

# Agenda

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## West Area Planning Committee

Date: **Tuesday 1 December 2015**

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Time: **6.30 pm**

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Place: **The Old Library, Town Hall**

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For any further information please contact:

**Jennifer Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer**

Telephone: 01865 252275

Email: [democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk)

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As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record the meeting please let the Contact Officer know how you wish to do this before the start of the meeting.

# West Area Planning Committee

## Membership

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Louise Upton	North;
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Councillor Michael Gotch	Wolvercote;
	Councillor Elise Benjamin	Iffley Fields;
	Councillor Colin Cook	Jericho and Osney;
	Councillor Andrew Gant	Summertown;
	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Carfax;
	Councillor Michele Paule	Rose Hill and Iffley;
	Councillor Bob Price	Hinksey Park;
	Councillor John Tanner	Littlemore;

The quorum for this meeting is five members. Substitutes are permitted

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# AGENDA

Pages

- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3 **FORMER WOLVERCOTE PAPER MILL: 13/01861/OUT**

11 - 50

**Site Address:** Wolvercote Paper Mill, Mill Road, Oxford

**Proposal:** Outline application (seeking means of access) for up to 190 residential units, employment space, community facilities, public open space and ancillary services and facilities. (Amended plans) (Additional information).

**Officer recommendation:** to grant planning permission for this development subject to the planning conditions set out in this report and the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement and to delegate to officers the completion of that legal agreement and the issuing of the notice of planning permission.

**Conditions:**

1. Development begun within 5 years year Outline PP or 2 years of Reserved Matters.
2. Approved Outline Matters (principle and means of access).
3. Reserved Matters (all matters other than means of access).
4. Specified Approved Plans (excluding illustrative masterplan and associated plans contained within the Design and Access Statement).
5. Submission of formal masterplan and design codes as part of reserved matters
6. Retention and management of trees in accordance with principles set out in Woodland Management Strategy including retention and appropriate management of existing tree belt adjacent Home Close.
7. Building height restrictions.
8. Housing Mix in accordance with BoDSPD.
9. All homes built to Lifetime Homes Standard
10. 5% of new dwellings fully accessible or easily adaptable to full wheelchair use.
11. Delivery of non-residential uses and community facilities.
12. Landscape and Open Space Strategy to be agreed and appropriate arrangements made for future management and maintenance of open space, before commencement of development.
13. All landscaping to be carried out within first planting season following completion.
14. Inclusion of public art on site.
15. Construction Traffic and Environmental Management Plan agreed before development commences.
16. Noise insulation for development built near Mill Stream Weir.
17. Details of any mechanical plant.
18. Details of proposals for dealing with cooking smells and odours arising from any non-residential use.
19. Development to meet the principle and physical security standards of Secured by Design.
20. Lighting Strategy to be agreed before commencement of development.

21. Construction of access in accordance with approved plans.
22. Travel Plan
23. Travel Plan to be implemented in full.
24. Visibility splays.
25. Location of bus stops.
26. Traffic Regulation Order for new parking restrictions in vicinity of new access.
27. Provision of allocated car parking for four cottages in Mill Road within the layout.
28. Development to take place in accordance with FRA – as recommended by Environment Agency.
29. Remediation Strategy to be agreed before development commences – as recommended by Environment Agency.
30. Completion of works in accordance with Remediation Strategy.
31. Watching brief for unexpected any unexpected contamination found and agreed of measures to remediate.
32. Details of Foul and Surface Water Drainage to be confirmed and agreed prior to commencement.
33. 8m buffer to be provided alongside Mill Stream and scheme of management submitted and agreed before commencement.
34. Requirement for repeat biological surveys.
35. Details of Biodiversity Method Statement to be agreed before commencement.
36. Ecological Management Plan to be agreed and appropriate arrangements made for future management and maintenance of open space and ecological habitat, before commencement of development.
37. Archaeological evaluation and scheme of mitigation to be agreed before commencement.
38. Detailed NRIA to be submitted with reserved matters application, including delivery of at least 20% renewable energy on site, in accordance with principles and proposals set out in the Renewable Energy Strategy.
39. Approval of any flues associated with renewable energy boilers to be agreed and limited in terms of emission levels.
40. Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points.

#### **Legal Agreement**

To secure the delivery of on-site affordable housing provision, the doctor's surgery, community facilities, appropriate measures to secure adequate provision, management and maintenance of open space and biodiversity enhancements, bus service procurement, s278 and s38 agreement for highway works the applicant will need to provide an undertaking under the terms of Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

#### **4 1 ABBEY ROAD:15/02512/FUL**

51 - 66

**Site Address:** 1 Abbey Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 0AD

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing buildings. Erection of 6 houses (2 x 3bed, 4 x 4bed) and 6 flats (1 x 1bed, 3 x 2bed and 2 x 3bed) on three levels.

**Officer recommendation:** to grant planning permission for this development subject to the planning conditions set out in the report and reproduced below, the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement which secures affordable housing provision on-site and to delegate to officers the completion of that legal agreement and the issuing of the notice of planning permission.

**Conditions:**

1. Development begun within time limit.
2. Development in accordance with approved plans.
3. Samples of materials.
4. Landscape plan required.
5. Landscaping to be carried out by completion.
6. Boundary details - development commencement.
7. Details of cycle parking, waste & recycling storage areas.
8. Travel Information Packs.
9. Alterations to the Public Highway - Reinstatement of Kerb.
10. Parking Permits for family homes.
11. Construction Traffic Management Plan.
12. Submission of surface drainage scheme.
13. Water butts to be provided for each new house and for the terrace of flats.
14. Archaeological recording and building recording.
15. Implement in accordance with recommendations of bat survey.
16. Details of biodiversity enhancement measures.
17. Submission and agreement of scheme to deal with risks associated with identified contamination.
18. Restrict occupation until any approved remediation works have been carried out.
19. Development halted if unsuspected contamination is found during the course of development.

**Legal Agreement:** To secure financial contributions towards the delivery of affordable housing on-site, the applicant will need to provide an undertaking under the terms of Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

**5 CHRIST CHURCH: 15/00760/FUL- REPORT BACK ON S.106**

67 - 84

**Site address:** Christ Church College St Aldate's

**Proposal:** Change of use and extension of existing thatched barn to provide accommodation for a visitor shop and ticket office, a café, storage, staff accommodation, interpretation space. Demolition of existing buildings and erection of new works building and service yard including workshops, garages, storage, staff facilities and WCs, parking area and established landscaping.

West Area Planning Committee resolved to approve this proposal subject to a contribution of £2000 to the County Council secured via a S106 agreement. The approval was subject to conditions and a legal agreement as set out in the full report to the committee on 9 June 2015 (attached).

The County Council have subsequently withdrawn their request for the contribution.

**Officer recommendation:** that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out previously, but with an additional condition requesting details and approval of way-finding measures within the site.

**6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

85 - 90

Minutes from the meeting of 10 November 2015.

**Recommendation:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2015 are approved as a true and accurate record.

## **7 FORTHCOMING APPLICATIONS**

Items for consideration by the committee at future meetings are listed for information. They are not for discussion at this meeting.

- Jericho Canalside: 14/01441/FUL: residential etc
- Westgate: 14/02402/FUL: various conditions
- Dragon School, Bardwell Road: 15/01561/FUL: new music building
- 26 Norham Gardens: 15/01601/FUL: student accommodation
- 54 St John Street OX1 2LQ: 15/01676/FUL and 15/01677/LBC
- Land south of Manor Place: 15/01747/FUL: student accommodation
- Former Skoda garage, 298 Abingdon Road: 15/01983/FUL: Change of use from car dealership to veterinary centre
- 18 Hawkswell Gardens: 15/2352/FUL: 3 houses
- 8 Hollybush Row: 15/02694/FUL: 7 flats
- Cooper Callas Building (15 Paradise Street and 5 St Thomas' Street): 15/02971/FUL
- Installation of Spanish Civil War Memorial, St Giles, Woodstock Road:15/02859/FUL

## **8 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee will meet on the following dates:

5 January 2016  
9 February 2016  
8 March 2016  
12 April 2016  
17 May 2016

## **DECLARING INTERESTS**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR DEALING WITH PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES AND PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Planning controls the development and use of land in the public interest. Applications must be determined in accordance with the Council's adopted policies, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Committee must be conducted in an orderly, fair and impartial manner.

The following minimum standards of practice will be followed.

1. All Members will have pre-read the officers' report. Members are also encouraged to view any supporting material and to visit the site if they feel that would be helpful.
2. At the meeting the Chair will draw attention to this code of practice. The Chair will also explain who is entitled to vote.
3. The sequence for each application discussed at Committee shall be as follows:-
  - (a) the Planning Officer will introduce it with a short presentation;
  - (b) any objectors may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
  - (c) any supporters may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
  - (d) speaking times may be extended by the Chair, provided that equal time is given to both sides. Any non-voting City Councillors and/or Parish and County Councillors who may wish to speak for or against the application will have to do so as part of the two 5-minute slots mentioned above;
  - (e) voting members of the Committee may raise questions (which shall be directed via the Chair to the lead officer presenting the application, who may pass them to other relevant Officers and/or other speakers); and
  - (f) voting members will debate and determine the application.
4. Preparation of Planning Policy documents – Public Meetings

At public meetings Councillors should be careful to be neutral and to listen to all points of view. They should take care to express themselves with respect to all present including officers. They should never say anything that could be taken to mean they have already made up their mind before an application is determined.
5. Public requests to speak

Members of the public wishing to speak must notify the Democratic Services Officer before the meeting starts giving their name, the application/agenda item they wish to speak on and whether they are objecting to or supporting the application. Notifications can be made via e-mail or telephone, to the Democratic Services Officer (whose details are on the front of the Committee agenda) or given in person before the meeting starts.
6. Written statements from the public

Members of the public and councillors can send the Democratic Services Officer written statements to circulate to committee members, and the planning officer prior to the meeting. Statements are accepted and circulated by noon, two working days before the start of the meeting. Material received from the public at the meeting will not be accepted or circulated, as Councillors are unable to view proper consideration to the new information and officers may not be able to check for accuracy or provide considered advice on any material consideration arising.
7. Exhibiting model and displays at the meeting

Applicants or members of the public can exhibit models or displays at the meeting as long as they notify the Democratic Services Officer of their intention at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting so that members can be notified.



## 8. Recording meetings

Members of the public and press can record the proceedings of any public meeting of the Council. If you do wish to record the meeting, please notify the Committee clerk prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best plan to record. You are not allowed to disturb the meeting and the Chair will stop the meeting if they feel a recording is disruptive.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present unless they are addressing the meeting.

For more information on recording at meetings please refer to the Council's [Protocol for Recording at Public Meetings](#)

## 9. Meeting Etiquette

All representations should be heard in silence and without interruption. The Chair will not permit disruptive behaviour. Members of the public are reminded that if the meeting is not allowed to proceed in an orderly manner then the Chair will withdraw the opportunity to address the Committee. The Committee is a meeting held in public, not a public meeting.

## 10. Members should not:

- (a) rely on considerations which are not material planning considerations in law;
- (b) question the personal integrity or professionalism of officers in public;
- (c) proceed to a vote if minded to determine an application against officer's recommendation until the reasons for that decision have been formulated; or
- (d) seek to re-design, or negotiate amendments to, an application. The Committee must determine applications as they stand and may impose appropriate conditions.

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<b>West Area Planning Committee</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2015
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<b>Application Number:</b>	13/01861/OUT
<b>Decision Due by:</b>	15th October 2013
<b>Proposal:</b>	Outline application (seeking means of access) for up to 190 residential units, employment space, community facilities, public open space and ancillary services and facilities.(Amended plans)(Additional information).
<b>Site Address:</b>	Wolvercote Paper Mill, Mill Road, Oxford ( <b>Appendix 1</b> )
<b>Ward:</b>	Wolvercote Ward

<b>Agent:</b>	Mr Nik Lyzba, JPPC Planning	<b>Applicant:</b>	University Of Oxford
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**Recommendation:**

Committee is recommended to grant planning permission for this development subject to the planning conditions set out in this report and the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement and to delegate to officers the completion of that legal agreement and the issuing of the notice of planning permission.

**Reasons for Approval:**

1. The proposed redevelopment of the former Paper Mill site makes an efficient use of previous developed land and has been allocated for housing development in the Council's Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026. The vacant former Paper Mill site and buildings detract considerably from the appearance of the locality and street-scene and its future redevelopment for housing will improve both the visual amenity of the locality and make an important contribution towards objectively assessed housing needs for the area, including much needed affordable housing. Whilst the overall layout, scale and design of the proposed buildings are to be determined at a later stage, the information submitted with the outline application indicates that development of the site can be facilitated whilst safeguarding the residential amenities of neighbouring properties, protecting and enhancing wildlife interests, having no unacceptable impacts on the local environment and providing an attractive environment for new residential occupants, community activities and

businesses. Future development also provides an opportunity to secure new community facilities and small-scale employment space as part of the overall development and new areas of open space of wildlife and recreational value. The principle of residential development is also acceptable in highways and transport terms, will be energy efficient and be designed to include some on-site renewable energy generation and does not create any flooding or other environmental impacts. The development would therefore accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.

2. The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the Development Plan as summarised in this report. It has considered all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that might otherwise arise as a result of the proposal can be offset or mitigated by the conditions imposed.
3. Officers have considered carefully all objections to these proposals. Officers have come to the view, for the detailed reasons set out in the officers report, that the objections do not amount, individually or cumulatively, to a reason for refusal and that all the issues that have been raised have been adequately addressed and the relevant bodies consulted.

**Conditions:**

1. Development begun within 5 years year Outline PP or 2 years of Reserved Matters.
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38. Detailed NRIA to be submitted with reserved matters application, including delivery of at least 20% renewable energy on site, in accordance with principles and proposals set out in the Renewable Energy Strategy.
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40. Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points

## **Legal Agreement**

To secure the delivery of on-site affordable housing provision, the doctor's surgery, community facilities, appropriate measures to secure adequate provision, management and maintenance of open space and biodiversity enhancements, bus service procurement, s278 and s38 agreement for highway works the applicant will need to provide an undertaking under the terms of Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

## **Main Local Plan Policies:**

### Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1** - Development Proposals
- CP6** - Efficient Use of Land & Density
- CP8** - Design Development to Relate to its Context
- CP9** - Creating Successful New Places
- CP10** - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs
- CP11** - Landscape Design
- CP13** - Accessibility
- CP14** - Public Art
- CP17** - Recycled Materials
- CP18** - Natural Resource Impact Analysis
- CP19** - Nuisance
- CP20** - Lighting
- CP21** - Noise
- CP22** - Contaminated Land
- CP23** - Air Quality Management Areas
- TR1** - Transport Assessment
- TR2** - Travel Plans
- TR3** - Car Parking Standards
- TR4** - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
- NE3** - Safeguarded Land
- NE6** - Oxford's Watercourses
- NE11** - Land Drainage & River Engineering Works
- NE12** - Groundwater Flow
- NE13** - Water Quality
- NE14** - Water and Sewerage Infrastructure
- NE15** - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- NE20** - Wildlife Corridors
- NE21** - Species Protection
- NE22** - Independent Assessment
- NE23** - Habitat Creation in New Developments
- HE2** - Archaeology
- HE3** - Listed Buildings and Their Setting
- HE7** - Conservation Areas

### Core Strategy

- CS1** - Hierarchy of centres
- CS2** - Previously developed and greenfield land
- CS4** - Green Belt
- CS9** - Energy and natural resources
- CS10** - Waste and recycling
- CS11** - Flooding

- CS12** - Biodiversity
- CS13** - Supporting access to new development
- CS15** - Primary healthcare
- CS16** - Access to education
- CS17** - Infrastructure and developer contributions
- CS18** - Urban design, town character, historic environment
- CS19** - Community safety
- CS20** - Cultural and community development
- CS21** - Green spaces, leisure and sport
- CS23** - Mix of housing
- CS24** - Affordable housing

#### Sites and Housing Plan

- MP1** - Model Policy
- HP3** - Affordable Homes from Large Housing Sites
- HP9** - Design, Character and Context
- HP11** - Low Carbon Homes
- HP12** - Indoor Space
- HP13** - Outdoor Space
- HP14** - Privacy and Daylight
- HP15** - Residential cycle parking
- HP16** - Residential car parking
- SP63** - Wolvercote Paper Mill, Mill Road

#### Other Planning Documents

National Planning Policy Framework  
 Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations SPD  
 Balance of Dwellings SPD  
 Waste Bin Storage and Access Requirements for New and Change of Use  
 Developments Technical Advice Note

#### **Relevant Site History:**

The site has had a number of planning applications submitted over the years, none of which are of particular relevance to the development proposal subject to this application.

#### **Public Consultation:**

##### Statutory Consultees:

##### Oxfordshire County Council Highways Authority:

Following the submission of additional information, including a revised Transport Assessment, access design etc., the Highways Authority raise no objection to the development or the means of access, subject to a S278 legal agreement which requires the construction of a new mini-roundabout in Godstow Road in accordance with the submitted plans and any planning permission being conditioned to require:

- an agreed Travel Plan, provision to update that Plan after partial occupation of the development and the payment of monitoring fees to enable the Highways Authority to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan;
- a Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- the provision and long-term safeguarding of satisfactory vision splays at the junction of Mill Road and the new access being created;
- the provision of replacement bus stops in Godstow Road (locations to be agreed following consultation with local stakeholders);
- the procurement of an enhanced capacity/frequency of Bus Service 6, between Wolvercote and Oxford after partial completion of the development and;
- the applicant to meet the costs of creating a new Traffic regulation Order which restricts on-street car parking in the vicinity of the new mini-roundabout being provided by the development.

### Highways England

Highways England confirms that it has objection or comments to make.

### Environment Agency:

Following the submission of additional information, including a revised Flood Risk Assessment, the Environment Agency raise no objections to the development proposed but suggests conditions to require:

- development to be undertaken in accordance with proposed plans and the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application
- the submission and agreement of a remediation strategy to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site;
- completion of any remediation works before first occupation of the development;
- an agreed surface water drainage scheme which ensures soakaways are not constructed into contaminated land (still needed??);
- the provision of and an agreed scheme of management for an 8m buffer zone alongside the Mill Stream to protect an important wildlife corridor;
- the provision of a landscape management plan for all landscaped areas.

### Thames Water:

Following the submission of additional information, Thames Water raise no objections to the development proposed but suggests a condition to ensure that surface water discharge arrangements and/or any site drainage connections to a public sewer are not detrimental to the existing sewerage system. It also recommends an informative note in respect of water supply connection.

