

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/V0885/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	22.4.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	SHELLINGFORD
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Robert Sharp
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr & Mrs Paul Hatcher
<b>SITE</b>	Land adjacent to Woodlands Fernham Road Shellingford Faringdon
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Change of use from agricultural to residential and erection of two semi-detached four bedroomed dwellings with garages. (Re-submission of withdrawn application P13/V0357/FUL)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	431623/193609
<b>OFFICER</b>	Miss S Green

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### SUMMARY

The application is referred to committee as the land is owned by Councillor Robert Sharp and the applicant is a relative.

The proposal is for two, four-bedroom houses within a gap of open land in Shellingford.

The main issues are:

- The proposed development is considered to be outside the built-up area of the village, within an important gap
- The proposal development will set a precedent for further development in the open gap
- Development in this gap would be harmful to the rural landscape setting and character of the village
- Development in this gap would be harmful to the setting of the conservation area
- Notwithstanding the objection in principle to the development, it would also not provide an efficient use of land.
- There is no harm to neighbours' amenity or to highway safety.

The recommendation is for refusal.

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site is located within the settlement of Shellingford. A location plan showing the site is **attached** at Appendix 1. The built form of Shellingford is essentially in two distinct parts - the historic older part along Church Street, which is within the conservation area, and the later housing along Fernham Road. The two areas are separated by an open gap. The site is within this gap.

1.2 The application is referred to committee as the land is owned by Councillor Robert Sharp and the applicant is a relative.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of two semi-detached, four-bedroom properties. The houses would front Fernham Road and would be separated from the nearest property Woodlands by 28m. Access to both would be via a new access point from Fernham Road. Copies of the plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Conservation Officer Vale – Object (reasons outlined in section 6 below)

County Highway Officer – No objection subject to conditions

Shellingford Parish Council – Object. Concerns over further development, general feeling would damage the view of the other side of the village.

Neighbour Approve (2)

- That development will be lived in by local family is to be welcomed;
- Wide architectural styles along road, proposal in keeping
- National shortage of housing especially in rural areas; would have very little impact on village as a whole, design in keeping

Neighbour Object (3)

- Additional traffic, noise; make exit from Church Street more dangerous;
- Reduce division between older Church Street and newer Fernham Road section reducing house prices;
- Concern new infill will set precedent for future development along Fernham Road/B4508
- Doesn't include shared ownership schemes which would help young families move to village
- Out of keeping with neighbouring properties of cottages and small houses; will stand out, far from blend in

Neighbour comments (2)

- No modest sized houses in village; important new housing is in keeping; believe development would be great benefit to village help keeping younger generations within area.
- Gap between conservation area and development is a positive, design in keeping. Houses not low cost; no objection in principle but concerned would set precedent for more infill on Fernham Road.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P13/V0357/FUL](#) - Withdrawn (26/04/2013)  
Change of use from agricultural to residential; Erection of Two, semi-detached, four bedroomed dwellings with garages.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 Adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;
- DC1 - Design
  - DC5 - Access
  - DC6 - Landscaping
  - DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
  - GS2 - Development in the Countryside
  - H12 - Development in the Smaller Villages
  - H13 - Development Elsewhere
  - HE1 – Preservation and Enhancement

H15 – Housing Densities

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)  
Planning Practise Guidance (March 2014)  
Residential Design Guide (SPD adopted 2009)

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main planning considerations are the following:

6.2 Principle

Shellingford would fall under policy H12 of the local plan. However due to the lack of a 5 year housing supply, this policy is not fully consistent with the NPPF. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF, the policy has little weight and new housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is made up of three strands – economic, social and environmental.

6.3 Shellingford has a small number of services and facilities which means it falls under the smaller village category. In recognition of this, policy H12 allows for a small limited amount of housing in such settlements. The NPPF also supports limited new housing in rural areas. In locational terms, some limited new housing would be supported in Shellingford.

6.4 Were it fully in force policy H12 would seek to restrict new housing to within the existing built up area of the settlement. This is both to control the number of opportunities for new housing, and to protect the rural setting of villages and the character of the surrounding countryside. Protection of the countryside is also a priority in the NPPF. This site is bordered on three sides by open fields and there is a substantial gap to the nearest dwelling, Woodlands. Therefore the site cannot be said to be infill or within the built-up area of the village.

6.5 The character of Shellingford is quite distinct, with the historic part along Church Street and the later housing along Fernham Road. Development in the gap between the two would consolidate these two areas of development. The gap between them is very open and highly visible and offers views to the fields beyond. A public footpath runs to the north and the site would be in full view from this. In your officers' view, development on the site would erode this open gap and set a precedent for future development. This would be harmful to the character of the area and would fail the environmental strand of sustainable development defined in the NPPF.

