

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	P14/V1952/FUL
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	Major
<b>REGISTERED</b>	08.09.14
<b>PARISH</b>	Steventon
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Matthew Barber
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Gladman Developments Ltd
<b>SITE</b>	Land at Barnett Road, Steventon
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Change of use from agricultural to residential and the erection of 65 dwellings including access, landscape and associated works (as amended by plans submitted 01.05.15)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	Yes – received 01.05.15
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	446877/192367
<b>OFFICER</b>	Laura Hudson

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## SUMMARY

This application comes to Committee due to objections from Steventon Parish Council and 13 local residents.

The proposal is for full planning permission for the erection of 65 dwellings and associated infrastructure with access onto Barnett Road via a previous phase of development of 50 units currently under construction.

The proposal has been submitted to address the Councils five year supply housing deficit and has been amended to address comments received.

The main issues to consider are:

- The principle of the proposed development in this location in relation to planning policy context.
- Whether the proposal is suitable to meet the five year housing supply deficit in terms of the sustainability of the site.
- The impact of the development on the wider landscape and the Lowland Vale.
- The acceptability of the proposed layout and design of the development within its context in urban design terms.
- The impact of the proposed dwellings on the residential amenity of existing adjacent dwellings.
- Whether the proposed access vehicular access onto Barnett Road is acceptable for the proposed development and the wider impact on the highway network and the acceptability of the proposed improvement works.
- Impact of the development on the local drainage network and implications for surface water and flood risk.
- Delivery of the development and S106 contributions.

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and S106 Agreements

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to land off Barnett Road, Steventon which lies adjacent to the north west edge of the village adjoining existing houses in Hanney Road and Field Gardens. The site wraps around the outer edge of a previous development of 50 dwellings which is currently under construction.
- 1.2 The site currently forms part of a larger swathe of agricultural land which is relatively flat and sits at the same level as the adjoining residential area. The site extends to approximately 4.46 hectares and lies within the Lowland Vale and Area for Landscape Enhancement as defined in the local plan proposals map. The shape of the site is dictated by an underground gas pipeline which runs along the north west boundary preventing development beyond the proposed red line.
- 1.3 The site is bounded to the north by open agricultural land, to the east by a field drainage ditch and existing dwellings in Field Gardens beyond, the far western edge by an existing access track to an electricity substation, the southern western edge abuts the rear gardens of Hanney Road, and the remaining southern edge by dwellings currently under construction (these will be referred to as phase 1 in the report).
- 1.4 The application comes to Committee as Steventon Parish Council objects and 13 letters of objections have been received from local residents.

## 2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks full planning permission for 65 dwellings and associated estate roads, parking, landscaping, and open space. The application has been submitted to help address the Councils five year housing supply deficit and is a departure from the development plan.
- 2.2 Access to the site would be gained through phase 1 of the development consisting of 50 dwellings and then via Barnett Road which is a cul de sac serving 22 dwellings. The application includes proposals to improve the road with some widening works to enable vehicles to park on the street as they currently do without obstructing the carriageway.
- 2.3 Phase 1 of the development was bounded on the outside edge with a landscape buffer to the open countryside beyond. The layout for phase 2 proposes two areas of development fronting onto this buffer which creates a linear park running through the heart of the development. Footpaths are proposed through this large area of open space providing links through the development.
- 2.4 The two areas of development are designed in perimeter blocks with houses fronting outwards onto a series of linked streets which create permeability through the development. Rear gardens back onto one another providing security.
- 2.5 Parking is provided on each plot thereby preventing the need for rear parking courts. The scheme includes visitor parking.
- 2.6 The developable area of housing amounts to 2.94 hectares which for 65 dwellings equates to a density of around 22 dwellings per hectare. The site as a whole is 4.43ha, including the areas of open space, equates to a density of 15 dwellings per hectare. The dwellings would be proposed in a mix of one, two, three, four and five bedroom units with 40% affordable.

2.7 The plans have been amended from those originally submitted to address concerns relating to neighbour impact, layout and housing mix.

2.8 The following documents have been submitted in support of the application and updated throughout the process.

- Planning statement
- Design and access statement
- Transport statement
- Framework Travel plan
- Flood risk assessment
- Sewer impact study
- Landscape and visual impact assessment
- Arboricultural assessment
- Agricultural use and quality report
- Ecological assessment
- Statement of community involvement
- Archaeological desk based assessment
- Geo environmental assessment
- Noise assessment
- Air quality assessment
- Socio economic report

2.9 Extracts from the application drawings are **attached** at Appendix 1.

### 3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Below is a summary of the responses received to both the original plans and the amendments. A full copy of all the comments made can be viewed online at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk).

