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**To:** Development Brief <developmentbrief@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Draft Development Brief (Site PR9: Land West of Yarnton) - Representations

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Local Plan Partial Review Draft Development Brief (Site PR9: Land West of Yarnton)**

Please find attached a representation letter, submitted on behalf of our client, Merton College, in respect of the above for your consideration and review.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this e-mail.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards

Jai

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21 September 2021

**Our ref: AFG/RJD/JSID/G6492**

Dear Sir/Madam

**PR9 Development Brief Consultation  
Local Plan Partial Review Draft Development Briefs - Site PR9: Land West of Yarnton**

We write on behalf of our client, Merton College Oxford, in order to submit a representation in respect of the draft Development Brief - Site PR9: Land West of Yarnton.

Merton College is the sole owner of PR9 and has had a constructive dialogue with the Council throughout preparation of the Development Brief since 2018 and therefore supports most elements of the document. However, there are also specific aspects of the draft brief which are at variance with our own thinking, and which we would like to bring to your attention as follows:

**Woodland Areas**

While the quantum of the new community woodland area is agreed (7.8 ha) we note that the brief proposes a single area of woodland, north of the residential area. By contrast, we are proposing two woodland areas, rather than one. Whilst they would be physically close, they would perform slightly separate functions.

The first, to the north, would act as a buffer between the site and Begbroke. Since it would not incorporate all the existing cropped agricultural land, it would maintain greater openness in comparison to the extent of woodland as proposed in the brief. Consequently, we consider that providing less woodland in this area would be more consistent with green belt policy as well as providing (with the adjacent allotments) a more effective and varied buffer between the development parcels and the wider locality.

The second area would be located to north-west, partially in the area currently identified by the draft Brief as a 'Woodland Habitat Buffer' within the Green Infrastructure plan on page 48 (Figure 18). It would be adjacent to and contiguous with the southern and eastern boundary of Begbroke Wood (which comprises some 14.5ha of Ancient Woodland, plus c. 3.5ha of secondary woodland). The new planting here would substantially increase the overall size of the woodland block, and in combination with a proposed conservation margin would provide a significant enhancement to the woodland edge habitat.

For these reasons, we consider that the College's proposed disposition of woodland area results in significant additional environmental benefits in comparison to the draft brief.

It is also acknowledged that the College will provide public access to both areas, although the full extent and details of these access arrangements would require discussion as part of any s106 agreement.

### **Meadowland**

The area of retained green belt immediately west of the development area (currently intensively farmed agricultural land) is proposed to be repurposed as a working meadow with grazing animals, in contrast to its proposed use under the brief as 'new green space / park'.

As meadowland, it will be a higher value habitat, managed to maximise botanical interest as appropriate. Visually, it will provide a softer transition between the more manicured open spaces within the development and the retained agricultural land further to the west. It will also have a pastoral character, entirely consistent with its location in the retained green belt. Publicly accessible grass paths will meander through this area, with the precise access arrangements to be agreed under any s.106 agreement.

### **Elderly/Extra Care Provision**

While the College's emerging proposal is largely in line with the draft Development Brief there is one proposed additional use, namely up to 9,000 sqm GEA of elderly/extra care floorspace (Use Class C2) to be located close to the vehicular entrance on the eastern boundary, accessed via the Rutten Lane / A44 roundabout.

Although this use is not supported by Policy PR9, it is in line with Local Plan: Part 1 – Policy BSC 4. Furthermore, the provision of elderly/extra care does not limit the proposed quantum of C3 dwellings, which is still expected to be 540 dwellings in line with Policy PR9.

We also understand that Oxfordshire County Council is interested in the matter of elderly/extra care provision and their officers have confirmed a willingness to work further with the College and Applicant and District Council in identifying the appropriate provision for older people within the development.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Robert Davies (0207 333 6207) or Jai Sidhu (0203 486 3666) of this office.

Yours faithfully



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