

APPLICATION NO.	P14/V2462/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE APPLICATION
REGISTERED	06.11.2014
PARISH	CHILTON
WARD MEMBERS	Janet Shelley Reg Waite
APPLICANT	Mrs Hilary and Helen King-Thompson and Shorthouse
SITE	McCloskey Equipment Ltd, Upper Farm Road, Chilton, OX10 0PJ
PROPOSAL	Erection of 58 dwellings with associated means of access, car parking, new footpath links, amenity space and landscaping
OFFICER	Stuart Walker

SUMMARY

This application is referred to committee as Chilton Parish Council objects to the proposal and as letters of objection from 25 local residents have been received.

The application is seeking outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing equipment yard on site and the erection of 58 dwellings (including 23 affordable units). The applicants seek consent for means of access and layout at this stage, with appearance, scale and landscaping being reserved for future consideration. The site falls wholly within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The report seeks to assess the planning application details against the national and local planning policy framework where relevant and all other material planning considerations.

The main issues to consider are:

- The principle of development in this location in relation to the planning policy context and the lack of a five year housing supply in the district
- Whether the development represents “major” development in the AONB and, if so, whether exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated
- The impact of the proposal on the North Wessex Downs AONB landscape
- The impact on highway safety
- The implications for flood risk, foul and surface water drainage and water supply
- The loss of employment land
- The impact on local infrastructure

The application is considered to be major development in the AONB. Amended plans have been provided that follow the recommendations of the accompanying Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal to reduce the impact of the proposal on the quality of the surrounding landscape. However, the lack of a five year housing supply in the district and the need for affordable housing represent exceptional circumstances and together with the limited impact for the landscape of the AONB allow the application to be considered favourably. Overall, the benefits of the development outweigh the harm to the landscape.

Subject to conditions and a Section 106 agreement, the application accords with local and national policy and is not considered to be materially harmful to residential amenity, highway safety, flood risk or water supplies, and should be approved.

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application relates to a single field located immediately west of the A34 within the parish of Chilton. The site is broadly triangular in shape, measuring 3.2 hectares in size. McCloskey Equipment yard is located in the north eastern corner with the remainder of the site remaining in agricultural use.
- 1.2 Hedging and trees largely define the boundaries of the site, particularly along the eastern, southern and western sides. Vehicular and pedestrian access is taken from Upper Farm Road. The site drops around one metre from the western to the eastern boundary.
- 1.3 The application site is immediately opposite Chilton Primary school and the Chilton Fields development of 275 dwellings lies to the northwest. There is an existing pedestrian link under the A34 into the older part of Chilton village which lies to the east.
- 1.4 Chilton is one of the district's smaller villages as it has a lower order of services compared to the larger settlements, meaning there will be a greater dependence on the private car for access to education, recreation, employment and retail opportunities. However, Chilton is also located within the Science Vale UK area, which is a strategic growth point for the council in terms of employment and associated housing. Didcot and Milton Park are located around four miles to the north of the site, with the A34 junction with the M4 being around ten miles to the south. The Harwell Oxford campus lies approximately
- 1.5 The site falls within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A site location plan is **attached** as Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 This is an application for outline planning permission seeking approval for the erection of 58 dwellings with the associated provision of new accesses for cars and pedestrians, amenity space and landscaping. The detailed matters to be considered at this stage are access and layout. Landscaping, appearance and scale are reserved matters that will be subject of a further detailed application should outline permission be granted.
- 2.2 The layout has been the subject of much negotiation and amendment during the assessment of the application. The scheme now proposed includes a noticeable set-back from the road to allow an area of planting, with the main area of public open space being located adjacent to this area and it will be seen when entering the site from the vehicular access. There is an apartment block located to the immediate west of the main road. The two areas of public open space are linked and will constitute more than 15% of the site area to ensure compliance with Local Plan policy.
- 2.3 The site is laid out in a perimeter block forming a crescent shaped development that responds to the manner the site narrows towards the southeastern corner of the site. The perimeter block approach ensures active frontages throughout the development.
- 2.4 The current housing mix is 34 two-bed units (of which 8 are flats), 19 three-bed units (of which 4 are flats), 2 four-bed units and 3 five-bed units. Twenty three units will be affordable to meet current policy requirements. The precise mix of proposed affordable units is the subject of further negotiations and will be confirmed by the Section 106 agreement accompanying any planning permission.

2.5 Reduced copies of the application plans are **attached** as Appendix 2. These plans, along with the suite of documents accompanying the application, can be viewed online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

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.

