

APPLICATION NO.	P13/V2490/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL
REGISTERED	2.12.2013
PARISH	SHRIVENHAM
WARD MEMBER(S)	Simon Howell Elaine Ware
APPLICANT	Charles Church and Hannick Homes
SITE	Land at Highworth Road, Shrivenham Oxfordshire
PROPOSAL	Erection of 35 dwellings with open space and associated infrastructure (as amended by drawings received 25 February 2014).
AMENDMENTS	Febrary 2104
GRID REFERENCE	423317/189224
OFFICER	Laura Hudson

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application relates to land to the north-western edge of Shrivenham contained between the existing built up area of the village and the main A420.

1.2 The site which extends to 1.69ha is relatively level paddock land used largely for grazing with an existing field access onto Highworth Road which bounds the north eastern edge of the site. The site is bounded to the south-east by the rear gardens of existing housing in Sandhill and Stallpits Road, and the narrow southern edge of the site abuts the end of Stallpits Road where the road terminates to become a footway. The A420 runs along the entire north-western site boundary but set at a much lower level within a cutting.

1.3 The site is wedge shaped in form at its widest adjacent to Highworth Road and then narrowing towards the south western edge where it abuts Stallpits Road.

1.4 The site is outside the village conservation area but falls within the lowland vale as defined on the local plan proposals map.

1.5 The application comes to Committee as the Parish Council object and more than four letters of objection have been received from local residents.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The application has been submitted to address the Councils five-year supply deficit which still exists notwithstanding the recent local plan consultation which due to its early stage currently holds very limited weight. The application follows a recently withdrawn scheme for 41 units.

2.2 The current application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 35 dwellings, two new access points and open space. Access to the site would be gained from a new access adjacent to the existing field access on Highworth Road at the north eastern end which would serve the majority of the development. A second access is proposed from the end of Stallpits Road to the south west which would serve 6 houses in a small cul de sac. There would be no vehicular link through the site however.

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- 2.3 The development would be linked by an area of public open space at its heart which would provide pedestrian links through the site and equipped play space. This is in addition to a smaller area of public open space and a separate toddler play area.
- 2.4 The application proposes 40% affordable housing amounting to 14 units in a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses. This accords with adopted Policy H17.
- 2.5 The proposed dwellings would be two storey but of varying heights and forms and in a mix of materials to reflect local vernacular. The 21 Market units are proposed in a mix of three and four bedroom units.
- 2.6 35 dwellings on a site measuring 1.69 hectares equates to a density of 20 dwellings per hectare.
- 2.7 The application is accompanied by relatively detailed landscaping drawings to demonstrate the mitigation proposals for the noise generated by the A420. These include the installation of a 2.8 m close boarded fence along the north western site boundary adjacent to the A420 which wraps around part of the north east and south western boundaries. The landscaping scheme proposed is designed to mitigate the visual impact of this prominent noise barrier.
- 2.8 The application was accompanied by a number of supporting documents including a Design and Access Statement, Landscape Statement, Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Impact Assessment, Air Quality Report, Transport Statement, Archaeology Assessment, Ecology Report, Residential Travel Plan, Services Appraisal, and Waste Management Plan.
- 2.9 The plans have been amended from those originally submitted to address concerns over the location of affordable housing, landscaping and some design changes. Extracts from the application drawings are **attached** at Appendix 1.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Shrivenham Parish Council – Object to both the original plans and the revised plans on a number of grounds including distance to the village centre, use of the land as a noise buffer, access concerns and increase in traffic, lack of smaller units, insufficient drainage and water capacity, and impact on village infrastructure. Their full comments on both sets of plans are **attached** at Appendix 2. **Contributions towards improvements to the village hall and other local facilities amounting to approximately £17,500.**

OCC Highways – No objections in relation to the new access onto Highworth Road subject to the 30mph zone being extended to include the access. Some concerns regarding the access onto Stallpits Road as currently proposed, however subject to further information no objection in principle. The required works include widening Stallpits Road adjacent to the access and the installation of a footway. An update will be provided at the meeting. No objections in principle to the development however in terms of the wider highway impact. Conditions recommended. **A public transport contribution is required of £35,000 and £10,000 towards two new bus stops.**

OCC Education – Based on the projected pupil numbers generated by this development no objections subject to a legal agreement. **Contributions required of £127,402 for primary provision, £175,666 (secondary) and £6,131 (special education needs).**

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OCC Property – No objections subject to **contributions to local facilities of £8,585 (Faringdon Library), £6,464 (Waste Management), £505 (Museums), £7,700 (Social and Health Care) and £1,056 (Adult learning).**

OCC Archaeology – No objections subject to conditions.