### Historic England

Historic England confirms that it has no comments to make on this application.



### Oxford Civic Society

The Society recommends refusal of the application commenting that:

- the development will add to congestion, in particular at the Woodstock Road roundabout;
- the fact that the Paper Mill generated traffic movements in the past is irrelevant to the assessment of traffic impacts now;
- the application assesses the quantitative impacts of traffic arising from the development, but says nothing about the qualitative impacts on the communities likely to be affected, such as Godstow, Lower and Upper Wolvercote and Wytham and their distinctive character;
- the additional traffic on Godstow Road and the Woodstock Road roundabout would exacerbate already unacceptable levels of air quality in the locality and would run contrary to the Council's Air Quality Action Plan;
- the proposals contain no details of measures to make travel by cycling more attractive beyond the immediate boundaries of the site nor how cycling would become the preferred mode of transport for occupants of the development.

### Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

The Wildlife Trust originally raised a holding objection to the development, but following the submission of additional information, including an Updated Biodiversity Report, it has removed that objection and comments as follows:

- the applicant has identified appropriate measures including the conservation management of Dukes Meadow to compensate for the loss of biodiversity on site as a result of development;
- if permission is granted, the delivery of the compensation measures should be secured through a S106 legal agreement, with sufficient funding and formal Management Plan required to be agreed and;
- Oxford Meadows SAC (particularly Pixey Mead) should be protected from any adverse impacts by conditions that secure reptile and bat mitigation measures and a sensitive lighting strategy as set out in the applicant's updated Biodiversity Report.

### Oxford Preservation Trust

The Preservation Trust owns Wolvercote Lakes and comments that the development of the site offers an opportunity to work with the University to join the lakes site with the 'community areas' being created by as part of the application proposals by creating a new footpath between the two sites, across third party land.

### CPRE

CPRE supports the use of a brownfield site for new housing and asks that development promotes easy access from the site into the countryside and provides a detailed plan to ensure that the open spaces suggested in the illustrative masterplan are safeguarded.

## Cherwell District Council

Cherwell raises no objections to the proposal, subject to a thorough assessment being made to impacts on the highway/transport infrastructure and local ecology.

## Wolvercote Commoners' Committee

The Commoner's Committee originally raised a number of concerns regarding the proposed development including:

- access from the site onto Mill Road;
- levels of car parking provision, which it considered to be inadequate;
- the need for greater measures to encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling, including new cycleways out of the village;
- the impact of additional traffic on the local highway network, including along Godstow Road, Mere Road and at the Wolvercote Roundabout and;
- a perceived lack of ambition within the submitted Energy Strategy in terms of making the development as sustainable and energy-efficient as possible.

Following the submission of additional information in 2015, the Commoner's Committee commented further. Whilst the Commoner's Committee does not object to the application it raises the following issues:

- It suggests this is a large development for a small community and should be restricted to 190 dwellings;
- The visual impact of the development on the village needs to be taken seriously. There should be a limit on the storeys of buildings with buildings being no more than 2-storey near Home Close and Godstow Road, with any 3-storey development located nearer the middle and northern edge of the site;
- Support the introduction of a mini-roundabout at the access point;
- Concerned that material submitted with the application under-estimates peak morning traffic flows and also suggests that the traffic survey information perhaps underestimates speeds of traffic emanating from the site, given that surveys were taken from near the slowest point in Godstow Road (near the new mini-roundabout);
- Also concerned about any increase in traffic along Mere Road, given the numbers of children using this road to get to school (both the junior school and Cherwell Secondary School);
- Asks whether the current zebra crossing in Godstow Road could be replaced with a pelican crossing;
- Asks whether the development should help provide a new bus service to Oxford Parkway station to help reduce traffic;
- Welcomes the possibility of new community facilities being provided as part of the development of this site and supports the idea of a new surgery, if it has the backing of the local GPs and the NHS, but suggests that any new surgery provided should be larger than the existing surgery in Godstow Road, to serve the additional population which will result from this development;
- Want the development to be as sustainable and as energy self-sufficient as possible and promotes an increased use of insulation and the use of solar panels as part of the development;
- Notes that soakaways are unsuitable for this site but queries whether the use of impermeable water storage tanks and water pumps to discharge surface

water is the best/most sustainable solution and is concerned to ensure that the drainage solution does not lead to a greater level of flood risk in the village.

### Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum

The Neighbourhood Forum originally raised a number of concerns related to the proposed development including:

- the development is too large, dense and would adversely affect the character of Lower Wolvercote;
- the means of access;
- the potential to increase the risk of flooding in Lower Wolvercote;
- additional pressure being added to an 'already deficient' foul drainage system;
- traffic impacts on the local road network;
- the risk of parking overspill into Lower Wolvercote;
- insufficient measures to encourage cycling;
- noise impacts from the A34;
- density of development compromising the quality of some open spaces;
- the lack of commitment towards a truly sustainable development;
- the need for further thought being given towards renewable energy generation, including hydro-electric;
- the need to consider the impacts of development along cumulatively, along with the impacts from other nearby developments, including the Northern Gateway.

Following the submission of additional information in 2015, the Forum has commented further. Whilst the Forum does not object to the application, it raises the following issues:

- Welcomes the development of 'this derelict brown-field site', but suggests that this is a large development for Wolvercote which will not be easily absorbed and that local residents remain uneasy about the scale of development proposed and in particular, the potential for an increase in traffic on local roads;
- Suggests there is local support for key worker housing and housing suitable for the elderly, as part of the affordable housing requirement;
- Welcomes the possibility of a new health centre on the development site, given the local population increase as a result of this development and that at the Northern Gateway, but suggests that if a new health centre isn't needed on the site, land and funding for other community provision should be secured to enable uses such as a nursery or crèche to be provided;
- Recommends that future developers take account of the HCA publication 'Urban Design Lessons – Housing Layout and Neighbourhood Quality', when drawing up detailed plans;
- Suggest that noise levels from the A34 will affect the northern part of the site and that mitigation should be considered as well as air quality levels monitored;
- Suggests conditions should be imposed to mitigate against any impacts on biodiversity;
- Broadly supports the access solution and prohibition of car parking around the new mini-roundabout;
- Concerned about traffic speeds in Godstow Road and asks whether traffic

- calming measures should be considered in Godstow Road/Mill Road;
- Supports the applicant's proposals to encourage the use of public transport, such as free bus tickets and free initial membership of a car club, but asks that these benefits should be made available to all local residents;
- Concerned that the foul sewerage system may not be able to cope with the development, in light of surface water leakage into the system;
- Concerned that some questions previously asked of the University in respect of flood risk and drainage of water into the river have not been answered;
- Like the Commoner's Committee, queries whether the use of impermeable water storage tanks and water pumps to discharge surface water is the best/most sustainable solution and is concerned to ensure that the drainage solution does not lead to a greater level of flood risk locally.

### Oxford Flood Alliance

When the application was submitted in 2013, the Flood Alliance was concerned that the flood zone categorisation of the site appeared incorrect and that the site was at greater risk of flooding than its categorisation suggested. The categorisation of flood risk was subsequently confirmed and the applicant submitted a revised Flood Risk Assessment in July 2015 to support the application. The Flood Alliance has not commented on the revised information.

### NHS Trust Development Authority

No comments received.

### Natural England

Natural England raises no objections to the development proposed commenting that:

- If development is undertaken in accordance with the details submitted by the applicant, there is not likely to be any significant effect on the interest features for which Oxford Meadows SAC has been classified;
- In terms of air quality, the minor increases in nitrogen and acidification etc. which are assessed to arise as a result of development are not likely to have a significant effect on designated wildlife sites in the locality, including Oxford Meadows SAC;
- The continued groundwater flows from the site towards the Wolvercote Mill Stream, will ensure that in terms of hydrology, there isn't a significant impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC;
- If piling of foundations is proposed a piling risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure that should piling be required, groundwater flows are not affected;
- It would be concerned if proposals included a footpath link from the development site to Pixey and Yarnton Mead SSSI (which it does not);
- If development is undertaken in accordance with the details submitted by the applicant, development will not damage or have any significant effect on the interest features for which Wolvercote Meadows SSSI has been notified;
- It is satisfied that the proposed mitigation measures would maintain the bat population identified in the application material;
- A detailed mitigation and monitoring strategy for badgers should be required

- by condition on any consent;
- Further details of the reptile receptor area are needed;
- The development should be designed to enhance local distinctiveness and be guided by the Council's Landscape Character Assessment;
- The Council should also assess the impacts of development on local biodiversity, geo-diversity, landscape character and biodiversity priority habitats and species.

### Sport England

No comments received.

### Thames Valley Police

TV Police confirms it does not object to the principle of developing the site for housing, but suggests that the illustrative layout would need to be amended in due course to remove excessive permeability through the site; to design in defensible space; to ensure any necessary rear access to plots are designed to reduce the opportunity for crime; to provide natural surveillance of car parking courtyards/areas; to ensure adequate lighting of car parking and areas of public realm and; to meet the physical security standards of 'Secured by Design', such that it achieves Secured by Design accreditation. Indeed, it recommends that any planning permission given includes a condition to require the applicant to demonstrate the measures which will ensure Secured by Design accreditation is achieved.

In their original comments in 2013, TV Police also requested that any planning permission also secured financial contributions towards the purchase of two new dedicated bicycles to help PCSO's and PC's patrol the area and two ANPR cameras.

### Individual Comments to Original Planning Application Documentation (2013):

More than 100 detailed representations were received from local residents and individuals in respect of original plans and documentation submitted with this application in 2013. The vast majority of representations raise objections and concerns regarding the development. Many are concerned regarding the scale of development proposed and its impacts on the locality. Many comments concern the traffic and highway implications of development, the assessment of flood risk, the impact on local foul sewer capacity and the ability of local community facilities, such as schools, to cope with the additional population arising from development of the site. Other comments reference the impacts of local wildlife, the relationship between the development site and neighbouring properties, noise and pollution concerns and the opportunities presented by the development to improve local facilities (ie. the doctor's surgery). Many respondents acknowledge the site is allocated for new housing and as a brownfield site, would like to see the site developed, but consider that a lower level of new homes is more appropriate because it would have lesser impacts on the village and locality. Many of the detailed points raised are listed below;

*Principle of Development comments:*

- Significant objection to the scale of development proposed on the site;
- Support for the use of brownfield land to deliver new housing;
- An acceptance by some of the need for new housing in the area;
- Not the infrastructure or space within the village to cope with the increase in people/households/traffic proposed;
- The character of Wolvercote will be completely transformed by this development;
- This is simply urbanisation;
- The development will change the character of Wolvercote ‘forever’ and ‘for the worst’;
- The scheme should have much less housing and more green space;
- The level of development proposed is far too great;
- Several suggestions that the scale of development should be reduced to 80, 100, or 120 homes, rather than the 190 homes proposed;
- The combined impacts of this development along with the Northern Gateway and other developments planned in Oxford need to be taken into account;
- Together with the Northern Gateway development, this will make Wolvercote a suburb of Oxford rather than a village;
- Not clear that this scheme should benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development given the level of car traffic in will generate and the failure to meet Sustainable Homes Code Level 6;
- The site should be given over to recreation and planting rather than development;
- A development of this scale would increase the size of the village by a third;
- Concern regarding the impacts of this development on the Conservation Area;
- The proposals do not conform to the NPPF in that they do not demonstrate that they will deliver any wider sustainability benefits.

*Housing Need/Mix comments:*

- This scheme offers the opportunity for a ‘Cohousing Scheme’ (a community-led self-build project) as promoted by Oxford Cohousing Group. This would have a lower impact on the environment than a conventional housing scheme and occupiers of the Cohousing Scheme would be keen to ensure that some of the sustainability aspects of the scheme (ie. the Car Club) have a greater chance of succeeding);
- Any planning permission should designate part of the site for self-build housing;
- The mix of larger households does not reflect the trend towards smaller households;
- There should be more 2-bed units on site;
- Like many locals we have been pushed out of Wolvercote by increased rents and house prices and welcome any opportunity for housing for people in Oxford;
- The area desperately needs more housing for teachers, nurses, other emergency services etc. The proportion of social housing is insufficient;
- Building plots should be made available individual and in small batches for small builders etc.

*Biodiversity comments:*

- An aspiration from some local residents to purchase the peninsula of land between the two Mill Streams to create a nature reserve;
- The development proposals should adequately care for local bats and breeding colonies on and near the site;
- The proposals do not include adequate facilities for temporary bat accommodation whilst development is under construction;
- Any nature reserves created should be properly maintained;
- Suggestion that the Oxford Preservation Trust might be asked to manage any nature reserves created as a result of the development;
- Concern regarding the impacts of the development on various species including otters, water voles, amphibians, reptiles, insects etc.
- More space needs to be left clear of development so as to reduce the impacts on wildlife;
- Areas of environmental interest must not suffer any damage as a result of development;
- Concerned about the impact on adjacent SSSIs;
- There is significant mammal activity on the site including badgers, foxes and deer.

*Open space, landscaping and countryside access comments:*

- The proposal would be greatly improved if it included pedestrian access onto Pixey Mead;
- There should be no access to Pixey Mead from the development site;
- There should be a clear plan for managing all existing landscaping to be retained and new open spaces/landscaping created;
- The tree belt, including leylandii adjacent home Close should be retained;
- The recreation area to be provided in the north of the site will suffer from air and noise pollution;
- There are insufficient details regarding how the public open space in the north of the site is to be used;
- The new recreation area being provided should be liked to Wolvercote Lakes;
- There should be a path linking the development with Airman's Bridge, alongside the Mill Stream;
- There is a tree group in the village who would like to be involved in any arboreal plans for the site;
- Concern regarding impacts on Port Meadow and Wolvercote Common.

*Highways & transport comments:*

- The access design is unacceptable;
- Concern that the new junction will become a bottleneck/accident black-spot in the village;
- A single access point to this development could pose a problem for emergency vehicles and for the level of traffic expected to be generated from the site;
- Sight lines are poor and car parking in the vicinity of the new access will force vehicles into the centre of the road;
- Significant concerns regarding the additional traffic/congestion generated by

the development both in the village, along Godstow Road, accessing the school in Mere Road and in particular, at the Wolvercote Roundabout,;

- Traffic calming measures should be considered in the village as a result of the development;
- Concerns that increased congestion and traffic will impact on highway safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users;
- Concerns regarding the safety of children and parents crossing Godstow Road to visit the children's play area and some suggestions that a new crossing is needed to ensure safety;
- The traffic information submitted is optimistic and under-estimates likely traffic from the development. Further traffic assessments are required;
- Rush hour traffic could be brought to a halt;
- Bus services are already overcrowded during rush hours and could not cope with increased demand;
- The current route of the bus service through Rosamund Road, Clifford Place and Home Close should be maintained;
- When there is snow on the road, buses cannot travel into the village;
- Thought should be given to an additional bus stop for the 300 bus along Woodstock Road;
- Additional traffic and more speeding cars would adversely impact on local highway safety, particularly along Godstow Road;
- There is insufficient car parking proposed in the development – parking will overflow into surrounding streets;
- It will lead to more car parking on-street in Wolvercote;
- It will lead to more car parking on Mill Road;
- The level of car parking must conform to the Council's standards;
- Concern that additional car parking on-street would eventually lead to the introduction of a resident parking permit scheme;
- There should be a direct feeder road from the development site onto the A34, rather than traffic routing through the village;
- The proposal for a Car Club with only two dedicated spaces is insufficient. More than two cars should be provided and a heavily discounted membership is needed to encourage people to use it;
- Some concern that a Car Club would encourage greater car use at a local level;
- Concern that irrespective of measures proposed to encourage sustainable travel, most people will travel to and from the site by car;
- The assessment of traffic impacts by the applicant is inadequate;
- Traffic surveys undertaken by local residents suggested to correlate reasonably to those submitted by the applicant, though some concern that not all issues have been taken into account and leads to some under-estimate of likely traffic generation;
- Several concerns raised regarding factual inaccuracies in the transport documentation submitted;
- Rat-running/ through-traffic through the village is already significant;
- There is also an increase in traffic at weekends, generated by the pub trade and access to Port Meadow;
- How can the Council countenance more development in the village when it is recognised that the bridge over the railway line is inadequate to cope with the volume of heavy traffic it receives now;



- The two 'blind bridges', Airman's Bridge and the one by The Trout Inn on Godstow Road should have traffic lights installed to help ease traffic congestion coming from the site;
- Could the disused part of Godstow Road be re-opened to make travel through the village safer?;
- The traffic lights on the railway bridge already lead to congestion;
- The developer should be asked to fund a replacement two-lane bridge over the railway;
- Further car parking surveys should be carried out before the development is allowed to progress;
- Any garages provided must be of sufficient size;
- Secure cycle parking is needed for the new homes built;
- A secure cycle compound should also be provided in Mill Road to offer secure storage and encourage cycle use by existing occupiers;
- Concern that residents of new properties to be built in Mill Road will park on-street rather than in allocated spaces within the site;
- Insufficient cycle parking is proposed for users of the surgery, community facilities and employment units;
- Better/safer/additional provision for cyclists and pedestrians need to be made along Godstow Road and Mere Road;
- Providing a new bus stop on Godstow Road to replace that on Home Close will result in the loss of on-street car parking for adjacent residents;
- A new traffic study is needed;
- Concern regarding the impact of heavy traffic during construction and the ability of the bridges to cope with it;
- Concern that any increase in on-street car parking may put the bus service at risk;
- Extra traffic will lead to pressure for extra car parking restrictions in the village.

*Flood and Surface Water comments:*

- References to the extreme flooding in 2007 and its impact on the village;
- Concern that this development would increase local flood risk in the village;
- Local watercourses, culverts and ditches need to be maintained properly to prevent future flooding of the site and adjacent properties in Home Close etc.;
- Any scheme permitted should include an adequate flood prevention strategy/ measures and make adequate arrangements for maintaining them;
- Any flood risk strategy should be for the whole village, not just this site;
- Concerned regarding any increased risk of flooding to properties in Home Close and Rosamund Road;
- The need for housing locally doesn't outweigh the flood risk;
- The use of Mill Stream to help drain floodwater away will have a significant impact on properties in Webbs Close;
- It is unclear whether Port Meadow can hold sufficient floodwater in major flooding events. In 2007, the worst flooding was caused by flowback from the Meadow;
- Uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of sustainable urban drainage systems;
- The Environment Agency needs to reassure the Planning Committee that this development will not increase flood risk locally;

- A site-specific flood-risk assessment is essential;
- The Flood-Risk Assessment does not reflect the requirements of the NPPF;
- The flood mitigation and surface water drainage measures suggested do not comply with the NPPF;
- Any surface water control and flood prevention measures requires 3<sup>rd</sup> party agreements which should be in place before detailed planning applications are considered;
- The Hydrology Survey is incomplete;
- Materials used in the development for roads and paths etc. should be permeable to allow surface water to be naturally absorbed into the ground;
- Concern that during a serious flood event it would not be possible to evacuate the site safely via the single access point onto Mill Road;
- The quality of groundwater is very important to the Oxford Meadows SAC - any flood storage on the site should be confined to 'made-up' land so as not to interfere with water running through gravels to the stream and river;
- The quality of groundwater should be monitored for a significant period of time after the development and the developer required to remedy any drop in quality;
- Concern that any surface water run-off into the Mill Stream may contain contamination – children often swim in the stream here.

