

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P16/V1493/FUL</a>
<b>SITE</b>	2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill, Oxford, OX2 9JB
<b>PARISH</b>	Cumnor
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of 2 Arnolds Way and erection of eight flats. (as amended by plans PL01C, PL02B and PL03A received 30 August 2016, additional vehicle tracking plan received 27 September 2016 and amended by plans received 1 December 2016).
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Dudley Hoddinott Judy Roberts
<b>APPLICANT OFFICER</b>	Mr Mike O'Shea Sarah Green

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement 3 yrs - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans.
3. Materials (Samples) to be submitted.
4. Tree Protection to be submitted.
5. Landscaping Scheme, including boundary treatments (Submission).
6. Landscaping Scheme, including boundary treatments (Implement).
7. Drainage Details (Surface) to be submitted.
8. Drainage Details (Foul) to be submitted.
9. Access, Park. & Turn. in accordance with Plan.
10. Parking spaces to remain unallocated.
11. Slab Levels in accordance with plan.
12. Bicycle Parking in accordance with plan.
13. Refuse Storage in accordance with plan.

And the entering into a legal agreement to secure £5000 towards a change to Traffic Regulation Order to install double yellow lines around the junction of Arnolds Way with Cumnor Hill.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 The site is located on the corner of Arnolds Way and Cumnor Hill. There is an existing dwelling on the site, which is part one storey, part two storeys. The land slopes in two directions on site, with the highest point being the south-east rear garden and the lowest near the north-west side of the site. A site location plan is included below:



- 1.2 Cumnor Hill has a general verdant character along this stretch which screens the majority of properties. In contrast the application site is more open and therefore more prominent. Arnolds Way has a more ‘built up’ appearance with housing closer together and closer to the street.
- 1.3 The application is for the demolition of the existing house and erection of a new building containing 8 flats. The footprint of the new building will be slightly larger than the existing building, and will be part three storeys, part two storeys. The existing access onto Arnolds Way will be used and parking will be to the front of the building, as is the case now. A new boundary hedge is proposed along with new trees as well as retaining some of the existing vegetation. The new building is contemporary in its design and will be faced in two different colours of brick with cladding to the top floor.
- 1.4 The current scheme before members has incorporated a number of changes from the original plans. These include a reduction in the size of the top floor of the building, increased window openings onto Cumnor Hill, changes to the use of materials on some parts of the building to help better define the different elements, a reduction in parking, an increase in landscaping and changes to boundary treatment, and the inclusion of bin and cycle stores.
- 1.5 A copy of the application plans are **attached** at Appendix 1.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

A summary of the responses received to the current 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)

2.1	Cumnor Parish Council	Objection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic movements/levels</li> <li>• Design, massing, scale, character</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drainage</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> </ul>
Neighbour Objection (23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, scale, massing</li> <li>• Overdevelopment</li> <li>• Unneighbourly</li> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Traffic and parking</li> </ul>
Countryside Officer	No objection
Waste Management Officer	No objection
Drainage Engineer	No objection, suggest conditions
Forestry Team	No objection, suggest condition
Urban Design Officer	No objection, suggest conditions
Thames Water Development Control	No objection
Highways Liaison Officer	No objection, suggest conditions

### 3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

#### 3.1 [P06/V1816](#) - Approved (09/01/2007)

Proposed alterations to existing dwelling including front facing dormer window and refurbishment of disused double garage.

#### [P88/V1639](#) - Approved (08/02/1989)

Extensions and alterations to provide double garage, sitting room, two en-suite bathrooms and extra bedroom. Existing garage reduced in height to form parking area. 2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill, Oxford. BR No. 283/89

#### [P87/V1318/O](#) - Refused (24/08/1987)

Demolition of existing bungalow. Construction of two dwellings and one new vehicular access. [site area 0.16 hectares approx.] 2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill, Oxford.

#### [P86/V1239](#) - Approved (22/09/1986)

Alterations and extension to provide additional bedroom, garaging, sitting room, study and new entrance. Alterations to existing access to highway. 2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill, Oxford.

#### [P85/V2229](#) - Refused (18/11/1985)

Construction of new dwelling. [site area 0.06 hectares] Land adjacent to 2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill, Oxford.

#### [P85/V2228/O](#) - Refused (13/05/1985)

Erection of a dwelling. [site area approx. 0.06 hectares]. 2 Arnolds Way, Cumnor Hill Planning Application History

### 3.2 **Pre-application History**

[P15/V2807/PEJ](#) – pre-app enquiry (22/12/2015)

Demolish the existing dwelling house and construct a new development consisting of 10 number flats and all the associated site works. One number 1 bedroom flat, Eight number 2 bedroom flats, One number 3 bedroom flat 16 surface car parking spaces, bin store, bicycle store and landscaping.

Officers responded by advising that the building needs to relate to scale of surroundings, and that impact on neighbours, landscaping, parking, access should be considered.

### 4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 The site area is less than 5ha, fewer than 150 dwellings are proposed and the site is not in a 'sensitive area'. The proposal is not therefore, EIA development.