<p>Parish/Town Council</p>	<p>Object to amended plans. <i>“Drainage has not been tested or has Thames Water agreed a method of disposal of both foul and surface water. Threat to existing dwellings of flood and no provision of for evacuation of the site. The traffic survey and number of cars involved has been to be inaccurate, the illustrated boundaries are questionable, which throws doubts on the development as a whole. An Environmental Impact Assessment should be done as the total area of development makes it a requirement. This is not sustainable development.”</i></p> <p>Objections on the original plans also raising the same concerns in addition to school capacity, cumulative development in the village, over development of the site, and inappropriate mix.</p>
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Neighbours	<p>13 letters of objection have been received. The concerns raised may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local infrastructure cannot cope.</li> <li>• The village already has too many houses.</li> <li>• The road junction with Hanney Road and the High Street is already a problem.</li> <li>• The local bus service is poor.</li> <li>• The proposal will increase flood risk.</li> <li>• The proposal will result in loss of light to neighbouring properties.</li> <li>• The proposal will result in overlooking neighbouring properties.</li> <li>• An Environment Impact Assessment should have been submitted.</li> <li>• The local road system cannot take any further development.</li> <li>• Footpath links to the village are poor.</li> <li>• The field is occupied by significant wildlife.</li> <li>• Agricultural land should be safeguarded.</li> <li>• The proposal is contrary to the adopted local plan.</li> <li>• The submitted transport study is inaccurate.</li> <li>• There are no traffic calming measures proposed for the area.</li> <li>• The development should have more than one vehicle access.</li> <li>• Why wasn't the development built in one phase?</li> <li>• Phase 1 should not set a precedent for phase 2.</li> <li>• The sewage system cannot cope with the increase in development.</li> <li>• How will the drainage ditch be maintained?</li> <li>• The red line is in the wrong place on the amended plans.</li> <li>• The proposed dwellings are too high.</li> </ul>
Oxfordshire County Council One Voice	Overall no objections.
OCC Transport	No objections subject to conditions.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification of the parking provision required.</li> <li>• Contributions to public transport, transport infrastructure and travel plan monitoring required.</li> <li>• Would be better if additional pedestrian links could be provided.</li> <li>• The upgrading of Barnett Road secured as part of phase 1 makes the access appropriate for the development as a whole.</li> <li>• The footway on Hanney Road should be upgraded.</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossing points on Hanney Road secured as part of phase 1 are welcomed.</li> <li>• The impact of the development on the wider network is acceptable.</li> </ul>
OCC Education	No objections subject to contributions towards primary and secondary education provision.
OCC Property	No objections – no contributions required due to S106 pooling issues.
OCC Archaeology	No objections subject to conditions requiring a written scheme of investigation.
Thames Water	No objections subject to conditions to ensure that the foul water drainage network is upgraded as currently an inability to cope with the proposed additional properties. (A sewer impact study has been carried out and sets out a choice of upgrade solutions to address the issue – this can be secured by condition.)
Environment Agency	No objections subject to conditions.
Council Drainage Engineer	No objections subject to conditions.
Environmental Health	No objections.
Landscape Officer	No objections in principle – the public open space needs to be planned to link both developments to create an interesting open space. Planting details needs to be submitted.

Urban Design Officer	No objections. Regrettable that phases 1 and 2 could not be designed as a whole. Additional vehicular and pedestrian links should be explored in the interests of permeability. The street scape is broken up with large areas of hardstanding to provide access to garage, and the communal parking areas could be softened with landscaping. (Amended plans have been submitted to address some of these concerns).
Waste	No objections subject to contributions towards cost of bin provision.
Housing Officer	The affordable housing mix should be changed to meet council requirements and concerns over the market housing mix. (The plans have been amended to address this and the mix meets council requirements.) The affordable housing distribution is acceptable.
Leisure Consultant	Recommended contributions to leisure facilities.
Countryside Officer	No objections. The application site is dominated by an arable field which has a low biodiversity value. The proposed development once complete with a mature landscape is likely to have a minor beneficial impact on biodiversity.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P14/V1538/DIS](#) - Approved (01/04/2015)

Application for discharge of conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 on application ref. P13/V2691/RM and conditions 5, 6, 9, 12 and 13 on application ref. P12/V1980/O. (Amended plans received 14 August submitted by the applicant/agent)

[P14/V1521/FUL](#) - Approved (21/08/2014)

Temporary sales and marketing suite with associated signs.

[P14/V1520/A](#) - Approved (21/08/2014)

Proposed flag poles and signs

[P13/V2691/RM](#) - Approved (22/05/2014)

Reserved matters relating to Outline planning application P12/V1980/O for details of Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping and Drainage for 50 dwellings. (As amended by documents received on the 21-03-2014 submitted by the applicant/agent)

[P13/V0094/O](#) - Approved (26/04/2013)

Outline application for residential development of up to 50 dwellings. (Re-submission of application P12/V1980/O)

[P12/V1980/O](#) - Refused (13/12/2012) - Approved on appeal (25/07/2013)

Outline application for erection of up to 50 new dwellings.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2011**

The development plan for this area comprises the adopted Vale of White Horse local plan 2011. The following local plan policies relevant to this application were ‘saved’ by direction on 1 July 2009.

