

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	P14/V2061/RM
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	RESERVED MATTERS
<b>REGISTERED</b>	19.9.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	SUTTON COURTENAY
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Gervase Duffield
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Persimmon Homes North London
<b>SITE</b>	Land to south of Appleford Road Sutton Courtenay
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following Outline permission P10/V1907/O for a residential development comprising 195 dwellings and access (amended plans including revised layout, house types and landscaping)
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	451117/194224
<b>OFFICER</b>	Adrian Butler

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### **SUMMARY**

This is a reserved matters application pursuant to an outline planning permission granted for residential development under application no. P13/V1907/O. This outline planning permission established the principle of residential development for an unspecified number of dwellings on this site plus the means of access. This reserved matters application seeks approval for the detail of the scheme including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development.

The main issues are:

- Housing mix
- Landscape and visual impacts including impact for the Lowland Vale
- Layout and design of the development
- Residential amenity

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

The housing mix has been adjusted with the market housing closely reflecting the SHMA. 40% affordable housing is proposed.

The site is within the Lowland Vale landscape and the site is well contained by existing vegetation particularly to its north boundary and to the east. The site is also mainly previously developed land accommodating commercial buildings within it. Landscape and visual impacts are localised. With the scale of development being primarily 2-storey dwellings with some limited 2½-storey buildings, open spaces at the site edges to the east and south and further landscaping, the landscape and visual implications are limited and not adverse. Housing density is 30 dwellings per hectare which is consistent with the neighbouring Amey Close development. However, the higher density elements of the scheme are more centrally located and against the open eastern and southern edges the density is lower with more spacious plots and open spaces.

The number of dwellings has increased from the 171 dwellings initially proposed to 195 with the increase in numbers reflecting the need for smaller house types. This is

considered reasonable given that this proposal seeks to make best use of a previously developed site and more so, as the market housing mix now closely follows that which the SHMA would expect and the layout has been modified to reflect expectations in the Council's Design Guide. The submitted house types are reasonable in terms of design. Privacy for existing neighbours and between proposals is reasonable.

There are few dwellings adjacent to the site and the proposals are located in positions to at least accord with Design Guide requirements and therefore, overlooking, loss of privacy and overshadowing are not unreasonable. Revised plans respond to comments and retain a landscaped bund adjacent Amey Close, show refuse vehicle tracking and revise the landscaping scheme. Adequate car parking is proposed.

Surface water and foul water drainage are subject to conditions on the outline planning permission and will be considered as part of the discharge of those conditions in the normal way.

The proposal is considered sustainable development meeting the three roles (economic, social and environmental) referenced in the NPPF and will contribute towards the 5-year land supply. The limited harm this proposal would cause is not considered adverse or considered to outweigh the benefits.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This is a reserved matters application pursuant to an outline planning permission granted under application no. P10/V1907/O. This outline planning permission established the principle of residential development for an unspecified number of dwellings on this site plus the means of access. This reserved matters application seeks approval for the detail of the scheme including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development.
- 1.2 The site mainly comprises previously developed land consisting of large areas of hardsurfacing and areas accommodating buildings, storage, parking and vehicle manoeuvring space. The site is relatively level.
- 1.3 The northern boundary adjoins Appleford Road and is defined by a deciduous hedge and trees with the trees mainly grouped towards the north eastern part of the site. Adjoining the north east corner of the site is a commercial building named 2morrrows Court. The eastern boundary features mature trees beyond which are open fields. To the south is open land forming the Sutton Courtenay Millennium Common that also wraps around part of the western boundary of the site. Adjacent to the north western corner of the site is housing in Amey Close. The site location plan is at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.4 The site is not within or adjoining a conservation area. There are no listed buildings on or adjoining the site.
- 1.5 The application is presented to planning committee as there are objections from the Parish Council and at least four objections from interested parties.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 This is an application for reserved matters with a total of 195 dwellings proposed. This is an increase from the 171 dwellings proposed at the time of the application being submitted.
- 2.2 Vehicular access to the site is in the approved location at the north eastern corner of the site. The roads leading through the site have a hierarchy of main, secondary and tertiary roads and cul-de-sacs serving the dwellings and flats. The main road leads through the site and providing linkages and a route around the site.

