

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P15/V2863/O</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	OUTLINE
<b>REGISTERED</b>	4.12.2015
<b>PARISH</b>	LONGWORTH
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Anthony Hayward
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Mr Jack Moody
<b>SITE</b>	The Potting Shed Nursery, Hinton Road, Longworth, Abingdon, OX13 5HQ
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Outline application for the erection of up to 13 dwellings with associated access. All other matters reserved. (10 March 2016 -revised illustrative plan and revised planning and heritage statement received.)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	As above
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	438750/199071
<b>OFFICER</b>	Sarah Green

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### SUMMARY

- The application is referred to planning committee due to objections from Longworth Parish Council and from local residents.
- The application is for outline planning permission with approval for access. All other matters are reserved.
- The main issues are: the principle of development, traffic, impact on character, including the setting of the conservation area
- It is considered in light of the lack of a five year housing supply, the development is acceptable in principle. Officers are satisfied that the level of proposed development can be accommodated on the site. There are no technical objections to the application
- The application is recommended for approval

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application is referred to committee due to objections from Longworth Parish Council and from local residents.

1.2 The site is located to the north of Hinton Road and to the west of Rectory Lane. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1. It is part of the existing horticultural nursery site which has an existing access from Hinton Road to the south. To the east of the site is a row of residential properties spaced along Rectory Lane. These properties and Rectory Lane are also included within the village conservation area. To the south there are sporadic residential properties along Hinton Road with agricultural fields beyond. On the opposite side of Hinton Road, up to Pinewoods Road, there is currently a full planning application under consideration for extension of the existing Squirrel Cottage, the conversion of an existing Pool House into a four bed dwelling, and the creation of nine new dwellings.

1.3 To the north and west of the application site is the existing nursery site. Beyond the existing nursery site are the grounds of Haugh House to the north, and a public footpath and fields to the west.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to 13 dwellings on the site including approval for access. All other matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) are reserved.
- 2.2 The dwellings would be accessed from Hinton Road using the existing access to the nursery. Access to the remaining nursery would also be retained off this same access. The existing poplar trees along the internal access road which would form the western boundary to the site would be retained, as would the existing boundary treatment to Hinton Road. A new footpath would be created to the north to connect the site to Rectory Lane.
- 2.3 An illustrative site plan has been submitted to demonstrate that the level of development can be accommodated on the site. This plan has been amended and is accompanied by additional information in relation to the impact upon heritage to address comments from your officers. Extracts of the plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

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

<p>Longworth Parish Council</p>	<p>Strongly objects for the following reasons:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes incorrect statements about neighbourhood plan</li> <li>• Longworth is not a sustainable location. No shop/post office, primary school is oversubscribed, bus service under threat.</li> <li>• Is not infill, and is not proportionate in scale. It will be the most significant and largest development in Longworth</li> <li>• Quantum of development have major impact as Hinton Road/Rectory Lane junction is main access to village</li> <li>• Issues in the dismissed appeal for site on Cow Lane are relevant</li> </ul> <p><i>Amended illustrative site plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood plan has been submitted, now has increased weight as a material consideration.</li> <li>• Development fails to be sustainable development</li> <li>• It is contray to neighbourhood plan</li> <li>• Harm to landscape and conservation area setting</li> </ul>
<p>Neighbour Objections</p>	<p>64 objections letters of objection were received to the original plans. The grounds for objection are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contray to local plan, emerging local plan and emerging neighbourhood plan</li> <li>• Incorrect statements from neighbourhood plan</li> <li>• Will set precedent for further development</li> <li>• Traffic increase/ highway safety</li> <li>• Increase risk of traffic accidents at A420/Pinewoods Road junction</li> <li>• Quiet ambience of village would be lost</li> <li>• Detrimental to character of village</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village does not have facilities/services to support additional housing</li> <li>• Longworth is not a sustainable place for development</li> <li>• Site is outside of village, open countryside, Not infill</li> <li>• Bus service to be cut</li> <li>• Primary school full</li> <li>• Represents 6% growth for village</li> <li>• Housing not needed in Longworth</li> <li>• Existing new builds have not been sold</li> <li>• No need given the supply of housing in Kingston Bagpuize</li> <li>• No local need for affordable housing in Longworth</li> <li>• Site is affected by flooding. High water table. Additional run off will cause problems</li> <li>• Danger to pedestrians</li> <li>• No footpaths</li> <li>• Removal of trees will affect wildlife</li> <li>• Noise and light pollution</li> <li>• Site in conservation area</li> <li>• Insensitive to historical pattern of village</li> <li>• Not brownfield land</li> <li>• Previous refusals on site</li> <li>• Appeal at site at Cow Lane</li> <li>• Will not provide any future long term employment, services, facilities</li> <li>• Security of properties backing onto nursery site</li> <li>• Sewage system can't cope</li> <li>• Site should be returned to agricultural land</li> <li>• Land is grade 2 agricultural land</li> <li>• Site is an isolated location</li> <li>• The Milton scheme that has been referenced is not comparable</li> <li>• Council strategy to meet housing targets does not involve development in smaller village</li> </ul> <p>In response to the amended illustrative site plan a further 13 letters of objection have been received on the following grounds:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant weight should be given to neighbourhood plan</li> <li>• Contrary to local plan, emerging local plan</li> <li>• Unsustainable</li> <li>• Change character of village</li> <li>• Increased traffic</li> <li>• School is full</li> <li>• On high grade agricultural land</li> <li>• Disproportionate to existing village</li> <li>• Neighbourhood plan has determined there is no need for affordable housing</li> <li>• Object for same reasons as before</li> </ul>
<p>Neighbour Comment</p>	<p>One letter of comment has been received. The comments are: Support principle of housing need in village. Would be problems to safely access the services of village. A more central site would be favourable.</p>

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Environment Agency	No objections
Thames Water Development Control	No objections
Oxfordshire County Council One Voice	Transport – no objections subject to conditions and S106 contributions Archaeology – no objections Education – no objections subject to S106 contribution to primary education Property – no objections subject to S106 contribution towards library book stock
Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council)	No objections
Conservation Officer	No objections
Landscape Architect - Vale of White Horse	No objections
Urban Design Officer (South Oxon & Vale of White Horse DC)	No objections
Countryside Officer (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse)	No objections
Housing Development	No objection. The proposal is providing 40% affordable in accordance with policy
Leisure (Developer Contributions - Vale of White Horse)	No comments
Health & Housing - Env. Protection Team	No objections
Waste Management Officer (District Council) - No strong views	No objections. Section 106 contribution of £170 per property

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P89/V5099 – Refused 5.6.1989 (dismissed appeal 7.6.1990)  
Change of use from commercial nursery to residential development. (Site area approx. 0.6 hectares).

P86/V5204 – Approved 21.4.1986  
Creation of a new access and closure of existing

P84/V5212 – Approved 17.8.1984  
Detached dwelling and garage in connection with the business. (Site area 0.1 hectare)

P77/V5244 – