

Residents, Oxley Woods

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Dear Oxley Woods Residents

**OXLEY WOODS**

Taylor Wimpey has recently indicated that it is planning to deliver the final two phases of the Oxley Woods development using traditional housing rather than the homes that we (Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP)) have designed and which you live in. We would, of course, prefer to stay involved to complete this unique project using the same technology used thus far, so we are disappointed that Taylor Wimpey has taken this decision. You have quite understandably voiced your concerns to us and others, so I would like to take this opportunity to explain our position in a little more detail.

RSHP originally became involved in the Design for Manufacture (DfM) competition to help improve the quality of housing design, to look at modern methods of construction and to improve the environmental performance of new-build houses in the UK. Since 2005, we have worked with Taylor Wimpey to deliver approximately 145 homes on the Oxley Woods development of which some 120 have been built. We have been very pleased with the architecture, the internal spaces and the environmental performance achieved, as well as the materials used in the construction of these houses to date. The fact that Oxley Woods was awarded the Manser Medal in 2008 – an award which usually recognises the designs of single, bespoke family dwellings – confirmed to us the success of the project among the UK architectural community. More importantly you, as residents, were independently interviewed several years ago and your pride in your neighbourhood was evident; this meant a lot to us. Now, whenever we visit Oxley Woods to present your neighbourhood to potential clients and other interested agencies, we are still as uplifted and as excited by what has been achieved as we were when the first houses were established on the site. The completed houses are truly modern homes which embody a confidence in the future of sustainable development in the UK.

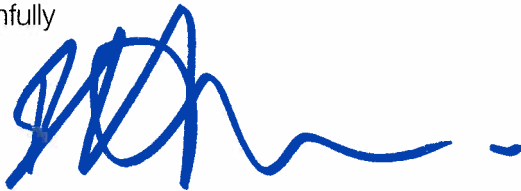
Taylor Wimpey has successfully completed six of the original nine areas on the site using our design and homes on the seventh area are currently almost finished. Taylor Wimpey is now looking for a way of completing the project on the remaining two areas of the site, on the other side of Milland Way, employing a 'traditional' approach to house design and construction. They have told us that 'traditional' homes are more likely to sell in the current challenging market.

Taylor Wimpey presented us with the designs for these new homes, which imitated key features of the houses you live in. However the fact that the remaining areas are separated from the heart of your community allows them to develop their own identity, whilst leaving the core of the neighbourhood architecturally intact. We strongly advised Taylor Wimpey to pursue alternative designs more suitable to a conventional approach since we believe that imitating the original design would diminish the architectural integrity of those properties already built.

As with all our projects, we have adopted a considered, holistic approach to the design and delivery of the completed houses. This – as you are aware – is the result of a huge investment in time and resources by a dedicated team. We would, therefore, hope that you do not accept a mere stylistic imitation on the remaining undeveloped areas.

We remain very attached to Oxley Woods and if Taylor Wimpey were to change their mind, we would be happy to work with them to develop alternative designs for the rest of the site. We are extremely proud of what has been achieved to date and we have a strong commitment to the future of the technology we have developed with our partners and to you, the community which lives there. We would like to thank you for the support you have shown our design in recent years – through direct feedback, correspondence and via the [oxleywoodsliving.co.uk](http://oxleywoodsliving.co.uk) website – and I hope that we will be able to continue the relationship we have established.

Yours faithfully



IVAN HARBOUR