- 2.3 A formal area of open space are provided north of centre of the site with play areas within this space. Housing is grouped around the open space with the central part of the site and area adjacent to the southern boundary of 2morrrows Court being the higher density housing. Informal open spaces adjoin the southern and eastern site boundaries with lower density housing generally towards the edges of the proposed development.
- 2.4 There is a mixture of house designs and variation in house sizes. In addition, there are buildings accommodating flats. Building sizes vary from 2½-storeys to 1½ storeys with most dwellings being 2-storeys. The taller buildings tend to be close to 2Morrrows Court, at the site entrance with a few scattered in the layout. Two storey dwellings adjoin existing houses in Amey Close. There is a combination of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Car parking is either on plot including garages, in courtyards or in front of dwellings. The layout plan is at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.5 The application is supported by:
- Design and access statement
  - Transport statement
  - Flood risk assessment
  - Drainage strategy
  - Response to the Environment Agency observations
  - Arboricultural assessment

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

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

Parish Council	<p>Strongly object. Their objections may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overdevelopment – not well planned and appearing cramped</li> <li>• Increased traffic, congestion exacerbating queuing traffic over Culham bridge and along Abingdon Road and Appleford Road</li> <li>• Increased risk of accidents</li> <li>• Swamp Amey Close</li> <li>• Threaten the Millennium Common</li> <li>• Inadequate sewer system</li> <li>• Wish to see fewer dwellings</li> </ul> <p>A copy of the Parish Council’s letter is attached as <b>Appendix 3</b>.</p>
Neighbours	<p>14 letters of objection have been received. Some objectors have written twice or more in response to iterations of the scheme. The objections may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not adhere to the spirit of the outline consent which mentions 140 dwellings and a retail unit. A detailed application should be submitted</li> <li>• Detrimental impact on neighbours including overlooking, loss or privacy, loss of light. Dwellings should be at least 21m away</li> <li>• Overdevelopment</li> <li>• House types should show more variation to reflect the village character</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased traffic and congestion over the Culham bridge across the Thames. Cumulative impacts will make this worse. Doubt the applicants transport technical note findings</li> <li>• Make access to Amey Close more difficult at rush hour</li> <li>• Detrimental to highway safety</li> <li>• Detrimental impact on wildlife including birds using the site and adjacent land</li> <li>• Creates an overcrowded and congested residential area</li> <li>• Inadequate infrastructure to accommodate the development such as sewers, road network</li> <li>• Noise and disturbance from construction work – working hours should be restricted</li> <li>• Street lighting should be provided on Appleford Road otherwise the walk to the village is dangerous</li> <li>• Poor accessibility with the distance to local amenities</li> <li>• Layout and house designs out of character</li> <li>• Landscaped bund between Amey Close and the site should be retained</li> <li>• Loss of green areas on the site frontage that were shown in the outline scheme</li> <li>• Damage to properties through pile driving</li> <li>• Increased surface water and sewerage flood risk for adjacent development</li> <li>• Inadequate sewerage capacity</li> </ul> <p>The Millennium Common Management Committee advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst no specific numbers of dwellings were permitted at outline stage this proposal may threaten the Common.</li> <li>• Would wish to see the two footpaths to the southern boundary with the Common removed to protect water vole</li> </ul> <p>One local resident has no objection but would wish to see the bund behind Amey Close retained, adequate parking provided and consideration given as to how the existing concrete is to be removed</p>
<p>Oxfordshire County Council One Voice</p>	<p><u>Highways</u> Propose conditions for vision splays, retaining garages and parking spaces, turning space, estate road construction, cycle parking, drainage and construction management plan. Raise a holding objection with regard to refuse vehicle access between plots 121 and 176 and because some parallel parking bays do not appear to have a suitable hardstanding behind them which should measure 2m wide footpath or at least 0.8m wide service strip to allow drivers to step out from their vehicles after parking.</p> <p>It is noted the quantum of development has increased from the previous 171 to 198 (sic) residential units. It is acknowledged that the previous transport statement considered for 155 dwelling units and was found to be satisfactory. Analysis of the increased quantum indicates AM and PM peak time movements to increase by 8 and 9 movements to a total of 68 and 29 peak times movements respectively, which are still acceptable and not detrimental in terms of capacity/congestion to Appleford Road.</p>

