

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P16/V2253/O</a>
<b>SITE</b>	6-8 Cumnor Road Boars Hill OXFORD, OX1 5JP
<b>PARISH</b>	WOOTTON
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing 2-storey building and garage and erection of new building consisting of 9 apartments and related works (As amended by Drawing Nos: 310.P.01, 02A, 03B, 05A, 06A, 07A, 08A, 09A, 10A, 11A, 14A and 15A accompanying agent's email of 5 November 2016 and Drawing Nos: 310.P.04C, 12B and 13B accompanying agent's email of 22 November 2016)
<b>WARD MEMBER</b>	Henry Spencer
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr & Mrs A & H Rock
<b>OFFICER</b>	Peter Brampton

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

To grant outline planning permission subject to:

- 1. Reserved matters application within three years, commencement two years.**
- 2. Approved plans.**
- 3. Slab levels to be agreed.**
- 4. Boundary details to be agreed.**
- 5. Tree protection to be agreed.**
- 6. Visibility splays to be agreed.**
- 7. Car parking spaces and turning space to be agreed.**
- 8. Travel information pack to be agreed.**
- 9. Surface water drainage to be agreed.**
- 10. Foul drainage works to be agreed.**
- 11. Materials as specified.**
- 12. Bicycle parking as agreed.**
- 13. Refuse storage as specified.**
- 14. Hours of work.**
- 15. No drainage to highway.**
- 16. Obscured glazing for northwestern first floor window.**

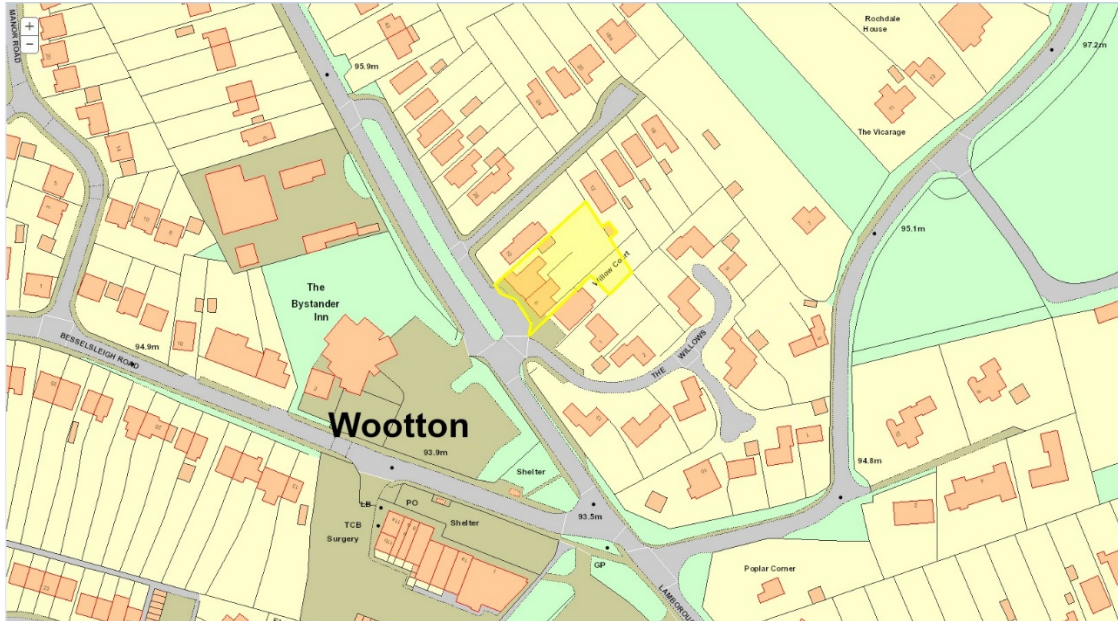
## **1. INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

1.1 This application is referred to planning committee due to an objection from Wootton Parish Council and was originally for 10 flats, constituting major development.

1.2 This application relates to a site of around 0.11 hectares within the settlement of Wootton and consists of a pair of two-storey buildings that have been linked to create one larger building which is now used as a hair salon (known as "Head to Toe", with flats above. There is parking to the front of the site, with a

drive and garage to the northern side and a garden behind. The buildings are of brick and tile construction and have been extended a number of times with single and two storey additions.

- 1.3 Immediately surrounding the site are residential properties, many of which to the immediate north and northeast are bungalows. The exception is The Bystander Inn which is located opposite. Many of the facilities of the village are nearby, including a small parade of shops and the community centre.
- 1.4 A location plan is provided below:



- 1.5 The application proposal is to demolish all existing buildings on the site and erect a new building to provide nine flats. The application has been amended in light of local and officer objection to alter the design, reduce the number of flats from ten to nine and to increase the amount of car parking, which is provided both to the front of the building and in a new rear parking court.
- 1.6 The amended plans have also changed the design from a flat roof approach to a more traditional pitched roof design. Consequently, the representations summarised below are separated between the original submission and the amendment for clarity. Reduced copies of the current application plans are **attached** as Appendix One. All plans and documentation submitted in support of the application are available to view online at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

## 2. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 2.1 A summary of the responses received to the current amended proposal is below. A full copy of all the comments made can be seen online at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

- 2.2 

Wootton Parish	Objection to the original scheme received. Their
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<p>Council</p>	<p>concerns may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely number of cars exceeds parking provision which will exacerbate existing on-street parking problems</li> <li>• Height of the building will lead to overlooking and loss of light</li> <li>• Office block appearance is out of keeping with the area.</li> </ul> <p>Objection to the amended scheme received. Their concerns may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking provision and ability to use each space</li> <li>• Sewer capacity</li> </ul>
<p>Neighbours</p>	<p>Letter of objection from 12 local residents have been received in response to the original submission, as well as a petition signed by 33 local residents</p> <p>The main concerns raised may be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overdevelopment of the site</li> <li>• Scale of building will be out of keeping with existing area – height in particular</li> <li>• Design is out of keeping with area – flat roof and materials</li> <li>• Overbearing impact on neighbours</li> <li>• Insufficient parking provision</li> <li>• Loss of privacy and overshadowing of 10 Cumnor Road</li> <li>• Noise disturbance from new parking area</li> <li>• Local sewer capacity</li> <li>• Building should remain as hair salon</li> </ul> <p>A further 11 letters of objection and 1 letter of support have been received to the amended plans, raising or reiterating the following main concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient parking provision</li> <li>• Overdevelopment of the site</li> <li>• Scale, height and bulk of building will be out of keeping with the existing area</li> <li>• Materials out of keeping with the area</li> <li>• Location of entrance at side of building could conflict with access road</li> <li>• Insufficient amenity space for new flats, compromised by new parking arrangement</li> <li>• Security concerns</li> <li>• Impact on neighbours – including noise disturbance, overshadowing and loss of light</li> <li>• Arrangements during construction period</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local sewer capacity</li> <li>• Overlooking of properties within Willow Court and The Willows</li> <li>• Progress on neighbourhood plan</li> </ul>
Oxfordshire County Council Highways	<p>No objection following submission of amended plans</p> <p><i>Conditions requested</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visibility splays to be agreed</li> <li>• Car Parking to be agreed</li> <li>• Cycle Parking as approved</li> <li>• Travel Information Pack to be agreed</li> </ul>
Oxfordshire County Council Archaeology	No objections
Thames Water	<p>No objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requests Grampian condition requiring prior agreement to impact studies relating to fresh water supply</li> </ul>
Drainage Engineer	<p>No objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition requiring prior agreement to surface water SuDS compliant surface water drainage strategy is necessary</li> </ul>
Waste Management	<p>No objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirms required capacity of bins to be stored in communal store</li> <li>• General comments on council waste collection contract provided</li> </ul>
Forestry Officer	<p>No objections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-commencement condition relating to tree protection required to protect those trees retained that offer wider amenity value to the area</li> </ul>
Countryside Officer	No objections
Urban Design Officer	No objections following submission of amended plans
Contaminated Land officer	No objections
Air Quality Officer	No objections
Environmental Health Officer	No objections

### **3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 [P92/V1195](#) - Approved (26/11/1992)  
Single storey conservatory extension to existing beauty salon.

3.2 **Pre-application History**  
None

3.3 **Screening Opinion requests**  
None

### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 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.

### **5. MAIN ISSUES**

#### **5.1 Current Housing Policy**

Policy H11 of the Local Plan 2011 confirms that Wootton is one of the larger villages of the district. It states that within the built up limits of these villages, development on sites of up to 0.5 hectares for up to 15 dwellings will be permitted subject to considerations of character, design, scale, appearance and layout and provided that the proposal would not lead to the loss of community facilities. Core Policy 4 of the emerging Local Plan 2031 confirms there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the built limits of larger villages.

#### **Employment**

5.2 This proposal is for 9 flats on a site of 0.11 hectares. Whilst the hair salon is understood to be a popular local business, the Local Plan does not specifically protect A1 retail uses in village locations, nor are they considered a community facility. Officers understand that Head to Toe plans to relocate in the local area to a building more suitable for their needs but still being able to serve their existing customers and retain existing staff. It is a successful business currently employing 19 people. One of the flats above is used by the business, whilst the other is rented out privately.

5.3 Given the above, the principle of this proposal can be accepted.

#### **5.4 Design**

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 of the current Local Plan and Core Policy 37 of the emerging Local Plan Part One). The council's design guide is also relevant

5.5 This application seeks full consent for the layout, scale and appearance of the

proposals, all of which have been the source of local concern. As outlined in Section Two, officers found the original flat roof design unacceptable and have negotiated with the applicant on amended plans. Following the submission of that amendment, officers consider that the proposal is, on balance, now acceptable. The Design Guide advises that the height and location of apartment buildings should respond to its context and that care should be taken to prevent buildings appearing bulky. It states larger buildings “*should be broken into a hierarchy of simple rectangular elements each with its own pitched roof.*”

- 5.6 As discussed in Section One, the surrounding area is characterised by two and single story buildings. The amended plans propose a 2 ½ storey building that is only marginally taller than the highest point of the existing buildings on the site. The overall building has a greater mass than the existing buildings. However, as noted by the council’s urban design officer, the amended plans have broken this up through changes in the roof form. The second floor flat is set within the roof of the building and set back from the front building line, so, when approaching from either direction, the two gables either side will be the dominant feature, much as with the existing arrangement. To the rear, the building is broken up into three individual gables, which reduces the impression of a single mass.
- 5.7 Officers accept that the contrast in scale between the proposed flats and the chalet bungalow at No.10 Cumnor Road, to the immediate northwest, will be obviously apparent. However, this contrast already exists with the existing buildings and at the closest point, the proposed flats will be set further away from No.10 than the existing buildings (by around 1.2 metres). Similarly, the new flats sit around 2 metres further away from No.4 Cumnor Road than the existing arrangement and is set further back from the road by around 2.3 metres. Overall, officers are satisfied that, whilst the proposal has a greater mass than the existing that will alter the character of the area, that impact is localised and not sufficient to warrant a refusal of planning permission.
- 5.8 The amended design of the proposal is acceptable, reflecting the pitched roof, brick and tile character of the local area. There is a good variety of building types, materials and designs in the area, including the recent flatted development at No.4 Cumnor Road, to the immediate southeast of this site. The area is not within, nor close, to any designated areas. Officers are satisfied that this contemporary approach to a pitched roof development is acceptable and will add to the variety of the area. In terms of materials, the applicant has specified bricks with lime mortar, plain roof and hanging tiles and aluminium doors and windows. These materials are of a high quality and can be controlled by a standard compliance condition.
- 5.9 In terms of layout, the footprint of the proposal is not significantly different to the existing. The building is set further back from the street than the existing and so the rear gables project further back into the rear garden than the existing buildings. However, this is not significant, particularly given the manner in which the rear of the building is broken up.

