

APPLICATION NO.	P17/V0348/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	10.2.2017
PARISH	Harwell
WARD MEMBER(S)	Janet Shelley Reg Waite
APPLICANT	Jadit Ltd
SITE	Long Reach, Didcot Road, Harwell, OX11 6DW
PROPOSAL	Outline planning application for the demolition of existing dwelling, and residential development (Class C3) of up to 19 dwellings; with associated car parking, turning, public open space, landscaping, and access arrangements - External access not reserved.
AMENDMENTS	None
OFFICER	Adrian Butler

This application is reported to planning committee due to its size and objection from Harwell Parish Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning subject to:

- 1. A section 106 legal agreement being entered into to secure financial contributions towards primary and secondary schools and to secure 35% affordable housing (161 dwellings); and**
- 2. Conditions summarised as follows:**

Compliance

- 1. Outline time limit (three years).**
- 2. Reserved matters.**
- 3. Implementation.**
- 4. Approved plans.**
- 5. Housing mix.**

Details to be approved prior to commencement

- 6. Tree protection.**
- 7. Sustainable drainage scheme.**
- 8. Slab levels.**
- 9. Scheme of archaeological investigation.**
- 10. Archaeological evaluation and mitigation.**
- 11. Ecology mitigation.**

Details to be approved prior to occupation

- 12. Access in accordance with approved plans.**

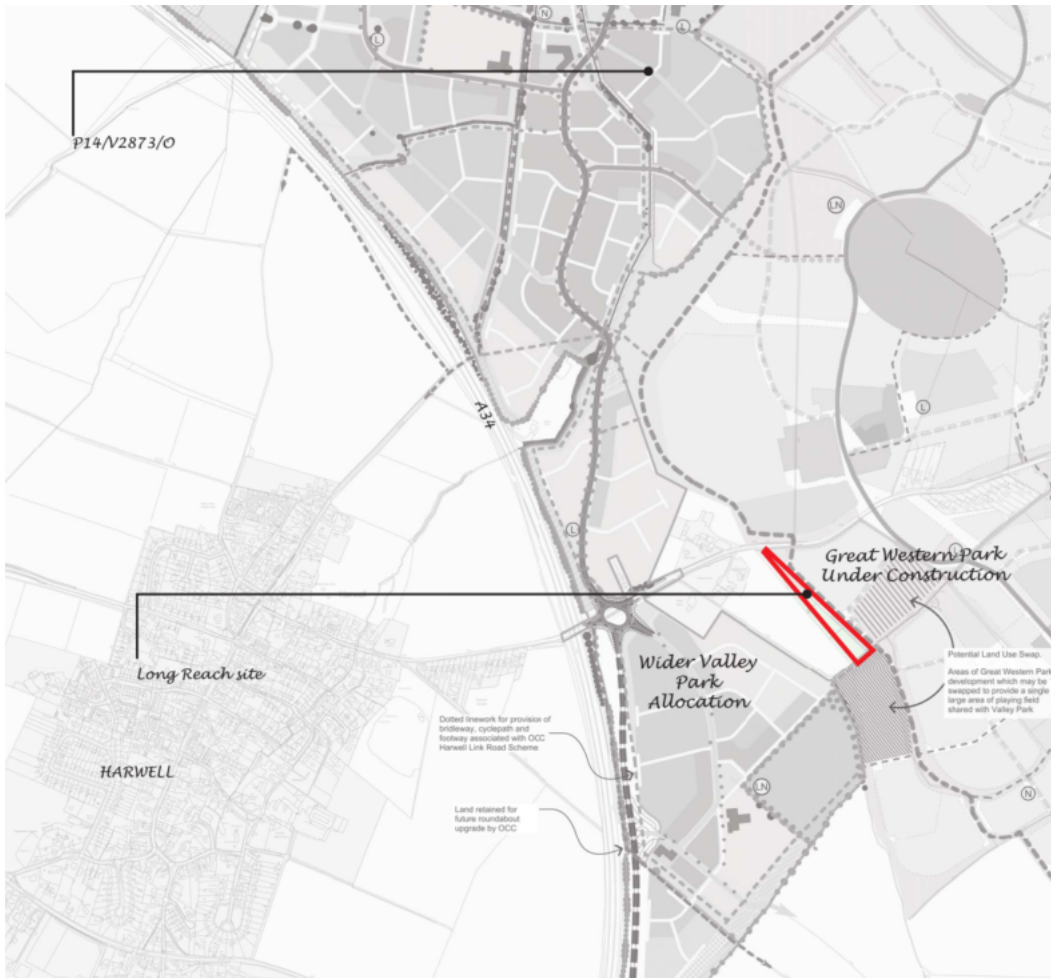
Informative

The submitted illustrative layout is not considered to respond to the constraints of the site and raises issues of some under provision of private amenity space, inappropriate housing mix and impacts for ecology and trees. As such the illustrative layout is not acceptable and any reserved matters application should address these points.

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This is an outline application with only access to be considered at this stage. Appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are all reserved matters.

1.2 The site forms part of the Valley Park housing allocation in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. There are open fields to the south and west. To the north and is development forming part of Great Western Park. A plan showing the application site in context is below:



1.3 The site accommodates a single dwelling with access from Didcot Road. The house will be demolished and an illustrative plan seeks to show 19 dwellings on the site. An illustrative layout plan is at **Appendix 1**. This plan also shows adjacent development under construction at

Great Western Park. Access remains from Didcot Road with a new access.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS ON CURRENT SUBMISSION

2.1 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

Harwell Parish Council	<p>Object</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not want to see lots of roads accessing small developments from the B9943 between the UTC junction and the new Harwell Link Road. A site of this size should be accessed from GWP or Valley Park, and east-west integration should be sought. • Access to the B4493 is close to the existing GWP exit and a bus stop. If it was considered dangerous to have a right turn into GWP when approaching from Harwell, then this access will be just as dangerous. • If allowed, a suitable highway design (integrated with Valley Park plans) is needed to ensure safe movement along the B4493 for cyclists and pedestrians and horses.