<p>Chilton Parish Council</p>	<p>Objection received on three separate occasions. The main objections to the submitted scheme can be summarised thus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal represents major development in the AONB, with no exceptional circumstances demonstrated • Proposal would cause substantial harm to the landscape • Lack of sewer infrastructure renders scheme undeliverable • Lack of school capacity and local facilities for further increase in local population • Increased traffic on local roads <p>The most recent objection from Chilton Parish Council is attached as Appendix 3</p>
<p>Neighbours</p>	<p>Letters of objection from 25 local residents have been received. The concerns raised have been in response to the original and amended schemes and may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity in local primary school • Increased traffic in local area • Conflict with local school in safety terms during construction phase • Harm to landscape and character of the AONB • Development is out of keeping with the character of the village • Increased flood risk • Major development in the AONB with no exceptional circumstances demonstrated • Proposed dwellings close to the A34 will be affected by noise • Chilton is a smaller village not suitable for large-scale housing development • Lack of sewer infrastructure • Lack of safe pedestrian route into main village • Lack of cumulative impact assessment alongside emerging allocation in the AONB in Local Plan 2031 • Proposed access position is unsafe and would conflict with school • Contaminated land assessment doesn't assess former storage area on site • Unattractive noise barrier • Lack of local facilities to support increase in population

<p>Oxfordshire County Council One Voice</p>	<p><u>Overall</u></p> <p><i>“This application has direct relevance to the county council proposals at Chilton Interchange. Comments made on this application are made with the assumption that the scheme to implement north facing slips at this junction will be implemented and be in place within the project’s planned timeframe.”</i></p> <p><u>Highways</u></p> <p>No objection following submission of amended plans and confirmation that the secondary access will be for pedestrian and cycle use only. Request standard highway conditions relating to access, visibility splays, parking and manoeuvring. Financial contributions to transport infrastructure, improvements to the Science Vale bus network and bus stop provision requested.</p> <p><u>Education</u></p> <p>Requests financial contribution to expansion of Chilton Primary School and secondary school capacity in the Didcot area. No contribution to Special Educational Needs accommodation requested due to CIL regulation pooling restrictions on financial contributions in the area.</p> <p><u>Property</u></p> <p>Requests financial contribution to the local library book stock. No contributions to local library capital projects, Oxford central library, strategic waste management, county museum resource centre and day care facilities due to CIL regulation pooling restrictions on financial contributions in the area.</p> <p><u>Archaeology</u></p> <p>No objections or conditions requested</p>
<p>Environmental Protection</p>	<p>No objections in regards of noise impact subject to the mitigation measures (including a noise barrier) being incorporated into the final development to protect the residents of the development from noise from the A34.</p>
<p>Air Quality</p>	<p>No objection subject to air quality assessment being submitted and mitigation measures being agreed prior to work commencing, given the proximity of the A34.</p>
<p>Contaminated Land</p>	<p>No objections subject to standard pre-commencement condition requiring prior agreement to contamination investigation before work starts on site.</p>
<p>Drainage Engineer</p>	<p>No objections subject to standard pre-commencement conditions covering surface and foul water drainage from the site.</p>

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<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>No comment</p> <p>No longer statutory consultee for developments of this size so no comments to make.</p>
<p>Thames Water</p>	<p>No objection</p> <p>Identified lack of capacity in local water supply and foul sewers. <i>“The receiving foul sewer may not have sufficient spare capacity to accommodate the predicted net foul flow increase from the proposed development. Thames Water request that an impact study be undertaken to ascertain, with a greater degree of certainty, whether the proposed development will lead to overloading of existing infrastructure, and, if required, recommend network upgrades.”</i> Overall, no objection subject to the following conditions:</p> <p><i>“Following initial investigation, Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing waste water infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this application. Should the Local Planning Authority look to approve the application, Thames Water would like the following ‘Grampian Style’ condition imposed. “Development shall not commence until a drainage strategy detailing any on and/or off site drainage works, has been submitted to and approved by, the local planning authority in consultation with the sewerage undertaker. No discharge of foul or surface water from the site shall be accepted into the public system until the drainage works referred to in the strategy have been completed”.</i></p> <p><i>“Development should not be commenced until: Impact studies of the existing water supply infrastructure have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority in consultation with Thames Water. The studies should determine the magnitude of any new additional capacity required in the system and a suitable connection point.”</i></p>
<p>Countryside Officer</p>	<p>No objection subject to condition requiring biodiversity enhancement measures to be agreed prior to work commencing on site.</p>
<p>North Wessex Downs AONB unit</p>	<p>Object</p> <p><i>“Both the North Wessex Downs AONB Unit (WH Landscape Consultancy Ltd March 2014) and the Vale of White Horse District Council (Hankinson Duckett Associates July 2014) have confirmed the unsuitability of this location to accommodate new residential development due to the level of landscape impact and change of character on the nationally protected North Wessex Downs AONB, from key receptors including the Ridgeway National Trail and other rights of way in the locality.</i></p> <p><i>The site is outside any settlement boundary and for the reasons described above would not be included in any future settlement boundary. The site is only partly developed and relatively poorly</i></p>