Policy No.	Policy Title
GS1	Developments in Existing Settlements
GS2	Development in the Countryside
DC1	Design
DC3	Design against crime
DC5	Access
DC6	Landscaping
DC7	Waste Collection and Recycling
DC8	The Provision of Infrastructure and Services
DC9	The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses
DC12	Water quality and resources
DC13	Flood Risk and Water Run-off
DC14	Flood Risk and Water Run-off
H11	Development in the Larger Villages
H13	Development Elsewhere
H15	Housing Densities
H16	Size of Dwelling and Lifetime Homes
H17	Affordable Housing
H23	Open Space in New Housing Development
HE10	Archaeology
NE9	Lowland Vale
NE11	Area for Landscape Enhancement

**Emerging Local Plan 2031 – Part 1**

5.2 The draft local plan part 1 is not currently adopted policy. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF. At present it is officers' opinion that the emerging Local Plan housing policies carry limited weight for decision making. The relevant policies are as follows:-

Policy No.	Policy Title
Core Policy 1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Core Policy 2	Co-operation on unmet housing need for Oxfordshire
Core Policy 3	Settlement hierarchy
Core Policy 4	Meeting our housing needs
Core Policy 5	Housing supply ring-fence
Core Policy 7	Providing supporting infrastructure and services
Core Policy 20	Spatial strategy
Core Policy 22	Housing mix
Core Policy 23	Housing density

Core Policy 24	Affordable housing
Core Policy 33	Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
Core Policy 35	Promoting public transport, cycling and walking
Core Policy 36	Electronic communications
Core Policy 37	Design and local distinctiveness
Core Policy 38	Design strategies for strategic and major development sites
Core Policy 39	The historic environment
Core Policy 42	Flood risk
Core Policy 43	Natural resources
Core Policy 44	Landscape
Core Policy 45	Green infrastructure
Core Policy 46	Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

### 5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design Guide – March 2015

The following sections of the Design Guide are particularly relevant to this application:-

*Responding to Site and Setting*

- *Character Study (DG6) and Site appraisal (DG9)*

*Establishing the Framework*

- *Existing natural resources, sustainability and heritage (DG10-13, 15, 19)*
- *Landscape and SUDS (DG14, 16-18, 20)*
- *Movement Framework and street hierarchy (DG21-24)*
- *Density (DG26)*
- *Urban Structure (blocks, frontages, nodes etc) DG27-30*

*Layout*

- *Streets and Spaces (DG31-43)*
- *Parking (DG44-50)*

*Built Form*

- *Scale, form, massing and position (DG51-54)*
- *Boundary treatments (DG55)*
- *Building Design (DG56-62)*
- *Amenity, privacy and overlooking (DG63-64)*
- *Refuse and services (DG67-68)*

- Open space, sport and recreation future provision – July 2008
- Sustainable Design and Construction – December 2009
- Affordable Housing – July 2006
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006
- Planning and Public Art – July 2006

### 5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

The following section are particularly relevant:

Paragraphs 14 and 29 – presumption in favour of sustainable development

Paragraphs 34 & 37 – encourage minimised journey length to work, shopping, leisure and education

Paragraph 47 – five year housing supply requirement

Paragraph 50 – create sustainable inclusive and mixed communities

Paragraphs 57, 60 & 61 – promote local distinctiveness and integrate development into the natural, built and historic environment

Paragraph 99 – Flood risk assessment

Paragraph 109 – contribution to and enhancement of the natural environment

Paragraph 111 – encourage the effective use of land



**5.5 National Planning Practise Guidance 2014 (NPPG)**

The following sections are particularly relevant:

Determining an a planning application'

'Air Quality'

'Design'

'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'

'Noise'

'Transport assessments in decision taking'

'Natural environment'

'Planning obligations'

'Water supply, waste water and water quality'

'Use of planning conditions'

**5.6 Other Relevant Legislation**

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act (including New Homes Bonus)

**5.7 Human Rights Act**

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

**5.8 Equalities**

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. Principle of the development
2. EIA and Cumulative Impact
3. Use of Land
4. Locational Credentials
5. Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
6. Landscape and Visual Impact
7. Design and Layout
8. Residential Amenity
9. Open Space and Landscaping
10. Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage
11. Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety
12. Protected Species and Biodiversity
13. Archaeology
14. Viability and Developer Contributions

