

To whom it may concern,

Garden land is a valuable resource which serves the needs of both humans and nature. Many gardens are cherished and loved, but some are left as monotonous areas of grass or built over with unsightly garages. For others, especially many older residents, a large garden can become a burden, beyond their means or ability to maintain, a source of stress which detracts from their ability to enjoy their own home.

In many cases, suburban gardens – especially corner plots - can do more good for the community if repurposed to serve other needs. Many are large enough to accommodate thoughtfully designed, high-quality, own-door, detached family homes within established residential areas without harming existing residents. Some could accommodate smaller, single-storey homes, which give owners the option to downsize to a house better suited to their needs in the community they love while freeing up the original large family home for a new family. In all cases, when properly landscaped, these homes can actually enhance local character and biodiversity.

We therefore object to the currently proposed Policy DM BG6, which will effectively ban any form of development in the grounds around existing residential dwellings. This policy completely undermines council's own policy (Policy DM H4) of permitting 'incremental, sustainable intensification' on small sites. Proposals for development in garden land should always be fairly assessed on their own merits, not subject to a blanket ban.