Thames Water Development Control – No objections to in terms of the sewage infrastructure capacity given the scale of the development. Initial concern over the capacity of the water supply however the applicants commissioned a flow and pressure investigation report from Thames Water which has confirmed that for 35 dwellings the network has sufficient capacity without requiring any offsite reinforcement.

Environment Agency - No objections.

Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council) – No objections subject to conditions.

Crime Prevention Design Adviser - No objections.

Landscape Architect - Vale of White Horse DC – The site is well enclosed with native tree planting and hedgerows on three sides. Comments in relation to the detail and amended plans received to address these in terms of boundary treatments, treatment of the open spaces, and planting plans. Amended plans have increased planting adjacent to the acoustic fence although some further details required. (Conditions in relation to boundary treatment and planting are recommended to address these remaining issues.)

Urban Design Officer – It would be preferable if the two accesses were linked to provide a through route. The previous application was more successful in layout terms however has been amended to address the noise constraints. The open space is fragmented and would be better consolidated and more central to the development. The acoustic fence would provide a harsh edge to the development unless suitably landscaped. Some of the parking areas have large areas of tarmac (the plans have been amended to address these with additional planting).

Waste Management Officer (District Council) – No objections subject to details of bin storage. **Contributions towards bin provision of £170 per unit (£5,950)**

Leisure Department (Vale of White Horse DC) – No objections subject to the **following contributions: £5,952 (football pitch), £2,184 (cricket pitch), £1,393 (rugby pitch), £2,073 (all weather pitch), £7,591 (tennis), £7,629 (multi use games area MUGA), £15,382 (pavilion/changing rooms), £15,963 (indoor sports hall), £12,474 (swimming pool), and £7,134 (general health and fitness).** A commuted sum for maintenance of the on site open space has also been requested however it is likely that this will be taken on by a management company and not the District or Parish Councils.

Health & Housing - Contamination - No objections.

Health & Housing - Env. Protection Team – Given noise levels generated by traffic from the A420 and the proximity of the development, measures have been incorporated into the scheme to mitigate the impact including the installation of an acoustic fence and setting the housing back 15 metres from the fence. No objections in relation to the layout and mitigation measures subject to conditions which include details of alternative ventilation required at first floor level only.

Housing Dev. (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse DC) - No objections as the proposal provides 40% affordable housing. The mix and distribution is acceptable.

Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No objections subject to the retention of the hedgerow along Stallpits Road.

Public Art – **required contribution of £300 per dwelling (£10,500)**

Street Naming and Numbering – **required contribution of £1,124**

Shared Grants Team – The village hall is in need of re-furbishment and therefore a contribution towards these works should be made (the parish have requested the same).

Letters of objection have been received from 8 local residents raising the following concerns:

- The proposal will have a significant visual impact for neighbouring houses.
- The access onto Highworth Road will be dangerous.
- There is already too much traffic in the area.
- The access onto Stallpits Road is not wide enough.
- Water pressure is currently low and sewage problems in area.
- Village infrastructure is insufficient to cope with additional development such as the school and surgery.
- The growth for the village is too much.
- Concern over the possibly pedestrian link to rear of 52/54 Stallpits road due as partly within private ownership.
- Stallpits Road is already busy.
- The application should not be considered in isolation but together with other developments in the village.
- The application site was designed as a noise buffer for existing houses.
- The developments are destroying the heritage and character of the village.
- The parking in the High Street is already over subscribed.
- The village has already has its share of new development recently.
- This development would lose the opportunity to provide slip roads onto the A420 and ease traffic in the village.
- The A420 is at saturation level.
- The development is not sustainable and the harm outweighs the benefits.
- The location of the site adjacent to the A420 is unsuitable for development.

One letter of support has been received from an initial objector, however the amended plans have addressed most of their concerns.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P13/V1381/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (27/09/2013)

Erection of 41 dwellings with open space and associated infrastructure

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 *Vale of White Horse Local Plan*

Policy H11 lists Shrivenham as one of the larger village sin the District with a

reasonable range of services and facilities. Development is permitted within the built up area of the village on sites capable of accommodating up to 15 dwellings subject to criteria including the impact of the proposal on the character of the area.