	<p><i>screened. New housing development in this location would therefore result in a substantial negative urbanising impact and extend the relatively contained development beyond into the open countryside.</i></p> <p><i>No reference has been made to Paragraph 14 (Footnote 9) of the NPPF that confirms the "presumption" in favour of sustainable development does not apply in AONBs because of the restrictions applied by paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF.</i></p> <p><i>The NPPG (6.10.14) has also been specifically amended to state: "The Framework is clear that local planning authorities should, through their Local Plans, meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. Such policies include those relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives, and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park or the Broads; designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion."</i></p> <p><i>Paragraph 115 of the NPPF confirms that "great weight" should be given to conserving and enhancing the character and qualities of the AONB which have the highest level of protection.</i></p> <p><i>The NPPG confirms that "major development" is a matter for the Local Authority to decide on and should be based on local context. In this case it is considered because of the sensitivities of the nationally protected landscape this development should be considered to be "major". Accordingly the NPPF (Paragraph 116) advises the starting point for applications of this nature are that they should be refused. There are no exceptional circumstances in this case to support this proposal."</i></p>
CPRE	<p><i>Object</i></p> <p><i>"Both the North Wessex Downs AONB Unit and the Chilton Parish Council have objected to this proposal on the grounds of the 'unsuitability of this location to accommodate new residential development due to the level of landscape impact and change of character on the nationally protected North Wessex Downs AONB, from key receptors including the Ridgeway National Trail and other rights of way in the locality.' (NWD AONB Unit).</i></p> <p><i>The CPRE Vale of White Horse District Committee endorse fully the objections raised by the North Wessex Downs AONB Unit and the Chilton Parish Council in their responses to this consultation. CPRE believe there are no exceptional</i></p>

	<i>circumstances in this case to support this proposal.”</i>
Landscape Architect	Comments on original and amended scheme attached as Appendix 4.
Urban Design Officer	<p><i>“The Design and Access Statement states that a restricted pallet of high quality materials including render, timber boarding and traditional red brick are to be used for the houses, drawing reference to the neighbouring residential development. This is welcomed. Brick buildings within Chilton and those recently built to the north east of the site use a red brick variety rather than a single red stock brick. To reflect the local character and maintain this richness a variety red brick should be used in this scheme.</i></p> <p><i>Properties on plots that bound a highway or footpath/public open space on two sides should turn the corners successfully. The house types on these plots will need ground floor windows of active rooms, such as the living room, dining room and/or kitchen, on both of the facades that front the streets and/or public spaces. This is to ensure that the natural surveillance of these spaces is maximised and to avoid blank facades that can detract from the street scene. To provide greater enclosure to the street and a stronger statement/definition at the entrance to the scheme I would recommend flipping the proposed apartment block so that the vertically orientated part of the building on the east of the block is on the west of the block. This will also help create more defensible space between the main access road and the associated amenity space.</i></p> <p><i>At detailed design stage consideration should be given to the vista created for motorists entering the site and travelling south towards the apartment block in the south eastern corner. While it would be challenging to reposition the apartment block to provide a vista, there is the opportunity to create an attractive focal point using some robust landscaping, for example a mature/large tree.</i></p> <p><i>The integration of parking into the central open space is welcomed as this allows stronger definition and enclosure of the space through the use of a series of short terraces. However, the number of parking spaces proposed per dwelling appears to be a little excessive (more than 3 spaces per dwelling). Although amenity trees have been proposed to soften the scheme, the visual impact of this amount of parked cars is likely to be detrimental. The design needs to allow for more trees and landscaping to successfully balance this visual impact. It should also be clear which parking spaces relate to which properties. This could be achieved by grouping the parking spaces in twos opposite the properties that do not benefit from on-plot parking to the side. Larger areas of landscaping and trees could then be placed in between each set of two spaces. At the eastern end, a group of three or four spaces could be provided for visitors. This could be addressed at the detailed design stage.</i></p>

	<i>There is a strip of land to the west of the north-western plot in the scheme that appears to have been left as public space. More consideration needs to be given to this space what is its purpose? Who will maintain it? Is there a reason it has not been included in the adjacent property s private amenity space?"</i>
Waste Management	No objection General comments on providing a layout suitable for the council's waste collection contract received. Financial request of £170/property requested for providing each house with wheeled bins requested
Housing	No objection Details provided on the mix of housing sizes and tenure types required for the 23 units to be provided as affordable.
Equalities Officer	Queries suitability of some footpaths within site for use by wheelchairs.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P14/V0051/FUL](#) - Extension of existing storage yard and associated landscaping. (As amended by drawing no 3762LO_002 and agents letter received 3 March 2014.) - Planning Permission on 25/04/2014

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
H12	Development in the Smaller 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
NE6	North Wessex Downs AONB

5.2 **Emerging Local Plan 2031 – Part 1**

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 15	Spatial strategy for South East Vale sub-area
Core Policy 22	Housing mix
Core Policy 23	Housing density
Core Policy 24	Affordable housing
Core Policy 29	Change of use of existing employment land and premises
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
- Affordable Housing – July 2006
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006
- Planning and Public Art – July 2006
- Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2030
- Draft Local Transport Plan 4 – 2015
- S106 interim guidance – 2014

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

5.5 National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

5.6 Neighbourhood Plan

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.