Vale of White Horse District Council – Planning Committee – 9 December 2015

	<p><u>Drainage</u>          No objection          Submitted drainage strategy plan now indicates an acceptable strategy and is therefore acceptable.</p>
Health & Housing – contaminated land	No objection
Waste management	<p>Plans do not show tracking for the section of road between plots 121 and 176. If a refuse vehicle is not to access this road waste collection points within 25m of the nearest accessible point for the collection vehicle should be provided          (Officer note: This tracking plan is now provided and demonstrates a refuse vehicle can access this stretch of road)</p>
Vale drainage engineer	<p>No objection.          The Environment Agency should confirm their acceptance to the submitted flood risk assessment and drainage strategy</p>
Thames Water	<p>No objection.          Unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of this application. Should approval be granted they request a 'Grampian Style' condition: <i>"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>          To determine whether the existing sewer network has sufficient spare capacity to receive the flows from the proposed development, a drainage strategy must be submitted detailing both the foul and surface water strategies.          (Officer note: this is a requirement of conditions on the outline planning permission. It is not necessary for the reserved matters application to provide this detail).</p>
Environment Agency	No comments received on the latest scheme. Objected to the original submission.
Vale Countryside officer	<p>No objection          Recommends proposed links to the Common south of the site be removed to protect water vole          (Officer note – revised plans no longer show these links)</p>
Vale urban design officer	<p>No objection          Recommendation: The revisions have addressed a lot of the design concerns previously raised. Remaining key concerns include the design of the pedestrian/cycle link proposed through the perimeter block in the west of the site together with the limited amount of defensible space provided to Plot 126; and the design of Plot three in terms of it weakening the site entrance and encouraging anti-social parking. The incorporation of windows in the side elevations of properties, the size of these windows and the materials being used in the scheme also require further consideration in order to create a high quality environment.</p>

Vale landscape officer	<p>No objection</p> <p>The proposed scheme has improved the relationship between the built form and the public open spaces.</p> <p>Some issues need to be addressed such as the play area surface is labelled as grass safety matting in the Hard Landscape plans but as play bark within the Landscape Strategy Plan, grass safety matting is preferred; the proposed screen/ buffer shrub mix in the within the southern and eastern areas of the POS should be native species reflecting the adjacent planting. Details of tree pits (indicating sufficient rooting material provided under hard standing), play area specification etc. but these could dealt with under condition along with details of planting methods and maintenance of the existing and proposed planting</p>
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4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 Application no. P10/V1907/O – planning permission granted for an unspecified amount of residential development – 9 April 2013.

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
HE9	Archaeology
NE9	Lowland Vale
HE1	Conservation Areas
HE4	Listed buildings

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

## Vale of White Horse District Council – Planning Committee – 9 December 2015

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 4	Spatial Strategy for the Abingdon & Oxford Fringe sub-area
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
- 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

### 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.

To date a neighbourhood plan for Sutton Courtenay has not been prepared.

### Environmental Impact

- 5.7 This proposal is for more than 150 dwellings and the site area exceeds 5ha in size and is therefore, above the thresholds set in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. As required by the above Regulations officers have undertaken a screening opinion. Taking into account government guidance in paragraph 58 of the NPPG on thresholds that may trigger the need for EIA and having considered the potential for significant effects of the

proposal in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Regulations including cumulative impacts with other housing developments permitted and the strategic housing site allocation for Sutton Courtenay, it is the case that this proposal is not EIA development. A screening opinion has been provided demonstrating this.