*Foul drainage comments:*

- The sewer serving Godstow Road backs up during heavy rain and you can often smell sewage in the area;
- The outdated sewers and drains serving Webbs Close already back up regularly and render them temporarily unusable;
- There is a lack of sewerage capacity and the existing sewer needs to be upgraded to cope with this additional development;
- There needs to be definite proposals to upgrade the local sewers;
- A new sewage pumping station is needed;
- The applicant must fund an assessment of local sewerage capacity/survey of the condition of local sewers;
- Any permission should be subject to conditions that fully implement the recommendations of Thames Water.

*Community facilities comments:*

- Concern regarding the impact on local schools and their ability to cope with extra pupils along with a suggestion that an extension to the school is needed;
- There should be funding contributions towards local schools;
- Suggested that the local school is already over-subscribed;
- Support for a new surgery and concern that the existing doctor's surgery could not cope with the extra people resulting from this development;
- A new medical centre would attract people from significantly beyond Wolvercote and bring additional traffic;
- There is a recycling centre at the top end of Mill Road. Opportunity should be taken to incorporate a properly designed replacement into the development;
- More car parking will be needed for the proposed doctor's surgery and community centre, to serve patients/visitors and particularly older and mobility

- impaired people who are more likely to visit these facilities by car;
- There is a lack of local amenities and shops in the village. The development could provide an opportunity for additional local retail businesses;
- Suggestion for an on-site pharmacy with the doctor's surgery;
- Funding should be sought to help renovate the Baptist Chapel schoolroom and kitchen;
- More indoor meeting places, play spaces for children, crèche and nursery facilities are needed to cater for the increased population;
- New facilities are needed for sport such as sports courts, new pitches, possibly a swimming pool and additional community space for the arts;
- The new community facilities appear dispersed. They should be provided under a single roof;
- Local people should be involved in the management of any new community halls and open spaces;
- The community hall shown on the illustrative masterplan looks like an afterthought;
- Is the existing children's play area to be removed and replaced by a new one in the development?

*Energy and Sustainability comments:*

- Conditions should be imposed to ensure the highest levels of sustainable development (Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 or 6);
- The development should be part of a lower carbon Wolvercote;
- The site should aim to be a net exporter of energy;
- Energy generation should be individually and community-owned;
- Why is there not the ambition to commit to anything more than the minimum renewable energy generation requirement?;
- The weir should be used to generate hydro-electricity;
- Energy efficient and non-polluting lighting should be provided;
- An air-quality assessment based on actual rather than modelled figures is needed;
- The air-quality assessment is not fit for purpose;
- Concern about the impact of additional vehicle emissions of local air quality;
- The development will add to air pollution levels that already exceed EC guidelines.

*Design comments:*

- Development should reflect local character of the village;
- The design of development appears to take no account of the character of the village;
- The development should be designed 'to restore some of the charm' to the northern side of Mill Road, which was lost when the paper mill was redeveloped in the 1950s;
- The development should be designed to reflect the heritage of the original Mill buildings;
- The height of any new buildings in Mill Road should complement/ not be any higher than the existing buildings in Mill Road;
- 3-storey development is too high for this site;

- 3-storey development would be contrary to the principles set out in the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal;
- No development should be allowed above 30ft high;
- Almost all development should be 2 storey in height;
- We need to see details before we can comment further;
- The width of the proposed buffer on the illustrative masterplan between the development and the properties in Home Close is inadequate;
- The density of development is completely inappropriate for the village;
- Not sure about 'the square';
- Much is said about the 'green gateway' into the site, but there are few practical suggestions to properly integrate the development into the village;
- The legacy of development here is something we should aim to be proud of;
- The plans don't show the architectural style proposed. That style shouldn't be 'brutal' or 'pastiche', but should be in keeping with the character of the village;
- The design appears to separate Mill Square from the rest of the site. If affordable housing is separated, will this foster 'mixed and balanced communities'?
- People need quality housing, not housing designed to meet minimum standards;
- The development will increase the opportunity for crime locally.

*Loss of Privacy/Amenity comments:*

- Concern regarding the loss of a 'green edge' and loss of privacy to properties in Home Close;
- Concern about loss of trees and screening they provide for properties in Home Close. Any trees cut down in this location should be replaced by semi-mature trees rather than whips;
- The new gardens proposed by this development are too small;
- Adequate bin storage for households needs to be provided;
- Concern regarding the additional noise and pollution created by the development and additional traffic;
- Concern regarding the adverse impacts during construction;
- Any construction traffic should be parked on the site and not on local streets;
- The quiet residential environment of Mill Road will be completely changed by this development;
- The development should include noise screening from the A34.

*Contamination comments:*

- Concern regarding historical contamination of the site;
- Where will the contamination from the site end up?
- Can any planning permission ensure adequate remediation is undertaken prior to occupation?;
- The details of contamination must be known and arrangements for its disposal agreed before any permission is granted;
- Concern that the disturbance of contaminated land will inevitably pollute the surrounding land and river;
- Concern that any affordable housing will be built on the most polluted areas of the site;

- Levels of pollution need to be investigated further.

*Local Business Impacts and New Employment Use:*

- Concern at the loss of car parking outside the White Hart Inn and the potential impact on business as well as its use by local residents;
- Difficulty in using the access to the White Hart Inn;
- There should be active encouragement of home-based and locally based enterprise and provision of workspace and support services for local businesses and start-ups;
- Not enough provision for new local employment is included in the proposals.

*General/Other comments;*

- Any infrastructure improvements should be at the developer's expense;
- The University's recent developments show it has little consideration to the community that surrounds them;
- Do not let the University spoil the village as they have the views across Port Meadow;
- Concern that the electricity and gas supply/networks cannot cope with additional development;
- The baseline assumptions in the EIA are wrong/ the EIA is not fit for purpose/ a new EIA is required;
- The absence of a Health Impact Assessment is disturbing;
- Before allowing development the Council should secure a bond from the developer which is only paid back to the developer if the development is satisfactorily completed;
- Local households should be given a reduction in Council Tax whilst this development is under construction;
- The Council should give substantial weight to the views of the Neighbourhood Forum.

Individual Comments of Further Documentation (2015)

In July 2015, further information was submitted by the applicant to help assessment of the application. This included further details on flood risk and surface water drainage proposals, a Sewer Impact Study by Thames Water, a Transport Statement and revised access proposals, a draft Travel Plan, a revised Illustrative Masterplan, a Biodiversity update report and a Statement of Community Involvement. The new information was published for public comment and further 17 individual representations were received. The main points made were:

- Objections maintained to the scale of development proposed, increased traffic implications, additional congestion and other impacts on village and the local area;
- Concern that the revised access for a mini-roundabout remains dangerous and unacceptable;
- Concern for the safety of people walking to the pub, given the proximity and design of the new access;
- The scheme won't include affordable homes for local people;

- Ability of the railway bridge to cope with increased traffic;
- Highway safety concerns around the new access and crossing Godstow Road;
- The Thames Water Sewer Impact Study is inadequate;
- Inadequate assessment of flood risk;
- Impact on the local schools;
- Assessment of traffic and transport implications inadequate;
- On-site car parking for new medical facilities are inadequate;
- Development doesn't appear to integrate well into the existing village;
- The design of the new development needs to fit with the character of the village;
- Height of development should be restricted;
- Development should be carbon neutral and be a net exporter of energy it generates;
- Support for redevelopment of this derelict site;
- Not enough car parking spaces proposed;
- The developer must be required to provide the community facilities they propose;
- The character of the White Hart, which is listed, will be adversely affected;
- New community facilities and better links to existing facilities are needed to cope with this development;
- S106 contributions should secure traffic management measures, local highway safety measures, sustainable travel and increased use of public transport, new community facilities, play-spaces and expansion of the school;
- Sensitive lighting needed;
- Additional studies are needed to assess environmental impacts;
- The landscaped buffer zone between the development and properties in Home Close needs to be retained and managed – it serves as an important buffer, a flood defence and protection against noise;
- Concern regarding impact on air quality;
- No confidence in modelling of impacts;
- As some on-street car parking is to be lost as a result of the new mini-roundabout, can replacement parking for existing residents be provided within the development?;
- Concern regarding noise levels and impacts on future occupiers;
- The site should be kept as a wildlife haven.

#### Pre-Application Consultation:

The applicant has undertaken significant pre-application consultation on its proposals for the paper mill site.

In January 2013, the applicant undertook a series of Community Design Workshops to help inform preparation of an illustrative masterplan and subsequent submission of a planning application. The workshops were held in the Red Lion PH, in Lower Wolvercote and were advertised through the distribution of 1700 leaflets locally. Over 150 people attended the workshops. Pre-workshop meetings were also held with a number of local stakeholders including the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum, representatives from the City Council, Oxford County Council the local PCT, doctor's practice and the Environment Agency. Feedback from these workshops and meetings informed the initial submission of this planning application in July 2013.

Further public events were held by the applicant in February 2015 in the White Hart PH to update local people, organisations and interested parties on the application proposals and to seek comments on the revised access proposals for a mini-roundabout. Over 100 individuals attended the update events and a wide range of comments received, reflecting similar issues to those raised in response to formal consultation on the planning application. Pre-event meetings were also held with officers and representatives of the Neighbourhood Forum to discuss access and transport issues in particular.

### **Key Determining Issues:**

- The Principle of Development
- The Illustrative Masterplan
- Nature and Mix of Housing
- The Non-Residential Components of Development
- Open Space Provision
- Other Community Infrastructure Requirements
- Residential Amenity and Relationship to Surrounding Development
- Highway Safety and Sustainable Travel
- Flood Risk
- Foul Water Drainage
- Biodiversity
- Archaeology
- Contamination and Remediation
- Energy Strategy and Other Environmental Issues
- Economic Issues

### **Officers Assessment:**

#### Site Location and Description

1. The application site comprises some 7.33 hectares of land in Lower Wolvercote.
2. Located on the north-western side of the village, this site borders the A34 to the north, Home Close to the east, the Wolvercote Mill Stream to the west and Mill Road to the south (**Appendix 1**).
3. The site was previously occupied by the Wolvercote Paper Mill. Most of the buildings which comprised the former Paper Mill have been demolished in recent years, but the office block fronting onto Mill Road still remains, along with one or two smaller ancillary buildings and significant areas of hardstanding and footings from the buildings previously demolished. At the height of its operation, the paper mill would have been a significant employer, but the site has been vacant and derelict for a number of years.
4. The site also includes several mature tree belts, woodland, a reservoir parallel to the Mill Stream and a significant area of open land in the northern part of the site, bordering the A34.

## Proposal

5. The site was allocated for housing development in the Council's adopted Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026 and this application seeks outline planning permission to further establish the planning principles and requirements against which detailed development proposals can subsequently be considered. The applicant, Oxford University is intending to market the site in due course.
6. Outline planning permission is sought, including agreement to the means of access for up to 190 residential units, along with the provision of new employment space, community facilities, public open space and ancillary services and facilities. The developable part of the site comprises some 4.87 hectares. The remaining 2.46 hectares is Green Belt.
7. Given that the application is in outline form, all other matters are reserved for future consideration, other than access. The applicant has confirmed however, that the development will include 50% affordable housing in accordance with the Council's policy. The means of access is also submitted in detail and following on from discussions and agreement in principle with the Highways Authority, proposes to introduce a new mini-roundabout at the junction of Mill Road and Godstow Road leading directly into the site.
8. In terms of non-residential space, the application proposes 303sq.m of space to accommodate a new doctor's surgery, if required, a new civic building of 110sq.m and some 108sq.m of B1(c) light industrial floorspace. The application suggests that this space could employ a small number of people on the site (at least 5).
9. The 2.46 hectares of Green Belt is to remain undeveloped, and managed as public open space.
10. The existing reservoir on the site is proposed to be retained and enhanced, and new open spaces are proposed to be created alongside the Mill Stream. The applicant also proposes to plan for the enhanced management of Dukes Meadow (the meadow located immediately north-east of the application site, and immediately north of Home Close and Rosamund Road), as mitigation for the impacts to wildlife habitats on the site that have been identified during consideration of the application.
11. The application is also accompanied by the following reports/documentation:
  - An Illustrative Masterplan;
  - A comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
  - A Planning, Design and Access Statement;
  - An Arboricultural impact Assessment;
  - An Energy Strategy;
  - A Landscape Strategy;
  - A Woodland Management Report;
  - A revised Flood Risk Assessment including details of draft surface water drainage proposals;
  - A Sewer Impact Study (undertaken by Thames Water)



- A revised Transport Assessment;
- A draft Travel Plan;
- Biodiversity Update Report and Survey;
- A statement of Community Involvement.

### The Principle of Development

12. The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS2 encourage the reuse/redevelopment of previously developed land.
13. The application site is previously developed land and is allocated for residential development by Policy SP62 of the Sites and Housing Plan. As such, the principle of residential development on the site is already accepted by the Council, subject to the details of development meeting the Council's more detailed planning requirements. The Paper Mill site is also one of the larger sites allocated for housing development in the Sites and Housing plan, and is therefore a crucial component in the Council's supply of new housing.

### The Illustrative Masterplan

14. The NPPF considers that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. This means that the level of development within any scheme should suit the site's capacity and respond appropriately and realistically to the site constraints and its surroundings. This is reflected in Oxford Local Plan Policy CP6, which requires development to make best use of the site's capacity in a manner compatible with the site and the surrounding area.
15. Policy CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 requires development to demonstrate a high-quality urban design that responds to the site and its surroundings; creates a strong sense of place; attractive public realm; and provide high quality architecture. Policy CP8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 also states that the siting, massing, and design of development should create an appropriate visual relationship with the form, grain, scale, materials, and details of the surrounding area. These principles are further supported by Policies HP9 and HP10 of the Sites and Housing Plan.
16. As part of the outline application, the applicant has submitted an illustrative masterplan. The illustrative masterplan is not intended to be formally agreed as part of any permission given, but is intended to help the Council assess the ability of the site to accommodate the level of housing and components of development in an acceptable manner. Following discussions between officers and the applicant, a revised illustrative masterplan was submitted in July 2015.
17. The revised illustrative masterplan suggests a variety of densities and character areas could be created within the development, providing an interesting and varied environment for incoming households. Suggested densities range from 22.3 units per hectare, up to 43.6 dwellings per hectare. Average density across the site is 39 units per hectare. This reflects the variety of densities within Lower Wolvercote, with the more traditional and/or flatted parts of the village reaching densities between 40-45 dwellings per hectare and some of the more suburban

streets, such as Home Close and Rosamund Road being built between 25-30 dwellings per hectare. In this context, officers are satisfied that the site can accommodate 190 new homes, whilst sensitively reflecting the character and density of development in the locality.

18. The illustrative masterplan indicates the intention to locate areas of lower density housing towards the Mill Stream and neighbouring the existing properties in Home Close. This idea is well conceived, as is the suggestion to deliver higher densities towards the centre of the site and around the entrance to the site in Mill Road, to reflect the tight-knit character of terraced cottages in that part of the village.
19. The development of a square within the site is also an interesting and valid idea, which brings both design legibility to the scheme, and a focus for the community facilities and low-level employment use and activity proposed.
20. In relation to layout, only point of real concern in respect of the illustrative masterplan, is the relationship between the 'Meadow Lane' character area and the properties in Home Close. The illustrative masterplan shows that the intention for this area is to create a lower density development of detached homes. In principle, this sits comfortably with the properties it backs onto in Home Close. However, the illustrative masterplan also indicates the potential for comparatively shallow back gardens of new properties backing onto Home Close. Even if acceptable 'back-to-back' distances between properties can be achieved here, due of the generous length of gardens in Home Close, the gardens of new properties in this part of the site will also need to take account of the shadowing effect of the very tall and mature tree planting along the boundary here, to ensure pleasant and useable garden spaces are provided to the new development being built. It is important that this tree belt be retained to help soften the edge of new development here, but also access will be needed to enable sound management of the tree belt. Both the formal masterplan to be submitted at reserved matters stage and planning conditions attached to any planning permission, will need to deal with these matters.
21. The detailed design of housing of course, is reserved as a matter for future consideration, but it is considered appropriate that the height of any new development should be restricted to buildings no more than 2.5 storey in height, except where it would be useful to create an individual 3-storey building or block, to create extra legibility within the design of development. The predominance of building heights should be two-storey, to reflect the predominant character of the existing village. A condition should be imposed on any planning permission to be clear on these restrictions.
22. As this is such an important development for Wolvercote, it is considered appropriate that the submission of any reserved matters application, is informed by a further local public consultation exercise to consider the formal masterplan and design codes, which will need to be submitted at the reserved matters stage.

#### Nature and Mix of Housing

23. Policy CS23 of the Core Strategy requires proposals for residential development to provide a mix of housing that complies with the mix prescribed within the Balance of Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (BoDSPD). This site is recognized as a 'strategic' scale site in the BoDSPD and for a site of this size it suggests that the mix of housing unit sizes should be as follows:
- 1-bed: 6 to 16% of all units provided;
  - 2-bed: 20-30% of all units provided;
  - 3-bed: 20-30% of all units provided;
  - 4+bed: 6-17% of all units provided.
24. Whilst no housing mix is proposed in this outline application, officers consider that the mix suggested by the BoDSPD should be applied to this site, and would expect future reserved matters applications to conform to that mix. This requirement will be dealt with by condition.
25. Policies CS24 of the Core Strategy and HP3 of the Sites and Housing Plan are also clear that planning permission for new residential development on sites with a capacity to deliver 10 or more dwellings, must be provided with a minimum of 50% of homes as affordable dwellings. Policy HP3 further makes it clear that the mix of affordable housing tenure on sites of this scale, 80% of affordable homes provided should be social rented, with the remaining 20% as intermediate tenures. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicant has confirmed that the applicant is content to meet the Council's affordable housing requirements and has not submitted a viability assessment to argue otherwise. The requirement to provide 50% affordable housing and the 80/20 social rent/intermediate tenure mix will be secured through a S106 agreement in accordance with the Council's Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations SPD.
26. There have also been some suggestions from those who have commented on the application, that over and above the 50% affordable provision agreed, the development should also include some provision for self-build and perhaps key-worker housing. Neither of these components form part of the current planning application and the Council's policies do not require either to be part of this development. However, the applicant will no doubt release the site onto the open market in due course and self-builders and/or developers who come forward, may decide to include self-build opportunities or key worker housing at that stage. It is not considered reasonable for the Council to 'require' self-build or key worker housing as part of the development.
27. Policy HP2 of the Sites and Housing Plan also requires all new dwellings to meet Lifetime Homes standard and that at least 5% of all new dwellings provided should be either fully accessible or easily adapted to full wheelchair use. Officers consider that any planning permission should be conditioned to ensure the development meets these requirements.