Didcot Town Council (adjacent Council)	<p>No strong views. Supportive of Harwell Parish Council's views concerning traffic and access particularly with the Harwell by-pass.</p>
Local residents	<p>There are no letters of objection or support from local residents.</p>
Oxfordshire County Council	<p><u>Highways</u> No objection. A speed survey undertaken indicates the 85th percentile speeds for eastbound traffic to be 39.5mph. The corresponding visibility for such speeds is shown on the submitted plans. The visibility splays proposed for the road speeds are sufficient. <i>Conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Access construction</i> • <i>Construction Traffic Management Plan</i> <p><u>Archaeology</u> No objection <i>Conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scheme of archaeological investigation</i> • <i>Archaeological evaluation and mitigation</i>

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	<p><u>Education</u> No objection Seek financial contributions towards primary and secondary school education improvements.</p> <p><u>Drainage</u> No objection <i>Condition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable drainage scheme needed</i>
Thames Water	<p>No objection Point out that a Thames Water mains crosses the site and may need to be diverted at the expense of the developer or be accommodated in the design.</p>
Drainage engineer	<p>No objection <i>Conditions</i> <i>Surface water and foul water drainage schemes to be submitted and approved.</i></p>
Housing officer	<p>Comment Expect 6 affordable units to be delivered on the site with a commuted sum payable for the 'part' (0.3) unit. The demand for two-bedroom shared ownership properties is much higher than for one-bedroom properties, therefore the overall affordable housing mix may be more suitably delivered with a higher proportion of two bedroom properties than is indicated in the SHMA guidance. In general, it is anticipated that the mix of affordable housing should reflect the significant demand for two bedroom units for both rented and shared ownership tenures with a reduction in one-bedroom accommodation and an adjustment to the number of larger homes.</p>
Forestry officer	<p>Comments Of the 52 individual trees, the tree survey recommends that 47 are felled on the basis of their condition. Numerous trees being recommended for removal without any physiological or age-related justification. There are a number of trees on the site that have a limited safe useful life expectancy and need to be removed regardless of whether the site is developed. Others could be removed in the context of the proposed layout without detracting from the visual amenity but to remove more than 90% of the trees would adversely affect the character of the site. Mitigation, through use of replacement trees, would not be possible as there is not sufficient space within the proposed layout. The applicant should reconsider the proposed removal of</p>

