

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/V1196/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	24.6.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	ABINGDON
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Jason Fiddaman, Aidan Melville
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Taylor Wimpey
<b>SITE</b>	Land East of Drayton Road Abingdon
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	158 residential dwellings, open space, a new access off Drayton Road (to include the removal of 7 Tree Preservation Ordered Lime Trees), engineering works, infrastructure works, car parking. and lighting.(as amended by drawings received 13 October 2014)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	448564/195747
<b>OFFICER</b>	Martin Deans

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## SUMMARY

This application seeks to make amendments to the housing scheme allowed on appeal in July 2013. The application is for one less dwelling with different building types and a revised layout. In most other respects the proposal is identical to the appeal proposal. The main issues are –

- The principle and location of the proposal in light of the five year supply shortfall
- The impact on the local road network bearing in mind the Grampian condition imposed by the appeal inspector regarding pedestrian crossings in Marcham Road and Ock Street
- The impact on the amenity of the area, including the lime trees on the Drayton Road frontage which are subject to a tree preservation order, and the nearby designated heritage assets
- The effect on neighbours
- The implications for local services, drainage, ecology and archaeology

Officers have carefully considered the proposal in light of the appeal decision and consider that there are no issues on which the proposal could be reasonably refused. The recommendation is to delegate authority to grant planning permission subject to the completion of section 106 agreements.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for amendments to the housing scheme allowed on appeal in July 2013 (ref P12/V2266/FUL). The appeal scheme was for 159 dwellings whereas the current application is for 158 dwellings. The site is a broadly rectangular field approximately 5.1 hectares in area. It lies immediately to the south of existing dwellings in Virginia Way. A location plan is **attached** at appendix 1.
- 1.2 The site is bounded to the west by Drayton Road, to the south by Stonehill House, a grade II listed house in grounds, and to the east by agricultural fields. There is a slope on the site which falls relatively gently from south-west to north-east. On the west boundary with Drayton Road is a row of 47 mature lime trees which are subject to a

Tree Preservation Order. Outside the site, alongside Drayton Road, is a metalled footpath which carries on into the town.

- 1.3 The application comes to committee because Abingdon Town Council and numerous local residents object.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 It is proposed to build 158 dwellings with a new vehicular access from Drayton Road. The new access is in exactly the same position as the access allowed in the appeal. It was accepted at the appeal that up to 10 of the 47 lime trees would be removed to make way for the new access and this is also true of the current proposal. The site layout and some of the detailed application drawings are **attached** at appendix 2. For comparison, the site layout plan for the appeal scheme and the inspector’s decision are **attached** at appendix 3.

2.2 The proposal provides 40% affordable housing in accordance with policy H17 of the adopted local plan. The affordable housing will be in five groups spread across the site. The proposed mix of all of the housing compared to the appeal scheme is as follows:-

<u>Current Application</u>	<u>Appeal Scheme</u>
12 x 1-bedroom	8 x 1-bedroom
57 x 2-bedroom	39 x 2-bedroom
29 x 3-bedroom	81 x 3-bedroom
60 x 4-bedroom	23 x 4-bedroom
	8 x 5-bedroom
<b>Total</b> 158 dwellings 453 bedrooms	<b>Total</b> 159 dwellings 461 bedrooms

2.3 As with the appeal scheme the layout incorporates two areas of public open space. The total area of public open space is the same. The scale of the proposed housing will be mainly two storeys with three buildings that are three storeys. Two of the three storey buildings will enclose a focal space near to the main entrance, while the third will provide a focal point near the middle of the site.

2.4 A total of 336 parking spaces will be provided. This equates to one space per 1-bedroom dwelling, two spaces for each 2- and 3-bedroom dwelling and 2.5 spaces on average for each 4-bedroom dwelling.

2.5 The mature trees surrounding the site are to be retained. These include the 37 tpo’d lime trees to remain on the west boundary.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Abingdon Town Council** – objects to the application. The town council comments are **attached** at appendix 4.

3.2 **Drayton Parish Council** objects to the application and its comments are **attached** at appendix 5.