#### The Non-Residential Components of Development

28. Three non-residential elements of development are proposed by the applicant to form part of this development:
- 303sq.m of space to accommodate a new local doctor's surgery;
  - 108sq.m of space for B1(c) light industrial/office employment use and;
  - 110sq.m civic building.
29. The illustrative masterplan shows that each of these components would be located within the 'Mill Square' to be created as part of the development concept.
30. When allocating this site for residential development, the Sites and Housing Plan encourages the possibility of exploring a level of employment close to the 50 jobs that were lost when the Paper Mill site closed and is particularly interested to see delivery of some small-scale employment units on the site. In relation to the light industrial use/office use proposed, the applicant estimates that only a small number of people might be employed (5+ employees) within the new B1(c) employment space to be developed. Whilst this a low number by comparison to the former Paper Mill use, the level of employment space being created reflects the balance that needs to be struck between the best use of this site for housing, for which there is an acute need locally and the aspiration to re-introduce an element of employment back onto the site. Officers consider that although relatively small-scale, the level of employment use proposed is acceptable. There may also be opportunity to create further employment from the site, as detailed below.
31. In respect of the doctor's surgery, whilst there has previously been interest in moving the existing 'satellite' surgery in Godstow Road onto the development site, at this stage, there is no clear indication that the surgery or health authority have concluded to take this forward. Further discussions will be needed between the developers who eventually purchase the site and the local doctor's practice and clinical groups to see whether this is the preferred option. However, in terms of any outline planning permission, a S106 should secure the development of surgery space. In the event that the doctor's practice chose not to relocate to the space provided, it is considered that the space should be used to create additional employment. The space could therefore be converted into further B1 (c) light industrial/office space, offering the potential for further local employment, or even into a small crèche. It is estimated that further B1(c) type businesses occupying this converted space, could employ in the region of a further 15-20 people, if the surgery does not come forward. Similarly, a crèche might employ 5-10 staff. The S106 can be used to secure this preference for conversion to B1(c) of crèche use of the surgery space provided, in the event that there is no occupation by a doctor's surgery within a set period of time, say 2 years from the completion of the surgery space.
32. If the surgery is relocated into the site, it will be a matter for the doctor's practice to fit out the surgery space to its requirements and at their costs.
33. In respect of the creation of new 'civic' meeting space, although there are already a number of existing community spaces, it is considered appropriate

that this site does include some space where local people can meet. It is equally clear however that there are already a number of local community buildings locally and discussions with the Neighbourhood Forum have indicated some uncertainty as to whether a new 'formal' civic building is needed. Officers consider therefore that whilst it is appropriate that a 'community' building is secured as part of this development, some flexibility should be enabled to cover its potential use, and that it may not necessarily need to be a formal community space in the accepted sense, so long as the building does function as a community 'meeting space'. In this sense, the building could for example, be used as a 'community café' serving both residents in Wolvercote and visitors to Port Meadow etc. If members are content with this type of 'community' use, the S106 can be written to enable this type of flexibility for an eventual 'community' use.

### Open Space Provision

34. The illustrative masterplan indicates the potential to create several new areas of open space as part of the development including:
  - 2.46 hectares of new open space including land known as Duke's Meadow, immediately north of the development area, as informal recreation/play space and the creation of new wildlife habitats;
  - Creation of informal open space and a nature reserve along the Mill Stream frontage;
  - Creation of a new amenity green or 'green gateway' as you enter the site;
  - Retention of the existing water reservoir which runs parallel to the Mill Stream and the creation of a walk around it and;
  - Development of a new children's play area within the developed area.
35. Whilst the formal masterplan to be submitted at the reserved matters stage will need to confirm the open space elements to be provided with the final scheme, officers consider that the final masterplan should include each of the five key elements described above and suggest that the S106 agreement should be used to secure the incorporation of these elements in the final masterplan.
36. Because the final masterplan has yet to be decided, and notwithstanding the Landscape Strategy and Woodland Management Report submitted with the outline application, it is also considered appropriate that any planning permission is conditioned to require that an amended Landscape and Open Space Strategy accompany a final masterplan at reserved matters stage. That strategy should set out the detailed design and development of all open spaces including within the final masterplan and development.
37. In addition to the requirement to provide new open space on site, any open spaces must be properly maintained and therefore the S106 will need to secure an agreed management mechanism and/or adequate commuted sums.
38. Members should also note that the level of new greenspace proposed as part of this development, is significantly in excess of the expectations set out in Policy

CS21, which is to be commended.

39. Finally, some respondents have suggested that any open space created is linked to other open land or public open space locally such as Wolvercote Lakes and Pixey Mead (to the west of Mill Stream). In relation to Wolvercote Lakes, managed public access to Dukes Meadow, which will be facilitated by this development could reasonably include a permissive access into the Wolvercote Lakes site and this should be encouraged, through the final management plan agreed for the Dukes Meadow site. However, further public access to Pixey Mead is not supported by Natural England, due to the adverse impact further access could have on its habitat.

#### Other Community Infrastructure Requirements

40. A development of this size also brings implications for other community facilities and infrastructure. Many of the responses to consultation refer to these needs, in particular, additional transport requirements such as bus services, new cycleways, the need to extend local schools, the need for more shops and leisure facilities locally.
41. Clearly in respect of many of these issues, the development is required to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and many of those additional needs will be provided for with the help of that funding. The Reg. 123 list for example, indicates that CIL contributions will be spent on extensions to existing primary and secondary schools, for day centre care, new sports facilities strategic transport and infrastructure improvements, including the Wolvercote Roundabout improvements currently taking place and improved cycle routes and around the city centre. Further contributions towards these types of facilities cannot therefore be sought a 'second time' through S106.
42. Members may also wish to note that the expansion of Wolvercote Primary School is already underway, partly in expectation of the additional pupil numbers that will arise from this development.
43. However, there are some locally specific transport measures that are necessary as a result of this development which can and should be secured through S106. These issues are dealt with in the transport section below.
44. Some respondents have also suggested that this development should provide for additional local shops. Whilst this is not considered to be something the Council can require on a development of this size, it could be that a new community café, if developed within the 'community space' secured through S106, will provide an opportunity to add to 'retailing' facilities locally.
45. Officers also consider that the site should include some provision for public art.

#### Residential Amenity and Relationship to Surrounding Development

46. To be acceptable, new development must demonstrate that it can be developed in a manner that will safeguard the amenity of the local residents, the character

of the locality and provide an acceptable level of residential amenity for incoming occupiers.

47. In the case of the development proposed, the illustrative masterplan indicates a sensitive approach to development, with higher density development towards the centre of the site and lower density development towards the edges. This broad principle should be similarly reflected in the final masterplan.
48. In terms of the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, when designing the final scheme for this site at reserved matters stage, particular regard needs to be taken to the relationship of development with neighbouring occupiers in Home Close and Mill Road.
49. As set out earlier in this report, it will be necessary to ensure that adequate back-to-back distances are maintained between properties in Home Close and new properties that back onto them. Indeed a slightly greater back-to back distance may be required here taking account of the fact that development site is slightly higher than the properties in Home Close and if built too close, or too high, would appear overbearing. This matter can only be evaluated once a reserved matters application is submitted, but it is considered prudent for any planning permission to include an informative note to remind developers how important this issue will be when drafting their detailed plans.
50. Properties in Mill Road are mostly traditional 'tight-knit' cottages. The cottages create an intimate street scene, and along with the entrance to the site, are included within the Lower Wolvercote Conservation Area. It is therefore important that the design of development and access into the site plays special heed to reflecting and indeed enhancing the character of this part of the Conservation Area. It can do this not just in terms of design, but also by helping to remove some of the on street car parking which presently occurs in Mill Road where cottages have no off-street car parking at present. The terrace of four cottages on the northern side on Mill Road in particular, have no off-street car parking space, and if allocated their own space immediately rear of their cottage, within the site, this could make a significant improvement to the appearance of the Conservation Area.
51. Of course, the construction noise and disturbance which will occur for some time as a result of development taking place on the site, also needs to be carefully managed and a condition will need to be imposed requiring a Construction Traffic and Environmental Management Plan to be agreed, before any development commences.
52. In terms of residential amenity of incoming occupiers, while most issues need to be looked at when detailed plans are received at the reserved matters stage, it is important that a certain issues are considered at this stage, in particular the potential noise disturbance.
53. In terms of noise, and beyond any noise that might occur through construction, officers have also considered the impacts of noise being generated by the nearby A34 and the Mill Stream Weir.

54. In relation to the A34, there have been some suggestions that this development should contribute towards possible noise attenuation along the A34, to restrict noise levels towards the development and the village. However, neither the Environmental Health Officer, the County Council nor the Highways Agency have suggested that this is needed or appropriate, so there is no justification to seek such a requirement.
55. In relation to the Mill Stream Weir, while most people would consider the noise from water travelling through the weir to be pleasant and attractive, dwellings built close to the weir should be designed to enable this noise to be shut out if needs be. This issue can be covered by condition.
56. Equally, it will be necessary to condition the details of any mechanical plant and proposals for dealing with any cooking smells or odours arising from any non-residential elements of activity developed within the scheme.
57. The Police have also requested that the development should meet the principles and physical security standards of Secured by Design and that appropriate lighting is provided to ensure that any parking areas and areas of public realm are appropriately lit. These matters can be covered by conditions.

#### Highway Safety and Sustainable Travel

58. Whilst this is an outline planning application, the applicant is also seeking detailed approval for its means of access. The design of that access has been amended in response to comments received during public consultation and following discussions with the highway authority and a revised access arrangement was submitted as a formal amendment to the application in July 2015.
59. The revised access arrangement introduces a new mini-roundabout at the junction of Mill Road and Godstow Road and gives priority traffic movement entering the development site by creating Mill Road as a T-junction onto the new access road. New footways will run along either side of the new access and further footway widening and extensions are proposed along Godstow Road and Mill Road. As part of the design of the new access, 'sensory kerbing' is to be included at crossing points around the mini-roundabout, along with new bollards and car parking restrictions that will ensure safety and smooth travel about the access.
60. Having been fully involved in the design proposals for the revised access, the highway authority confirms it has no objections to the new design and will require the applicant to enter into a S278 Agreement to undertake the agreed works within the public highway.
61. The highway authority has also looked in detail at the applicant's original and updated transport assessment and confirms that it has no objections to the level of traffic likely to be generated from the site and its impact on the surrounding road network. In this respect, the highway authority has also considered



whether or not there is a need for further traffic calming measures to be delivered locally as a result of the development, but has concluded that no additional traffic calming measures are necessary, other than the calming that would be introduced by the new mini-roundabout. It also considers that the general speed of traffic in the village remains low, and that there is no evidence to suggest that speeds will be affected by this development. Indeed, it suggests that the introduction of any new traffic calming features could have an adverse impact on the bus service and would be difficult to introduce effectively without impacting on the existing space given over to on-street car parking, which itself helps to traffic calm the local road network.

62. In terms of sustainable travel from the site, the applicant has submitted a draft Travel Plan as part of their application which sets out challenging but achievable targets to reduce car journeys and significantly increase the share of potential journeys undertaken by public transport and cycling. The highways authority recognizes the draft Travel Plan as a sound starting point for increasing non-car modal share for journeys to and from the new development, but considers further refinement and detail is needed and wishes to see a final Travel Plan agreed before first occupation of the development. When agreed, the developer will be expected to implement the Plan for 5 years after full completion of development. In broad terms, the sustainable travel measures to be included in the final Travel Plan will be:

- Procurement by the applicant of additional capacity/frequency of Bus Service 6 between Wolvercote and Oxford, so that service increases from 4 to 6 buses an hour in the morning and evening peak periods (this to be in place before occupation of 50<sup>th</sup> dwelling);
- An amendment to the existing route of Bus Service 6, taking it into the site rather than looping around Rosamund Road and Home Close, providing a new bus stop within the site and a pair of replacement bus stops for residents of the Home Close area, on Godstow Road;
- Bus taster passes/trial bus tickets for new residents on first occupation;
- Funds towards a Car Club to serve the development, including one year membership for one resident per household and reserved car parking spaces for car club parking;
- The appointment of a dedicated Travel Plan Co-ordinator;
- The distribution of Travel Information Packs to all new households within the development along with the promotion of information to encourage sustainable travel locally;
- Co-ordination of measures in the Travel Plan with the Wolvercote Primary School Travel Plan;
- Personalized travel planning for incoming households;
- Physical measures within the internal street design to encourage cycling and pedestrian movement within the site and;
- Secured cycle parking in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

63. Taken together, officers consider that the applicant is taking all reasonable measures to deliver a sustainable development in terms of travel to/from the new development. The agreement of a final Travel Plan and the measures

arising from it will need to be secured by condition and S106 agreement.

64. Members will also note that several respondents to consultation have made comments or further suggestions relating to highway or transport matters. Those suggestions include the potential of a new crossing in Godstow Road, a replacement bridge over the railway line, better provision for cyclists along Godstow Road and Mill Road, the possibility of the developer providing a secure cycle compound in Mill Road and an additional bus stop along Woodstock Road for the 300 bus service. However, the highways authority has not suggested that any of these measures would be required as a result of the development proposed and it would therefore be unreasonable of the Council to require them. Of course, CIL funds will in future be spent on securing wider improvements to Oxford's transport network and some of those funds will be delivered as a result of any planning permission given on this scheme.
65. A further respondent suggests that more than two car club car parking spaces should be put forward as part of this scheme. The need for additional dedicated spaces however, is something that can be considered in the final Travel Plan agreed on condition of any outline consent.
66. Finally, a number of respondents have suggested that the 399 car parking spaces nominally proposed as part of the development, is insufficient to serve the development and would lead to additional on-street car parking in the locality. Officers do not agree, however, the exact number of car parking spaces appropriate for this development will be dependent upon the details of development proposed at reserved matters stage. If for example, the development includes an element of sheltered housing, it may be appropriate that a lesser level of car parking is provided within the site. This matter is best left for determination at reserved matters stage and should not be conditioned at this stage.
67. Members may also wish to note that the applicant will be required to enter into a S38 agreement to enable adoption of that part of the road layout used for the new bus route into the site.

#### Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

68. The site has been allocated in the Sites & Housing Plan following a wider strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA) and it is therefore not necessary to test the appropriateness of developing the site for residential purposes. Government guidance in the NPPF also makes it clear that 'sequential' and 'exception' testing of sites when determining planning applications does not need to be applied to allocated sites where this approach will have already been undertaken in the SFRA.
69. In any event, the application is accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment. The assessment confirms that the site is mainly located within Flood Zone 1 'low probability' of flooding, and all new development is proposed within Flood Zone 1. When flooding has occurred on the site in the recent past, this has been as a result of the weir not being opened to the extent needed. To

address that issue, the Environment Agency is currently operating the weir on behalf of the landowner, until such time as a formal agreement is put in place to secure the Agency's responsibility.

70. In terms of surface water drainage, the proposals confirm that it is not feasible to use soakaway/infiltration drainage for the disposal of surface water run-off at the site due to shallow groundwater and potential contamination risk. They therefore propose to discharge surface water drainage run-off via an underground system, including attenuation storage, which will discharge at a rate no greater than the greenfield run-off rate to Wolvercote Mill Stream. The system being designed also has the potential to reduce current levels of flood risk to properties in Home Close.
71. The level of flood risk and the outline surface water drainage strategy have both been assessed by the Environment Agency who raise no objections to the outline planning proposals, subject to a number of conditions being imposed.
72. Given the Environment Agency's support, officers are content that the nature and scale of development proposed has been assessed and can be designed to be safe from flood risk, will not increase flood risk and indeed could reduce flood risk elsewhere. Subject to the imposition of conditions being suggested by the Environment Agency, the proposals are therefore judged to accord with Policy SP1 of the Sites & Housing Plan and Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy.

#### Foul Water Drainage and Water Supply

73. A number of local residents have raised concerns that the existing foul drainage system is already overloaded and could not easily cope with any further discharge from new development on this site. Having heard these concerns, Thames Water was asked to undertake a Sewer Impact Study to confirm whether or not sufficient capacity existed within the foul drainage system to deal with levels of discharge expected from this development. To study concludes that sufficient capacity exists to serve the development, but suggests that the developer should take measures to ensure that external groundwater and surface water cannot enter the foul drainage system. The applicant has confirmed that the new sewer system will be designed to ensure that is the case and this will be conditioned accordingly.
74. Thames Water also recommend an informative be placed on any planning permission setting out the principles to be adopted for surface water discharge and water supply.

#### Biodiversity

75. The application was submitted with a detailed ecological assessment as part of the EIA and has subsequently been updated by a Biodiversity Update Report dated May 2015, and further survey work specifically related to badger activity in the locality.