**The Principle of Development**

6.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires

applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. The development plan currently comprises the saved policies of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF provides that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 6.2 Other material planning considerations include national planning guidance within the NPPF and NPPG and the emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan: Part 1-Strategic Sites and Policies and its supporting evidence base.
- 6.3 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF expects local planning authorities to *"use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area"*... The authority has undertaken this assessment through the April 2014 SHMA which is the most up to date objectively assessed need for housing. In agreeing to submit the emerging Local Plan for examination, the Council has agreed a housing target of at least 20,560 dwellings for the plan period to 2031. Set against this target the Council does not have a five year housing land supply.
- 6.4 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states *"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites"*. This means that the relevant housing policies in the adopted Local Plan are not considered up to date and the adverse impacts of a development would need to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits if the proposal is refused. In order to judge whether a development is sustainable it must be assessed against the economic, social and environmental roles.
- 6.5 Policy GS1 of the adopted Local Plan provides a strategy for locating development concentrated at the five major towns but with small scale development within the built up areas of villages provided that important areas of open land and their rural character are protected. In terms of a hierarchy for allocating development this strategy is consistent with the NPPF, as is the intention to protect the character of villages. This site is outside the built up area of the village and is not allocated for residential development therefore it is contrary to the adopted local plan and has been advertised as such. However the site is adjacent to the built up area of one of the larger villages in the district.
- 6.6 The relevant housing policies of the adopted and emerging local plan hold very limited material planning weight in light of the lack of a 5 year housing supply. Consequently the proposal should be assessed under the NPPF where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is seen as the golden thread running through the decision making process. Having a deliverable 5 year housing supply is considered sustainable under the 3 strands. Therefore, with the lack of a 5 year housing supply, the proposal is acceptable in principle unless any adverse impacts can be identified that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of meeting this objective.

### **Cumulative Impact and EIA**

- 6.7 The NPPF does not suggest that populations of settlements should be limited in some way or not be expanded by any particular figure. It expects housing to be boosted significantly.
- 6.8 A number of other schemes have been permitted or are pending in the village totalling 224 dwellings including phase 1 together with this current application. This represents an increase in households by approximately 34% according to the 2011 census figures. However, given that Steventon is classed as one of the larger villages in the district it is considered that this is an appropriate and proportionate increase and will help support the existing village services and facilities whilst contributing to improvements such as the school and sports facilities.
- 6.9 The cumulative increase in households is not such that it would trigger the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as set out in the EIA regulations (2011) as the site is below the relevant thresholds and not classed as a sensitive area within the requirements of the regulations. The size of the site area required the need for a screening opinion which has been carried out and included an assessment of cumulative impact. This concluded that an EIA was not required.

### **Use of Land**

- 6.10 The NPPF identifies the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from development (paragraph 112). The site is currently in agricultural use and is classified as best and most versatile land grade 3b. Whilst the loss of such productive land must be considered as a potential constraint, this needs to be balanced against the current lack of a five year housing land supply. In this case, the proposal involves the loss of a relatively small area of agricultural land and therefore the harm resulting from its loss is relatively small. Refusal on this ground alone could not be justified.

### **Locational Credentials**

- 6.11 The NPPF requires the need to travel to be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes to be maximised (paragraph 34).
- 6.12 The site is located immediately adjacent to the existing built up area to the north west of the village centre. Steventon is one of the larger villages in the District with a good range of services and facilities including convenience store, hairdresser, takeaway, village hall and two public houses. The site is within a reasonable walking distance of these facilities and the previous phase of development included two crossing points on Hanney Road to enable links to the wider footway network. Whilst it would be desirable to secure further pedestrian links from the site, particularly to the north onto Abingdon Road, due to landownership constraints, these cannot currently be delivered. The applicant has explored this option however.
- 6.13 The village is served by a regular bus service linking the village with Oxford, Abingdon, Drayton, Didcot and Wallingford. The existing bus stops are approximately 800 metres from the majority of the proposed site, however the County Engineer has requested the provision of two additional bus stops closer to the site which would be secured as part of the County S106 agreement and delivered through the S278 works within the highway. In addition contributions are requested towards improving the existing bus service.

- 6.14 It is considered that in locational terms the site is considered a sustainable form of development in close proximity to existing services and facilities in the village and public transport links to the wider area.

**Affordable housing and housing mix**

- 6.15 The application makes provision for 40% affordable housing which accords with Policy H17 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. The proposed affordable housing mix is shown in the below table and the tenure split would be 75% rented and 25% shared ownership as required by council policy.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
Total	4	13	6	3	26

- 6.16 Policy H16 of the Adopted Local Plan requires 50% of houses to have two beds or less. However, as stipulated at paragraph 47 of the NPPF this policy is out of date as it is not based on recent assessments of housing need. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) is the most recent assessment and estimates the following open market dwelling requirement by number of bedrooms (2011 to 2031) for the District. The table includes the numbers required for this development and the actual mix proposed.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
SCHMA %	5.9%	21.7%	42.6%	29.8%	
Required	2	8	17	12	39
Proposed	0	7	14	18	39

- 6.17 Whilst the proposed mix does not meet the SCHMA requirements exactly it is considered that given the loose knit layout and character of this part of the village, replicated within phase 1 of the development to create a lower density edge to the village, that the mix of dwellings is appropriate for this location. The scheme proposes a larger number of smaller 2 and 3 bedroom units than the previous phase of development and is closer to the required mix. Officers therefore consider the proposal strikes the right balance between meeting SHMA requirements and fitting in with the pattern of existing development in the locality.

**Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 6.18 The NPPF seeks to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109). The site is located in the lowland vale as defined in the local plan proposals map. This designation covers a large part of the district and seeks to protect the long open views across the landscape. Whilst the development will change the character of the site, the proposal would be viewed in the context of the existing development under construction and the built up area of the village beyond, when viewed from the wider landscape. Given the flat topography of the area, the proposed development which would be no higher than two storeys would not appear prominent or out of keeping with its context.
- 6.19 As stated above, the landscape on this side of the village is relatively flat and featureless and is described in the previous application response by the council's landscape officer as having limited landscape quality. The site also falls within an area defined for landscape enhancement on the local plan proposals map. This seeks to

ensure opportunities are secured within developments to enhance the appearance of the area. The proposed layout includes large areas of open space and tree planting both within the layout and along the outer edge, which would in your officers view provide some interest to this landscape and enhance the setting of the village which currently has rear gardens and associated boundary treatment at its edge.

### **Design and Layout**

- 6.20 The NPPF provides that planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (paragraph 60). It gives considerable weight to good design and acknowledges it is a key component of sustainable development.
- 6.21 A number of local plan policies seek to ensure high quality developments and to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties (Policies DC1, DC6, DC9). In March 2015 the council adopted its design guide, which aims to raise the standard of design across the district. The below assessment is set out in logical sections similar to those in the design guide.

#### *Site, Setting and Framework*

- 6.22 The applicants have provided a character study within the submitted design and access statement, as recommended by principles DG6 –DG9 of the design guide which requires an assessment of site context including the structure and history of the settlement. The proposal has been designed in response to this. The applicants have also carried out an assessment of the proposal against the Building for Life 12 document which sets out a government endorsed industry standard to achieve well designed homes and neighbourhoods.
- 6.23 The site is located on flat, relatively featureless agricultural land adjacent to the existing built up area of the village. There are no specific landscape constraints to the area other than the Lowland Vale which covers a large part of the district and seeks to protect the long open views. The setting to the south is suburban in character with residential development, including phase 1, characterised by larger houses in relatively spacious plots. The existing development to the east at Field Gardens is higher density with smaller plots. Open agricultural land lies to the north west.
- 6.24 Principle DG26 of the design guide states that density should be appropriate to the location, and it requires a range of densities for larger development proposals. Policy H15 of the adopted local plan requires densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. The proposed development is designed in a mix of larger and smaller dwellings but at a low density of around 15 dwellings per hectare. The scheme includes a large area of open space at the centre and a planted buffer to integrate the development into the wider landscape. The density is actually reasonably low compared with the expectation of local plan policy H15, however when compared to the pattern of existing development in the immediate locality and due to the fact the site is adjacent to open land to the north west, 65 dwellings is considered to be the right quantum of development for this site. It is considered that this lower density is appropriate given the rural edge of village setting, and surrounding residential development.

#### *Spatial Layout*

- 6.25 The site shape is constrained by the location of a gas pipeline to the north west and the

existing phase 1 development to the south east. This has created a development of two distinct areas separated by a central of open space which sits at the heart of the resulting neighbourhood totalling 115 dwelling. The councils urban design officer has raised concern that the developments were not planned as one comprehensive scheme. Whilst this is regrettable, the proposal has clear vehicular and pedestrian links through and the central open space as a green lung running through the development with houses fronting the space on both sides.

- 6.26 As with phase 1, the layout has been design with a clear connected framework of streets creating good permeability through the development. The street layout is defined with main streets running through the centre of each area secondary streets or lanes which reflect the greener edges of the development. Whilst not a traditional grid type layout as recommended by principle DG27 of the design guide, the street hierarchy creates clear perimeter blocks with gardens backing onto one another and frontages which provide a sense of enclosure to the street scene as required by principle DG28.
- 6.27 The outer edge of the development has dwellings fronting onto open space which in turn creates a softer setting to the development and better integration with the open countryside beyond. This accords with principles DG29 and DG55 of the design guide. Boundary treatment in this location will be critical and the scheme currently proposes a post and rail fence which is considered appropriate. A boundary treatment condition is recommended to ensure that this remains the case.

#### *Built form*

- 6.28 The built form of the development is of two storey dwellings in a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced units providing varying width plots to create some variation in the street scene. This reflects the scale of development within the immediate surrounding area as recommended by principle DG51. Where possible buildings are located to turn corners and provide landmark features to aid legibility through the development as required by principle DG30 of the design guide.
- 6.29 Parking is mainly on plot and on street to avoid the need for rear parking courts. A landscaping condition is recommended to ensure that the on street parking is softened by landscaping to prevent large expanses of tarmac as recommended by principle DG46.
- 6.30 The open space which runs through the site and the smaller areas at either end are all over looked by dwellings to provide natural surveillance to these public spaces according with principle DG54.