Policy GS2 indicates that outside the built-up areas of settlements new building will not be permitted unless it is on land identified for development or is in accordance with other specific policies.

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 DC6 requires hard and soft landscaping to protect and enhance the visual amenities of the site and surroundings and to maximise nature conservation and wildlife habitat creation.

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

Policy H17 requires 40% provision of affordable housing in schemes of more than 15 dwellings in the larger settlements.

Policy NE9 refers to development in the Lowland Vale as defined on the local plan proposals map.

5.2 *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. Paragraph 109 requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

Paragraphs 47 – 49 require local planning authorities to identify a five year supply of housing sites. Where this cannot be demonstrated relevant local plan policies for new housing development should not be considered up-to-date until the shortfall.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues to consider in determining this application are: i) The principle of the proposed development in this location in relation to planning policy; ii) five year housing supply and sustainability; iii) landscape and visual impact; iv) layout and design; v) access and highway considerations; vi) drainage and flooding issues; vii) Noise from the A420; viii) impact on neighbouring properties; ix) ecology and wildlife issues; x) archaeology; xi) contributions and delivery.

6.2 *Policy context*

The current Vale of White Horse Local Plan is the adopted development plan under which this proposal should first be considered. Although the Council have an emerging local plan being formulated in accordance with up to date Government guidance this

holds very little weight in the consideration of the current proposal given its early stage.

6.3 The site currently consists of undeveloped paddock land located beyond the main built-up area of the village. Although the site is visually well contained and relates well to the existing settlement pattern with residential development to the south east, the main A420 to the north west, and local roads/footways either end, the land clearly falls beyond the existing built up area of the village and is considered to form part of the open countryside in planning terms. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to adopted policies H11, GS1 and GS2 of the adopted local plan.

6.4 *Five year housing land supply and sustainability*

As has been well documented, the council does not currently have a five year supply of housing land, as required by paragraphs 47 – 49 of the NPPF. Where the council does not have a five year supply of housing land, the relevant local plan housing policies, including policies H11, GS1 and GS2, are not wholly consistent with the NPPF and, therefore, hold limited weight. The NPPF makes clear that, where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal. The proposed development, therefore, must be considered on its specific merits and, in particular, whether it constitutes a sustainable form of development as defined in the NPPF.

6.5 *Sustainable Development*

Shrivenham is classed as one of the larger village in the District with a good range of services and facilities centred mainly around the High Street area. The site is located immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area of Shrivenham and around 800 metres from the High Street therefore within easy walking distance of the village facilities including shops, bank, hairdresser and a number of local pubs/restaurants. In terms of the site's location and its relationship to the existing settlement pattern the proposal is considered a sustainable form of development under the terms of the NPPF.

6.6 There are concerns over the impact of the development cumulatively with other developments in the area, particularly on social infrastructure, which is another indicator of sustainability. Shrivenham currently has 934 households (based on the 2011 census). The application proposes 35 dwellings which as a percentage increase equates to 3.7%. Even together with the other recent approved developments currently totalling 203 units the increase in total number of households is still only 25% which your Officers consider is a manageable and proportionate increase given the current five year supply deficit coupled with the status of Shrivenham as one of the larger more sustainable settlements in the District. In addition the developers are contributing towards improvements to local services and facilities to mitigate the impact of the development.

6.7 Officers are mindful of other applications which are pending in the pipeline in addition to the current local plan consultation, which would result in a more significant increase in population in the village. However given the current policy situation, each development has to be considered on the merits of the proposal and the specific site constraints which exist. In negotiating infrastructure improvements the contribution each site can make to the necessary facilities is considered to ensure that cumulatively the social and economic impact of development on a community is acceptable. The County Council have raised no objections in relation to this application in terms of traffic, and local

services and facilities therefore refusal on these grounds, particularly with the necessary contributions, could not be justified.

6.8 *Visual and landscape impact*

The site is located immediately adjoining the existing built up area of the village and bounds residential development to the south east and other strong features on the other sides. There is a strong line of vegetation to the north west with the A420 beyond. Views from the adjacent main A420 are limited given the vegetation along the boundary and the difference in levels with the main road set into a cutting. The site is therefore visually well contained. In landscape terms from the wider area the proposed development would not appear prominent and would be set against the existing built up limits of the village. The proposal is not therefore considered harmful in landscape terms and would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the Lowland Vale.