- 3.3 **Local Residents / Interested Parties** – 92 letters of objection have been submitted. These include a letter of objection from MP Nicola Blackwood, and one from ward councillor Jason Fiddaman. The grounds for objection are as follows:-
- Additional traffic generation and congestion on the road network
  - Traffic report is from 2012 and cannot be relied upon
  - The movement of the crossing in Marcham Road and the creation of a new crossing in Ock Street will not resolve traffic problems
  - Proposed bus stops will worsen delays
  - Impact on air pollution
  - Impact on local services which are at capacity
  - Impact on protected species and on the wildlife sanctuary at Stonehill House underestimated
  - Impact on flooding
  - Precedent for further housing south of Abingdon
  - Three storey flats overlooking dwellings in Virginia Way
  - The density is too high
  - Impact of pumping station next to existing housing
  - It is not likely future residents will work in Abingdon
  - The type of housing is not energy efficient and occupants will rely on the car
- 3.4 **County Highways Authority** – in light of the inspector's conclusions on traffic in the appeal, the county highways authority raise no objection subject to conditions including the Grampian condition on the approved works to the pedestrian crossings in Marcham Road and Ock Street. The full comments are **attached** at appendix 6
- 3.5 **Environment Agency** – no objection subject to compliance with the agreed flood risk assessment
- 3.6 **Thames Water** - No objection subject to a Grampian condition to secure off-site improvements to the local sewer network prior to the occupation of any dwelling
- 3.7 **Drainage Engineer** - No objections subject to the implementation of the agreed surface water drainage strategy
- 3.8 **Urban Design Officer** – Initial objections have been overcome through amendments that have been made to the proposed layout and there is now no objection
- 3.9 **Landscape Officer** had objections to the original layout which has led to amendments
- 3.10 **Forestry Officer** had objections to the original plans which have led to amendments
- 3.11 **Countryside Officer** – no objections subject to conditions to protect foraging bats and badgers
- 3.12 **Health & Housing - Contaminated Land** - No objections
- 3.13 **Health & Housing - Air Quality** - No objection but requests details for the distribution of electric charging points to encourage electric vehicle usage
- 3.14 **English Heritage** - No objection regarding impact on the scheduled ancient monument to the west of Drayton Road known as Sutton Wick Settlement Site

- 3.15 **Waste Management Officer** - No objection subject to a financial contribution of £27,030 to new recycling bins

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P12/V2266/FUL](#) - Refused (24/01/2013) - Approved on appeal (11/07/2013)  
Erection of 160 residential dwellings, with associated open space, new access off Drayton Road, engineering (including ground modelling) works, infrastructure works (including drainage works, utilities provision and site reclamation), car parking and lighting.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **National Planning Policy Framework, 2012**

The following paragraphs of the NPPF are relevant to the application:-

- 14 – the presumption in favour of sustainable development
- 17 – core planning principles
- 32 – developments that generate significant amounts of traffic
- 34 – minimising the need to travel
- 49 – the supply of housing
- 50 – the mix of housing
- 56 – good design
- 70 & 72 – social infrastructure
- 109 – the natural environment

5.2 **Planning Practise Guidance, 2014**

The Planning Practise Guidance includes the following relevant subjects:-

- Design
- Open space, sports and recreation
- Travel plans and transport assessments

5.3 **The adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011**

The adopted local plan has saved policies which are relevant to the application and consistent with the NPPF. These are:-

- DC1 – design
- DC5 – access and parking
- DC6 - landscaping
- DC8 – infrastructure and servicing
- DC9 – Impact on neighbours
- NE9 – development in the Lowland Vale
- H17 – affordable housing
- H23 – open space with new housing development

5.4 **Draft Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1**

The pre-submission version of the draft local plan was subject to public consultation during November and December 2014. It is intended to submit the draft local plan to the secretary of state in March 2015. Following paragraph 216 of the NPPF the policies of the draft local plan currently have little weight.

5.5 **Vale of White Horse Design Guide, March 2014**

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 In the appeal decision of January 2013 the inspector dealt with the following matters – the need for housing, the location of the site outside the built limit of the town, the traffic implications, landscape and visual effects, drainage, affordable housing and off-site infrastructure. The same format will be used for this report.