#### *Architectural Detailing*

- 6.31 The dwellings themselves are proposed in a simple form with traditional pitched roofs. Corner plots are articulated to provide some interest on all sides where viewed from the public realm (principles DG52 and 53).
- 6.32 The dwellings are proposed in mainly brick with some render panelling on landmark buildings. Brick detailing is proposed along the eaves and to provide window arches and stone cills, features found locally. Some units have bay windows and feature porches to provide some articulation. Generally the materials palette is simple in accordance with principle DG62 and matches with the finishes approved on phase 1.

- 6.33 The proposed dwellings will comply with building regulations to ensure suitable accessibility and create an inclusive community as required by principle DG65.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 6.34 Adopted local plan policy DC9 seeks to prevent development that would result in a loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight for neighbouring properties or that would cause dominance or visual intrusion for neighbouring properties and the wider environment. Protecting amenity is a core principle of the NPPF. Design principles DG63-64 of the Design Guide pertain to amenity, privacy and overlooking.
- 6.35 Concern has been raised by the existing residents particularly in Field Gardens to the east of the development that the proposal will overlook and result in a loss of light. The properties in this neighbouring close, all have relatively short rear gardens abutting the site. Plots 56-64 are all proposed with rear gardens backing onto the common boundary and plot 65 is side on to this boundary. The residential design guide (principle DG64) requires development to demonstrate an adequate relationship between facing habitable rooms recommending 21 metres as appropriate. The plans have been amended to address these concerns and the proposed back to back distances are all now well in excess of this requirement. The rear gardens of the proposed dwellings are all in excess of 17 metres and in some cases more than 20 metres therefore this is considered sufficient to provide the existing and proposed dwellings with an acceptable level of residential amenity in terms of overlooking and overshadowing.
- 6.36 Units 1-12 are located adjacent to the rear gardens of Hanney Road, however these properties benefit from relatively long plots thereby ensuring the back to back window distances of between 45 and 50 metres which would ensure that there would be no harmful overlooking or overshadowing.
- 6.37 Given the relatively low density layout, all the proposed dwellings have reasonable sized garden areas in excess of the recommendations of the design guide.

### **Open Space, Landscaping and Trees**

- 6.38 Adopted Local Plan Policy H23 of the adopted Local Plan requires a minimum of 15% of the residential area to be laid out as open space. The application proposes approximately 1.49 ha of open space which is well in excess of 15% of the overall site area. The open space links with that which formed the outer edge of phase 1 to create a green lung through the resulting development. This relatively large area of open space provides a functional area for informal recreation and a leisure route around the outer edge of the site with footpaths throughout the space.
- 6.39 It is proposed to landscape this area with trees which will soften the impact of the houses from the wider area. The hedge along the western site boundary will be retained and it is proposed to plant a new hedge along the outer edge of the development.
- 6.40 Planting will also be introduced into the streetscapes to soften the impact particularly in areas of on street parking. Conditions requiring the submission of a detailed landscaping scheme are recommended.

- 6.41 The eastern edge of the site is defined by a field drainage ditch which marks the boundary between the development and the adjacent properties in Field Gardens. Concern has been raised over the ownership and maintenance of this ditch. The plans have been amended to reflect the ownership of this area which falls partially within the development site. It is intended that a management company would be responsible for the maintenance of the entire ditch rather than being subdivided into each plot. This would ensure a comprehensive management programme is adhered to. A condition requiring details of this is recommended.

#### **Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage**

- 6.42 The NPPF provides that development should not increase flood risk elsewhere and should be appropriately flood resilient and resistant (paragraph 103). It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other things, preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution (Paragraph 109).
- 6.43 Adopted local plan policy DC9 provides that new development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties or the wider environment in terms of, amongst other things, pollution and contamination. Policy DC12 provides that development will not be permitted if it would adversely affect the quality of water resources as a result of, amongst other things, waste water discharge. Policies DC13 and 14 are not considered to be consistent with the NPPF, because they do not comply with paragraphs 100 to 104 which require a sequential approach to locating development and provide that flood risk should not be increased elsewhere.
- 6.44 Local residents have raised serious concerns about potential flood risks and the capacity of the drainage network to cope with further development. The drainage strategy for this development is the same as previously approved for phase 1 of the development.

#### *Surface Water*

- 6.45 The application site falls within Flood Zone One, i.e. the lowest probability in terms of risk from river or sea flood risk events. The submitted FRA states that surface water strategy is to control the surface water discharge from the development to provide a 30% betterment to the existing pre-development greenfield run off rates. Detention ponds are located on site to control off site run off as the geology of the site is not suitable for infiltration. Both the Environment Agency and the council drainage engineer are satisfied with the principles of the surface water drainage strategy subject to conditions requiring full details.
- 6.46 This is a viable and deliverable solution and can be required by condition to be provided before the development is occupied.