6.9 Whilst there would be more local views of the development particularly from the village and access roads to the site, the development would be seen in the context of the existing built form and is not therefore considered harmful. The proposed development would undoubtedly be visible from existing housing adjoining the site however the impact of a proposal on a private view is not a material planning consideration.

6.10 The scheme proposes a relatively high 2.8m acoustic timber fence along the entire north western boundary with the main road, and which wraps around part of the north east and south west edges of the site. This is required in order to mitigate the noise from the main road on the proposed dwellings. Whilst this proposal addresses the noise impact, it is not desirable from a landscape point of view given its proximity to both the proposed dwellings and the A420. However the proposal includes a detailed landscape scheme which will help mitigate this prominent barrier. From the main road the fence will be screened by a dense buffer of mature trees and would be set at a higher level. From within the site and either end adjacent to Highworth Road and Stallpits Road, the landscaping is considered sufficient to soften its impact. The Council's landscape officer has raised no objections to the principle of the development and with the fence given the proposed planting therefore refusal on these grounds could not be justified. A landscaping condition is recommended to ensure the final details are acceptable.

6.11 *Layout and Design*

The proposed development has been designed to take account of the constraints of the site, particularly the linear form and requirement for a noise barrier and a 15 metre buffer. Concerns have been raised by the Council Urban Design Officer due to the lack of vehicular permeability and location of the open space. It is considered that in this instance a vehicular through route would reduce the amount of open space available further and create an undesirable short cut to Highworth Road. Pedestrian links through the site are still available. In terms of the open space there is a larger useable area in the middle of the development, however given the narrow shape of the site cannot be completely surrounded by housing although it is overlooked by plots 28, 29 and 30. The two smaller areas of open space help to break up the rest of the development and are therefore considered in this case to be acceptable. Amended plans have been received which re-align some of the units, increase landscaping to the parking areas and soften the impact of the acoustic fence in response to comments received.

6.12 The housing is proposed in a mix of sizes and designs to create a varied development. All the housing is two storey but in varying heights and some with projecting bay

windows to create some articulation. A mix of materials is proposed including brick and reconstituted stone although it is recommended that sample panels are erected on site for approval prior to commencement.

6.13 *Access and Highway Considerations*

Vehicular access to the site is proposed via a new access onto Highworth Road to the north-east and end of Stallpits Road to the south west. Access from Highworth Road is relatively easy to provide subject to relocating the 30mph sign and the provision of suitable visibility splays which can be achieved therefore a condition is recommended. Stallpits Road currently becomes a footway which links through to the A420 and footpaths beyond. The proposal would therefore require some widening of this path to deliver access through to the site however this can be achieved on highway land and therefore can be secured. Further details of this are required and a condition is recommended. The application proposes at least two parking spaces per dwelling, with the larger units having four.

6.14 Contributions have been requested towards public transport of £35,000 in addition to £10,000 towards two new bus stops.

6.15 There is concern locally over the impact of the proposed development on the capacity of the A420 however this has not been raised as an issue in relation to this particular development by the County Engineer. Until there is a specific proposal to improve this major route, it would not be reasonable to seek contributions towards upgrade works.

6.16 *Noise Impact from the A420*

One of the main constraints to development on the site is the A420 which is the main route between Oxford and Swindon. Traditionally this parcel of land has been seen as a buffer between existing development and the road. The previous application for 41 units whilst proposing a better layout in Urban design terms was unacceptable on amenity grounds due to the noise impact from this main road despite being set at a lower level to the site within a cutting.

6.17 The current application proposes an acoustic fence extending along the entire north western site boundary and wrapping some way around either end of the site in order to mitigate the noise impact. In addition the houses themselves are set 15 metres back from the fence with only open space, access roads and ancillary garage buildings proposed within this zone. The current layout and design has addressed previous concerns from the Environmental Health Officer and the development is considered acceptable on noise grounds.

6.18 A condition is recommended requiring the front facing first floor habitable rooms to utilise an alternative means of ventilation as the noise levels within these rooms would not meet current requirements. Whilst this is not ideal in this village location, there are no policy grounds to refuse this solution as it meets the requirements of Environmental Health legislation. In addition, it relates to only a small number of plots on the site. A similar solution was proposed at the neighbouring site on Colton Road which was recently granted outline permission.

