

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P13/V1467/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	10.7.2013
<b>PARISH</b>	WANTAGE
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Charlotte Dickson John Morgan Fiona Roper
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Vanderbilt Homes
<b>SITE</b>	21-23 Wallingford Street Wantage Oxfordshire, OX12 8AU
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Erection of two shops, 7x1 bedroom and 17x2 bedroom flats.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	439975/187935
<b>OFFICER</b>	Laura Hudson

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to land at 21 and 23 Wallingford Street, Wantage. The site is located in Wantage Town Centre a short distance from the Market Place and sits at the corner of Wallingford Street and Stirling Road opposite Waitrose.
- 1.2 The site was formerly occupied by two shop units fronting onto Wallingford Street with some parking to the rear and an informal parking area accessed from Stirlings Road. The site is currently cleared and vacant.
- 1.3 Planning permission and conservation area consent was previously granted for the demolition of the shop units and other small buildings on the site and their replacement with two identical shops fronting Wallingford Street, 14 flats and five shop units to the rear fronting Stirlings Road. The demolition has been carried out and the site cleared however the new building has not been implemented.
- 1.4 The site is located within the Wantage development boundary and the Conservation Area.
- 1.5 The application comes to Committee as the Town Council object.

## 2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the two shop units fronting Wallingford Street and a new building to the rear accommodating 24 flats consisting of seven one bedroom units and seventeen two bedroom units.
- 2.2 The proposed shop units would have the same appearance as the previously demolished units but are slightly higher to meet modern building regulations standards and are the same as previously permitted. The flats to the rear would be accommodated in a single building fronting onto Stirlings Road opposite Waitrose.
- 2.3 The proposed building would be of a similar form to that previously permitted with a varying ridge line and projecting elements to provide some articulation and appear as a series of town houses.
- 2.4 A new access is proposed to the site from the northern end from Stirlings Road which would serve 27 parking spaces some of which are accommodated under the building as undercroft parking. Covered bicycle parking and bin storage is also proposed as part of

the scheme.

- 2.5 The site layout includes an area of private amenity space to the rear of the building.
- 2.6 Amended plans have been received to address comments raised by the County highway officer, crime prevention design advisor, and waste management team.
- 2.7 Extracts from the application drawings are **attached** at Appendix 1.

### 3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Wantage Town Council – Object. “This is over development. The Town Council would like to see fewer dwellings on this site. The increase in car parking spaces is welcomed, but it is unclear how the shops are to be serviced. The highway in Wallingford Street in this area is too narrow to accommodate parked delivery lorries. There are concerns that the shops are too small to be viable. The conditions required by the Conservation Officer are supported.”

OCC Transport Strategy – No objections subject to contributions towards **Science Vale UK (£58,500)** and towards **local bus services (£20,280)**.

OCC Transport Development Control – Proposal meets standards for the flats but concern over level of visitor parking provision but acknowledge previous approved scheme therefore acceptable. Level of bicycle parking below standard and additional spaces required. Concerns over the size of some of the parking spaces and visibility. Tracking plan for delivery vehicles required. Amended plans have been received addressing some of these concerns as far as possible including increasing the width of spaces, better visibility and additional cycle parking provision for 45 bicycles.

OCC drainage – no objections.

OCC Education – No objections subject to contributions towards school place provision amounting to the following:

**Primary School Places – £81,752**  
**Secondary School Places – £50,576**  
**Special Education Needs – £3,065**

OCC Property – No objections subject to contributions towards local services and facilities for the following:

**Library – £3,570**  
**Day Care – £4,400**  
**Waste Infrastructure – £2,688**  
**Museum Resource – £210**  
**Adult Learning – £544**  
**TOTAL – £11,412**

Thames Water Development Control - No objections.

Environment Agency - No objections subject to conditions.

drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council) – Holding objection due to lack for information in relation to an acceptable means of drainage. Additional information is awaited and an update will be provided at the meeting.

Landscape Architect - Vale of White Horse DC - No objections subject to conditions in relation to hard and soft landscaping.

Forestry Team (Vale of White Horse) – Concerns over the construction methods of

parking spaces 6, 10, 11 and 12. Construction details should be submitted (a condition is recommended.)

Conservation Officer Vale – “Following extensive pre-app discussions I am now satisfied that the scheme proposed will not harm the significance of the Wantage Conservation Area or the setting of nearby listed buildings.

However it will be essential that appropriate conditions are applied to any permission to require:

1. Submission of materials and the construction of sample panels
2. Detailed elevations at an appropriate scale to illustrate details of doors, windows and dormers, wall details (including decorative features arch, cill and lintel details and stone details) and eaves and ridge details.
3. details of all external pipes, flues, vents and service boxes
4. details of new shopfronts.”

Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No objections.

Architects Panel – “The approach to the Market Place via Wallingford Street presents an opportunity for the built form to create a gateway feature, with a suggestion of recreating the arcade found further up the street and celebrating the corner on the SE point onto Wallingford Street. There is concern about the pseudo-domestic treatment of the ground floor elevation to Stirlings Road. It would be better to create a plain wall on the boundary with a collonade set back for the parking behind.” Previous comments on the withdrawn scheme criticised the design approach which is now considered acceptable.