6.2 It should be noted that the inspector's decision to grant planning permission on 11 July 2013 contained a three year time limit. The planning permission can be implemented any time up to 10 July 2016. This means that the planning permission is extant and is the acknowledged "fall-back" position for assessing the current application. This is an important material consideration to which significant weight should be attached

6.3 *The Need for Housing*

In the appeal the inspector noted that in 2013 the council did not have a five-year supply of housing land. Based on the latest objectively assessed need for housing, contained in the SHMAA, this remains the case. In accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF the relevant policies relating to housing supply in the adopted local plan (policies GS2, H10 and H13) have little weight. Following paragraph 14 of the NPPF this means planning permission should be granted for the application unless the adverse impacts would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits.

6.4 *The Location Outside the Built Limit*

The inspector concluded that, although outside the existing built limit of Abingdon, the site was reasonably well located for access to services and facilities and that use of no-car modes of transport could be maximised. Two new bus stops on Drayton Road are included in the current proposal as they were in the appeal scheme. Officers consider there has been no change in material circumstances to warrant a departure from the inspector's findings on this issue.

6.5 *Traffic Implications*

Policy DC5 of the adopted local plan requires that the traffic implications of new development are acceptable. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that applications should only be refused on traffic grounds if the effects are "severe". At the appeal it was agreed that the existing peak hour traffic queues northbound into town on Drayton Road were serious and that, without any form of mitigation, the impact of the additional traffic from the new housing would be severe.

6.6 The inspector considered quantitative evidence from surveys and from modelling of traffic flows on the road network. Various options designed to reduce the impact were put forward. Attention focussed on the blocking effect of stationary traffic in Marcham Road and Ock Street at peak times caused by queuing at the pedestrian crossing in Marcham Road when the crossing was in frequent use by pedestrians.

6.7 Based on the quantitative evidence he concluded that the option of relocating the existing pedestrian crossing on Marcham Road further to the west together with the introduction of a new pedestrian crossing east of the mini-roundabouts in Ock Street would materially reduce the blocking effect, allow more vehicles to leave Drayton Road, and thereby adequately counteract the addition of traffic to the peak hour queue. He made the works to the crossings a Grampian condition of the planning permission.

6.8 Since the decision in July 2013 officers consider there has been no material change to

traffic conditions in Drayton Road. There is no alternative quantitative assessment of local traffic conditions to counter the evidence presented to the appeal. The current proposal is for one less dwelling and for fewer bedrooms than the appeal proposal. Therefore the traffic generation will be no worse. On 16 December 2014 Oxfordshire County Council agreed to an order to make the changes to the pedestrian crossings envisaged by the inspector. Consequently officers consider it would not be reasonable to refuse the current application on the grounds of traffic impact.

6.9 *Landscape and Visual Effects*

Policy DC1 of the adopted local plan requires that new development is of a high standard of design. The layout of the scheme and the design of some of the individual units have been amended following discussions with the urban design officer who is now satisfied with the proposal. The general scale of the proposal is two storeys with isolated three storey buildings to add focal points. This approach is considered to be acceptable.

6.10 Policy DC9 ensures that the impact of new development on the amenities of neighbours is satisfactory. The adopted residential design guide stipulates minimum distances for new housing development to maintain privacy and outlook. The minimum distance between principal windows is 21 metres. The neighbours most affected by the proposal are in Virginia Way on the north boundary of the site. Distances between new and existing dwellings are approximately 30 metres. As this exceeds the minimum distance, there will be no harm to neighbours.

6.11 Policy DC6 covers the landscaping of new developments and policy NE9 looks to protect the character of the Lowland Vale local landscape designation. At the appeal the inspector concluded that the site was sufficiently well screened to minimise the impact of the development on the wider landscape, including Stonehill House to the south. Notwithstanding the loss of some of the roadside lime trees for the new access he considered they would continue to make an important contribution to local amenity.

6.12 Officers consider there has been no material change in relevant considerations that would allow a departure from the inspector's conclusions. The forestry officer has examined the application and has sought amendments to the layout to safeguard the existing mature trees. In this regard the current scheme is an improvement over the appeal scheme.

6.13 There is a scheduled monument on the west side of Drayton Road known as Sutton Wick Settlement Site. The monument is below ground. English Heritage has examined the current proposal and considers there will be no harm to the setting of the monument

6.14 *Ecology*

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF covers the impact of development on the natural environment. Ecological surveys have been submitted and the council's ecologist has visited the site to verify these. Whilst it is noted that the site is used by foraging badgers and by transiting bats it contains no habitats for protected species. Consequently it is considered the impact of the proposal will be acceptable subject to conditions to ensure that the identified species are protected during the construction process.