76. Much of the site contains habitat characteristic of vacant, previously developed land with fairly extensive areas of self-seeded, scrubby woodland and ephemeral/perennial vegetation covering the site. The woodland area includes a number of broadleaved tree species, including sycamore and ash and extends into the broadleaved plantation wood that occupies part of the A34 embankment.
77. The Mill Stream and reservoir support open water habitats and river margin vegetation, whilst Dukes Meadow in the northern part of the part (which is to remain undeveloped), comprises unimproved grassland representative of lowland meadow, which is a BAP priority habitat and is designated as a Site of Local Interest for Nature Conservation (SLINC).
78. The information submitted with the application indicates that the site is rich in a number of species, including breeding populations of slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake. It also contains an active badger sett and an artificial sett, in anticipation of previous redevelopment proposals, a maternal roost of common pipistrelle bats, supports a range of breeding birds and otters are known to use the waterways adjoining the site.
79. The application site is also within 200m of the Oxford Meadows SAC.
80. Development of the site will remove more than half of the existing habitats within the site. Most of those removed are of low ecological value and their loss has only minor adverse impact. The most important habitats including Mill Stream and the ecologically important areas of woodland are to be retained. It is proposed that badgers will be relocated to the artificial sett and access maintained to existing foraging areas to neutralize any impact on the group as a result of relocation. The pipistrelle bat roost would be closed, but replacement bat roost features would be incorporated into new buildings within the development, foraging routes maintained and lighting designed to be of minimal impact. Habitats lost within the site currently supporting the breeding populations of slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake would also need to be replaced.
81. Following detailed discussions between the Council and the applicant, it is proposed that the net loss of biodiversity from the site can be offset by the creation of new habitats and on-going management of those habitats within Dukes Meadow, immediately north of the development area. Dukes Meadow is an extensive area and lies partly beyond the application site. Some of those habitats needed (ie. for reptiles etc.), are to be created on land outside the application site, on immediately adjacent land, which is similarly within the control of the applicant. In principle this is an acceptable solution and one supported by Natural England, the Wildlife Trust and the Council's officers, however, further details and survey work needs to be undertaken to confirm the detailed solution and management arrangements (including commuted sums for ongoing management if necessary) for all new habitats being created. These matters can be dealt with by condition and/or S106 agreement.

82. The Environment Agency has also requested that a condition be imposed to maintain an open buffer of about 8 metres alongside the water course, to help protect access for wildlife.

### Archaeology

83. A Heritage Assessment has been submitted to accompany the planning application. Whilst there are no designated archaeological assets within the site, the assessment identifies the potential for prehistoric remains, including Palaeolithic material, Bronze Age features, Iron Age settlement. The assessment also indicates the potential for medieval mill remains, denuded medieval 'ridge and furrow' and other features of local interest, including remains of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Paper Mill associated with the Oxford University Press.
84. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. It is also clear that where appropriate, local planning authorities may require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.
85. In this case, given the potential for varied archaeology to be present, it is recommended that any permission is subject to conditions requiring an archaeological evaluation to take place in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Council and the implementation of any scheme of mitigation to be similarly approved by the Council. That investigation will include trial-trenching, recording, analysis and publication of any findings.

### Contamination and Remediation

86. The EIA identifies a number of contaminants present within the site that would need to be removed or remediated before development can take place. Officers consider that a detailed Remediation Strategy should be agreed with the Council and implemented as required, before any development takes place. A watching brief will also be needed during construction to deal with any unexpected contamination which may arise during the course of development. These matters can be adequately dealt with by condition.

### Energy Strategy and Other Environmental Issues

87. At outline application stage, it is not feasible for the applicant to prepare a detailed Natural Resource Impact Analysis (NRIA) to confirm all measures to be used to ensure the development is built to be as environmentally sustainable as possible. However, as part of an Energy Strategy, an initial NRIA has been included with the outline application, and in particular, focuses on how the development might best plan to meet the Council's requirement to deliver part of its energy needs from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies.

88. The Council's policies look to require new development to provide for at least 20% of its energy needs from on-site renewable or low carbon technology. The Energy Strategy submitted with the application looks at a number of options for generating renewable energy on-site and concludes that the best options for generating renewable energy on site will be through a combination of methods, including a single district heating system or small scale biomass district heating system for apartment buildings, combined with either Solar PV or heat pumps for larger dwellings. Together, these technologies will be able to meet the 20% renewable energy generation requirement of the Council's policies.
89. Some respondents to the planning application have suggested that the scheme should seek to deliver higher levels of renewable energy generation, however, there is no basis in Council policy for a higher requirement. Others have suggested that hydro-electric renewable energy should also be considered by using the weir and mill race. This has been looked at by the applicant, but largely dismissed as a suitable option given the level of new infrastructure involved and the adverse impacts it could have on the likely masterplan for this sensitive part of the site.
90. A more detailed NRA will be required by condition to accompany a reserved matters application and confirm all measures to be used to ensure the development eventually built will be as sustainable as possible. Any planning permission should also be conditioned to deliver renewable energy on-site in line with the proposals set out in the submitted Energy Strategy.
91. In terms of other environmental considerations, the development must also consider the air quality implications that arise from the development or those that could impact on it. As part of the EIA, an Air Quality Impact Assessment has been included which concludes that the impact of the proposed development on local air quality is negligible and that air quality should not pose a constraint to redevelopment of the site. The Council's Air Quality Officer concurs with this view and raises no objection.
92. However, officers also consider that a separate assessment is required to ensure that any flues associated with renewable energy boilers are adequate to ensure against any local impact of air quality. This can be dealt with by condition.
93. The Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2013 also commits to ensure that new developments make appropriate provision for low emission vehicle infrastructure (i.e. electric vehicle charging points), and officers consider that such provision should be made within this development. The number of charging points sought will be determined at reserved matters stage, but it is recommended that provision is made at a level of 1 charging point per unit for houses with dedicated car parking and 1 charging point per 10 spaces of unallocated car parking (i.e. for flats/apartments). This matter can be dealt with by condition.

#### Economic Issues

94. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes it clear that the ongoing delivery of sustainable development is a fundamental requirement of delivering economic growth and prosperity. The NPPF is also clear that the planning system should act to encourage new development and that new investment in development should not be over-burdened by excessive planning requirements.
95. The principle of development on this site is firmly established through the Council's development plan and, the details submitted at this outline stage of indicate the intention for future development to be sustainable and to comply with the Council's policies. The delivery of this site is also fundamentally important to the Council's ongoing supply of much needed housing including affordable housing, for many people who work locally.
96. Development itself will bring important construction jobs in trades etc. and there is likely to be additional local consumer spend in the economy both during construction and when occupied.
97. The development is also planned to provide new employment space for ongoing local employment, the potential for some additional employment within the community space and new doctors surgery and could lead to additional employment locally as a result of increased patronage on bus services or other facilities, such as local schools.
98. Finally, the development will deliver significant financial contributions to help provide new public services and infrastructure through the provision of CIL, investment in new affordable housing, contributions required through S106 requirements (highlighted earlier in this report) and through the use of New Homes Bonus receipts etc. that will arise as a consequence of this development being built in due course.
99. Whilst none of these factors are by themselves reasons to agree outline planning permission for this development, economic factors are legitimate planning considerations and also reflect the commitment to what will be a significant economic investment in the locality.

**Conclusion:**

100. The proposed redevelopment makes an efficient use of previous developed land and will facilitate the demolition of a vacant and underutilized site which has been allocated as an important site for new development in the Council's development plan.
101. The site and remaining buildings are of a poor appearance and condition and detract from the appearance of the locality and street-scene. Their removal and replacement to new development represents an important opportunity to improve the appearance of the area.
102. Whilst the detailed design of the scheme is largely reserved for future

consideration, it is clear that the development can be delivered in a sustainable manner without any unacceptable impacts to the locality.

103. The development will bring much needed new housing including affordable housing to the area, along with new employment, open space and improved local facilities.
104. It can also be designed to a high standard and to meet all the Council's adopted planning policies and requirements.
105. The proposal is acceptable in highways terms and energy efficiency and does not create any biodiversity, environmental or flooding impacts. The development therefore accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.
106. It is recommended that outline planning permission be given subject to conditions and a S106 legal agreement to secure affordable housing and other planning requirements set out in this report.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and various requirements being secured through a S106 legal agreement. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

**Contact Officer:** Trevor Saunders

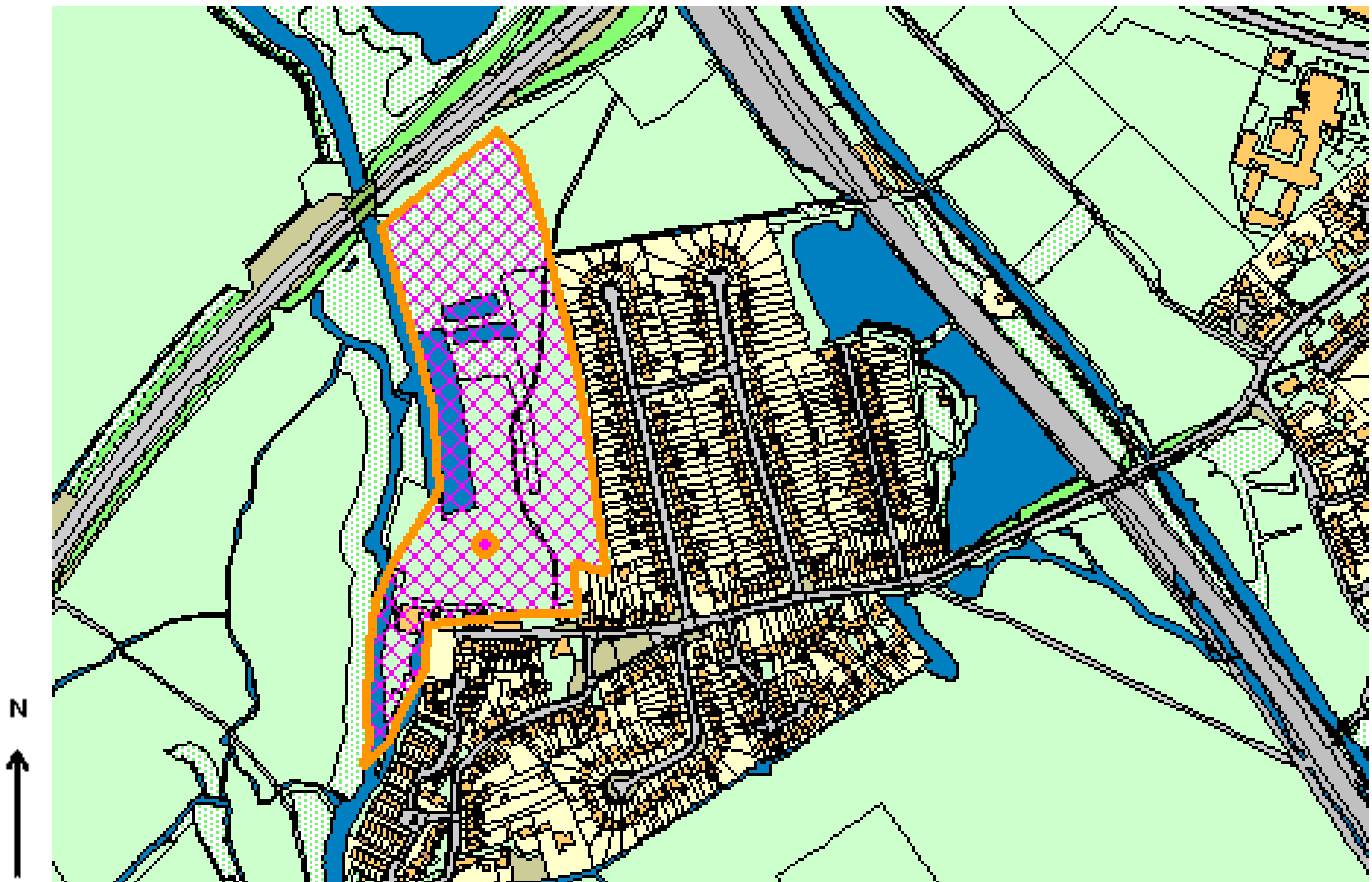
**Extension:** n/a

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015



# Appendix 1

## 13/01861/OUT - Wolvercote Paper Mill



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Ordnance Survey 100019348

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<b>West Area Planning Committee</b>	1st December 2015
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<b>Application Number:</b>	15/02512/FUL
<b>Decision Due by:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2016
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of existing buildings. Erection of 6 houses (2 x 3bed, 4 x 4bed) and 6 flats (1 x 1bed, 3 x 2bed and 2 x 3bed) on three levels.
<b>Site Address:</b>	1 Abbey Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 0AD (See Appendix 1)
<b>Ward:</b>	Jericho And Osney Ward

<b>Agent:</b>	N/A	<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Neil Cottrell, Cala Management Ltd.
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**Recommendation:**

Committee is recommended to grant planning permission for this development subject to the planning conditions set out in this report, the completion of a S106 Legal Agreement which secures affordable housing provision on-site and to delegate to officers the completion of that legal agreement and the issuing of the notice of planning permission.

RESOLVE TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO COMPLETION OF LEGAL AGREEMENT

**Reasons for Approval:**

1. The proposed redevelopment is an efficient use of previous developed land within a predominantly residential area and will facilitate the demolition of largely vacant buildings, originally occupied as a timber yard and more recently as a car rental office. The existing buildings are of a poor appearance and condition and detract from the appearance of the locality and street-scene. The overall layout, scale and design of the new housing proposed is attractive and sympathetic to the site and its surroundings while carefully safeguarding the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. The new development would provide high quality housing for future occupants and deliver new affordable housing for the city. The proposal is acceptable in highways terms and energy efficiency and does not create any biodiversity, environmental or flooding impacts. The development would therefore accord to the National Planning

Policy Framework, policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.

2. The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of Development Plan as summarised in this report. It has considered all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that might otherwise arise as a result of the proposal can be offset or mitigated by the conditions imposed.
3. Officers have considered carefully all objections to these proposals. Officers have come to the view, for the detailed reasons set out in the officers report, that the objections do not amount, individually or cumulatively, to a reason for refusal and that all the issues that have been raised have been adequately addressed and the relevant bodies consulted.

**Conditions:**

1. Development begun within time limit
2. Development in accordance with approved plans
3. Samples of materials
4. Landscape plan required
5. Landscaping to be carried out by completion
6. Boundary details - development commencement
7. Details of cycle parking, waste & recycling storage areas
8. Travel Information Packs
9. Alterations to the Public Highway - Reinstatement of Kerb
10. Parking Permits for family homes
11. Construction Traffic Management Plan
12. Submission of surface drainage scheme
13. Water butts to be provided for each new house and for the terrace of flats
14. Archaeological recording and building recording
15. Implement in accordance with recommendations of bat survey
16. Details of biodiversity enhancement measures
17. Submission and agreement of scheme to deal with risks associated with identified contamination
18. Restrict occupation until any approved remediation works have been carried out
19. Development halted if unsuspected contamination is found during the course of development

**Legal Agreement and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):**

To secure financial contributions towards the delivery of affordable housing on-site, the applicant will need to provide an undertaking under the terms of Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

The development generates a CIL contribution of £16,728.43.

**Main Local Plan Policies:**

## Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1** - Development Proposals
- CP6** - Efficient Use of Land & Density
- CP8** - Design Development to Relate to its Context
- CP9** - Creating Successful New Places
- CP10** - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs
- CP11** - Landscape Design
- CP13** - Accessibility
- TR3** - Car Parking Standards
- TR4** - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
- TR11** - City Centre Car Parking
- HE2** - Archaeology

## Core Strategy

- CS2** - Previously developed and greenfield land
- CS9** - Energy and natural resources
- CS11** - Flooding
- CS12** - Biodiversity
- CS13** - Supporting access to new development
- CS17** - Infrastructure and developer contributions
- CS18** - Urban design, town character, historic environment
- CS19** - Community safety
- CS23** - Mix of housing
- CS24** - Affordable Housing
- CS28** - Employment sites

## Sites and Housing Plan

- SP1** - Avis, Abbey Road
- HP2** - Accessible and Adaptable Homes
- HP3** - Affordable Homes from Large Housing Sites
- HP9** - Design, Character and Context
- HP12** - Indoor Space
- HP11** - Low Carbon Homes
- HP13** - Outdoor Space
- HP14** - Privacy and Daylight
- HP15** - Residential cycle parking
- HP16** - Residential car parking

## Other Planning Documents

National Planning Policy Framework  
Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations SPD  
Balance of Dwellings SPD  
Waste Bin Storage and Access Requirements for New and Change of Use  
Developments Technical Advice Note

## **Public Consultation**

### Statutory Consultees etc:

#### Highways Authority:

The Highways Authority raises no objections to the development proposals proposed but suggests conditions to require:

- provision of Travel Information Packs for the new homes;
- submission and agreement of an acceptable Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- provision of covered and secure cycle parking;
- submission and agreement of an acceptable Surface Water Drainage Scheme;
- exclusion of the development from eligibility for parking permits, with the costs of amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order met by the applicant;
- dropped kerbs along the frontage of the site on Abbey Road to be reinstated at the applicant's expense.

#### Environment Agency:

The Environment Agency raises no objections to the development proposed but suggests conditions to require:

- development to be undertaken in accordance with proposed plans;
- submission and agreement of an acceptable scheme to deal with risks associated with contamination;
- restriction on occupation until any approved remediation works have been carried out;
- development to be halted and mitigation agreed if unsuspected contamination is found during the course of development.

The Agency also requests that the applicant is advised that its consent is required under the Water Resources Act 1991 for any proposed works or structures in, under, over or within 8 meters of the top of the river bank designated 'a main river'.

#### Thames Water:

Thames Water raises no objections but suggests a condition to ensure that surface water discharge arrangements and/or any site drainage connections to a public sewer are not detrimental to the existing sewerage system. It also recommends an informative note in respect of water supply connection.

#### Individual Comments:

Representations have been received from the occupiers of no's 9, 25, 29, 31, 34 and 42 Abbey Road. Nearly all those who have commented are in broad support of residential development on the site. One respondent is opposed to the scheme. The main points raised are:

- support for the architectural style of the development;

- the development is 'in-keeping' with the area;
- the importance of matching the materials used to those of existing houses (i.e. yellow bricks, slates and working wooden sash windows);
- concern that the development is too large;
- concern at the lack of car-parking associated with the development;
- concern for highway safety;
- the suggestion that there is room to add more on-street car parking in Abbey and Cripsey Roads, which should be done as part of this application;
- visitor parking permits should be restricted;
- that opportunity is taken associated with the scheme to deliver some new street tree planting;
- that opportunity is taken to resurface pavements;
- concern that the development would overshadow the towpath;
- that the illegal mooring of boats along the towpath adjacent this site should be resolved;
- the developer needs to pay attention to the ownership of the towpath;
- concern to ensure that noise and disturbance is reduced as much as possible during the construction period;
- adequate off-pavement provision for storage and recycling bins are needed;
- development needs to augment the existing inadequate sewerage system;
- development needs to avoid the potential to create localised flooding within Abbey Road.

#### Pre-Application Consultation:

Pre-application consultation took place on the previous application for development on this site, ref: 13/01376/FUL, which was eventually refused and subsequently dismissed on appeal due to the absence of an acceptable scheme of affordable housing. The housing mix in the current scheme is now very different to the previous scheme and includes affordable housing. The character and design of the two schemes however, are very similar. The pre-application consultation which took place on the original scheme in May 2013 was generally supportive of the principle of residential development and its design, but raised detailed concerns regarding the adequacy of drainage, sewerage, car parking, traffic and disturbance during construction and the potential loss of privacy to neighbouring residents as a result of overlooking from rear balconies of the proposed new dwellings.