Crime Prevention Design Adviser – No objections but some concerns over the open nature of the parking and accessibility to the public which should be gated, concerns over recesses to the rear of the retail units, public areas should be lit, and glazing should turn the corner in retail unit 1. Amended plans have been received to address these concerns and additional lightiung can be secured by condition.

Health & Housing - Env. Protection Team – The development must comply with the recommendations of the accompanying acoustic report.

Health & Housing - Air Quality - No objections.

Housing Dev. (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse DC) – Policy H17 requires the development to provide 40% affordable housing as the proposal is for more than 15 units. No provision is referred to in the application and if this cannot be provided evidence will be required demonstrating why the level of provision sought is not viable.

Waste Management team – initial concerns over the size of the bin store however amended plans have been submitted increasing the storage area.

One letter has been received from a local resident stating that although the appearance of the building and parking provision is improved over previous withdrawn applications, the original approved scheme for 14 flats was more appropriate. The proposal represents an over development of the site and the flats and communal space is too small. The two shop units are also too small and not viable.

#### 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

##### 4.1 [P13/V0103/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (02/08/2013)

Erection of two shops and 8x1 bedroom and 18x2 bedroom flats. (Re-submission of withdrawn P12/V1868/FUL)

##### [P12/V1868/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (29/11/2012)

Erection of two shops and 34 one and two bedroom flats.

[P11/V1759/CA](#) - Approved (01/02/2012)

Demolition of existing building

[P11/V1758](#) - Approved (01/02/2012)

Demolition of 21-23 Wallingford Street and replacement with very similar building also containing two shops and two flats. (Amendment to applications ref: 10/01284/FUL and 10/01366/CON)

[P10/V1281](#) - Approved (18/11/2010)

Demolition of existing double garage to rear of the site. Proposed mixed use development including 5 no. retail units, 2 x 1 bedroom flats, 11 x 2 bedroom flats, 1 x 3 bedroom flat and refurbishment of existing retail units.

## 5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

### 5.1 *Vale of White Horse Local Plans*

Policy DC1 requires new development to be of a high design quality in terms of layout, scale, mass, height, detailing, materials to be used, and its relationship with adjoining buildings.

Policy DC5 requires safe and convenient access and parking and suitable access from the public highway.

Policy DC9 seeks to ensure development will not unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment.

Policy H10 states that development within the built-up area of the five main settlements of the District including Wantage will be permitted provided it would not result in the loss of areas of informal public open space, and provided the layout, mass and design would not harm the character of the area.

Policy HE1 refers to development in conservation areas stating that it will not be permitted unless the established character of the area is preserved or enhanced.

Policy H17 requires the provision of 40% affordable housing on all development over 15 units in Wantage.

### *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraphs 14 and 49). Paragraphs 34 and 37 encourage minimised journey lengths to work, shopping, leisure and education, and paragraphs 57, 60 and 61 seek to promote local distinctiveness and integrate development into the natural, built and historic environment.

## 6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues to consider in determining this application are: i) the principle of the development in this location; ii) the design of the proposal and impact on the character of the area; iii) the impact of the development on the amenity of adjacent residential properties and uses; iv) highway safety and parking provision; v) drainage considerations; vi) trees and landscaping; and vii) contributions and viability.

### 6.2 *Principle*

The site is located in Wantage town centre a short distance from the Market Place and within the development boundary as defined on the local plan proposals map. Planning permission has previously been granted to re-develop the site in a similar form to that now proposed and the demolished shops would be replaced in a design which reflects the original buildings. The site was originally occupied by the two shops, some dilapidated outbuildings and private car parking area, therefore the site does not constitute an important open space in the conservation area.

6.3 Given the location of the site, the previous uses and the previous permission albeit that this has now expired, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

6.4 *Design and Impact on the character of the area*

The proposed flats reflect the design approach taken in the approved scheme for 14 flats and shop units with a varying ridge line, and articulated frontage to appear as a series of town houses rather than a single block. The current design follows lengthy negotiations from a scheme which was more Georgian in form and did not reflect Wantage vernacular.

6.5 Although largely three storey with some 3 ½ storey elements, the building takes account of the sloping land downwards away from Wallingford Street which mitigates the impact from the surrounding area. In addition the proposal sits opposite Waitrose which is a large bulky form with an uninterrupted flank wall opposite the site.

6.6 The proposed shop units fronting Wallingford Street reflect the design of the previously demolished units in order to preserve the character of the street scene in the conservation area. It is acknowledged that the Architects Panel suggested an alternative gateway approach for this location however it is considered that given the character of the previous units that this element should be retained. This part of the scheme also reflects the previous approval.

6.7 The Architects Panel also suggested an alternative treatment of the façade onto Stirlings Road with a blank wall rather than false domestic frontage to the car park, however given the blank wall to Waitrose opposite it is considered that this element should create some interest in the street scene, albeit with imitation windows. Railings are proposed in front with some landscaping to soften the impact. Currently there is a blank wall along the frontage therefore is considered that the proposal would enhance this part of the town and conservation area.