- 5.10 The main alteration to the layout is the rearrangement of the garden spaces to the rear of No.4 (within the applicant's control) and the application site to accommodate the necessary parking. Most of the current garden to No.4 will be given over to the parking court, with a new communal garden space provided to the upper floor flats across both buildings. The ground floor flats for each building will benefit from their own private gardens. The applicant has confirmed that the overall amenity space provided for all the flats will, cumulatively, meet the Design Guide recommendations for garden sizes (1-bed: 35 square metres and 2-bed 50 square metres).
- 5.11 The layout also allows for separate bin stores and cycle stores to serve the flats. By moving the building back, parking can also be accommodated to the front of the site, whilst allowing for the reinstatement of the pavement line that is currently curtailed past this site due to the current parking arrangements. Subject to conditions relating to boundary treatments, parking provision and turning space, cycling provision and bin storage, officers are satisfied that the layout of the site is acceptable.
- 5.12 The Design Guide encourages apartment buildings to incorporate an active street frontage and that entrances to central stairwells should be directly from the street. As noted by some local objectors, this design proposes an entrance to the side of the building, contrary to this advice. The arrangement of the flats provides for two large "feature" windows serving the living rooms of two apartments, which will allow for some natural surveillance of the street, which is the primary purpose of an active frontage. The side entrance is a weaker element of the scheme but not one that officers consider warrants objection. It is served by a footpath linking to the public highway.
- 5.13 Officers are concerned that the layout leaves little scope for new planting within the development, potentially leaving the site with an unduly harsh urban appearance. This is particularly the case around the front and rear parking areas. Given that landscaping is a reserved matter, this does not represent a reason for resisting this outline application. However, officers expect that the reserved matters application will have to incorporate noticeably more additional plan that is shown on the current plans.
- 5.14 Overall, officers are satisfied that the layout, scale and appearance of the proposal is acceptable and largely accords with the Design Guide advice on apartment buildings and Local Plan policies.
- 5.15 **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. Protecting amenity is a core principle of the NPPF. Design principles DG63-64 of the Design Guide pertain to amenity, privacy and overlooking.
- 5.16 As outlined above, Paragraph 5.10.4 of the Design Guide confirms that a one bed unit should have 35 square metres and a two bedroom unit should have 50

square metres of garden space. The Design Guide expects communal amenity space to be provided for apartments in line with these standards and this proposal achieves that.

- 5.17 The main focus in respect of amenity is therefore whether the larger building results in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing neighbours. The most directly affected is No.10 Cumnor Road, which has an unusual relationship with the application site. This property is a chalet bungalow sitting in a shallow wide plot with its rear elevation facing across the application site. This rear elevation includes dormer windows facing the flank wall of the existing building at a distance of around 4 metres. Officers' note there is no planning application for these dormer windows and presume they were added under permitted development rights. The manner in which they overlook the application site at such close proximity would be unacceptable had permission been required. However, they exist as part of the built environment and so the impact on them and No.10 in general from this proposal is a material consideration for this application.
- 5.18 Given that No.10 sits northwest of the application site, the additional height, depth and bulk of this building will have some impact on the amount of light and direct sunlight that the rear of No.10 receives. However, officers consider that this impact will be offset by the greater distance between the two buildings relative to the existing situation. Thus, the overall change in the amount of light and sunlight received to the rear of No.10 from this proposal will, in officers' opinion, not be significant and so the harm to the amenity of the occupants of this property will not change materially.
- 5.19 In terms of overlooking, the application has been amended to ensure that the bedroom to Flat 6 is only served by a rooflight and obscure glazing to prevent direct and unwelcome overlooking of No.10 (akin to the overlooking currently possible from this property of the application site). This arrangement can be secured by condition.
- 5.20 In terms of overlooking from other windows, primarily in the rear elevation, this overlooking will be comparable to the overlooking possible from first floor windows in the existing building and the flats at No.4 Cumnor Road. The Design Guide advises that "back-to-side" distances between properties should be at least 12 metres. At the closest point, the rearmost gable of the proposal sits around 16 metres from the shared boundary with No.12 Cumnor Road, the property to the immediate rear of the site.
- 5.21 Officers recognise that the increased parking manoeuvres alongside neighbouring rear gardens, and the increase in population itself, could lead to a general increase in noise disturbance affecting existing residents. However, officers do not consider this increase will be so large as to warrant objection.
- 5.22 Overall, officers are satisfied that, following the submission of amended plans, this proposal will not result in a materially harmful impact on neighbouring amenity.



5.23 **Flood Risk and drainage**

In consultation, the council's drainage engineer has identified the overall increase in built footprint associated with this proposal, including the additional areas of hardstanding. This could have an impact on the ability of the site to accommodate surface water run-off within the boundaries of the site and so a condition requiring a surface water drainage strategy is necessary to ensure the proposal does not increase flood risk outside the site.