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	the trees as recommended within the tree survey.
Landscape officer	<p>No objection</p> <p>The site is adjacent to the permitted Great Western Park development and within the Valley Park allocation in the Local Plan. The Landscape and Visual impacts of the proposal are likely to be localised to the vicinity of the site, mainly viewed from the B4493. Care is in needed in the detailing of the site in Reserved Matters to ensure that the maximum amount of vegetation is retained to soften the built mass of the proposals. However the proposed fronting of the development eastwards towards the Great Western Park pedestrian link and associated open space is the appropriate treatment at this time.</p>
Countryside officer	<p>Holding objection:</p> <p>Ecological surveys have not revealed any significant ecological constraints. The most significant habitats on the site are associated with the boundary hedgerows and trees. The existing dwelling has been found to provide a low status daytime bat roost for common pipistrelle bats which will be lost. Given the low status of the roost mitigation is likely to be relatively straightforward. There is limited opportunity to mitigate for tree loss and the plans are unclear how no net loss of biodiversity can be achieved.</p> <p>If the applicant is unable to demonstrate a no net loss then, given the low value of existing habitats the Council would consider the use of a biodiversity offsetting agreement or contributions towards offsite biodiversity enhancements.</p>
Environmental protection team (Noise)	<p>Comment</p> <p>Parts of the site are adversely affected by road noise. The applicant will need to demonstrate that the internal and external amenity area noise limits specified in BS 8233:2014 will be met. It may be appropriate for this to be dealt with at the detailed stage rather than the outline stage.</p>
Health and Housing (air quality)	<p>No objection</p> <p>Expect that provision for an electric vehicle charging point at each private house with a garage and that a travel plan is submitted.</p>
Health and Housing – contaminated land	<p>No objection</p>
Waste	<p>No objection</p>

management team	Seek a financial contribution of £170 per dwelling to provide refuse ins for the development.
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3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 P16/V/1987/PEJ - Other Outcome (02/09/2016)

Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 19 dwellings with associated parking, turning, landscaping, private amenity space and access arrangements. The advice given may be summarised as follows:

- Principle of development acceptable due to the then lack of a five year housing supply and the site being allocated for housing in the then emerging Local Plan 2031 Pat 1.
- The housing allocation sets aside policy NE10 of the Local Plan 2011
- There would be limited landscape impact
- Housing mix closely follow the SHMA estimate
- 35% affordable housing would be sought
- No highway comments had been received
- Unlikely to impact on the settings of listed buildings
- Scheme needs to consider protected species and biodiversity enhancements should be demonstrated
- Site is in flood zone 1.A sustainable drainage scheme will be needed
- Financial contributions may be sought towards education, leisure, transport and waste management infrastructure and services
- The advice is the opinion of officers and is not binding on the council

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

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

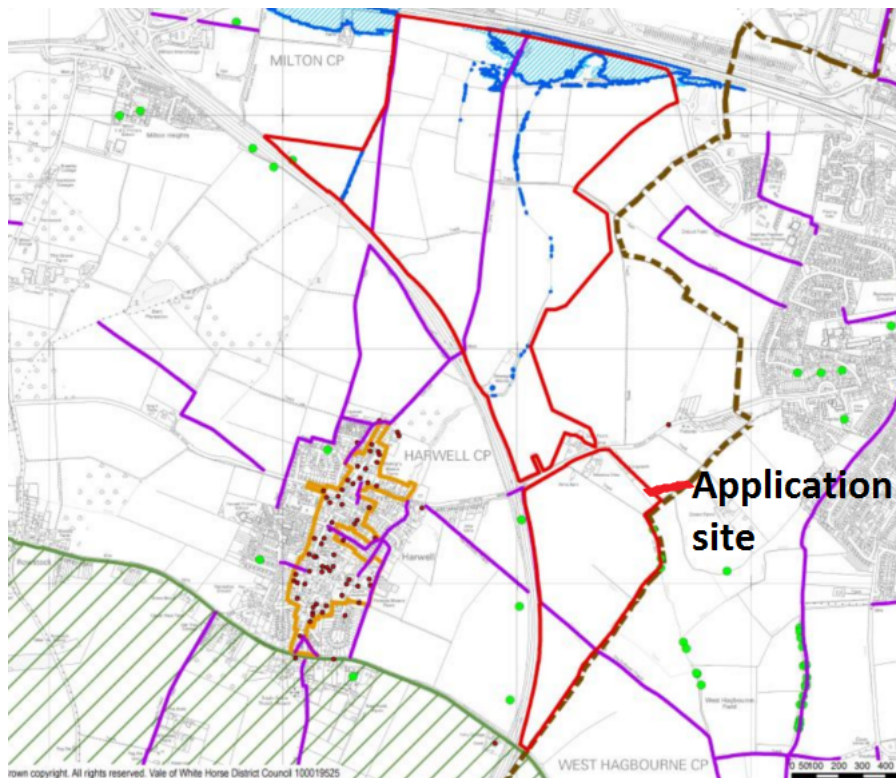
The main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are:

- The principle of development
- Affordable housing and housing mix
- Design and layout
- Landscape and visual impact
- Trees and biodiversity
- Flood risk and drainage
- Traffic parking and highway safety
- Financial contributions

Principle of development

5.1 Core policy 4 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1 supports new development on strategic site allocations. It also adds that development outside the existing built areas of settlements will be permitted where it is allocated by the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The site is part of the Valley Park

strategic site allocation – see plan on the next page. In principle housing development on this site is therefore supported by core policy 4.



- 5.2 The site is within the Housing Supply Ring Fence which is the subject of core policy 5 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. This policy identifies a core area within Science Vale where new homes will be provided to achieve sustainable development in accordance with the Spatial Strategy. The Housing Supply Ring Fence area has a separate housing land supply target from the rest of the district. Core policy 5 permits housing development where it accords with other policies in the Local Plan. The proposal is core policy 5 compliant being housing development on land identified for housing in the Spatial Strategy.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

- 5.3 The application provides 35% affordable dwellings (6 in total) in accordance with core policy 24 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. It is expected that the tenure split will be 75% social or affordable rented and 25% shared ownership. The affordable housing and tenure mix will be secured through a s106 agreement.
- 5.4 The application plan indicates 4 x 1 bedroom dwellings and two x 2 bedroom dwellings. This mix is not favoured by the housing team who recognise need for more two bedroom affordable dwellings. As the mix is illustrative at this stage a condition can be imposed to secure an appropriate mix for both affordable and market housing.

Design and Layout

- 5.5 As appearance, layout and scale are reserved matters it is not intended to address design and layout in any detail. Site constraints which include its shape, access and trees largely dictate the layout. The illustrative layout depicts 19 dwellings (including four in the form of flats), largely in a line beside an access road with three houses forming the south eastern extent of the site. There are numerous trees on the site boundaries either side of the proposed access road. These should be retained as they form an important visual feature in an area adding to the verdant character and appearance of the site and softening the appearance of new development to the east. It should be possible to do this with the line of the access and open space.
- 5.6 Open space at the site frontage amounts to at least 15% and is therefore, in accordance with saved policy H23 of the Local Plan 2011.
- 5.7 Garden sizes depicted are mostly in excess of Design Guide expectations. However, the two affordable dwellings and the flats are not shown with adequate garden/outdoor space. An alternative design potentially with fewer dwellings could achieve compliance with the Design Guide.
- 5.8 Implications for residential amenity will be addressed through the reserved matters.
- 5.9 As alluded to already the housing mix proposed does not meet the housing team's recognised need and the market housing should be reasonably compliant with the SHMA estimate. A condition is recommended to secure this. This may result in a different layout and potentially fewer than 19 dwellings.
- 5.10 It will be for an applicant at reserved matters stage to convince this authority that 19 dwellings can be accommodated on this site. At present officers are not convinced 19 dwellings can be accommodated with the need to protect trees, provide adequate gardens and provide a reasonable housing mix. As this is a proposal for up to 19 dwellings the council is not committing to 19 dwellings on the site but a number from 1 to 19.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 5.11 The site is not within the North Wessex Downs AONB. It is sufficiently contained and distant to have no impact on its setting. The site is part of the Lowland Vale landscape but is in residential use and largely contained by boundary hedges and trees. It does not add to the patchwork pattern of fields that form the Lowland vale landscape and the site is not striking in views from higher ground. The site is sandwiched between the permitted Great Western Park development and Valley Park development which has a resolution for approval. The site is part of the emerging Valley Park allocation. The impact for landscape character is minimal with the site also being visible against

new development at Greta Western Park to the immediate north and east.