6.8 *Neighbour Amenity and neighbouring offices*

The site is largely surrounded by commercial development although there are some flats above shop units and residential buildings, a mix which reflects the town centre location. To the west is the Waitrose store with the car park to its rear, to the north there is Stirlings Road and car park to a former office building now converted to flats which lie adjacent to the north east corner of the site, Wallingford Street lies to the south and there is a car park and residential building to the east but far enough away so as not to be adversely impacted by the development.

6.9 The Waitrose delivery bay lies close to the northern end of the proposed building however an acoustic report has been submitted with the application demonstrating that the proposal would not be adversely affected subject to recommendations. This is the same situation as the approved scheme and it is not unusual to have such uses in close proximity in a town centre.

6.10 *Access and Highway considerations*

The application proposes access to the rear of the site along its northern boundary in a similar location to the approved scheme. The access serves open and undercroft parking providing 27 spaces. This equates to one space per flat and 3 visitor spaces which the County Engineer has accepted given the previous permission and town centre location. Amended plans have addressed concerns over the layout and additional cycle parking has been provided equating to 45 spaces distributed around the site.

6.11 It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of access and parking provision.

6.12 The County Engineer has requested tracking plans for deliveries within the site however given the undercroft nature of the access it is not envisaged that service or waste vehicles would enter the site. The waste storage areas can be accessed from outside the site and the shops would be serviced from the front as they previously were.

6.13 The application includes a proposal to widen the footway along the front of the site to approximately 2 metres to improve pedestrian accessibility. A condition is recommended to secure this.

6.14 *Drainage*

The Council drainage engineer has registered a holding objection as the proposal has not demonstrated an acceptable drainage solution. Thames water and the Environment Agency have raised no objections and additional information is awaited to clarify the proposal. An update on this will be provided at the meeting, however the site is located in the town centre with main drainage available and is not in an area liable to flooding.

6.15 *Trees*

The Council's tree officer has raised concerns over the impact of the parking spaces on the root protection areas of some trees on the site. The layout is similar to that of the approved scheme and it is considered that with sympathetic construction methods that the proposal can be accommodated without harm to the trees, particularly a walnut tree adjacent to the eastern site boundary. A condition requiring details is recommended.

6.16 *Contributions and Viability*

Given the scale of the development, the proposal is subject to contributions towards local services and facilities, public transport and road improvements, and the provision of 40% affordable housing. However, the applicants have not proposed any such provision based on the viability of the development. In such circumstances a full viability appraisal is required to demonstrate whether the scheme is viable or not.

6.17 The applicants have provided a report which, based on their assessment of the final value of the development that it is barely viable with no contributions or affordable housing and that with any of these requirements the scheme is rendered unviable. The report has been assessed by an independent consultant on behalf of the Council who have advised that this scheme is marginal..

6.18 This is a prominent vacant site in the town centre and therefore needs to be redeveloped in the interests of enhancing the appearance and vitality of the area. The scheme is relatively high density and cannot accommodate any additional units whilst achieving the required parking and amenity space therefore the viability situation cannot obviously be improved. However, the original planning approval has recently expired and in light of

this the appraisal is being run in the hope that the contribution to mitigate the effect of the scheme can be revised.

- 6.19 Bearing in mind the current housing shortfall in the District, the vacant and unsightly condition of the site and the sustainable location of the development, it is important that the scheme is delivered. The applicants have indicated they are keen to resolve these negotiations. An update on the outcome of the viability assessment and the proposed section 106 contributions will be reported to Committee verbally.

#### 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is located in a highly sustainable location in Wantage Town Centre, benefits from a previous, albeit expired, planning permission for a building of a similar form, and is acceptable in design, layout, access, parking and amenity terms. The scheme is recommended for approval subject to satisfactory resolution of the sec 106 negotiations.

#### 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended that Planning Permission is granted subject to a S106 Agreement and to the following conditions;**

1. TL1 – time limit
  3. List of approved plans
  4. MC2 – Submission of material samples and erection of panels on site.
  5. MC9 – Submission of building details - elevations at an appropriate scale to illustrate details of doors, windows and dormers, wall details (including decorative features arch, cill and lintol details and stone details) and eaves and ridge details.
  6. Details of any vents and flues etc.
  7. Details of new shop fronts.
  8. MC24 – Submission of drainage details
  9. Submission of sustainable drainage system.
  10. LS4 – Tree protection scheme during construction.
  11. Method statement for construction of the car park.
  12. LS1 – Landscaping scheme – submission
  13. LS2 – Landscaping scheme – Implementation
  14. Full details of external lighting on the building and within the car park.
  15. MC22 – Contaminated land assessment
  16. HY1 – Submission of access details including visibility splays
  17. Submission of construction traffic management plan.
  18. Submission of cycle parking details including stands and shelters.
  19. Proposed footpath widening works along Stirlings Road to be carried out prior to occupation of development.
  20. Submission of boundary details.
  21. Works to be carried out in accordance with the submitted noise assessment.
  22. Submission of archaeological assessment.
- Submission of finished slab levels.

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