#### *Foul Water*

- 6.47 The submitted foul water drainage strategy proposes that the development would drainage to the pumping station within phase 1 of the development which is sufficient to accommodate the needs of phase 2. This would then control discharge to the public sewer system. Thames Water in their consultation response has identified an inability of the existing system to accommodate the needs of the development. As a result of this the applicants have funded an impact study carried out by Thames Water for phase 2 which has identified two potential solutions for improvement works which would



address the capacity issues. The options are:

- i) On-line storage - connecting the development to the pumping station within phase 1 with upsized pumps increasing capacity from 2 litres per second (l/s) to 4 l/s by laying a new 900mm diameter pipe for 88 metres off site on The Green to create on-line storage.
- ii) Provide on site storage and discharge off peak.

6.48 Both these options provide a viable and deliverable solution which can be secured within the time frame of a one year permission to ensure that the additional housing can be implemented quickly to address the five year supply deficit. A condition to ensure that the required upgrade works are implemented prior to occupation of the development is recommended.

### **Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety**

6.49 Adopted local plan policy DC5 requires safe access for developments and that the road network can accommodate the traffic arising from the development safely. The NPPF (Paragraph 32) requires plans and decision to take account of whether:-

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.

6.50 Paragraph 32 goes on to state: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”*

6.51 The application is supported by a Transport Statement and a Framework Residential Travel Plan.

6.52 The site would be accessed via Barnett Road which currently serves the existing 22 dwellings and the 50 units permitted in phase 1. This previous phase included upgrade and widening works to Barnett Road which would ensure that the access is suitable to accommodate the needs of both developments. On this basis the County Engineer raises no objections to the site access.

6.53 Local concerns have been raised in relation to the impact of the proposed on the wider surrounding roads and the wider highway network. The Transport Statement submitted as part of the application included an assessment of the additional dwellings on a number of local junctions which the County Engineer has considered is acceptable. The junction of Barnett Road with Hanney Road was not assessed given the low numbers of vehicles in this location which again the County Engineer has accepted.

6.54 The Parish Council have however commissioned their own local survey which has been submitted and challenges the figures presented. This has been sent to both the County Engineer and the Applicant for comment and an update will be provided at the committee. In order to justify refusal of the application however on cumulative traffic impact, regard must be had to the above referenced paragraph of the NPPF.

6.55 The site has limited pedestrian links to the wider network which as stated previously in the report cannot currently be delivered due to land ownership constraints. Whilst this

is regrettable, the development does provide good pedestrian permeability through the development and links down Barnett Road which provides the shortest route to the village centre. The County Engineer has requested that the footway on Hanney Road to the west of Barnett Road should be upgraded for approximately 60 metres to link to the crossing points secures as part of phase 1. A conditions requiring this is recommended.

- 6.56 Parking within the site is largely provided on plot or within the street. The County Engineer has requested further details of unallocated and visitor parking provision and this is recommended as a condition. Given the low density layout it is considered that adequate parking can be secured within the proposed layout.

### **Ecology and Biodiversity**

- 6.57 Paragraph 117 of the NPPF refers to the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, whilst Paragraph 118 sets out the basis for determination of planning applications. Paragraph 118 states that “...if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused...”
- 6.58 An ecological appraisal was submitted in support of the application which identified the site as having low ecological value given its agricultural use. The council countryside officer has raised no objections and considers that the proposed open space and drainage attenuation would provide an opportunity for some, biodiversity benefits.

### **Archaeology**

- 6.59 Policy HE10 of the adopted Local Plan states that development will not be permitted if it would cause damage to the site or setting of nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not.
- 6.60 An archaeological assessment has been submitted with the application. The county archaeologist has raised no objections subject to the completion of a further survey which can be secured by condition.

### **Viability, affordable housing and Section 106 contributions**

- 6.61 The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests (paragraph 204):
- i) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - ii) Directly related to the development; and
  - iii) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- Policy DC8 of the Adopted Local Plan provides that development will only be permitted where the necessary physical infrastructure and service requirements to support the development can be secured.
- 6.62 As discussed above, the application provides for 40% affordable housing in a mix and layout which complies with council requirements.
- 6.63 The following developer contributions have been requested. These contributions are considered fair and proportionate:-