### 5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

#### 5.1 **Housing policy**

The site lies within the settlement of Botley, which is a local service centre. Policy CP4 allows for new housing development within the existing built up area of Botley as it is one of the most sustainable locations within the district. The principle of new housing is therefore acceptable in this area.

#### 5.2 **Design and character**

The existing building on site has a shallow pitched roof similar to No 4 Arnolds Way. The existing garage sits below the house. Further up Arnolds Way are two storey houses. The adjacent property at No 67 Cumnor Hill is also a two storey house. Opposite the site, on the corner, is a development of 6 flats on three floors. This end of Arnolds Way slopes steeply down to meet Cumnor Hill.

5.3 Cumnor Hill is identified in the design guide as an area of lower density housing with a spacious and verdant character. Consideration of the relationship of new development to landscape character is important (DG76). Although the design guide advises that the scale of new developments should generally reflect their context it also notes that corner sites are often visually prominent but may provide an opportunity to aid the legibility of a place through distinctive designs or increased building heights. It notes "corner locations are particularly suitable for flatted blocks and L-shape buildings maintaining continuity of built frontage and incorporating corner windows and entrances" (DG53)

5.4 The proposed building has been designed to sit on a similar, although slightly larger, footprint to the existing dwelling and in a similar L-shape footprint. It is part three storeys and part two storeys. The changes that have been made to the scheme (outlined in paragraph 1.4 above) have sought to address the comments from the forestry officer and the urban design officer.

5.5 The elevations to both Arnolds Way and Cumnor Hill have been articulated through the building facades stepping in and out, and with the use of different materials on the building. This helps to visually break up the elevations. The

top floor facing Arnolds Way and corner of the site has now been set back, thereby visually reducing the massing of the building, which was of concern to the urban design officer. Glazed balconies will maintain a lightweight feel to this floor. This approach is very similar to other flatted development along Cumnor Hill, and is considered an appropriate approach to take in design terms in reducing the massing of a building.

- 5.6 The building has been designed to sit within, and make use of, the existing site levels. The three storey element of the building itself will be 8.7metres high. Due to the way the land levels fall together with the position of the building on the site, the top of the building will be at datum point level 112.4. For comparison purposes, the top of the existing dwelling sits at datum point 111.50. Thus the proposed building will be 0.9 metres higher than the existing dwelling.
- 5.7 No 4 Arnolds Way at its highest point sits at datum point 112.61. The proposed building, at 112.40, would be 0.21 metres lower than this neighbour. Visually the proposed be of similar height to this neighbour. At its closest point the proposed building will sit approximately 13m from no.4 Arnolds Way. Officers consider this separation is sufficient to accord with the street character, especially given there are already three storey blocks of flats on the opposite side of the road.
- 5.8 In terms of No 67 Cumnor Hill, its ridgeline sits at datum point 114.38 and its eaves sit at 111.51. Thus the top of the proposed three storey element of the new building would be 1.98 metres lower than the ridgeline of No 67. The proposed two storey element, which sits closest to the boundary with No 67 would be 0.78metres lower than the eaves of No 67, and 3.6metres lower than its ridgeline. The proposed building therefore respects the 'step down' in building heights along Cumnor Hill.
- 5.9 The internal ground floor will be at the same level as the existing garage on site, so there will be some excavation. The two storey element nearest No 67 will have a higher floor level to take account of the change in levels. The levels of the parking area are proposed to be the same as the existing. The height of the boundaries around the site will serve to screen the ground floor of the building from the Cumnor Hill perspective, similar to the existing situation.
- 5.10 Officers consider that whilst the design of the proposed building is more contemporary than its neighbours, its overall scale has been successfully broken up and it would not be higher than the neighbouring buildings. There are a number of other examples of contemporary buildings and flats along the length of Cumnor Hill. Consequently officers consider it would be difficult to sustain that the design approach is out of character with the area.
- 5.11 The existing boundary treatment along the frontage is a fence above the retaining wall. The retaining wall will stay but the fence would be replaced with a new hedge which will offer a visual improvement over the existing fence. The reduction in parking has enabled space to be available for two additional trees to be incorporated near the corner, as well as bin and cycle stores. Details of the new trees and hedge can be secured by condition to ensure they are

appropriate and tree protection measures can be ensured for those that are to be retained.

