

APPLICATION NO.	P15/V0719/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	31.3.2015
PARISH	HARWELL
WARD MEMBER(S)	Janet Shelley Reg Waite
APPLICANT	The Lime Walk Gospel Hall Trust
SITE	Land adj Fieldside Didcot Road Harwell, OX11 6DH
PROPOSAL	Erection of a pair of two storey 4-bed detached dwellings with integral garages served by a shared vehicular access. (12 February 2016 - amended plans received.)
AMENDMENTS	As above
GRID REFERENCE	450721/189672
OFFICER	Sarah Green

SUMMARY

- The application is referred to planning committee due to the number of local objections
- The application is for the erection of two detached dwellings.
- The main issues are the impact on the character of the area, highway safety, drainage and neighbours.
- The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact. The application is recommended for approval.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application is referred to planning committee due to the number of local objections.

1.2 The site is an area of land adjacent to Didcot Road. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1. To the eastern side and opposite the site are existing dwelling plots which front the road. To the rear of the site is a religious meeting hall, the access road for which runs alongside the site. To the other side of the site is the major housing development of Great Western Park.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of two detached dwellings. Both dwellings would be two storey and have four bedrooms, a single garage and additional parking. Both would be served from a shared access onto Didcot Road. Extracts of the plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

2.2 The proposal has been amended so that the dwellings are set in slightly from the side boundaries and plot 2 is located 4m further back into the site. The site boundaries have also been amended slightly to remove the marginal areas of the site that are owned by GWP developers.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

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.

3.1 Harwell Parish Council	<p><i>Original plans</i> No objection, concerned houses too large for plot and with access arrangements.</p> <p><i>Amendments</i> No objection. Previous comments still apply</p>
Neighbour Object	<p><i>Original plans</i> Objection – (4) Siting of dwellings will obstruct existing access view Sewage problems Siting further forward is inconsistent with existing building line Roof heights and dwelling styles inconsistent with existing bungalows/chalets</p> <p><i>Amendments</i> Objection – (2) Same reasons as above</p>
Ward Councillor – Reg Waite	<p><i>Original plans</i> Number of problems have arisen in this area during past few years, shall be writing in detail to object to application shortly once have completed various enquires.</p> <p>(NB: no further comments have been received.)</p>
Thames Water Development Control	No objection
County Archaeologist (OCC)	No objection
Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council)	No objection, subject to condition
Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)	<p><i>Original plans</i> Holding objection subject to further information</p> <p><i>Amendment</i> No objection subject to conditions</p>

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P14/V0724/PEM](#) – Pre-app enquiry (28/04/2014)

Erection of a pair of two storey detached dwellings with integral garages served via a shared vehicular access.

- Generally supportive of principle and design, but more appropriate to wait for GWP submission for adjacent site before developing this site.

Adjacent sites:

[P14/V2718/RM](#) – Approved (17/04/2015)

Parcel SN02ABCD DN02CD of Great Western Park consisting of the erection of 415 dwellings, landscaping, section of southern spine road, estate roads and utility infrastructure (as amended by documentation received on 30.03.2015 and 31.03.2015).

[P12/V1040](#) - Approved (17/07/2012)

Proposed erection of a religious meeting hall and creation of a new vehicular access

[P02/V1594/O](#) - Approved (18/07/2008)

Mixed-use urban extension of 3300 new dwellings together with associated open space, leisure, community, local shops and services and drainage and utility infrastructure (site area split between SODC & VWHDC).

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.

DC1 - Design

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

GS1 - Developments in Existing Settlements

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. Whilst the plan has been through Examination the Inspector's has not been received and the objections to it remain unresolved. 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:-

Core Policy 1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Core Policy 3 Settlement hierarchy

Core Policy 4 Meeting our housing needs

Core Policy 15 Spatial strategy for South East Vale sub-area

Core Policy 33 Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility

Core Policy 35 Promoting public transport, cycling and walking

Core Policy 37 Design and local distinctiveness

Core Policy 44 Landscape

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design Guide – March 2015

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

Neighbourhood Plan

There is no neighbourhood plan designation for this area.