#### **Relevant Site History**

92/00687/NF - Change of use of part of buildings from Builders Merchants to Car Rental Office. PER 27th November 1992.

95/00992/VF - Variation of Condition 5 on NF/687/92 to allow extended opening hours from Monday to Friday, 0800-1800 hours and Saturday 0800-1300 hours: to Monday to Friday, 0800-2100 hours; Saturday 0800-1700 hours; and Sunday 0900-1500 hours. PER 11th September 1995.

96/01309/NT - Continued use as car rental office with extended opening hours. (Renewal of 95/992/VF). PER 15th November 1996.

98/01548/NF - Change of use to car hire/storage in conjunction with continued use of adjacent land for car hire, car rental office, car preparation area & car storage (including extension of 96/1309/NT) for temporary period of 10 years.. PER 23rd November 1999.

13/01376/FUL - Demolition of the existing buildings and erection of nine 3-storey 4-bed dwellings. REF 20th February 2014 due to an inappropriate mix of housing and the lack of affordable housing provision. Planning Appeal subsequently dismissed, 5th June 2014 on similar grounds.

### **Key Determining Issues:**

Principle of development

Design & Character of development

Nature and Mix of Housing proposed

Impacts upon adjoining properties

Residential Amenity/Standard of Accommodation

Highway Safety

Flood Risk

Other material considerations to be taken into account are sustainability, archaeology, biodiversity and ground contamination.

### **Officers Assessment:**

#### Site Location and Description

1. The application site is located within a predominantly residential area, close to Oxford Railway Station, and within walking distance of local bus routes, local facilities, and the city centre.
2. The site was originally a timber yard but was subsequently used as a car-hire office for Avis and most recently for public car parking and car washing, though these latter uses are unauthorised.
3. The site comprises an open yard/hardstanding, encircled by fairly nondescript, utilitarian buildings, some of which are open fronted. A high wall encloses the site frontage onto Abbey Road where there are two current points of access into/out of the site. Abbey Road is an attractive street of semi-detached and terraced Victorian properties mostly displaying their original architectural features.
4. Immediately west of the site lies a towpath and the River Thames, where a number of canal boats are moored. Overlooked by the site, on the other side of the river, is an area of allotments.

#### Proposal

5. Planning permission is sought for the erection of twelve new homes, comprising six houses and six flats, following demolition of the existing



buildings. The new homes would be created as three terrace blocks, fronting onto Abbey Lane, with one terrace containing six flats and the other two terraces, comprising three houses each. All the terraces are a uniform 2.5 storeys high.

6. The six private houses comprise two 3-bed and four 4-bed dwellings. The six flats comprise one 1-bed, three 2-bed and two 3-bed dwellings. The flats would all be affordable, with five proposed as social rented and one 2-bed flat of intermediate tenure.
7. Each of the houses has its own private garden space whilst the six flats would share a communal garden. No off-street car parking spaces are provided as part of the development, though there is on-street space immediately in front of the application site to park approximately eight or nine cars once the development is complete.
8. In common with many neighbouring properties, rear pedestrian/cycle access would be facilitated from the towpath with the development enclosed behind a low level wall and ironwork railings, to afford the new development views across the river.

#### The Principle of Development

9. The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS2 both encourage the reuse/redevelopment of previously developed land.
10. The application site is indeed previously developed land and has been allocated for residential development by Policy SP1 of the Sites and Housing Plan. As such, the principle of residential development on the site is long accepted by the Council, subject to any planning application conforming to its detailed policy requirements, including high quality design, no adverse impacts on the setting of Osney Town Conservation Area, measures to mitigate flood risk, an acceptable mix of housing, and the provision of affordable housing etc.

#### Design & Character of Development

11. The NPPF considers that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. This means that the level of development within any scheme should suit the site's capacity and respond appropriately and realistically to the site constraints and its surroundings. This is reflected in Oxford Local Plan Policy CP6, which requires development to make best use of the site's capacity in a manner compatible with the site and the surrounding area.
12. Policy CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 requires development to demonstrate a high-quality urban design that responds to the site and its surroundings; creates a strong sense of place; attractive public realm; and provide high quality architecture. Policy CP8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 also states that the siting, massing, and design of development should create an appropriate visual relationship with the form, grain, scale, materials,

and details of the surrounding area. This is supported by Policies HP9 and HP10 of the Sites and Housing Plan.

13. The character of existing residential development in Abbey Road is largely Victorian. The traditional pattern of terraces and semi-detached dwellings in the area presents a very attractive residential environment. The applicant has submitted a scheme with a building style which mirrors the existing character and complements the street-scene.
14. In terms of height, the new development is 2.5 storeys, which similarly reflects the 2.5 storey housing that already exists in Abbey Road. Other properties in the immediate locality range between 2 and 3.5 storeys, so the development will look entirely within keeping with the locality and street scene in this respect.
15. In terms of materials and detailing, the submitted design shows the intention for a very clear palette of materials to reflect the yellow/buff brickwork, slate roofs, natural and painted stonework, black iron rainwater goods and white painted timber sash windows found within the immediate area. Any permission would of course, need to be conditioned to ensure samples of materials were a close match to the materials used in the immediate locality.
16. The proposal also reflects much of the architectural detailing found in the local area, introducing stonework bay windows, mullions, ironwork railings and chimney detailing into the design. This detailing is particularly strong in the elevations which present themselves onto Abbey Road.
17. To the rear, the elevations have slightly simpler, cleaner lines, but interest is created by the contrasting depth of the ground and upper floors, and features such as stonework caps, mullions, ironwork and balconies. The rear elevations of the new development will also be more open to view from the river than the commercial buildings which presently occupy the site behind high walls. Opening the site up to the river will introduce a new sense of openness along this part of the towpath, and would generally enhance views across to the site from the allotments and the Osney Conservation Area. However, care also needs to be taken here to retain the green, semi-rural appearance of the towpath, by ensuring that the views into the new development are softened by new planting. In this respect, it is considered that any permission should be conditioned to agree a landscaping plan and boundary treatments along the river frontage in advance of the commencement of development.

#### Nature and Mix of Housing Proposed, including Affordable Housing

18. Policy CS23 of the Core Strategy requires proposals for residential development to provide a mix of housing that complies with the mix prescribed for the Jericho and Osney Neighbourhood Area, as set out within the Balance of Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (BoDSPD).
19. In this location, the BoDSPD suggests that residential development should not include more than 35% of units as 4+-bed homes and between 35-75% should be 3-bed units with some proportion of 1 and 2-bed accommodation welcomed.

20. The mix proposed by this application includes four 4-bed homes (ie. 33% of all homes proposed), four 3-bed homes (ie. more than 30% of all homes proposed) and includes some smaller units. The mix is therefore fully compliant with Policy CS23 and the guidance of the BoDSPD.
21. Policy HP3 of the Sites and Housing Plan is also clear that new residential development on sites with a capacity to deliver 10 or more dwellings, should include a minimum of 50% of new dwellings as affordable homes. In this case the development provides for six of the twelve new homes to be affordable, and therefore it complies fully with this requirement. The affordable element comprises a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bed properties, with five of the six affordable homes being provided as rental properties and one as an intermediate tenure. This is also therefore fully policy compliant. The delivery of the new affordable homes will be secured through a S106 agreement.
22. Policy HP2 of the Sites and Housing Plan requires all new dwellings to meet Lifetime Homes standard and on sites of 4 or more dwellings, at least one dwelling should be either fully accessible or easily adapted to full wheelchair use. The new homes meet the Lifetime Homes standard in terms of internal space, but have steps up to entrance floor levels to ensure they are less susceptible to flooding and this prevents full compliance with the standard. Officers are satisfied however that the proposals have taken all practical steps to comply with Policy HP2.

#### Impacts upon Adjoining Properties

23. To be acceptable, new development must demonstrate that it can be developed in a manner that will safeguard the residential amenities of the adjoining properties in terms of loss of amenity, light, outlook, sense of enclosure, and loss of privacy in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy HP14 of the Sites and Housing Plan.
24. In terms of noise and disturbance, the construction of the new homes on the site will at times be noisy whilst construction lasts, but that will be for a relatively short period and does not give rise to any unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
25. In terms of overlooking and privacy, the closest part of the development to no.4 Botley Road is about 20m. This is a 'side-to-back' distance rather than a 'back-to-back' distance and is considered to be an acceptable level of separation to safeguard the residential amenity of that property. No's 6 and 8 Botley Road are part of an annexe to the River Hotel, and the impact on the rear garden is considered to be similarly acceptable.
26. The proposed balconies to flats 1-6 will directly overlook their communal garden space and will have tangential views into the garden space of neighbouring properties in Botley Road, which are already well screened by mature planting within the rear curtilage of those neighbouring properties.

There is also a second floor window in the kitchen of Flat 5 which looks out towards the rear curtilage of no. 4 Botley Road, but which again, is screened by the substantial mature trees within the curtilage of that property.

27. To the north, the new development abuts no. 3 Abbey Road. Due to the depths of the new homes being proposed, the side wall of Plot 12 at first and second floor level, projects about 5 metres beyond the original rear elevation of no. 3 however, care has been taken by the developer to set back the side wall of Plot 12 by some 3 metres, so that loss of sunlight/daylight to no.3 has been minimised. The removal of the existing commercial buildings that border no.3 Abbey Road will also considerably improve the outlook from that property.
28. In terms of overlooking and privacy issues therefore, officers judge that the relationship between the new dwellings and the adjoining residential properties in Abbey and Botley Road is acceptable.

#### Residential Amenity/Standard of Accommodation

29. The proposed dwellings are designed to provide a good level of internal space and comfortably comply with minimum size standards set out in Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP12. The rooms are all of usable size, have a pleasant outlook, access to daylight and adequate space for storage.
30. In terms of external space, each of the six family homes are provided with their own private garden of a good size and also benefit from private balcony space leading from the first floor. The six flats will share a communal garden area, with ground floor flats having direct access into the communal garden. The four 'upstairs' flats also have their own private balconies. All the new dwellings are therefore considered to have acceptable levels of external amenity space and comply with this aspect of Policy HP13.
31. Each of the garden spaces also has side or rear access from the towpath, to facilitate convenient access to bins and secure cycle parking, ensuring that bins and cycles do not need to be taken through the properties. The design and location of secure cycle and bin stores within the rear garden areas however, needs to be conditioned to ensure that they do not detract from the appearance of the development or locality.

#### Highways & Transport Matters

32. The proposals do not include any provision for off-street car parking. Such provision would have resulted in the buildings being set back from the street frontage to the detriment of the strong and established rhythm of existing development within the street which it is particularly important to preserve.
33. Given the site's location so close to the railway station and the city centre as well as its location within a controlled parking zone, officers are content to support a car-free development in this location and consider this to comply with Policy HP16 of the Sites and Housing Plan.
34. Whilst Abbey Road is subject to local parking pressure, the loss of commercial

(previously car rental) premises is also likely to reduce the actual number of traffic movements within the street and any on-street parking associated with that use. There is also a significant length of dropped kerb along the frontage of the site,. The re-instatement of this kerb is appropriate as part of this development and will create about eight or nine additional on-street parking spaces. If approved, a condition will be imposed to require re-instatement of the kerb at the applicant's expense, prior to occupation of the new homes so that the full length of the site frontage can be returned to on-street parking for local residents.

35. Whilst the Highway Authority does not raise any objection to the scheme and indeed, welcomes its design as one that is essentially 'car-free', it argues that occupiers of the development might be excluded from having the right to parking permits for the Controlled Parking Zone within which it sits. However, officers do not consider it reasonable to prevent this development, which includes several family homes, from having access to at least one car. Consequently, if the application is approved, officers recommend imposing a condition to require variation of the traffic regulation order to entitle the 3-bed and 4-bed units to one residents' parking permit each.

### Flood Risk

36. A small proportion of the application site lies within Flood Zone 3 as defined by the Environment Agency. This means the site is at a higher risk of flooding (greater than 1 in 100 years) though there is no evidence of flooding of the site in recent times. The site has been allocated in the Sites & Housing Plan taking account of the Council's strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA) and it is therefore not necessary to test the appropriateness of developing the site for residential purposes again at this stage. Indeed, Government guidance in the NPPF makes it clear that 'sequential' and 'exception' testing of sites when determining planning applications does not need to be applied to allocated sites where this approach will have already been undertaken in the SFRA.
37. The application is also accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment. This has been assessed by the Environment Agency and no objections are raised.
38. The assessment indicates that the proposals will result in a reduced amount of developed floorspace with greater flood-water storage potential. Floor levels of the houses are raised to reduce the impact of flood water in the event that flooding of the site occurs. The spacing of new buildings will also allow for better dispersal of flood-water than the existing buildings/hardstanding on site.
39. Officers are content that the proposals take all reasonable steps to reduce flood impact for future occupiers of the houses and that by improving permeability of the site the risk of flooding locally will be reduced. The proposals are therefore judged to accord with Policy SP1 of the Sites & Housing Plan and Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy. However, any permission should be subject to the conditions suggested by the Environment Agency.

### Archaeology

40. The application site is located on Osney Island and may have been formed in the late Saxon period as a result of artificial channelling of the River Thames in order to create the channel now known as Castle Mill Stream. It is also speculated that the sub-oval island has characteristics of a Late Iron Age oppidum, however there is no firm evidence to support this hypothesis (Oxford Archaeological Resource Assessment- The Iron Age (2011)).
41. The site is also of interest because it was previously occupied by a notable 19th century building firm (Thomas H. Kingerlee & Sons) who remain active and retains a number of late 19th century/early 20th century structures from this time. The Victoria County History notes that the growth of the Oxford suburbs in the later 19th preserved the building industry as a mainstay of the city's economy and T.H. Kingerlee, at times employed between 400 and 500 men (VCH 1979).
42. The NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement should be taken, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Where appropriate local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.
43. In this case, mindful of the scale and nature of the development, the City Archaeologist recommends any permission should include a condition requiring archaeological investigations to take place. The form of the investigations recommended would require a Level II photographic survey of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings and contemporary structures followed by post-demolition (to ground level only) trial trenching, and further mitigation if required. All work undertaken would require a professionally qualified archaeologist working to a brief issued by the Council's Archaeologist.

### Biodiversity

44. The existing buildings have been recently surveyed but appear unlikely to be used for bat roosts. However, there are records of Daubenton bats using the canal for foraging and as a flight path. Given the size of the development proposed there is also potential to include biodiversity enhancements including maternity roosts for Daubenton bats. Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy expects developments to incorporate ecology enhancements where possible. If permission is given, officers recommend a condition requiring the submission and agreement of biodiversity enhancement measures and their incorporation within the development. In addition, a condition is also suggested to require development to take place in accordance with the recommendations of the applicant's Bat Report, ensuring that the soft stripping of the slates off existing buildings does not adversely impact on bat populations, given the possibility that bats might be inhabiting the buildings despite the findings of the report.

### Contaminated Land

45. A Desktop Study and Site Investigation Report submitted with the application conclude that the site will need some remediation from contaminants. The report considers adding a capping layer as remediation however, as part of the site is located within a flood zone, this is not considered to be an appropriate approach given that a flooding incident may lead to contaminants leaking into the watercourse. In this respect, it is recommended that any permission is also conditioned to ensure the submission and agreement of an alternative method of remediation.

### Sustainability

46. The application makes clear that development is designed to make best use of previously developed land. The garden spaces to be created will provide opportunity to introduce trees, planting and to develop new garden habitat for wildlife. The application also states that the development is being designed to exceed the most up to date building regulations, reducing energy consumption by building in materials that are highly energy efficient and introducing air source heat pumps to help heat the development. The applicant forecasts that these measures will achieve a 34.4% reduction in potential energy use, which is significantly beyond the requirements of Policy HP11 of the Sites & Housing Plan.
47. The development is also proposed to be built with no off-street car parking, recognising the convenience of this location to the railway station, local facilities, bus services and the city centre.