6.6 Notwithstanding the above, if the site were considered suitable for development, policy H12 sets out that up to four small dwellings can be permitted. The supporting text to the policy explains that this means schemes may include dwellings which are not overly large of up to three bedrooms where this is consistent with the objective for widening housing opportunity and choice. Restricting the number of dwellings is consistent with restraining the level of development in less sustainable areas, whilst supporting rural communities. Policy H15 seeks an efficient use of land recognising the balance to be struck against to respect the unique character of rural settlements.

6.7 The proposal includes two, four-bedroom dwellings on a plot of 0.15ha (a density of approximately 14 dwellings per hectare). Should members consider that the site is suitable for new housing, then officers would advise that a more efficient use of the land for this purpose should be considered. Existing housing along this side of Fernham Road is much closer together than this proposal is to the nearest property. The gap of 28m between the proposal and the nearest dwelling, Woodlands could potentially be

considered an infill plot for further housing. Overall, officers consider the site could accommodate more dwellings and still accord with the density and character of existing frontage development. The threshold for securing affordable housing is five and policy H15 requires examination of all new housing proposals to ensure that affordable housing cannot be secured.

6.8 The provision of two, relatively large four-bedroom properties does not accord with policy H12 definition of small dwellings and does not make the most efficient use of the land if it is to be developed.

6.9 Setting of conservation area

The village conservation area includes the properties along Church Street and the farm buildings and land to the north of the application site. The site and the gap are outside the conservation area.

6.10 The NPPF sets out that in determining planning applications planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. It defines the setting of a heritage asset as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.

6.11 The recently published Planning Practise Guidance sets out:

*'The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.'*

*'When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.'*

6.12 Policy HE1 is fully consistent with the NPPF and only permits development where it preserves or enhances the established character and appearance of the area. It continues that development will only be permitted in areas such as gaps between buildings or other open spaces where it can be shown that these areas do not make a positive contribution to the conservation area's special interest, including its relationship with its landscape or views into or out from the conservation area, which would be damaged or lost.

6.13 The council's conservation officer has visited the site. In her view the site forms an important gap between the historic core of the village clustered around the church and the larger houses and outlying cottages along Fernham Road. The land in the gap forms part of the wider landscape which contributes to views to and from the conservation area and is a significant attribute to its setting. This proposal would erode its rural setting and would not preserve or enhance its character.

6.14 The implications of cumulative change needs to be considered. Permitting development within this historic gap, would in your officers view, make it difficult to resist further development alongside or on the opposite side of the road. The development would therefore set a precedent for further development. The cumulative impact of this would be the further erosion of open space and further harm to the setting of the conservation

area.

6.15 The proposal is therefore contrary to policy HE1, to the NPPF and to the Planning Practise Guidance

6.16 Design

Although the proposed dwellings have four bedrooms the elevations have been designed with dormer style windows and gables in order to try to reduce the bulk of the buildings. There is a mixture of building styles and sizes within the housing along Fernham Road. Seen against this housing, the design *per se* is not considered to be out of keeping.

6.17 Highways

A new access is proposed off the Fernham Road to serve both dwellings. The highway officer has commented with regard to the width of the access being too wide and this and the gates should be revised. Such an agreement on access details could potentially secured by a condition. Visibility splays for the dwellings can be achieved and could be secured by condition.

6.18 Amenity

Given the distance of the dwellings to the nearest neighbouring properties, it is not considered the development will cause harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

6.19 Other

Some of the support for the application is centred on it being for local families. However there is no control over who will occupy the dwellings and they are not offered as affordable housing (social rented/shared ownership). Officers consider this is not a material planning consideration.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposal is considered to be harmful to the rural and landscape setting of the village and the setting of the village conservation area. It would also set a precedent for further development. It is therefore contrary to the relevant policies of the adopted local plan, the NPPF and the Planning Practise Guidance.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

**Refusal of Planning Permission for the following reasons:**

**1 : The site is outside of the built up area of the village and is part of an important open gap for the rural seting of the village. The development would lead to an erosion of this gap and detract from the rural and landscape character of the area. The development is therefore not accepable in principle. The gap significantly contributes to the setting of the village conservation area and its development would be harmful to its setting. It would also set a precedent for further development of the gap which would further harm the rural setting of the village and the setting of the conservation area. The development would be contrary to Policies GS2, H12 and HE1 and the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Policy Guidance.**

**2 : Notwithstanding refusal reason 1, the proposal does not make the most efficent use of land in acordance with policy H12 and H15.**

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