

Residents fear extra traffic if homes built

By Tom Burrows

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RESIDENTS raised concerns about extra traffic at a consultation meeting on proposals to build 700 new homes east of Carterton.

The proposed development, known as Carterton East, includes a primary school, shops, community and leisure facilities and an extension to the Kilkenny Lane Country Park.

As well as the 700 homes, of which 40 per cent would be classed as affordable housing, the plan by Bloor Homes for land owned by Christ Church, Oxford, includes allotments, playing fields and a new road to link the B4477 with the Witney and Curbridge road.

The developer says there is also potential to provide a hotel, nursery and community centre and that the project will bring in an extra £5m a year to the local economy.

But residents from the town and neighbouring Brize Norton said extra traffic was a key concern during the meeting at St John's Church Hall in Carterton on Friday.

Irene Frost, from Carterton, said: "The increase in traffic will be a problem. It's already at a standstill at 8.30am. It's madness and to add to it would be a nightmare.

"I also don't think it will bring more jobs to Carterton, as they will also just go somewhere else."

Wendy Morgan, of Butlers Drive, Carterton, said: "The A40 will get even worse. Heaven knows what another 700 homes will do to it."

Lesley Goble, of Station Road, Brize Norton, said:

"The cars from the planned development will go on to the A40, which is already gridlocked."

Helen Beckingham, of Manor Road, Brize Norton, said: "It's not a question of it being in our backyard, it's a question of it being a very stupid plan."

But other residents supported the scheme.

Office manager Julie Edgington, of Rock Close, Carterton, said: "I think more houses will bring more people into the centre of Carterton."

Christine Green, a teaching assistant from Brize Norton Road, Carterton, said: "I think it's a better site than if it were west of the town. I think the traffic would be even worse if it was to be built in the west, as that links more to the A40."

When asked about concerns over traffic issues, a spokesman for Bloor Homes said the company had offered "significant contributions", which would see three S2 buses between Carterton, Witney and Oxford run every hour, rather than two, while the link road would keep A40 traffic away from Carterton and Brize Norton.

And land would be offered on a 150-year-lease to Brize Norton Parish Council to create a "buffer" between Carterton and Brize Norton.

A website to allow people to comment online has been set up at cartertoneast.com, with consultation running until Thursday, December 12.

Residents say 287 dwellings will over-strain the NHS doctors' surgery

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'Downton' village fights new homes

DOCTORS and residents in the village where *Downton Abbey* is filmed have said its surgery cannot support hundreds of extra residents that new homes could bring.

They fear Bampton, population currently about 3,000, lacks infrastructure

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to support an extra 287 homes.

Developers have put in outline plans for two major estates on greenfield sites, one of 127 homes by Gladman Developments and the other of 160 by Richborough Estates.

Bampton hit the headlines after ITV's hit drama series was filmed in the village.

The Grade I-listed 12th-century St Mary's Church was used as the place where Lady Mary Crawley, played by Michelle Dockery, married her cousin Matthew Crawley, played by Dan Stevens, at the start of the third season.

But Bampton Medical Practice and locals fear for the future of the village and say the GP surgery cannot cater for hundreds more people.

Practice manager Sue Gooding said: "It would have a significant impact on the surgery and as we stand at the moment we could not accommodate that number of extra patients."

Roger Jones, editor of the *British Journal of General Practice*, agreed, saying: "It seems clear that the resulting additional population will put unsustainable pressure on Bampton's infrastructure, including its roads and health care."

He said Dr John Uden from the surgery had said it was now at full capacity in terms of space and clinical resources.

"Without substantially increasing the provision of primary health care services, well in advance of any increase in population size, these developments strike me as potentially hazardous," he said.

Resident Lesley Campbell said her 89-year old mother Marjorie Holloway had moved to Bampton because of the surgery.

She said: "It is a fantastic surgery. For existing residents, there are not issues with capacity at the moment but we want to keep it that way."



Lesley Campbell, front, with fellow residents outside the doctors' surgery they say is threatened by the extra population that will occupy the new housing developments in and around Bampton

Picture: OX64021 Mark Hemsworth

"It is quite a scary feeling when you aren't able to see a GP because they are full."

Fellow resident Phil Waite said: "The GP surgery and Bampton Primary School would not be able to cope with an additional 600 people."

West Oxfordshire District Council is set to decide on the outline planning application for the smaller development on Monday, December 16.

Officers have recommended

refusal. The larger proposal is due in front of the council for a decision in January.

The council said that consultations had shown there was some capacity to cater for extra patients.

Gladman Developments, the company behind the smaller housing scheme, was unavailable for comment.

Richborough Estates could not be contacted for response.