Environmental Impact

This proposal does not exceed 150 dwellings, the site area is under 5ha and is not within a 'sensitive area' as defined by the EIA regulations. Consequently the proposal is beneath the thresholds set in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 as amended and this proposal is not EIA development and there is no requirement under the Regulations to provide a screening opinion.

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)

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.

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:

- Principle of development
- Location
- Design and Layout
- Residential Amenity
- Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage
- Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety

6.2 Principle of development

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.

6.3 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.

- 6.4 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.
- 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 **Location**
The site is located on the edge of Didcot and adjacent to the Great Western Park (GWP) development. As such it will no longer be on the edge of a settlement or encroach into the countryside. It is essentially an infill plot.
- 6.7 It will be located close to a main junction into GWP from Didcot Road, where the commercial and retail area is proposed. Facilities such as a new pub, supermarket, technical college, and bus stops are/will be available a short distance from the site. The site is considered to be in an accessible location.
- 6.8 **Design and Layout**
The NPPF gives considerable weight to good design and acknowledges it is a key component of sustainable development. Policy DC1 requires that developments do not adversely affect the character of an area
- 6.9 The development is laid out such that both dwellings would face the main road, although they will both set back to allow for a parking and turning area in front of the dwellings. Both dwellings are pitched roofed with lower rear gables. The general character of the street is of dwellings set back into the plot from the road. These dwellings would be set further forward than the dwellings to the east, however they would be similar to the newer dwellings in GWP to the west. Similarly whilst there are chalet bungalows to the east, to the west the GWP development will be two storey houses. The proposed dwellings would therefore not appear out of place by being two storey. Officers consider that the proposed design and layout would not be significantly harmful to the visual amenity of the area to justify refusal in this ground.
- 6.10 **Residential Amenity**
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. Design principles DG63-64 of the Design Guide pertain to amenity, privacy and overlooking.
- 6.11 The dwellings would at their closest, be 15m from Fieldside to the east, 16m from the religious hall to the south east and 17m from the closest houses on GWP to the west. It is considered that at these distances the proposed dwellings will not be overbearing on the neighbouring occupiers.

6.12 The houses will have their main habitable room windows in the front and rear elevations. The side windows of the dwellings will serve either bathrooms or the stairs and therefore can be obscured glazed. There will therefore be no direct overlooking towards neighbouring residential occupiers.

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

The NPPF provides that development should not increase flood risk elsewhere and should be appropriately flood resilient and resistant (paragraph 103).

6.14 Objections have been raised from local residents on the capacity of the local sewage system. The drainage engineer does not raise any objections to the proposal and neither does Thames Water on this point. Any permission will be subject to a sustainable drainage condition in any event, to ensure that the proposed drainage scheme for the site is acceptable.

6.15 **Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety**

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

6.16 The application proposes a new access point on Didcot Road to serve the dwellings. Objections have been raised with regards to the safety of a new access and to the impact on visibility. The highway officer has reviewed the application. Further to his original comments visibility splays have been shown on the plan. These are considered acceptable to him. He no longer objects to the application. The corner of plot 1 nearest the road would be 7.2m from the back of the footpath and over 9m from the road carriageway. Details of the front boundary treatments can also be controlled by condition to ensure they are of appropriate height. The highway officer has not raised any issue with the development restricting visibility from other accesses along the road. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of highway safety.

6.17 Conditions can also ensure that the new access is in accordance with OCC standards and that parking and turning areas are retained on the site. Given the level of development and its location officers do not consider it is necessary to require a construction traffic management plan for this site.

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. The scheme would have a social role as it will provide in general additional housing that the District needs. The scheme would have some impact on the character of the area and amenity, although this is considered to be acceptable and is not considered to be harmful in planning terms.

7.3 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. The

application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:**

1. Commencement three years - full planning permission.
2. Approved plans.
3. Slab levels to be submitted.
4. Materials details to be submitted.
5. Drainage details to be submitted.
6. Landscaping scheme, including boundary treatments (submission).
7. Landscaping scheme, including boundary treatments (implement).
8. Access, parking and turning in accordance with plan.
9. No gates across access.
10. Garage accommodation to be retained.

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