- 5.12 The main public vantage points are Didcot Road, paths through Great Western Park to the immediate east and north, and a bridleway on the eastern side of the A34. There will be views from the Harwell link road which is currently being constructed. Views from these vantage points will be of a development in the context of existing housing. The visual impacts are minimal.
- 5.13 The proposal accords with core policy 44 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.

Trees and Biodiversity

- 5.14 A laurel hedge on the site frontage will need to be removed to form the vehicular access. A revised plan shows the retention of more trees than initially suggested and laurel and beech hedges on the side boundaries. Landscaping is a reserved matter and will be considered at that stage.
- 5.15 The site is not subject to any ecological designations and there are no pre-existing records for protected species from within the site. Surveys of the site have not revealed any significant ecological constraints.
- 5.16 Retaining trees and hedges provides an opportunity to install bat and bird boxes which will assist in maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity interest of the site.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.17 The site is within flood zone 1 which are the preferred areas for housing development in flood risk terms. According to the Environment Agency flood risk maps and this council's Strategic Flood Risk Maps, there is no history of flooding on this site and no risk from fluvial flooding.
- 5.18 A flood risk assessment does not accompany this application, as there is no requirement for one to be submitted with the site being below 1ha in size. The County Council as lead drainage authority and this council's drainage engineer have not raised any concerns. A condition can secure a sustainable drainage scheme.
- 5.19 Thames water has no objection on foul sewerage grounds.
- 5.20 The proposal is considered compliant with the NPPF and core policy 42 of the draft local plan 2031.

Traffic, Parking and Highway Safety

- 5.21 The highway authority has no objection in terms of traffic generation onto Didcot Road. The site is on the route of a bus service between

Didcot and Wantage which also serves Harwell Campus. Services in Greta Western Park and Didcot can be accessed by bus or by cycling. This is an accessible location. Pedestrian connections can be provided to the adjacent Great Western Park development. There are alternative means of transport to the private motor car for accessing services and potential employment opportunities.

- 5.22 The highway authority explain that a week-long speed survey shows vehicles tend to travel at almost 40mph past the site. The visions splayed achievable at the proposed access are shown as being suitable for the speed of vehicles and are therefore, acceptable.
- 5.23 The proposal is compliant with policy DC5 of the Local Plan.

Financial Contribution Requests

- 5.24 The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests in paragraph 204:
- I. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - II. Directly related to the development; and
 - III. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 5.25 Core policy 7 of the Local Plan provides that development will only be permitted where the necessary physical infrastructure and service requirements to support the development can be secured.
- 5.26 Nineteen dwellings would be a net gain of 18 dwellings. The financial contributions listed in the table on the next page are based on net gain. The s106 agreement would include a mechanism for basing contributions and affordable housing on the net gain in dwellings agreed at reserved matters stage.

EDUCATION

- 5.27 The County Council as education authority advise that Harwell primary school is at capacity. In addition, the County Council recognises that planned growth in the area requires additional secondary schools. A new school is proposed at North East Didcot. It seeks financial contributions towards improved Harwell primary school capacity and towards the new school at North east Didcot. These requests are reasonable as the proposal will provide family housing and is highly likely to accommodate school pupils. The amounts sought are proportionate to this proposal.
- 5.28 The County Council does not seek any other contributions due to pooling restrictions.

District Council	Amount (£)
Bin provision (£170/dwelling)	£3,060
Total	£3,060

Oxfordshire County Council	Amount (£)
North East Didcot secondary school	£91,140
Harwell primary school expansion	£59,507
Total	£150,647

Overall Total	£153,707
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6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This application has been determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 This is an outline application with all details but access reserved for future consideration.
- 6.3 This is a sustainable development on a site allocated in the Local Plan 2031 Part 1. The principle of development is acceptable.
- 6.4 The means of access to the site is acceptable providing adequate vision splays. There are no technical concerns with regard to traffic generation.
- 6.5 Details of the scheme are reserved matters and issues such as tree retention and ecology mitigation can be secured by planning condition.

The following planning policies have been taken into account:

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031: PART 1 – CORE POLICIES 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 15, 22, 23, 24, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2011 – SAVED POLICIES – DC1, DC5, DC6, DC7, DC9, H23, HE9, HE10, HE11, NE6, NE9

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DESIGN GUIDE 2015

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

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