**Head of Planning
Vale of White Horse District Council
Benson Lane
Crowmarsh Gifford
Wallingford OX10 8ED**

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**December 2014**

**Letter of Objection to Planning Application P14/V2626/FUL Land adjoining Hitchcopse Farm, Cothill Road, Cothill**

Dear Mr Duffield,

I would like to strongly object to the planning application for Land adjoining Hitchcopse Farm, referred to below as Cothill Pitt.

The main reasons for my objection are based on the following concerns regarding the proposed development;

**It is inappropriate development**

* The proposal represents inappropriate development as defined by Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. Paragraph 3.4 of the document classifies new buildings as inappropriate development that would cause harm to the Green Belt. Core policy 9 of the Local Plan also protects Green Belt areas from inappropriate developments. Therefore, planning application for 14 dwellings dwellings (with scope for further) and communal car park is clearly inappropriate and should not be allowed on the green belt site.
* The Green Belt is likely to suffer from incursion in the land between Abingdon and the A34, reducing quality green space for local communities. This needs to stop before there is nothing left. Once built on, it will never go back to green space.

**The local area does not want or need this sort of tourism**

* The application is for a ‘holiday village’ which will put pressure on already congested local roads as there is no local public transport that services the area and few (if any) areas of interest to tourists within walking distance.
* Due to its proximity to Oxford and lack of transport options other than by car, the area most likely to benefit from ‘off site expenditure’ from the development is Oxford City Council, not local businesses or the VWHDC. The principal economic beneficiary from the development is the developer himself.

**The development will decrease, not increase access to the Green Belt**

* Cothill Pitt has increasing numbers of visitors from surrounding areas due to the loss of accessible green space in neighbouring areas, including Wantage, Southmoor, Witney, Steventon, Abingdon and Didcot.
* Building holiday accommodation on the site will reduce rather than improve access to green space by visitors such as myself, who are currently able to walk at will across the site and enjoy the freedom of allowing our dogs off lead. This is highly likely to be curtailed if the development of expensive holiday accommodation is allowed.

**It is detrimental to the appearance of the site and the abundant wildlife it supports**

* The developer erroneously refers to the site as ‘brownfield’. This does not recognise the ‘regreening’ process that has occurred in the 30 years+ since it was used for sand extraction. It is now an extremely attractive location for those interested in using it for leisure, sport and observing nature.
* The imposition of Finnish cabins on the site is entirely out of keeping with the rural Oxfordshire landscape and would deplete its amenity and landscape value.
* Many visitors to the site enjoy it for the diverse and changing wildlife it supports. Moreover, local experts consider Cothill Pitt represents the best site in the Vale of the White Horse for butterflies, one of the best for Hymenoptera (bees and wasps), a highly important site for flowering plants, and one of great importance for other day-flying insects such as moths. Impact of housing, light pollution and increased human activity, together with direct loss of habitat, which would result if this development were to go ahead has to be strongly opposed.

I trust that in light of these arguments and strong concern from the local community that the Vale of White Horse District Council planning committee will see fit to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,