No neighbourhood plan has been submitted for Chilton parish.

5.7 Environmental Impact

Given the AONB location of the site there is a need to screen the application to assess the need for an Environmental Statement, even though it sits below the indicative thresholds of 150 dwellings and 5 hectare site area set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. The main issues to be considered are highway safety, landscape impact and drainage. The application has been supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal that offers a comprehensive assessment of the site's value to the AONB and the impact of the proposal upon the special character of the area. It is considered that the LVIA offers sufficient consideration of the impacts of this development and represents an appropriate level of detail for the scheme. Similarly, the supporting documentation covering highways and drainage are sufficient for these aspects of the scheme. Thus, it is considered an Environmental Statement isn't required for this proposal and the development is not EIA development. This recommendation holds when considering the impact of this development cumulatively with the permitted sites in the village and area.

5.8 Other Relevant Legislation

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation
- 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)

5.9 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.

5.10 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**

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

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

6.2 **The Principle of Development**

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).

6.3 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.

6.4 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.

6.5 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.

- 6.6 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 is not a site allocated for housing in either the current Local Plan 2011 or the emerging Local Plan 2031. The site lies clearly outside the built limits of Chilton, which is one of the district's smaller villages. The emerging Local Plan 2031 confirms that the smaller villages have a low level of services and facilities and any development "*should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily be to meet local needs.*"
- 6.7 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

- 6.8 Chilton has been subject to a number of planning permissions granted for housing and current applications for housing and commercial development. 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. There are no objections from technical consultees on cumulative impact grounds and a financial contribution will mitigate for additional pressure on the primary school and assist in improving bus services through the village.

Use of Land

- 6.9 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF identifies the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from development. With the exception of the storage yard, the site is used for agriculture. From observations on site, the land is only used for grazing. According to Natural England's agricultural land classification maps, the land around Chilton is generally Grade 3, which is one of the lower classifications. The loss of this this single field from agricultural production is not considered to represent planning harm.

Locational Credentials

- 6.10 The NPPF requires the need to travel to be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes to be maximised (paragraph 34).
- 6.11 The village lacks facilities including a village shop. Local residents are reliant on travelling for food shopping. The site is located directly next to the primary school and so is ideally positioned for parents and children walking to school each day. A number of local residents and the school itself have objected to the lack of capacity at Chilton Primary school and this is something discussed later in the report. The recreation ground, church and village hall are located in the "older" part of Chilton on the other side of the A34 from the site (approximately 600m from the site). There is an underpass allowing relatively easy access to these facilities.
- 6.12 There is a bus service linking Chilton to Wantage, Didcot and Oxford (passing Harwell campus located approximately 850m to the north). However, this is an intermittent service and it is unlikely this scheme could reasonably fund significant improvements to

the service to make it a reliable option for commuters, shoppers and school children. The limited accessibility of the site needs to be balanced against the benefits of this housing proposal.

Loss of employment land

- 6.13 The site is not an allocated employment site in the local plan. Notwithstanding, this application would cause the loss of McCloskey Equipment yard. The council understands that McCloskey are currently looking for alternative premises for their business operation. Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states *“Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.”* Paragraph 51 of the NPPF states, *“[Local planning authorities] should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate”*
- 6.14 Policy E14 of the Local Plan states, *“Proposals which would lead to the loss of appropriately located small-scale commercial premises within settlements will not be permitted...”* As outlined above, this site is considered to lie outside the built limits of Chilton and so it would be difficult to apply this policy strictly here.
- 6.15 Emerging Core Policy 29 lists a number of criteria where any change of use of existing land or premises would need to satisfy, at least in part, before alternative uses could be considered. These are:
- There is no reasonable prospect of the land or premises being used for employment purposes
 - The land or premises is unsuitable for business use on grounds of amenity, environmental or highway safety issues
 - The land or premises has no long term or strategic requirement to remain in employment use or
 - The proposed use would be ancillary to the use of the land or premises for employment purposes
- 6.16 This Policy has an ingrained requirement for any employment site to be marketed for a period of a year and an applicant to provide evidence the site has proven unviable before a change of use can be entertained. No such evidence is provided with this application and it is noticeable that the site remains in active use. However, the policy has only limited weight at this time.
- 6.17 Overall, it is considered the lack of a five year housing supply and the clear benefits this proposal offers in this regard comfortably outweighs the harm caused by the loss of McCloskey from active employment use, particularly given the stance outlined in the NPPF. Officers, therefore, do not consider a refusal based on the loss of employment land could reasonably be justified.
- Affordable housing and housing mix**
- 6.18 The application makes provision for 40% affordable housing which accords with Policy H17 of the adopted local plan. This is 23 units from the 58 proposed. As confirmed in Section 2, the precise mix of affordable units to be provided is the subject of on-going negotiations with the applicant and will be finalised in the Section 106 agreement should planning permission be granted.
- 6.19 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 – 1-bed 5.9%, 2-bed 21.7%, 3-bed 42.6% and 4-bed 29.8%.

- 6.20 The latest version of the application proposes the following overall mix for the 58 units: 1-bed 0%, 2-bed 58.6%, 3-bed 32.8%, 4-bed 3.45% and 5-bed 5.17%. However, given the outline nature of the application, the precise split of affordable and market housing has not been confirmed at this stage so it is not possible to confirm the precise level of compliance with the SHMA for market housing. Overall, it is considered this application could provide a reasonable mix of housing that will be able to meet housing requirements for the district to an acceptable degree, despite the lack of one bed properties currently proposed.

Design and Layout

- 6.21 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.
- 6.22 A number of local plan policies seek to ensure high quality developments and to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties (Policies DC1, DC6, and DC9). In March 2015 the council adopted its design guide, which aims to raise the standard of design across the district. The assessment below is set out in logical sections similar to those in the design guide.

Site, Setting and Framework

- 6.23 The Design and Access Statement accompanying the application confirms that the aim is to integrate this development with the recently completed Chilton Fields development to create a “stronger community” for the school and residents of the western part of Chilton. The site is located on the southern side of Upper Farm Road, so there is an opportunity to orientate the layout to maximise solar gain. Additional planting is proposed, particularly in the northern and southern portion of the site, to improve the relationship of the site with the AONB. The commercial units are considered to detract from the AONB and their removal represents an opportunity for the site to integrate with the largely residential and rural surroundings.
- 6.24 Clearly the AONB location of the development is a major constraint that the scheme needs to address. The impact of the proposal on the landscape are considered in a later section of this report.
- 6.25 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 to the hectare, subject to character considerations. 58 dwellings on a site of 3.21 hectares represents 18 dwellings to the hectare. This is below the policy requirements of the Local Plan but is considered appropriate given the particular setting of this site.

Spatial Layout

- 6.26 The proposed layout is considered to work reasonably well. The proposed site plan demonstrates that 58 dwellings can be achieved on this site. Active frontages are achieved throughout the development to achieve natural surveillance as required by Principle DG54 of the Design Guide. The majority of plots meet and often exceed the garden sizes outlined in Principle DG63 of the Design Guide. The layout achieves

appropriate distances between rear elevations of the properties in the central block comfortably in excess of the 21 metres outlined in Principle DG64 of the Design Guide. This is to be expected given the low-density nature of the development.

- 6.27 The public open space for the site is well-integrated into the development, in line with Principle DG18 of the Design Guide. In particular, the main area of open space is accessible by neighbouring residents as well as those within the development itself. The areas of open space link with the thick tree belt around the southern and western boundaries in a manner that will encourage biodiversity activity. The northern part of the site presents a positive, sympathetic frontage to Upper Farm Road. There is space for a LAP within the open space and this can be secured at the detailed stage should outline permission be granted.
- 6.28 Both a vehicular and pedestrian priority access are provided onto Upper Farm Road, providing good connections with the existing routes as required by Principle DG23 of the Design Guide. From the vehicular access, a single primary road loops around the central block of housing and the open space. This hierarchy of streets is appropriate for a scheme of this size. Private drives allow access to properties fronting the open space around the site. Pedestrian routes are provided throughout the development in a manner that will not conflict with the motor vehicle. The curved nature of the main road will keep vehicle speeds down.
- 6.29 The layout accommodates a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. This variety is characteristic of Chilton as a whole as well as the Chilton Fields development opposite. The urban design officer considers the apartment block could be “flipped” so that the vertically orientated part of the building is next to the main entrance to ensure better enclosure. This does have some benefit, but is not considered a fundamental issue to the overall success of the layout. A mature tree could play a similar role and this can be secured at detailed design stage.
- 6.30 Parking is located either to the side of dwellings or in areas of parking adjacent to the street. The integration of parking into the central open space is welcome as it allows the terraces of housing behind to define this area of the site. Overall, it is considered the layout accords with the relevant Design Guide principles and represents a suitably high quality solution to the particular constraints and opportunities of this site.

Built form and architectural detailing

- 6.31 Given that appearance and scale are reserved matters, it is not possible to make a detailed assessment of this aspect of the scheme. However, the Design and Access Statement contains general principles that have been considered. The Statement confirms that a restricted palette of materials are proposed for the housing, including render, timber boarding and traditional red brick. Generally, housing in Chilton and those at Chilton Fields use a variety of red-bricks rather than a single stock brick. This should be replicated here at detailed stage.
- 6.32 The layout lends itself to a number of corner plots, and the type of house used on these plots will be crucial to the overall success of the scheme. As stated by the urban design officer, the house types on these plots will need ground floor windows of active rooms (living room/kitchen) on both facades of the building that front the street. This is to ensure no blank facades that will detract from the street scene.
- 6.33 The Design and Access Statement confirms that the dwellings will be two-storeys, which is appropriate for the locality and consistent with Chilton Fields.
- 6.34 Overall, the general principles of the built form and appearance of the proposed

dwelling are acceptable, but the detailing of the scheme will be a key element of its likely success in this sensitive location.

Residential Amenity

- 6.35 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.
- 6.36 Given the site's location on the southern side of Upper Farm Road, there are no concerns about the impact of this proposal on the amenity of existing neighbouring residents. As outlined above, the layout incorporates appropriate amenity and privacy for the occupants of the new houses.
- 6.37 Given the proximity of the site to the A34, the application is supported by a Noise Assessment. This assessment confirms that the current noise level on the site exceeds that currently recommended as maximum levels by the World Health Organisation. Accordingly, the report has identified a number of necessary mitigation measures to ensure the new residents of the development enjoy appropriate levels of noise both within their homes and within their gardens. For the houses themselves, this involves particular double-glazing frames to reduce internal noise levels. These windows will include ventilation to reduce the need to open them. For external areas, the report recommends an acoustic barrier around the site perimeter on boundaries with the A34. This barrier will obviously have a rather functional appearance and great care will need to be taken at detailed design stage to ensure it does not harm the overall scheme. However, given the new and enhanced planting proposed close to the A34 (discussed in the next section) there should be ample opportunity to screen this fence from view.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 6.38 Policy NE6 of the Local Plan 2011 confirms development in the North Wessex Downs AONB will only be permitted if the natural beauty of the landscape will be conserved or enhanced. Development which would be visually prominent, would detract from the views from public vantage points or would spoil the appreciation of the quality of the AONB will not be permitted.
- 6.39 The NPPF seeks to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109). According to paragraph 115 of the NPPF great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty of the National Parks, The Broads and AONB, as they have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF goes on to add that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include assessments of:
- The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy
 - The cost of, and scope for developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and,
 - Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.
- 6.40 Firstly, it is important to be clear that the NPPF definition of "major" development is not the same as the "ten houses or more" definition used for classifying application types in the Development Management Procedure Order. The use of the word "major" in the

NPPF is a more relative term and it is through case law that what constitutes major development in the AONB is being tested. What the case law to date indicates is that factors such as the size of the development relative to the existing settlement and the severity of the development's impact on the landscape are all factors in the assessment of what represents "major" development in the AONB.

- 6.41 Case law continues to be important in establishing what constitutes exceptional circumstances for major development in the AONB. Given the amount of large-scale housing developments received in the AONB, the council has sought a legal opinion on this matter. The opinion has considered recent appeal decisions and the predominant theme is that the factors in favour of granting planning permission for residential development in an AONB must be carefully balanced against the harm caused to the AONB. The lack of a five year supply of housing, as well as a need for affordable housing, can constitute exceptional circumstances that weigh favourably in weight of the proposal. This housing need can also represent the public interest required by Para 116 of the NPPF.
- 6.42 The council's legal opinion is also clear that proposed residential schemes must seek to address landscaping concerns and mitigate harm to the AONB as far as possible. Schemes designed in this way will have a much greater chance of being successful and can be considered sustainable development.
- 6.43 As such, before any definitive conclusion about whether this scheme a) is major development in the AONB and b) demonstrates exceptional circumstances that allow it to be granted, the particular impact of this proposal on the local landscape must be assessed.
- 6.44 As a starting point, the council's landscape architect confirms that the current commercial buildings on the site form a visual detractor to the AONB, particularly as they sit in the prominent corner of the site adjacent to Upper Farm Road. Their removal, on their own, would represent a benefit to the AONB.
- 6.45 Nonetheless, there can be little argument that this proposal would extend an urban form of development south and west away from the existing development on the site. The proposed housing would be visible clearly from the northern boundary of the site and would represent a much denser form of development than is currently on the land. There is an existing tree boundary to the south but this is thin in places and there are views through. Overall, officers considered that the initial scheme did not respond well to the particular surroundings of the site, nor did it seek to identify and mitigate the harm caused to the landscape. The initial scheme attracted strong objection from the council's landscape architect.
- 6.46 In response, the applicants commissioned a full Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) that properly considers the impact of developing this site on the AONB and submitted the revised masterplan currently being considered. The amended site layout takes heed of the findings of the LVIA and incorporates a number of improvements that reduce the impact on the landscape. The proposal is now better integrated with the adjacent school and the housing to the north, whilst the link to the eastern part of Chilton is better defined. Development is set back from the eastern boundary, to respect the public right of way into Chilton and allow the retention of existing vegetation on this boundary. This is also the case with the northern site boundary. The manner in which areas of landscaping link into the main areas of public open space is also welcomed.
- 6.47 The LVIA highlights the importance of the southern tree belt, as it forms the separation

of this site from the wider AONB. The applicants now propose a management plan for this tree belt. This will cover the replacement of the evergreen trees which are considered out of character with the AONB and will enhance the overall belt to ensure it can act as an important visual buffer between the site and open landscape to the east and south. The management plan for this tree belt is an element of the scheme that can be conditioned and should be considered a vital part of the proposed residential scheme.