- 5.12 The parking area will be behind the hedge and screened to large degree, as is the case now behind the existing fence. Along Arnolds Way the access will make provision for pedestrian vision splays. The existing retaining wall within the site will be realigned to enable a bin store to be included. This will be below the level of Arnolds Way and therefore will be screened behind the boundary.
- 5.13 Officers therefore consider that the scheme is acceptable in terms of design and scale.
- 5.14 **Residential Amenity**  
To the south of the site is No4 Arnolds Way, which is a bungalow. Its main ridge level is 112.61 measured to the datum and the flat roof garage is 110.5.
- 5.15 The proposed building will be built along the same line as the existing building on this elevation, therefore it will not be any closer to this neighbour than the current building. While the height of the existing dwelling at No 2 closest to this boundary is 110.6 in terms of the datum, the height of the proposal will be 112.4 in part and 110.2 with a balcony above. There is a line of trees along the boundary which provide some screening between the sites and which will be retained. The height of the three storey element will be approximately 1.5metres higher than the neighbour's garage. Given the distance between the properties, it is considered that the new building will not cause harm to this neighbour through dominance. The balcony will be to the front of the building, and will overlook the road and possibly some of the front garden of No 4 through trees. Officers consider that it is further enough way from the main private external areas of the neighbour to the rear to not result in harmful overlooking to this neighbour.
- 5.16 In terms of No 67 Cumnor Hill, the two proposed storey element will be on the same footprint as the existing building, closest to this boundary. The existing building at No2 on this boundary has a ridge of 111.50 and eaves of 108.9 to the datum. The new two storey element will have a height of 110.78, slightly lower than the ridge of no.67.
- 5.17 No 67 projects further back along the boundary than the new building will do. It is therefore considered that this element will not result in harmful overlooking of the rear garden of No 67. At the front, the building will be slightly forward of No 67, as in the current situation with the existing dwelling at No 2. As the maximum height of this element (110.78) will be lower than the eaves of No 67 (111.51) officers consider that this corner of the building will not block the outlook from the neighbours' window.
- 5.18 In terms of windows to the rear of the building, those directly opposite the boundary with No 67 will be over 12m away which is considered to be an acceptable distance. Moreover the windows are mainly to bathrooms. Those directly opposite the boundary with No 4 will be over 20m away, which again is considered acceptable and will not result in harmful overlooking.

- 5.19 The neighbour at No 67 is concerned that the boundary between the sites is not shown correctly and that the fence annotated is the wrong height and is incorrectly shown as running to Cumnor Hill, whereas close to the road the boundary is formed of shrubs and trees. The agent has confirmed that the application red line is correct. The inaccuracy regarding the extent of the fence is acknowledged. Consideration of the application has been based on what has been observed by officers on site and, consequently, this discrepancy in the plans has not affected the assessment. Full details of the boundaries and landscaping treatments can be required by condition and this will ensure that the final boundary treatment is appropriate.
- 5.20 Other concerns raised with regards to the construction and potential effect on the neighbouring property in terms of structural damage are a civil matter between the relevant parties.
- 5.21 **Traffic, parking and highway safety**  
Following comments from the highways officer, amendments and additional information have been submitted. The existing access will be utilised, with some minor adjustment to meet the current visibility standards for pedestrians. Additional tracking plans have been submitted to show that a small service/delivery vehicles will be able to enter the site, turn and leave in a forward gear, minimising the impact on the adjacent highway.
- 5.22 There are bus routes along Cumnor Hill and Arnolds Way which pass the site. A cycle parking area has been included within the site and a refuse storage area close to the access has also been included. The site is within a relatively sustainable location. The highways officer does not consider that the increase in the number of dwellings on the site would cause severe harm to the highway network, which is the relevant test in the NPPF.
- 5.23 The number of parking spaces have been reduced to 11. This number is based on Oxfordshire County Council parking standards for unallocated parking. If parking were to be allocated, then more spaces would be required to be provided. Unallocated parking should provide more flexibility to the use of the spaces. The highways officer noted in his earlier comments that overflow parking does appear to occur on street from the flats opposite. It has been brought to the highways officer's attention by the ward member that Matthew Arnold School has plans to expand and this will result in an increase in vehicle movements to the school, which is accessed via Arnold Way. Therefore an increase in overflow parking on the junction could have an impact upon traffic and highway safety. He has therefore made an additional request for double yellow lines on the Arnolds Way junction to help mitigate this potential risk from the outset. This would require a Traffic Regulation Order, the cost of which would be £5000, including legal fees, installation of road markings, and a commuted sum for future maintenance for 15 years. This could be ensured by a legal agreement and the applicant is agreeable to this.
- 5.24 **Drainage**  
Both Thames Water and the drainage engineer have reviewed the proposal. Thames Water have no objection to the development in terms of sewage capacity or water supply. The drainage engineer also has no objection subject

to conditions.

5.25 **Waste**

The scheme now includes a refuse area close to the access, which will be easily accessible to refuse vehicles. There are no objections from the waste team.

5.26 **Ecology**

The countryside officer has no objection to the proposal. He suggests an informative as a precautionary approach as bats can be highly mobile creatures.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The proposal is considered to respect the step down in building heights along Cumnor Hill and, as now amended, is considered to be an acceptable scale and design. It would not give rise to adverse harm in terms of highway safety, or neighbour amenity. It is considered to comply with the relevant development plan policies and with the NPPF.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 policies;

CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy

CP04 - Meeting Our Housing Needs

CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking

CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

CP44 - Landscape

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

GS1 - Developments in Existing Settlements

H10 - Development in the Five Main Settlements

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DESIGN GUIDE 2015

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

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