#### **5.8 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)

#### **5.9 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. Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
2. Design and Layout
3. Residential Amenity
4. Landscape and Visual Impact
5. Open Space and Landscaping
6. Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage
7. Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety

#### **The Principle of Development**

6.2 The principle of development is established through the outline planning permission that permitted an unspecified number of dwellings on this site. It has therefore been accepted that the use of this land and the site location is acceptable for a housing development.

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 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.

**6.6 Affordable housing and housing mix**

The applicant is proposing 40% affordable housing in accordance with policy H17 of the adopted local plan. 75% of the affordable housing is to be rented with 25% shared ownership. 117 market houses are proposed with 78 affordable dwellings. Affordable housing is reasonably dispersed through the site and is designed to be indistinguishable from the market dwellings. The mix is as follows:

Affordable housing:

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+bed	TOTAL
Proposed	15	42	17	4	78
SHMA	21.3	27.4	26.2	3.1	78

Market Housing

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	TOTAL
Proposed	6	24	49	38	117
SHMA	7	25	50	35	117

- 6.7 The affordable housing mix is biased towards 2 bedroom dwellings in accordance with policy H16 housing mix whereas the market housing closely follows the SHMA and is acceptable.

**Design and Layout**

- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 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*

The design and access statement (DAS) contains a character study, context appraisal and site appraisal and seeks to explain how the proposal responds to local character.

- 6.10 In this case the site is relatively free standing at the edge of the village with open land on three sides. On the north western boundary is a small development of dwellings (Amey Close) of relatively modern appearance and tightly grouped in a cul-de-sac. To the west and fronting Appleford Road is a ribbon of dwellings of mixed appearance. Visually the site does not relate to the loose knit form of development in the historic

core of Sutton Courtenay or other parts of the village which vary in character, appearance and layout. In this case the architect in discussion with officers has sought to design a scheme which makes best use of this previously developed site with recognition given to the adopted Design Guide with house types seeking to reflect the form of the older forms of housing in the village.

- 6.11 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 although this is caveated by the need for development to respond to the character of the area. The application proposes a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. (Amey Close is 30 dwellings per hectare). This site is part of the rural edge of the village. The proposal provides for higher density development within the main body of the site with the edges defined by detached houses in more spacious plots and with a soft edge of open space and landscaping particularly to the east and southern boundaries that adjoin open land. This approach is considered acceptable and the density of development overall is deemed reasonable.

*Spatial Layout*

- 6.12 The proposal takes access from Appleford Road in accordance with the outline permission. It contains a hierarchy of connected roads being the main access road, secondary roads and a third tier of reasonably short cul-de-sacs. These provide a well-connected and legible network of streets leading through and around the development. The roads allow a choice of routes through the development with a logical route to follow. The proposal also includes footpaths through the site providing connections and shorter walking distances and access to Appleford Road. The proposal is considered compliant with principle DG23 of the Design Guide. Traffic calming is formed by the change in road direction including curvature of the roads which should reduce traffic speeds, different materials for roads surfaces, focal points and rumble strips. This should keep traffic speeds low making the development reasonably safe for pedestrians and cyclists. This accords with principle DG34 of the design guide. The proposal creates active frontages with houses fronting the roads with corner dwellings designed to 'turn' the corner by incorporating windows and doors on side elevations, whilst some terraces of dwellings are specifically designed to turn the corners. Furthermore, the landscaping scheme incorporates hedges and tree planting to the frontages of plots creating enclosed front gardens and further street enclosure together with softening the appearance. Therefore, this layout creates enclosure and accords with design guide principle DG28.
- 6.13 A detailed planting scheme accompanies the proposal and this shows tree and hedge lined frontages breaking and softening the appearance of the development. Opportunities for tree planting and soft landscaping are also available elsewhere including the central open space/play areas and at the site boundaries which include retention of trees and hedges on the Appleford Road frontages. In response to objections the earth bund adjacent Amey Close is now retained. Planting to the southern and eastern open spaces is now revised to a native wetland mix as requested by the council's landscape officer. Ground cover against the side on plot 126, 127 and 167 is provided. This comprises cotoneaster, ivy, rose and *Lonicera pileata* to help secure these boundaries against a proposed pedestrian link requested by officers. This accords with principle DG33 of the design guide.
- 6.14 The open spaces include a large off centre of site area that incorporates play areas overlooked by proposed houses. Further areas of open space are proposed to the eastern and southern boundaries of the site adjoining existing open land including the Millennium Common. These areas are overlooked by proposed dwellings to create passive surveillance and there are pedestrian links though to the Common. All spaces