6.15 *Archaeology*

The site has been subject to archaeological investigation. Although this has revealed evidence of late prehistoric settlement and activity there is no demonstrable evidence of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument. The county archaeologist therefore recommends conditions for a written scheme of investigation to be agreed for staged archaeological mitigation and recording prior to development.

6.16 *Drainage*

As with the appeal scheme the surface water drainage strategy in the current proposal is to use a mixture of permeable paving and an infiltration basin under the eastern area of public open space to control surface water flows. This is designed to prevent surface water flooding and is acceptable to the Environment Agency. The submitted flood risk assessment notes that the site is in flood zone 1 which is the least at risk from river flooding.

6.17 With regard to waste water drainage the applicants have been in discussion with Thames Water. Two options have been identified for off-site improvements to the sewer network to off-set the impact of the development, which will be subject to a Grampian condition.

6.18 *Affordable Housing*

The applicants have liaised with the council's housing officers on the provision of affordable housing. Both the tenure mix and the spread of affordable housing through the site are acceptable to housing officers. The affordable housing will be secured through a section 106 obligation.

6.19 *Off-site Infrastructure*

Policy DC8 requires that the impact of any development on local services and facilities is mitigated. Section 106 obligations are in preparation with both the district council and the county council to secure contributions to off-set the impact of the development. At the time of writing the report some of the contributions requested by the county council were subject to negotiation. At this time the figures are as follows:-

District Council

Leisure centre	£110,832
Tennis courts	£52,422
Football pitches	£83,342
Rugby pitches	£57,351
Artificial pitch	£8,674
Waste	£27,030
Work of art	£42,800
Street naming	£1,623
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£384,074</b>

County Council

Primary schools	£544,354
Secondary schools	£668,870
Special educational needs	£30,656
Libraries	£35,530
Central library	£7,168
Science Vale transport	£432,446
Science Vale bus network	£124,030
Bus stops	£20,000
Travel plan monitoring	£1,240
Waste management	£26,752
Youth services	£48,730
County museum	£2,090
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,941,866</b>

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The current application has to be assessed in light of the extant planning permission for 159 dwellings granted on appeal in July 2013. Officers have carefully assessed the relevant issues in light of the appeal decision. There is no evidence to suggest that the conclusions reached by the inspector in terms of the impact on peak traffic congestion in the vicinity can be successfully challenged.

7.2 Similarly there is no material fact to support a departure from the conclusions reached by the inspector in terms of landscape and visual impact or with respect to drainage. The impact of the proposal on local services and facilities can be addressed through financial contributions.

7.3 Consequently officers consider there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal which will provide housing to help meet the five-year supply shortfall. The proposal is considered to be in accord with relevant policies of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 and with the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning in consultation with the chairman subject to:**

**i) Completion of section 106 agreements with the district council and county council to secure affordable housing and financial contributions to necessary off-site infrastructure.**

**ii) Conditions as follows:**

**1 : Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission.**

**2 : Approved plans.**

**3 : Materials as approved.**

**4 : LS2 – Implementation of approved landscaping.**

**5 : LS4 – Implementation of approved tree protection.**

**6 : RE8 – Boundary treatments.**

**7 : HY3 – New access in accordance with approved plan.**

**8 : HY9 – Car parking in accordance with approved plan.**

**9 : HY13 – Estate road prior to occupation of dwellings.**

**10 : Construction Traffic Management Plan.**

**11: Bin storage as on approved plan.**

**12 : Scheme for electric charging points to be submitted and agreed.**

**13 : MC25 – Surface water drainage in accordance with approved strategy.**

**14 : MC26 – Foul drainage scheme to be approved and implemented prior to first occupation.**

**15 : No development shall take place until the approved highway works relating to the pedestrian crossings in Marcham Road and Ock Street have been implemented.**

**16 : Prior to commencement of development a mitigation strategy for bats shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved strategy.**

**17 : Prior to the first occupation of the development a lighting strategy for bats using the site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. No external lighting shall be installed other than**



in accordance with the approved lighting strategy.

18 : Prior to commencement of development a mitigation strategy for badgers shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved strategy.

19 : CN11 – Scheme of archaeological investigation.

20 : CN12 – Implementation of archaeological investigation/recording.

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