

DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE: 4

WINCOTE

In August 2011, the village was alerted to a planning application from the owner of Wincote, off Cow Lane, who wished to demolish most of the existing house and build a new structure on an adjacent plot. This was to be combined with new landscaping, opening up a view to the Rousham Eyecatcher. The scale of the proposed house was staggering, being about seven times the “footprint” of the existing one.

Village objections were various, but the most significant was the fact that this was a very substantial development in the Conservation Area involving the destruction of a local heritage asset for somewhat questionable purposes. It appeared that this might not be a single house but one capable of being let out to several occupiers. There were concerns about the potential for increased traffic, and the huge amounts of earth movement required during construction. The impact on the landscape setting of the village and the protected Rousham Eyecatcher were also concerns.

Local resident David Palmer launched a campaign website to orchestrate opposition (see example pages). It turned out that there had been “secret” discussions between the site owner and the local planning authority over several years; the new residents of the neighbouring property were informed of the plans just days after moving in, despite having paid the local authority for a planning search months earlier. Feelings ran high for some weeks, and the owner offered to attend a public meeting to explain the scheme. Nevertheless, many remained sceptical and the large number of objections lodged convinced the applicant to withdraw the scheme. He promised to revise the proposals and that we should expect a resubmission “shortly”. That was four years ago.



Artist's impression of how the new building would impact on the view of the Church from Cow Lane. The building is just below the Church tower.



MANOR FARM

In 2002 development commenced at Manor Farm, the oldest established farm in the village. The great timber-framed barn was rebuilt to make two substantial new homes, and two other houses were created from existing farm buildings.

The development was carried out with much attention paid to its “green” credentials, and a high standard of design and construction is evident.



SHEPHERD'S HILL

Shepherds Hill was completed in 2003. It was the first of the village's two affordable housing schemes built on “rural exception sites”.