are reasonably secure including surveillance and can be considered attractive and useable. Open space provision constitutes in excess of 15% of the site area. It is considered the scheme complies with the NPPF, policy H23 of the local plan, the Council's Adopted Supplementary Planning Document titled Open Space, Sport and Recreation Future Provision and policies DG15 and DG17 of the adopted Design Guide.

- 6.15 The proposal provides frontage to Appleford Road albeit with dwellings set back behind the hedge and trees securing their retention. It is noted that existing hardsurfaces extend close to this frontage vegetation and the proposed dwellings and parking areas are further south of the hedge and tree line in comparison. Dwellings also face the open spaces at the site edges. This treatment of the sites edges accords with principle DG29 of the Design Guide.
- 6.16 The layout provides focal points with visual stops along most of the roads and vistas along the roads to the focal points and the open areas to the south. It also creates a legible layout. This accords with principle DG30 of the design guide.

*Built form*

- 6.17 The proposed dwellings are a mix of 2½, two and 1½ storeys with the majority being 2-storeys. Ridge heights vary with 2½ storey buildings being up to 10.7m to ridge with 1½ storey buildings some 7.5m to ridge. Most dwellings are between 7.5m and 9m in height and are reflective of heights found in Amey Close and at 2morows Court. There was some initial concern with regard to the height of the flats being close to the eastern boundary. Changes to the scheme have reduced their height in part and relocated one block to a more centrally located part of the site. Tree screening on the eastern boundary limits views of the site and will break up the appearance of the development. The heights of dwellings are considered acceptable and in accordance with principle DG51 of the design guide.
- 6.18 House sizes and designs in the village are an eclectic mix. The house types proposed are simple in form being rectangular with vertical emphasis, well-proportioned and balanced elevations. Variation is provided by different house sizes and a mix of detached, semi-detached, terraced dwellings and flats and features including porches, occasional bay windows and gables. House types are reasonably reflective of Amey Close designs whilst providing their own identity. Materials are brick with two different types of mottled red/brown bricks proposed interspersed with elements of render and timber boarding finished in black. Roof tiles are a red and brown tile. These materials are reflective of the colours of materials used in the village. The proposal is considered compliant with principles DG51 – DG54 of the design guide.
- 6.19 Boundaries are defined by a mix of brick walls, fences and hedges. The stone walls are provided against the streets to defend amenity spaces and some parking areas. Where rear gardens are not in the public realm, close boarded fences are proposed although low level post and rail fencing is proposed against part of the western boundary for dwellings backing on to the Millennium Common. Hedges are proposed for many of the house frontages, thereby defining the street scenes and providing some protection and privacy for occupants of the proposed dwellings. This accords with principle DG55 of the design guide.
- 6.20 The proposal is considered compliant with the adopted Design Guide and policies DC1 and DC6 of the adopted local plan together with design advice in the NPPF.
- Residential Amenity**
- 6.21 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.

