**G**reat **M**issenden & **P**restwood **R**evitalisation **G**roup

Incorporating Ballinger, South Heath and Heath End

27th April 2021

Emma Showan

Directorate for Planning Growth and Stability

Buckinghamshire Council

King George V House

Amersham HP6 5AW

Dear Emma Showan

**Re: PL/21/0534/FA**

**Land at Great Missenden Railway Station, Station Approach, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire HP16 9AZ**

Great Missenden and Prestwood Revitalisation Group (GMPRG) has previously responded to proposals for development on this site in the developer’s community consultation, please see attached.

As stated in the response, redevelopment of the site is supported in principle.

However, whilst the developer has attempted to comply with NPPF paragraph 66 in terms of active engagement, this application fails to take into account the views expressed by the community.

As previously pointed out, there are a number of problems with the development proposals which still appear to be the general view of the community:

**1. Inappropriate design for the location**

The Design and Access Statement shows the planning context design cues as being taken from architectural precedents set in Amersham and Cambridge. This is a wholly inappropriate starting point; this site is in the Conservation Area of a small historic village in the heart of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), NOT an urban area of a major settlement. This approach has resulted in a proposal that is too urban in style for the location and incongruous within its setting.

The Victorian railway station provides an important gateway to Great Missenden for visitors to the Roald Dahl Museum and surrounding countryside, who help to support local retailers and the hospitality sector. The design and materials need to sympathetically reflect the rural nature of the village and to create a first impression that meets expectation. Any new development needs to conserve and reflect the unique and special character of the village, even if in a contemporary way. The proposals, subject of this application, fail to do this by way of their bulk, height and urban style.

An example of proposed incongruous development nearby, refused as being out of character to the area, can be seen in CH/2014/1999/FA. An amended proposal was later allowed when the local architectural vernacular of Great Missenden, with its mixture of high-quality Georgian, Victorian, Arts and Crafts and Tudor properties, was taken into account.

**2. Amount and use class**

Previous assessments by the LPA of the potential amount of residential development, appropriate to the station area, in emerging Local Plan evidence base documents, show a figure of 22 dwellings and express concerns for parking provision.

However, these reports were done prior to the development of 5 flats at Hampden Place, 28 new retirement apartments at The Cloisters and 9 new flats allowed at the Old Red Lion site. Despite the location of this site being by a transport hub, with 42 new flats approved already in such a small village and no Housing Need Assessment provided with the application, it is questionable whether there is a need for 37 further flats on what is currently an employment site.

As pointed out in GMPRG’s response to the community consultation, due to the constraints on development in the area by the Conservation Area, Green Belt and AONB, it is extremely important that any development on this site meets a local need.

**3. Parking**

It is the general view of local people that there is already a parking problem in the village. Local public transport is poor and private car ownership is high. Therefore, unless each of the flats has access to adequate parking on site, this development will only exacerbate parking problems elsewhere in the village.

Within this application there appears to be no parking proposed for employees or customers of the retail units, no parking for railway staff or visitor parking for the flats.

**4. Intensification of access onto Station Approach**

The proposed new access road to the Old Red Lion site is supported.

However, the proposed intensification of use of the junction with Station Approach will require highway improvements to provide safe access and egress from the site. This is evidenced by the Parish Council’s Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign data for October 2019, which shows traffic approaching this junction down the hill in excess of 30mph. It also shows the peak traffic times (over 100 cars per 30 minutes) as 7am to 8.30am and 3pm to 5pm, not 8am to 9am and 5pm to 6pm, as stated in the Transport Assessment.

**5. Landscaping**

The improvements to the public space area in front of the station are supported in principle.

Again it is important that the material palette reflects the rural nature of the village. Also, that a plan for future maintenance is put in place.

With regard to trees currently on the site, the Tree Protection Plan shows trees to be retained. However, none of the landscaping or elevation plans for the site show Tree 59, a mature Sycamore with high visual amenity value to Station Approach, within the site. This tree must be retained.

It is noted that this application has been called to Planning Committee and it is respectfully requested that these comments are taken into account in the determination of the application.

Yours faithfully

Carole Eaden

Chair, on behalf of GMPRG

[www.gmprg.org.uk](http://www.gmprg.org.uk)