5.24 A number of local objectors have raised concerns about the impact on foul sewer capacity. In consultation, Thames Water have confirmed they are unable to determine the foul sewerage impacts of this development and requested a Grampian condition that will require any necessary sewer upgrades to be identified prior to commencement and for those upgrades to be implemented prior to occupation.

5.25 **Traffic, parking and highway safety**

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”* Policy DC5 of the current Local Plan relates to parking provision, turning and circulating space and access. Full consent for access is sought as part of this outline application.

5.26 In consultation, the County Council as Highways Authority has confirmed that the level of traffic generation associated with this proposal would be similar to the traffic generated by the current use of the site (A1 with flats above) and so there are no concerns on this point.

5.27 The level of parking has been a strong concern locally, and officers understand that the current hair salon use can lead to parking on local streets. The amendment to the application provides 14 spaces for the 9 flats and officers understand this to be above the level of parking that the Highways Authority would ordinarily accept for this development, particularly given the reasonably sustainable location of the site. There are bus stops a short walk from the site and a policy compliant level of cycle storage will be provided. A

5.28 The Highways Authority are concerned about the parking arrangement to the front of the site in terms of the length of dropped kerb and pavement necessary to provide six spaces. This has the potential to cause conflict between pedestrians and reversing motorists. However, the Highways Authority have not objected on this point as they have some control over this arrangement through the Section 184 agreement the applicant and the Highways Authority will enter into. The Highway Authority expects that clear kerb detailing will be provided to delineate between parking spaces and pavement. Thus, subject to a pre-commencement condition that will require the applicant to demonstrate that this parking arrangement can be provided safely alongside adequate turning space, there are no objections on the level of parking provided.

5.29 In terms of the access point, there are no objections from the Highway Authority subject to a standard pre-commencement condition. Given the above, and the recommended conditions, there are no objections to this

proposal on grounds of highway safety.

**5.30 Trees**

As noted by the council's forestry officer, this proposal will result in the loss of five semi-mature trees. However, these are not protected and there can be no objection to their loss. Three trees along the rear boundary will be retained and officers consider they will offer some softening of the site and the proposal from Cumnor Road. To ensure their retention, a condition requiring prior agreement to a tree protection plan is recommended.

**5.31 Biodiversity**

In consultation, the council's countryside officer has reviewed the bat survey accompanying the application which has found no evidence of roosting opportunities and so there are no objections on this point.

**5.32 Noise, air quality, contaminated land and archaeology**

In consultation, the council environmental health officers have confirmed no objections to the proposal in terms of the impact on noise, air quality or contamination. Similarly, the County Council Archaeologist has no objections.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 This application has been assessed on its merits, in light of the requirements of the existing Local Plan, the Inspector's Interim Findings into the emerging Local Plan 2031 Part One, the spatial strategy for growth and housing allocations of the emerging Local Plan and the guidance of the NPPF in relation to sustainable development.
- 6.2 The scheme will provide an economic and social role through employment through construction, increased investing in the local economy and providing additional market housing in line with the growth strategy of the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.3 Following submission of amended plans, there are no technical objections to the proposal.
- 6.4 In terms of the environmental role, the scale of the proposal will cause some limited harm to the character of the area and the amenity of existing residents. However, this is not sufficient to warrant a refusal of planning permission and so the application is recommended for approval.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;**

- GS1 - Developments in Existing Settlements
- 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
- H16 - Size of Dwelling and Lifetime Homes
- H17 - Affordable Housing
- H23 - Open Space in New Housing Development
- NE9 - The Lowland Vale

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part One Core Policies;**

- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
- CP04 - Meeting Our Housing Needs
- CP05 - Housing Supply Ring-Fence
- CP07 - Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
- CP08 - Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area
- CP22 - Housing Mix
- CP23 - Housing Density
- CP24 - Affordable Housing
- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
- CP36 - Electronic communications
- CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
- CP39 - The Historic Environment
- CP42 - Flood Risk
- CP43 - Natural Resources
- CP44 - Landscape
- CP45 - Green Infrastructure
- CP46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- CP47 - Delivery and Contingency

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DESIGN GUIDE 2015

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