6.19 *Drainage*

Whilst Thames Water have registered capacity concerns in relation to the existing waste water infrastructure on other developments in the village, given the small scale nature of this current proposal no objections have been raised.

- 6.20 Concerns were however raised in relation to the water supply. The applicants commissioned Thames Water to carry out a flow and pressure investigation which was completed in February this year which revealed that the network had sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development of 35 dwellings without off site re-enforcement.
- 6.21 The Councils Drainage Engineer has raised no objections in principle subject to conditions requiring full details of foul and surface water and details of the proposed sustainable drainage system.

6.22 *Neighbour Amenity*

The site is bounded to the south east by the houses in Sandhill, Stallpits Road and Highworth Road. However the layout has been designed to ensure that the relationship between existing and proposed houses is acceptable. The plans have been amended to address concerns and ensure that the scheme meets Council Design Guidance distances between existing and proposed units. A condition removing permitted development rights for the smaller units is recommended to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

- 6.23 One local resident has raised concern that the proposal would have a significant visual impact when viewed from neighbouring properties. As previously stated the site is visually well contained in terms of impact from the wider landscape, and local private views from individual properties are not matters which are material to the planning process. Refusal on these grounds could not therefore be justified.

6.24 *Ecology and Archaeology*

The application was accompanied by an ecological report which demonstrates that no protected species would be adversely affected by the development. The Council Ecologist has raised no objections to the development.

- 6.25 The application was also accompanied by an archaeological report which reveals some evidence of previous settlements. Conditions are recommended requiring a further written scheme of investigation prior to commencement to ensure the proper recording of any finds.

6.26 *Contributions and delivery*

The application includes 40% affordable housing in accordance with local plan policy H17. The plans have been amended to ensure that the affordable housing mix is acceptable and that it is distributed throughout the site so that it is indistinguishable from the market housing. In addition, the proposal includes a requirement to provide the necessary developer contributions. These are set out in bold in section 3 of the report.

- 6.27 Concern has been raised in relation to the local primary school capacity particularly as the existing site is constrained and there is little scope to extend. The County have not specifically stated that the school is currently at capacity, and have not objected given the small scale nature of this particular development. Given other development coming forward in Shrivenham and those proposal in the emerging Local Plan a new primary school is likely to be necessary in the village. Given the current uncertainty it would not be reasonable to refuse the application on education capacity grounds given the County are not objecting to the proposal and the numbers of pupils generated by the development are not significant. Contributions are sought which would either improve

local facilities or contribute towards a new school.

- 6.28 The site is deliverable and would therefore help contribute to the current housing land supply shortfall. An 12 month permission from the date of the decision is recommended to ensure the development is delivered quickly.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 It is accepted that the application does not accord with the development plan, however in light of the current housing land shortfall the proposal has to be assessed against the NPPF. The proposed development lies immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area of one of the larger villages of the district with its associated facilities, and the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the character of the area, amenity of neighbouring properties and highway network. Contributions towards local infrastructure would help mitigate the impact on local services and facilities.

7.2 It is therefore considered that the proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development within the definition of the NPPF, and the housing can be delivered quickly to help address the current housing land shortfall.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to a S106 Agreement to secure the affordable housing and contributions, and subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Time limit – Full Application (1 year from date of decision)**
- 2. Approved plans**
- 3. Material samples and panel on site**
- 4. Building details of the proposed dwellings**
- 5. MC24 - Drainage details (surface and foul)**
- 6. MC29 - Sustainable drainage scheme**
- 7. LS1 – Landscaping scheme (submission)**
- 8. LS2 – Landscaping scheme (implementation and management plan)**
- 9. LS4 – Tree protection**
- 10. Construction traffic management plan**
- 11. Provision of a Local Equipped Area of Play within the site**
- 12. Boundary treatment details**
- 13. Development in accordance with recommendations of noise report.**
- 14. Details of alternative ventilation to first floor.**
- 15. Provision of fire hydrants on site**

- 16. Written scheme of archaeological investigation.**
- 17. Full details of the proposed site accesses.**
- 18. Full details of improvements to Stallpits Road.**
- 19. Relocation of 30mph sign on Highworth Road.**
- 20. Removal of permitted development rights for extensions and outbuildings – plots 9-15 and 21-27.**
- 21. Removal of permitted development rights to prevent the conversion of garages without planning permission – all garages.**

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