### **Conclusion:**

48. The proposed redevelopment makes an efficient use of previous developed land within a predominantly residential area and will facilitate the demolition of underutilised buildings, originally occupied as a timber yard and more recently as a car rental office. The existing buildings are of a poor appearance and condition and detract from the appearance of the locality and street-scene. The overall layout, scale and design of the proposed buildings are attractive and sympathetic to the site and its surroundings while safeguarding the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposed development will provide high quality housing for future occupants and delivers much needed new affordable housing for the city. The proposal is acceptable in highways terms and energy efficiency and does not create any biodiversity, environmental or flooding impacts. The development therefore accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.
49. The scheme is recommended for approval subject to conditions and a S106 legal agreement to secure affordable housing.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and a S106 agreement. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

**Background Papers:** Previous application and planning appeal relating to ref: 13/01376/FUL.

**Contact Officer:** Trevor Saunders

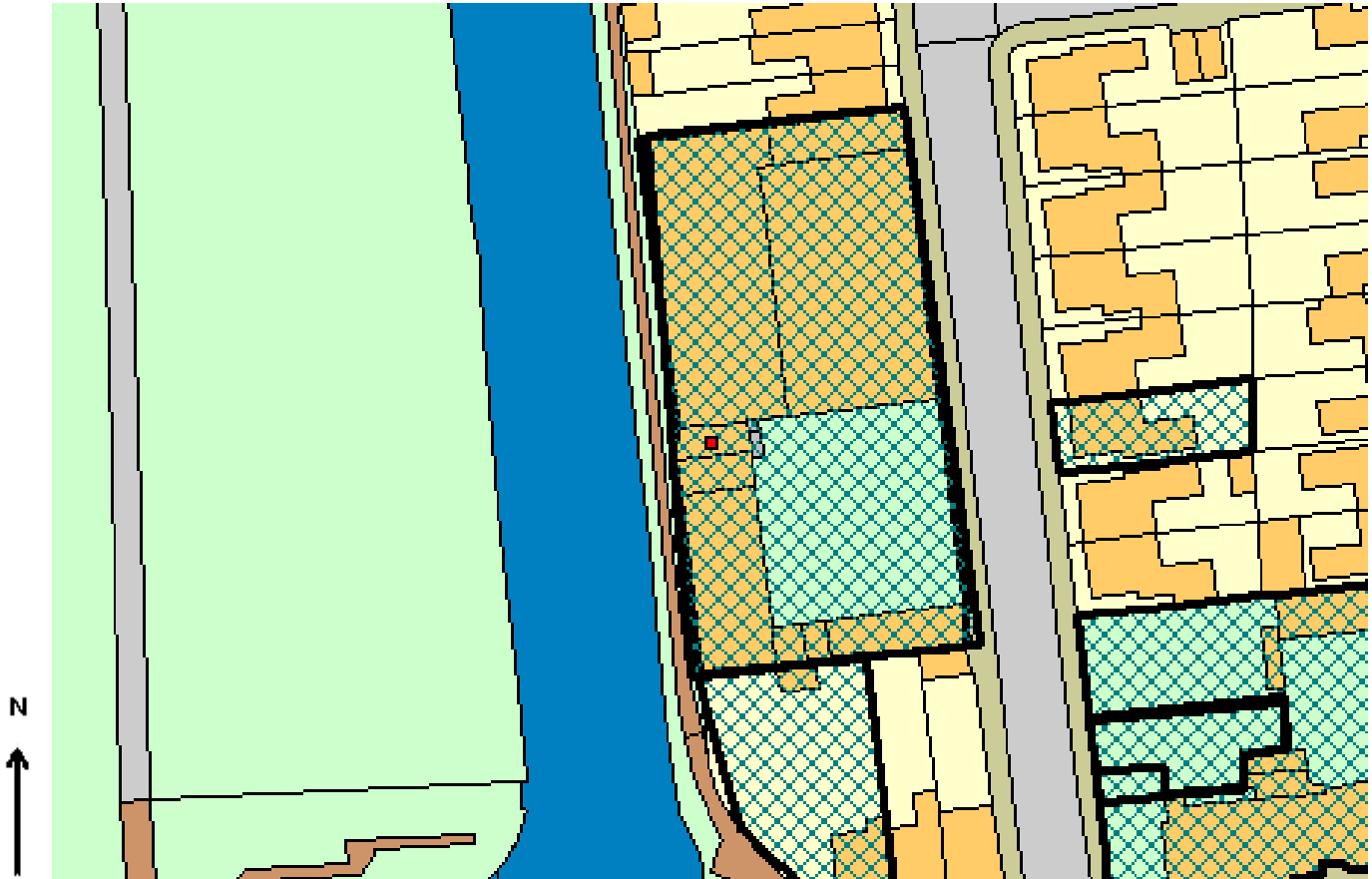
**Extension:** n/a

**Date:** 10th November 2015



# Appendix 1

15/02512/FUL - 1 Abbey Road



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Ordnance Survey 100019348

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West Area Planning Committee

1 December 2015

**Application Number:** 15/00760/FUL

**Decision Due by:** 15th May 2015

**Proposal:** Change of use and extension of existing thatched barn to provide accommodation for a visitor shop and ticket office, a café, storage, staff accommodation, interpretation space. Demolition of existing buildings and erection of new works building and service yard including workshops, garages, storage, staff facilities and WCs, parking area and established landscaping.

**Site Address:** Christ Church College St Aldate's

**Ward:** Holywell Ward

**Agent:** Terry Gashe

**Applicant:** Mr James Lawrie

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## Addendum Report:

1. West Area Planning Committee resolved to approve this proposal subject to a contribution of £2000 to the County Council secured via a S106 agreement towards establishing a new scheduled coach set-down stop and improve the bus stops along St Aldate's, particularly outside Tom Gate, and way-finding information within the site. See paragraph 38 of the previous report attached at **Appendix 1**.
2. Since Committee's decision the Applicant has queried the purpose of the contribution and the direct relevance of the works. The County Council confirmed the contribution was intended to allow them to tidy up the present arrangements outside Tom Gate where the scheduled London coaches drop off. There was no intention of introducing any additional bus movements but to ease the pavement congestion by moving the scheduled London coaches further south, away from Tom Gate. This was seen as a benefit to Christ Church in managing their visitors but was not proposed to directly mitigate the visitor centre. As a result the County have reviewed their position and withdrawn their request for the contribution. They will however continue to work with Christ Church to identify a way of improving public realm and bus stop situation close to Tom Gate outside the planning process.
3. As the provision of the new bus stop and public realm improvements was suggested by the County as a way of better managing the visitors to Christ Church, rather than to directly mitigate the impact of the Visitor Centre, Officers consider that there would be no harm as a result. It is therefore

recommend that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out previously, but with an additional condition requesting details and approval of way-finding measures within the site.

**Contact Officer:** Felicity Byrne

**Extension:** 2159

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015

## Appendix 1 to the report of 1 December 2015

West Area Planning Committee

9th June 2015

**Application Number:** 15/00760/FUL

**Decision Due by:** 15th May 2015

**Proposal:** Change of use and extension of existing thatched barn to provide accommodation for a visitor shop and ticket office, a café, storage, staff accommodation, interpretation space. Demolition of existing buildings and erection of new works building and service yard including workshops, garages, storage, staff facilities and WCs, parking area and established landscaping.

**Site Address:** Christ Church College St Aldate's Oxford Oxfordshire  
(Appendix 1)

**Ward:** Holywell Ward

**Agent:** Terry Gashe

**Applicant:** Mr James Lawrie

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### Recommendation:

Resolve to approve subject to completion of a legal agreement. Delegate to officers to issue decision.

For the following reasons:

- 1 The proposals represent a sensitive and well-considered response to the issues of managing visitors to the site and propose opportunities to enhance the tourist attraction and experience. Whilst the proposed new buildings would be located within the Greenbelt, where national and local policies restrict new development to maintain its openness, the City Council considers that the very special circumstances of this proposal and the overall benefits that would flow from the development are sufficient for it to be considered an exception within the terms of the policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and thus it is considered that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.
- 2 The City Council has given considerable weight and importance to the desirability of preserving or enhancing designated heritage assets and their settings, including the listed building(s), conservation area and registered park. It is considered that the net effect of the proposals will not result in harm to the designated heritage assets or their settings and result in new buildings

and a use that will give greater opportunity for the public to access and enjoy the historic environment of Oxford.

subject to the following conditions, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Development in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Further construction and design details to be submitted
- 4 Samples of materials
- 5 Sample panels on site
- 6 Archaeological investigation and mitigation
- 7 Building recording and details of salvage/reuse of internal features of interest
- 8 Tree protection and root protection zone mitigation measures
- 9 Proposed landscaping and tree planting
- 10 Landscaping scheme implementation
- 11 Landscape management plan and implementation (including area outside ticket office and café)
- 12 Ecological mitigation measures
- 13 Flood risk mitigation measures
- 14 Cycle parking
- 15 Informative: Considerate Contractors Scheme

**Legal Agreement** s106 Heads of Terms, County:

- to contribute £2,000 towards establishing a new scheduled coach set-down stop, to include the cost of a pole/flag/information case unit and appropriate road markings.
- The developer to provide some form of wayfinding within or outside the thatched barn

**Main Local Plan Policies:**

**Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016**

- CP8** - Design Development to Relate to its Context
- CP9** - Creating Successful New Places
- CP11** - Landscape Design
- CP13** - Accessibility
- NE15** - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- NE16** - Protected Trees
- HE2** - Archaeology
- HE3** - Listed Buildings and Their Setting
- HE7** - Conservation Areas
- HE8** - Important Parks & Gardens
- TA3** - Tourist Information
- TR3** - Car Parking Standards
- TR2** - Travel Plans
- TR4** - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities

## **Core Strategy**

**CS18\_** - Urban design, town character, historic environment

**CS4\_** - Green Belt

**CS11\_** - Flooding

**CS12\_** - Biodiversity

**CS32\_** - Sustainable tourism

**CS20\_** - Cultural and community development

**CS29\_** - The universities

**CS21\_** - Green spaces, leisure and sport

**CS9\_** - Energy and natural resources

**CS13\_** - Supporting access to new development

**CS19\_** - Community safety

**CS20\_** - Cultural and community development

**CS27\_** - Sustainable economy

## **Other Material Considerations:**

National Planning Policy Framework

This application is in or affecting the Central Conservation Area. The development is affecting the setting of Grade I and Grade II Listed Building and a Grade I Registered Garden

Planning Practice Guidance

## **Relevant Site History:**

15/00227/ENT - Fell 1no. Leylandii and 1no. Alnus tree in the Central Conservation Area. RNO 26th January 2015.

15/00276/ENT - Fell 1no. Populus Balsmaifera in the Central Conservation Area..  
PCO .

## **Representations Received:**

**Historic England:** Supports proposal, the harm that would result is outweighed by the public benefits that would flow from the development. Recommends careful attention to landscaping proposals

**Environment Agency:** no objection, recommends condition to deliver mitigation measures

**Highways Authority:** recommends additional cycle provision and a s106 agreement to secure improved bus stop provision and wayfinding.

**Oxford Civic Society:** supports

## **Statutory and Internal Consultees:**

Environment Agency Thames Region, Historic England Commission, Garden History Society, Internal - Conservation - Trees, Internal - Conservation - Archaeology, Oxford Civic Society,

## **Issues:**

Greenbelt

Heritage

Flood Risk

**Sustainability:**

The re-use of existing buildings  
Energy efficient new buildings  
Sustainable building materials

**Officers Assessment:**

**Background**

- 1 The College first commissioned studies of visitor attraction and staff facilities for the Cathedral in 2009, followed up by wider studies of and a masterplan for the whole Christ Church site. The Cathedral attracts around 400,000 visitors each year and the Meadow attracts 1,000,000 visitors. The studies have highlighted particular issues of:
  - Congestion for visitors in peak months and poor visitor offer
  - Disturbance to the academic life of Christ Church
  - Inappropriate use of the Cathedral Chapter House as a shop and for Treasury displays
  - Inadequate public toilet facilities
  - Unsightly maintenance yard facilities and buildings
- 2 This application has been submitted as part of the College's implementation of its masterplan, to address these deficiencies with the conversion of the Meadow barn, its extension and a new thatched building to provide a new visitor centre with new maintenance and storage facilities to replace the existing substandard ones.
- 3 The College has already started to implement other elements of the masterplan; very relevant to this proposal are the landscaping proposals for the Meadow, including tree removals and replanting and realignment of the Meadow railings.

**The site and its history**

- 4 The thatched Meadow Barn is located in the north-west corner of the Meadow alongside the Trill Mill Stream. The Shire Ditch (the historic boundary between Oxfordshire and Berkshire until 1974) runs east west across the bottom of the application site. The barn, which is not listed, dates from 1851, subsequently extended later in the C19th/early C20th.
- 5 To the south of the thatched barn is a car park for staff and college members, a number of garages, a storage yard with steel containers and a timber store. The barn is also used for storage. To the north-west of the barn is a row of single storey buildings used by the Clerk of Works.
- 6 The Meadow has a long history dating back to its early creation by the



amalgamation of two separate water meadows around 1346 and the formation of a circular walk around the meadow in the 1570s. Though it has been subject to some alteration, extension and various regimes of avenue planting Broad Walk formed part of this original walk. New Walk was introduced later, in the 1860s at the same time as the Meadow Buildings were completed.

- 7 The layout of the meadow and the changes that have taken place are recorded in paintings, sketches and historic maps from the C16th. J.M.W. Turner for example records in one of his paintings (Christ Church c1794) stables on the site of the present barn and a variety of other service buildings. Early maps record the barn record the stables and a rick yard, and early Ordnance Survey maps show a track from the barn (which replaced the stables) leading out to the Meadow, all illustrating that this part of the meadow from the C18th served a functional purpose associated with the management of the meadow.
- 8 The introduction of the Memorial Garden in the early C20th (commemorating the lives of those associated with Christ Church lost during the Great War) introduced further changes to this part of the Meadow creating a new, prominent and now well used 'public' entrance.

### **The Proposals**

- 9 The application proposes the introduction of new visitor facilities and the reordering and improvement of maintenance facilities in a series of linked building that pursue a rural buildings typology – including the use of thatch, timber cladding and stone.
- 10 The Thatched barn will be restored and used as part of a new café and interpretation space, with a thatched extension on the east elevation. The new ticket office is proposed to the north of the barn, linked to it by a service range providing toilets, plant room, storage and service spaces for the café and ticket office.
- 11 A series of single storey works and ground staff/clerk of works buildings are proposed along the east boundary of the works compound, looking into the site with a 'Dutch barn' vehicle store on the southern edge of the compound. To the south of this on the other side of the Shire Ditch an existing composting area will be redesigned to better manage the decaying process of the green waste. The staff car park is proposed along the west boundary, where it currently is laid out to provide 36 parking spaces plus two disabled spaces.
- 12 The landscaping strategy for the proposed new buildings and uses is integrated with the wider landscape management strategy for the meadow and seeks to better integrate the immediate setting with the wider meadow, removing 'domestic' planting and introduces more appropriate tree species and planting to help assimilate the new buildings into the wider landscape.
- 13 The proposals have been subject to pre-applications discussions and engagement with local groups and key stakeholders and it is worth noting that the comments received from formal consultation have all been positive, with no objections received.

## **Policy Context**

- 14 The application site is located within the Greenbelt, within a Grade 1 Registered Garden, within the setting of the listed buildings of Christ Church, within an archaeologically sensitive area, in an area of local nature conservation interest and within Flood zones 2 and 3a. Policies that are relevant to this proposal are listed at the beginning of this report but the focus will be on those matters that require some explanation; officers having concluded that the development is in accordance with other relevant policies not explicitly discussed here.

## **Impact of the proposed development**

### **Greenbelt**

- 15 The fundamental aim of the greenbelt is to keep land permanently open and harm can be caused by development that reduces that openness. Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies those uses that would not be inappropriate, and includes facilities for outdoor recreation, extensions and alterations of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions and partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites. Paragraph 87 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances explaining in paragraph 88 that

*‘Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Greenbelt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations’*

- 16 The applicant has erred on the side of caution concluding that the proposed development is inappropriate and has thus gone on to explain the very special circumstances of this case that justify supporting this proposal. The special circumstances have been explained in the supporting documents (Ferax Planning) and include:
- The harm being caused by the present arrangements – harm to the aesthetic and historic qualities of this part of the meadow, the inappropriate use of the Chapter House, the poor quality visitor offer;
  - The combination of circumstances – challenges and opportunities presented by the historic site and its context is unique to Christ Church;
  - The applicant has explored all other opportunities for addressing the existing deficiencies of the tourist offer and the impact on academic life in the College, concluding that this proposal is the most appropriate, with the least harm and most benefits.
  - The re-use of the barn helps to ensure its long term viability and sustain its heritage significance;
  - The relocation of the shop from the Chapter House will ensure that it can be put to more appropriate uses and that its architectural and historic qualities

can be better accessed, understood and enjoyed by the public.

- Improvement to the appearance of the Meadow and enhancement of the setting it provides for the historic buildings that abut it;
- Enhanced experience for all visitors to the Meadow and Christ Church;
- Improvements in the tourist offer, supporting and adding to the local economy;
- In all other respects it is a sustainable development with economic social and environmental benefits being delivered simultaneously.

- 17 As discussed briefly below officers consider that the design and scale of the buildings are appropriate for the site – measured against other policies of the development plan, and involve in part the redevelopment of a previously developed site, the re-use of an existing building and the provision of facilities that in part will be used by people pursuing outdoor recreation in the Meadow. There will be an impact on the openness of the Greenbelt but officers consider that the benefits (the very special circumstances) outweigh the harm. It is worth noting that Historic England also recognises that the public benefits of the proposal would outweigh the harm to the Registered Garden.

### **Historic Environment**

- 18 The National Planning Policy Framework in Annex 2 defines heritage significance as:

*‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’*

and defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

*‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’*

- 19 Conservation principles, policy and practice seek to preserve and enhance the value of heritage assets. The National Planning Policy Framework explains that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations.

- 20 The Government sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of this. The NPPF sets out twelve core planning principles that should underpin decision making (paragraph 17.). Amongst those are:

- *not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding*

*ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*

- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generation.*

- 21 The historic environment policies of the NPPF are supported by Historic England's Good Practice Advice Notes, which give more detailed advice about gathering the information on significance, assessing the impact and assessing harm with an emphasis on the proactive management of heritage assets.
- 22 The application site is located within the Central (City and University) Conservation Area and within a registered garden and is thus part of a designated heritage asset. The NPPF and accompanying Practice Guide (NPPG) explain that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and '*the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be*'. Recent case law (Barnwell) has demonstrated that this responsibility, rooted in the legislative requirements of the Planning Acts, should be given special consideration when considering the balance between any harm and the planning merits of the proposal.
- 23 The application proposals are supported by a body of research and a historic landscape appraisal that sets out in detail the history of the development of the site and the Meadow, which also seeks to define the heritage significance of the site and the nature and extent of the heritage impacts that would result from this proposal.
- 24 Clearly the site as a whole has high heritage significance including:
- a very long history dating back to the Priory of St Frideswide, founded in the C9th and association with important people and events (Cardinal Wolsey, Henry VIII, Lewis Carroll, Joseph Addison and many others, Civil War etc.).
  - The buildings of Christ Church have high architectural significance and contribute to the iconic views of Oxford from the River Thames and from outside and across the city;
  - The picturesque rural character of the Meadow is heightened by its juxtaposition with the city and represents a well preserved water meadows planned and used for recreation (and agriculture) since the C16th
  - High communal value in the site's association with artists, authors, scholars and many others;
  - Archaeological significance in the long history of use and defensive role

during the Civil War.

- 25 The thatched barn is a relatively late arrival in the history of the Meadow, but provides evidence of the agricultural uses that took place and the associated 'service' role in managing the whole site. The evidence of change, including the introduction of the Memorial Garden is part of its history and part of the story.
- 26 It is this service role and the agricultural roots to the application site that have informed the design approach, a contemporary interpretation of traditional rural buildings. The disaggregation of the new floor space into various building blocks results in a collection of relatively small-scale buildings that would have a presence in the Meadow similar to those that once existed and the character of a small farmstead. The vernacular form of the buildings is accentuated by the architect's choice of materials – timber and stone walls, natural slate and thatch (probably almost unique in modern history for a new thatched building to be proposed within a city centre).
- 27 The proposals have received positive responses from statutory and other consultees. Historic England comments that the limited degree of harm that would result to the Grade I Registered Garden would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme and gives its support to the scheme, with advice that the landscaping and management of the area around the ticket office should be kept simple to maintain the pastoral qualities of the area. Officers agree with this and recognise that it will be important to ensure that the commercial/retail activity associated with the café and ticket office will need to be carefully managed to ensure that it does not detract from the rural experience that draws people to the site in the first place. A landscape management and visitor management condition is proposed to give effect to this.
- 28 The application is also supported by a visual impact assessment and officers have tested the visibility of the site and the predicted impacts on various viewpoints around the Meadow.
- 29 From more distant points around the perimeter path (i.e. around the eastern and southern perimeter walks the site is seen against the backdrop of St Aldate's, the views filtered by the planted avenues of trees (the view is more open now than shown in the application details because some trees have since been removed as a part of the delivery of the landscape strategy for the Meadow). The Meadow Building, Tom Tower and the Cathedral are prominent in these views, where the Meadow provides an important and picturesque foreground.
- 30 The view from the Memorial Garden gradually opens up as one progresses along the path and at the point near the existing steps a view of the Meadow opens up underneath the canopy of the trees. The proposed ticket office will foreshorten this view and this is where officers have concluded that the proposal could result in some harm. Changing the experience of a view need not necessarily be harmful, particularly if the 'new' viewing experience is an improvement on the existing one. The applicant has sought to mitigate the nature of the impact by designing a building and proposing materials that help to root it in a rural context. Given the existing conditions officers conclude that

the nature of the approach to the Meadow through the Memorial Garden will be improved, with the new ticket office acting as a 'frame' to the view, rather than an obstruction.