- 6.22 Dwellings in Amey Close back on to the site and these are the only dwellings directly affected by the proposal. An earth bund with planting and topped by a low fence exists between the site and Amey Close housing and this was agreed as part of the landscaping scheme for Amey Close. The original plans showed the bund as being removed and replaced by a fence. Revised plans now retain the bund and this is also confirmed in writing by the applicant. This helps to separate and screen existing housing from the proposals.
- 6.23 Where rear windows in the proposals directly face rear windows in neighbouring dwellings, the distances between them are all 21m or more which accords with the design guide and ensures overlooking is reasonable. Plots 152 and 153 are side on to existing dwellings at a distance of some 15 at the closest point. No side windows are proposed and whilst these dwellings are to the south the distances between the proposed and existing dwellings ensures no unreasonable overshadowing or overbearing impact results. The retained bund with its planting also assists in preventing unreasonable relationships.
- 6.24 Distances between proposed flats and 2Morrows Court are in excess of 21m with intervening tree screening as well. This relationship is reasonable. Within the site care is taken to minimise overlooking whilst providing natural surveillance of proposed public areas and maintaining privacy for dwellings beside public areas. The requirement for privacy is balanced against the urban design officer's expectations.
- 6.25 The proposal is considered compliant with policy DC9 of the adopted local plan, the Design Guide and NPPF.

#### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 6.26 The NPPF seeks to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109). In NPPF terms this is not a valued landscape. Policy NE9 of the adopted Local Plan designates the site as part of the wider Lowland Vale which is a distinctive landscape and valued for its own quality. Paragraph 7.67 of the adopted local plan explains that "*the long views over the patchwork quilt of fields, farms and villages in the Vale are an essential part of the landscape quality of the District*".
- 6.27 This site is previously developed and the principle of housing on it is accepted. The site is well screened in public views from the east due to trees on the eastern boundary and surrounding 2Morrows Court. The change to Appleford Road will be noticeable. The frontage hedge and trees are retained and this site is very noticeable as a developed site in its present form. In views from the Millennium Common the developed nature of the site is apparent although a less intensive form of development compared to that proposed. This is an edge of village, previously developed site in a relatively flat landscape with public views screened by existing vegetation on and off site. The site does not have an important role in the landscape character of the Lowland Vale and its development for 195 dwellings would not have an adverse impact.

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

- 6.28 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. Open spaces exceed 15% of the site area in accordance with policy H23.
- 6.29 There are no protected trees on site. There is a hedgerow and trees on the site

frontage and trees to the eastern boundary which are retained. The planted earth bund against Amey Close is retained. There are existing trees in the north east corner of the site which extend in a line southwards into the site which are to be removed to accommodate dwellings. These trees have a limited role in the character of the street scene owing to frontage trees and trees around 2morows Court. Their loss is acceptable particularly in balancing the limited harm against the benefits of providing housing on this site.

- 6.30 A detailed landscaping scheme accompanies the application and includes new tree planting, hedges and shrub planting in the public areas. The new planting can compensate for the trees lost and it helps soften the appearance of the development.

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

- 6.31 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).
- 6.32 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.
- 6.33 The site is in flood zone 1 which are zones least susceptible to flooding and preferred in flood risk terms for housing development. The applicant has submitted a flood risk assessment (FRA) as expected by the NPPF which seeks to draw on the FRA submitted as part of the outline application.
- 6.34 Thames Water comments are noted. The environment agency objected to the drainage strategy submitted with this application at the outset. The Environment Agency is no longer the statutory consultee for drainage matters with this responsibility falling to the County Council. OCC has no objection. However, the outline planning permission includes planning conditions requiring a new flood risk assessment and surface water and foul water drainage schemes to be submitted to and approved by this authority prior to development commencing and the approved schemes to be implemented prior to occupation. There is no requirement to provide this detail as part of this reserved matters application, and these conditions still need to be complied with and will be considered as part of the discharge of planning conditions in the normal way.

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

- 6.35 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.