- 6.48 The LVIA also identifies opportunities for ecological buffers, incorporating lightly managed grassland and wildflower areas and new areas of habitat.
- 6.49 Overall, officers consider that this proposal does represent a major development in the AONB. However, officers have also concluded that, on balance, the benefits to this proposal outweigh the harm. The district's lack of a five year supply does represent exceptional circumstances to allow major development in the AONB. Particular regard has been had to the manner in which the scheme now proposed has been informed by an LVIA and amendments made to react to the particular relationship the site has with the AONB. It is considered the site mitigates its harm to the landscape as far as is reasonably possible. Weight can be particularly applied to the enhancement of the tree belt in the southern portion of the site and the associated management plan to ensure it continues to act as an important buffer. Furthermore, the amended proposal ensures the scheme responds positively to its immediate context, in particular the primary school and the Chilton Fields development. As such, officers conclude that this scheme can be considered sustainable development that meets the requirements of Paragraph 116 of the NPPF and can be supported.

Open Space

- 6.50 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. 15% of the total area of this site is 3,923 square metres. The proposed site plan shows that 4,710 square metres of the layout is allocated as public open space. Whilst some of the areas allocated as "open space" constitute little more than landscaping strips between hedgerows and roads, the development will comfortably exceed policy requirements.

Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage

- 6.51 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).
- 6.52 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.
- 6.53 The lack of capacity in the local sewer network has been a source of objection from Chilton Parish Council and local residents. Thames Water have confirmed in consultation that there is a lack of capacity in the local sewer network. They request a standard Grampian condition that will require the developer to agree a foul drainage

scheme prior to work commencing and for that scheme to be implemented in full before any foul water is discharged from the site into the public sewer. The Parish Council have quite reasonably queried whether this site can be deliverable in the short term when there is such uncertainty over the ability of the local sewer network to accommodate the development.

- 6.54 The first stage of ascertaining the capacity of the local sewer network is for the developer to contract Thames Water Developer Services to undertake an impact study. From discussions between officers and the applicant, the cost and timeframes involved with undertaking this study have proved unrealistic within the timeframe of this application, but the applicant does accept the Grampian condition is necessary. Thames Water, as the statutory undertaker for sewerage in this area, have a duty to provide, maintain and extend their network as necessary. Any developer would have a right to connect to the public sewer on completion of their development. This “right to connect” and Thames Water’s responsibilities lie outside the planning remit. Given the lack of objection from Thames Water, it is considered the Grampian condition remains the appropriate measure to take in this matter. Whilst recognising the valid concerns of local people, there are insufficient planning grounds to recommend refusal.
- 6.55 Turning to surface water drainage, the site is wholly located in Flood Zone 1. Residential development is classified in the NPPF as “more vulnerable” but is considered acceptable in Flood Zone 1. As the site is located within an area of the lowest probability of flooding, the proposal complies with the sequential approach outlined in national guidance. Therefore, the only mitigation necessary against flooding is for finished floor levels to be above typical water levels in extreme rainfall events. The Environment agency have raised no objection to the proposal on flood grounds.
- 6.56 The site is underlain by Chalk strata and the applicant’s drainage consultant has assumed that the use of infiltration drainage is appropriate. This will be subject to further testing, something recommended by the council’s drainage engineers. It is considered that the precise nature of the SUDS scheme for this site can be controlled by condition. On this basis, there are no objections relating to drainage on this scheme.

Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety

- 6.57 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.
- 6.58 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.”*
- 6.59 The applicant proposes to re-use the existing access but it will be upgraded to suit the requirements of a residential development. Upper Farm Road will be widened at this point up to the access to a width of 4.8 metres. Footpaths two metres wide will be provided on both sides of the access road and will continue to the junction with Newbury Road to the east. Visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 90 metres will be made available from the site access point along Upper Farm Road, which is appropriate. The Highways Authority have confirmed the access arrangement is acceptable subject to

work within Upper Farm Road to include kerbing, footways, verges, pedestrian crossing point and street lighting. The details of these mitigation measures will be secured through a Section 278 agreement between the developer and the County Council.