<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>	
<b>Transport</b>	

Strategic transport infrastructure (£2737per dw)	£177,905
Science Vale Bus Strategy (£795 per dw)	£51,675
Travel Plan	£1,240
<b>Education</b>	
Primary School expansion	£229,439
Secondary School expansion	£315,038
<b>Administration and Monitoring</b>	
Administration and Monitoring costs	£5000
<b>Vale of White Horse District Council</b>	
Sports Halls (to local Steventon sports facility )	£38,005 (tbc)
<b>Informal open space – off site</b>	
Public open space maintenance (if taken on by Parish. Not required if management company as funded by residents)	£395,893
<b>Other District Requirements</b>	
Waste bins £170 per dwelling	£11,050
Public Art (£300 per unit)	£19,500
Administration and Monitoring	£13,000
<b>Parish Council Requirements</b>	
See sports hall figure above – (may change after costings received)	
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>£1,257,745 (£19,349 per dw)</b>

6.64 The County Council have identified that the development will increase pressure upon existing community infrastructure. Therefore contributions have been requested towards increased school places and public transport improvements. Other County contributions in relation to local and central library infrastructure, museum, waste infrastructure and day care have not been requested as they no longer comply with the CIL regulations which prevent the pooling of more than 5 contributions towards a single facility.

6.65 District provision includes contributions towards waste bin provision on site and public art in accordance with the adopted supplementary planning guidance. The Councils requested leisure contributions in relation to off-site leisure facilities cannot be justified as they do not comply with the CIL regulations. This was confirmed in the appeal decision (para 20) on phase 1 in which the Inspector concluded the following;

*'20.....The Council has not undertaken an assessment of what other facilities are available to residents of Steventon and to whether these facilities are used at a level which would mean that the proposal would place unreasonable additional demands on them. Rather, the Council's approach seems to have been one where they apply a standard cost per head of various facilities and seek a contribution accordingly. There is no support for such an approach in Policy DC8 of the LP and the evidence submitted fails to demonstrate that the contribution sought is necessary to make the development acceptable, nor is it fairly related in scale and kind. The obligations relating to recreation and leisure specifically set out in paragraphs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.9, 2.11 and 2.12 of the Second Schedule of the Unilateral Undertaking do not satisfy the tests of Regulation 122 of the CIL regulations and I am unable to take them into account in*

*determining this appeal.”*

- 6.66 As such the leisure contributions requested cannot be secured given the stance taken by the previous appeal Inspector and the continuing lack of evidence to support the requested contributions.
- 6.67 Notwithstanding the above comments in relation to the leisure contributions, the Parish Council are planning a new community indoor sports facility from which the future occupants of the development would benefit. It is therefore considered reasonable to request contributions towards this facility. Officers consider this justified and fully compliant with the CIL regulations. The exact figure may be subject to change when the final costing has been provided by the parish.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This application has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant saved policies in the local plan and all other material planning considerations. The NPPF states that sustainable development should be permitted unless the adverse effects significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The NPPF also states that there are social, economic and environmental dimensions to sustainability and that conclusions must be reached taking into account the NPPF as a whole.
- 7.2 The proposed development would perform an economic role through increasing the housing stock, it would contribute to an expansion of the local housing market and could potentially improve the affordability of open market housing. In addition, the additional houses would ensure the future vitality and viability of this rural community and help maintain existing infrastructure.
- 7.3 The scheme would have a social role as it will provide affordable housing units and other social benefits will arise through the contributions to local infrastructure identified including towards village facilities. The proposal would also increase public open space provision which would be available to all.
- 7.4 The proposal will have some adverse environmental implications given the change in landscape as a result of the development. However these are considered to be outweighed by the wider social and economic benefits of the development. There will be potential environmental benefits including additional planting in the landscaping scheme to increase the landscape buffers around the site and within the development.
- 7.5 Overall, taking into account the planning balance, and in view of the emphasis in the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of housing, the development is considered to amount to sustainable development. Whilst there will be some adverse effects, these do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Consequently, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and a legal agreement to secure affordable housing and developer contributions.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee, subject to:**

**1: A S106 agreement being entered into with both the county council and district**

council in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing, and;

**2: Conditions as follows:**

1. TL1 – time limit – one year.
2. Approved plans listed.
3. Submission of material samples including panel on site.
4. Submission of building details – windows etc.
5. Submission of slab levels.
6. Submission of boundary treatments.
7. Removal of permitted development rights – garage conversions.
8. Full details of bin and bike storage.
9. Landscaping scheme required to be submitted and approved.
10. Implementation of landscaping scheme.
11. Tree protection to be submitted and agreed.
12. Sustainable drainage scheme (SUDS) to be agreed and provided.
13. Foul water drainage strategy including upgrade works to be agreed and implemented pre commencement.
14. Full details of management and maintenance of SUDS drainage features including pond areas and ditch.
15. Development in accordance with flood risk assessment .
16. Archaeological written scheme of investigation to be agreed.
17. Programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation to be agreed.
18. Construction traffic management plan to be agreed.
19. Residential travel plan to be submitted and agreed.
20. Parking and turning details to be submitted.
21. New estate roads to OCC specification.
22. Footpath widening works on Hanney Road to be implemented prior to first occupation in accordance with details to be submitted.
23. No drainage to highway.

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