- 6.36 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.”*
- 6.37 Car parking is provided in accordance with the Council’s parking standards and the location and design of parking accords with advice in the Council’s 2015 adopted Design Guide. For two or more bedroom dwellings OCC parking standards expect a maximum of 2 spaces per dwelling. Space is proposed for some 431 parking spaces with each house comprising two or more bedrooms having two parking spaces allocated. Each one bedroom flat has a parking space allocated. There are also some 28 unallocated/visitor parking spaces throughout the development. Space for two parking spaces is proposed in front of the garages with the exception of those beneath plot 3 which is a flat above garage spaces. A condition preventing garage conversion is not considered necessary as adequate parking would be retained. The few parking bays without a footpath adjacent are in short cul-de-sacs in which vehicle movements will be few, slow moving and there is open space adjoining. The highway authority concern is not justified. Refuse vehicle tacking is now shown between plots 121 and 176 and a refuse vehicle can access this short length of road.
- 6.38 The urban design officer suggests plot 3 may encourage frontage parking as the front door to this unit is distant from its parking space. Plot 3 is close to the site entrance and opposite the entrance to 2morrors Court. An on-street parking space exists close to this dwelling which could be used for dropping off bags of shopping for example. This small element of the acceptable overall design could not justify refusal
- 6.39 The outline application was supported by a transport statement which considered the impacts of 155 dwellings (this included 15 dwellings at Amey Close). With this proposal for 195 dwellings the applicant has provided an updated transport technical note which references 198 dwellings and therefore, considers a slightly worse case scenario.
- 6.40 The outline permission accepts a total of 80 AM peak traffic movements to and from the site and a total of 80 PM traffic movements to and from the site. The applicant calculates the additional dwellings (43 based on a 198 dwelling scheme) would generate an additional 13 two-way movements in the AM peak and an additional 24 two-way movements in the PM peak. Officers are aware of traffic queuing to access the bridge across the Thames and that traffic often queues back along Abingdon Road into Appleford Road and that traffic from this development could add to the queuing traffic. This increase in traffic from this proposal is not considered significant or severe in NPPF terms and it is noted the highway authority has not raised any concerns in respect of traffic generation.

#### **Ecology and Biodiversity**

- 6.41 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...”*
- 6.42 The site is not designated for its ecology or biodiversity interest and there are no designated sites likely to be affected by the proposal. Water vole uses the ditch immediately beyond the southern boundary of the site. The countryside officer and Millennium Common Committee are concerned the original and some amended versions of the plans show access to the Common. These access points could impact on adjacent ditches which are habitat for water vole. The plans no longer show access from the southern parts of the site to the Common.

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

6.43 Financial contributions are dealt with by the outline planning permission and this is not an opportunity to secure contributions towards any other infrastructure under this planning application.

**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 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). This proposal would have considerable economic benefits.

7.3 The scheme would have a social role as it will provide additional housing that the District needs together with much needed affordable housing.

7.4 The proposal has an environmental role including providing housing in a reasonably accessible location, provision of public open spaces and tree planting, using previously developed land and an appropriate design.

7.5 Set against the economic, social and environmental benefits is the very limited localised landscape and visual impact and limited harm for water vole.

7.6 The Council does not have a 5-year land supply and this proposal would provide 195 dwellings towards this. It is in the public interest that housing is provided to meet need acknowledged in the District. The economic and social roles of this development are in the public interest. In conclusion, it is considered the public benefits including the contribution towards the 5-year land supply outweighs the limited and very localised impacts, and that this proposal meets the three strands of sustainable development.

7.7 The impacts of the proposal are not considered unreasonably adverse and it is considered the harm does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF as a whole. Consequently, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions. It should be noted that the conditions associated with the outline permission remain applicable.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **It is recommended that approval of the reserved matters is granted subject to the conditions as follows:**

1. **Approved plans**
2. **Retention of landscape bund alongside Amey Close**
3. **Removal of permitted development rights**

**(The planning conditions associated with the outline planning permission remain relevant. There is no need to repeat them as part of this approval).**

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