- 6.60 As a related matter, the main access to the site would be across a public byway open to all traffic (BOAT). The part of the BOAT affected will need to be adopted by the Highways Authority to ensure future maintenance that is appropriate to the increased use.
- 6.61 The Transport Statement concludes the following on trip generation: *“The proposed development is likely to generate an additional 26 trips in the AM peak hour of which 23 vehicles departing the development. In the PM peak hour the development will generate an additional 28 movements with 20 inbound trips towards the development. This is roughly one vehicle every two minutes. The effect of the proposed development on the local road network is therefore considered to be low. The junction modelling has demonstrated that the development traffic will have a very small effect on the Chilton Field Way / Newbury Road junction. The modelling shows there will be significant spare operating capacity in 2021 with the development traffic.”*
- 6.62 The Highways Authority have reviewed the assumptions, methodology and conclusions of the Transport Statement and have found them to be sound. The findings factor in the current vehicular movements associated with the storage yard. The Highways Authority confirm there are no objections to the proposal based on the additional traffic movements derived from this development.
- 6.63 Adequate car parking space is proved on site, and on occasion, plots benefit from more than the requisite level of parking which is acceptable. There is also ample space within the site for cycle parking.
- A Section 106 contribution has been requested by the highways Authority to improve the Science Vale bus network at £795/dwelling and a £5,000 contribution
- 6.64 towards bus stop provision close to the site. These contributions are considered necessary, relevant and proportionate to the development.
- 6.65 Overall, there are no objections to this proposal in terms of highway safety, subject to conditions covering the access, visibility splays, parking, manoeuvring and travel plans.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.66 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...”*
- 6.67 The application has been supported by an ecological assessment that has surveyed that site and found very limited evidence of protected species activity. Parts of the existing grassland are species-rich and this would be lost to accommodate the development. However, the proposals do offer opportunity for biodiversity enhancement and further details of this could be easily secured by condition. As such, there are no objections on this point.

Heritage and Archaeology

- 6.68 There are no listed buildings close to the application site that would be affected by this proposal. The nearest listed buildings are all in the older part of Chilton on the other

side of the A34. There is no conservation area in Chilton.

- 6.69 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. The County Archaeologist has confirmed there are no objections on this point.

Viability and developer contributions

- 6.70 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.

- 6.71 The following developer contributions have been requested. Officers consider the contributions are fair and proportionate and should be subject to a legal agreement should permission be granted. At the time of writing discussions with the applicant and the county council in relation to transport and education are ongoing and a further update will be given at the meeting.

Vale of White Horse District Council	<i>Proposed Contributions</i>
Street naming	£TBC
Provision of bins at £170/property	£9,860
Public Art at £300/property	£17,400
Section 106 monitoring	£2,150
Total	£TBC
Oxfordshire County Council	<i>Proposed Contributions</i>
Science Vale bus network improvements	£45,315
Bus stop provision	£5,000
Chilton Primary school expansion	£186,933
Secondary school provision in Didcot area	£293,461
Library book stock	£2,773.80
Section 106 monitoring	£3,750
Total	£537,232.80

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In view of the council’s housing land supply shortfall, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and permission should be granted unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole” (NPPF paragraph 14). Paragraph 7 of NPPF identifies three mutually dependant dimensions to sustainable development; it should fulfil an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.
- 7.2 The proposed development would perform an economic role, at least in the short term, in that it would provide employment during the construction phase. It would also create investment in the local and wider economy through the construction stage and new

residents and their spending. This could help secure local facilities or make them more robust. 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 the Highworth Road, Faringdon appeal case (proposed up to 94 dwellings) it is noted that the Secretary of State considered that the *"benefits of the scheme would include the provision of much needed market and affordable housing to contribute towards acknowledged substantial shortfalls, and would generate considerable economic benefits of the type arising from housing development"* and that he gave these benefits significant weight (application no. P13/V1366/O, appeal reference APP/V3120/A/13/2210891).

- 7.3 The scheme would have a social role as it will provide in general additional housing that the District needs together with much needed affordable housing units. Whilst the housing mix does not strictly meet the SHMA this is a matter to be addressed fully at detailed application/reserved matters stage.
- 7.4 This scheme has been the subject of a great deal of negotiation, particularly focussing around the impact of the proposal on the AONB. Whilst the development does represent major development in the AONB, it is considered the need for housing in the area represents exceptional circumstances and a public interest that outweighs the identified harm to the AONB.
- 7.5 There are no technical objections to the proposal, subject to the recommended conditions. These conditions will cover, in particular, a foul drainage and water supply improvement scheme, a SUDS strategy for the entire site and secure a long-term management and enhancement plan for the southern belt of planting that provides an important buffer to the AONB beyond. A Section 106 agreement will be necessary to secure much needed affordable housing financial contributions towards infrastructure improvements.
- 7.6 Overall, 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, and 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

8.1 **It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning 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. Commencement two years or six months after reserved matters approval.**
- 2. Approved plans.**
- 3. Tree belt management plan to be agreed.**
- 4. Tree protection to be agreed.**
- 5. Surface water drainage to be agreed.**
- 6. Foul drainage works provided prior to occupation.**
- 7. Water supply works to be agreed.**

8. Contamination investigation to be agreed.
9. Construction traffic management plan to be agreed.
10. Green travel plans to be agreed.
11. Air quality mitigation to be agreed.
12. Biodiversity enhancement to be agreed.
13. Noise mitigation as agreed.
14. Access as agreed.
15. Visibility splays as agreed.
16. Parking and turning as agreed.
17. No drainage to highway.

Author: Stuart Walker
Contact number: 01235 540546
Email: stuart.walker@southandvale.gov.uk