### **Archaeology**

- 31 This application is of interest because the site is located close to the projected line of the Royalist Civil War defences, in the vicinity of an 18<sup>th</sup> century coach house and also on the projected route of a post-medieval water course. The application will also impact on a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century thatched barn that may have an early 19<sup>th</sup> century antecedent. The geophysical survey and a test pit to the north of the current barn have produced results suggesting the presence of archaeological features likely to be associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century coach house. A full evaluation of the current proposal footprint was not possible because of the presence of mature trees over part of the proposed building footprint.
- 32 In this case, bearing in mind the small scale of the proposed works, no further predetermination evaluation is required, but a condition should be attached to any permission granted requiring the submission of details of further investigation and proposed mitigation with completion of a building record of the thatched barn prior to its conversion.

### **Trees**

- 33 As explained above the landscaping details for this site have been considered as a part of the wider landscape strategy for the Meadow and propose the removal of inappropriate tree species. The proposal will also involve the removals of those trees within the footprint of the proposed buildings. New tree planting is proposed to mitigate the impact of those losses and to help settle the new buildings in to the wider landscape. What is less clear from the submitted details is the nature of the impact on the retained trees and their root protection zones. The buildings have been designed and sited to take account of these constraints, but officers have requested additional information to ensure that the impacts can be managed. The committee will be updated at the meeting with the results of any findings. In any event conditions are proposed to ensure that the viability of retained trees will not be compromised by any aspect of the proposed development.

### **Ecology**

- 34 Key features of ecological interest within the site include: the stream corridor and scattered mature trees. Survey have been carried out which demonstrate that there are no bat roosts, badger setts, water voles or otters but possibly low numbers of relatively common and widespread reptile species such as Grass Snake and Slow Worm.
- 35 The Ecology report suggests various mitigation measures and practices during construction to avoid unnecessary disturbance to wildlife and the provision of

water ways management, bat boxes and tree planting as a means to introduce reinforce existing and to introduce new habitats. Officers are satisfied that the ecological findings is accurate and will include a condition that will secure the mitigation measures proposed in the Ecology Report.

## **Highways**

- 36 The application site is a highly sustainable location and the Highways Authority welcome that the proposal is accompanied by a small reduction in the number of car parking spaces as well as the provision of 10 cycle parking spaces. It comments though that, given how well located the site is for cycling and walking, there would seem to be scope to provide more cycle parking spaces to encourage even more cycling by Christ Church staff to the site.
- 37 The proposed floor space is below the threshold to require the submission of a travel plan, but given the constrained nature of the site the Highways Authority encourage the applicant to prepare and agree a construction traffic management plan.
- 38 Given that the proposal focuses on the management of visitors to the site the Highways Authority has recommended a legal agreement to secure improvements to the bus stop provision and wayfinding in St Aldate's. This recommendation is embedded in the Officer recommendation. The Highways Authority is suggesting the provision of an additional bus stop and flag further down St Aldate's, closer to the entrance to the Meadow. This will have to be managed carefully, because although it may help secure more efficient working arrangements for the buses it could have an adverse effect on the quality of the public realm (St Aldate's) by extending the presence of buses further down the street and encouraging more tourist coaches to enter the city centre, rather than dropping off/picking up on the edges. Further discussions are being held with Highways Authority officers to ensure that there is a balanced and proportional response to addressing this issue and the Committee will be updated with any further advice that comes forward.

## **39 Flooding**

- 40 The Environment Agency (EA) Flood Zone map shows the site lies mainly within Flood Zone 2 'Medium Probability' of the River Thames, defined as follows:

*Flood Zone 2 'Medium Probability' (between 1 in 100 (1%) and 1 in 1000 (0.1%) annual probability of river flooding)*

The south-eastern part of the site (i.e. the work compound area) currently lies within the 'High Probability' Flood Zone 3a (greater than 1 in 100 (1%) annual probability of river flooding).

- 41 The proposals are classed as 'Less Vulnerable' development ("*Buildings used for shops, financial, restaurants, cafes... general industry, storage and distribution...*"), which is considered acceptable in Flood Zones 2 and 3a without requiring the Exception Test.

- 42 The Flood risk assessment report explains the level of risk and the proposed mitigation measures stating

*The proposed ground floor level of the redeveloped thatched barn and extension is constrained by the existing building fabric but is still set at a minimum of 56.50m AOD; 220mm above the modelled 1 in 100 (1%) annual probability plus allowance for climate change fluvial flood level.*

*The work compound units are set at a minimum of the reference flood level of 56.28m AOD due to the need to provide level access. These floor levels are considered acceptable given the 'less vulnerable' nature of the proposals.*

*Continuous safe access from the site is available at the 1 in 100 annual probability plus climate change flood level via the primary pedestrian route north out of the site.*

*The proposed development includes ground raising in the work compound area and the provision of compensatory floodplain storage as part of the ground remodelling around the composting area. This results in an increase in floodplain storage capacity, on a level-for-level basis up to the 1 in 100 annual probability plus climate change flood level.*

- 43 The Environment Agency has confirmed its agreement with the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment and does not object to the proposals, recommending the imposition of a condition to ensure that the mitigation measures proposed are delivered.

### **Sustainability**

- 44 The proposal fall below the threshold to require a Natural Resource Impact Assessment. However, as good practice the applicant has explored a range of energy efficiency measures and renewables. In order to ensure that the maximum reduction in energy usage is achieved the applicant has focused on insulation and airtightness. A Passivhaus level of detail is proposed to maximise this aspect. The applicant claims that this will ensure that the building has one of the lowest energy requirements for its type in Oxfordshire.
- 45 Due to the restriction of the site (tree cover and heritage interests) and the demand type all forms of renewable are unlikely to be significantly beneficial, though their viability has been explored.
- 46 The proposals involve the re-use of an existing building, which has the added benefit of capturing the embodied energy of that building.

### **Design details.**

- 47 There are a number of detailed design issues that are still subject to some discussion with officers or that have yet to be fully translated into construction drawings (for example the details for the ramped access next to the Memorial Garden/Broad Walk steps and the construction details for the barn and ticket office windows and doors). These are detailed matters that can be resolved by the imposition of a condition. The absence of any finally agreed details at this



stage does not present an impediment to making a decision on the application.

**Conclusion:**

This is a very sensitive and high profile site and context, which has recognised national and international importance for its history, architecture and landscape. This heritage significance attracts large numbers of visitors and the Meadow is used by residents and tourists alike. Its popularity is threatening to undermine the qualities that attract people in the first place and action is required to manage the flow of people and access arrangements, but also to improve the visitor experience. The proposals have been developed from a lengthy dialogue with key stakeholders and the detail informed by comprehensive studies of the history and landscape qualities of the place. The proposals offer the opportunity to add a new chapter in the history of the Meadow and Christ Church, which will bring important and sustainable benefits. Subject to the conditions imposed to secure appropriate design details and mitigation measures officers recommend approval.

**Human Rights Act 1998**

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

**Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

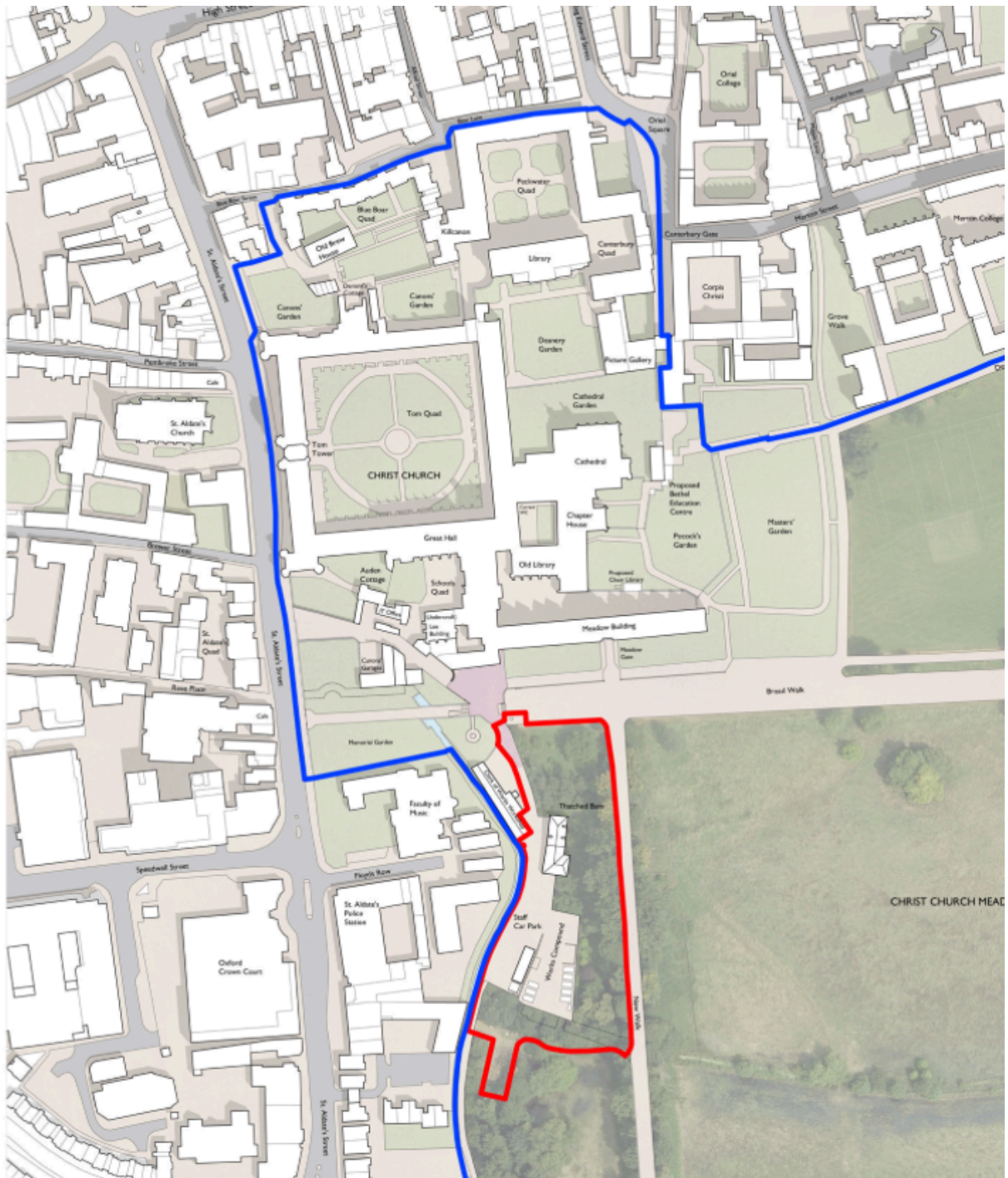
Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

**Background Papers: None**

**Contact Officer:** Nick Worlledge

**Extension:** 2147

**Date:** 31st May 2015



SITE LOCATION MAP: CHRIST CHURCH MEADOW BARN PROPOSED VISITOR CENTRE

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## MINUTES OF THE WEST AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 November 2015



**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Upton (Chair), Gotch (Vice-Chair), Cook, Gant, Hollingsworth, Price and Tanner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Michael Morgan (Law and Governance), Edward Oteng (Planning and Regulatory), Mehdi Rezaie (Planning and Regulatory), Jennifer Thompson (Committee Services Officer) and Matthew Watson (Planning and Regulatory)

### 63. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Benjamin gave her apologies.

### 64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

### 65. 333 BANBURY RD: 15/01548/VAR

The Committee considered a report detailing an application for the removal of condition 22 (to vacate premises at St. Giles and Ewert Places) of planning permission 14/03255/FUL at 333 Banbury Road, Oxford.

Gary Tully, representing the applicant, and Sami Cohen, principal of D'Overbroeck's college, said they were prepared to answer questions from the Committee.

The Committee debated this application which sought to remove the requirement on the extant permission to vacate city centre premises; noted the potential increase in employment generated by the increased floor space for sixth form education; and considered the appropriateness of requiring a contribution to affordable housing secured by legal agreement. The Committee considered that policy CS24 was relevant in this case. The Committee were of a view that given the proposed use the overall increase in floor area proposed in this application triggered a requirement to secure an affordable housing contribution.

The Committee **resolved** to:

- a) approve the application 15/01548/VAR in principle but to defer determination in order to draw up a legal agreement in the terms outlined below and delegate to officers the issuing of permission, subject to conditions below, on its completion:

1. Development begun within 5 years.
2. Approved plans.
3. Materials.
4. Lighting.
5. Obscure glazing to northern elevation.
6. Landscape plan.
7. Landscape carry out by completion.
8. Landscape management plan.
9. Landscape hard surface design-tree roots.
10. Landscape underground services-tree root.
11. Tree protection plan.
12. Arboricultural method statement.
13. Trees: Construction method statement.
14. On site traffic management plan.
15. Parking provision.
16. Alternative cycle parking facilities.
17. Deliveries - manoeuvring space.
18. Travel plan.
19. Archaeology - evaluation.
20. Biodiversity - bird and bat boxes.
21. Contamination - risk assessment.
22. Community use of facilities.
23. Public art.
24. Construction management plan.
25. Sustainable drainage.
26. Piling methods.
27. Extraction equipment – kitchen.
28. Mechanical plant.
29. Noise attenuation.
30. Interpretative scheme.
31. Natural Resource Impact Assessment.

Legal agreement: to secure a contribution to off-site affordable housing in accordance with Policy CS24.

b) to have the value of the contribution reported to a future meeting.

#### **66. 105 GODSTOW ROAD: 15/02603/FUL**

The Committee considered a report detailing an application for the erection of a two storey side extension to create 2 x 1-bed flats (Use Class C3) with provision of private amenity space, bin and cycle store and alterations to existing vehicle access; erection of a two storey rear extension; and replacement and alterations to porch to existing dwelling at 105 Godstow Road, Oxford.

Derek Belsen, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application and outlined his concerns.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. Development begun within time limit.
2. Develop in accordance with approved plans.
3. Materials.
4. Demolition of Extension.
5. Boundary Treatments.
6. Parking areas.
7. Cycle parking.
8. Surface water drainage and SUDs.
9. Landscaping.

**67. 23 FRENCHAY ROAD: 15/02474/FUL**

The Committee considered a report detailing an application for the demolition of existing WC, store and garage; erection of single storey rear extension and formation of two rear dormers; insertion of a sash window to side elevation and two rooflights to front roofslope; erection of detached single storey home office/garage; and relocation of garden gate and demolition of section of garden wall at 23 Frenchay Road, Oxford.

Melissa Gilani, a local resident, spoke against the application and in particular the potential of the conservatory (the main habitable space) of number 21 to be overlooked from the clear glazed windows now proposed in the side elevation.

The Committee discussed the impact of the development on no 21 and agreed that to preserve the amenity of no 21 it would be reasonable to replicate in its entirety the condition on permission 14/03051/FUL requiring first floor windows overlooking Hayfield Road to be obscure glazed and fixed shut.

The Committee **resolved** to approve application 15/02474/FUL, subject to the five conditions as set out in the report and the replicated condition (number 6) on 14/03051/FUL as recommended at the meeting:

**68. ST ALDATE'S CHAMBERS, 109 - 113 ST ALDATE'S: 15/02846/SP56**

The Committee considered a report detailing an application for prior approval for the installation of Solar Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roof of the non-domestic building at St Aldate's Chambers, 109 - 113 St Aldate's.

The planning officer reported late comments from the historic buildings and conservation officers that they were content with the application subject to conditions which minimised the impact of the solar panels.

The Committee **resolved** to approve application 15/02846/SP56 with the following conditions:

1. Materials.
2. Screening.
3. Construction Traffic Management Plan.

#### **69. CHATHAM ROAD AND FOX CRESCENT: 15/02223/CT4**

The Committee considered a report detailing an application for the provision of 18 residents' parking spaces on existing grass verges on verges at 21 to 27 Chatham Road and 10 to 40 Fox Crescent.

The planning officer reported that the Highways Authority's comments requested the applicant meet the cost of amending the road traffic order. The recommendation should thus read 'approve the application in principle but to defer determination in order to complete an agreement with the highways authority to change the road traffic order as requested and delegate to officers the issuing of permission, subject to conditions below, on its completion'.

Rod Tanner and Jonathan Fennell, local residents, spoke objecting to the application.

The Committee debated the application. Councillor Price, as ward councillor, explained the rationale behind the decision to change the parking provision.

Contrary to the officer's recommendation of approval, the Committee considered that the scheme had an adverse impact on the amenity of the local area by removing green open spaces; disrupted the symmetry of the streetscene and was detrimental to the character of the area. There were concerns that the scheme reduced the safety of cyclists and pedestrians crossing the access to the parking spaces. It was considered that there was insufficient net gain in parking spaces or other benefits to offset the detrimental impacts. A motion to refuse planning permission because of the adverse impact on the character and amenity of the area was carried on being put to the vote.

The Committee **resolved** to refuse planning permission for application 15/02223/CT4 for the following reason:

The proposal would result in the disruption of the symmetry of the green open spaces and would be detrimental to the urban setting and character of Chatham Road and Fox Crescent, through adversely impacting on the visual amenity of the area, and did not comply with policy CP1 of the adopted Local Plan and policy CS18 of the adopted Core Strategy.

#### **70. PLANNING APPEALS**



The Committee noted the report on planning appeals received and determined during October 2015 and the overall performance. They asked for a report to both area planning committees on the issues and interpretations of policy and guidance where inspectors' conclusions differed from those of the Council.

#### **71. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee **resolved** to approve as a true and accurate record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October, subject to correcting in Minute 56 the speaker's name to Kevin Minns.

#### **72. FORTHCOMING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee noted the list of forthcoming applications.

#### **73. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

**The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 8.30 pm**

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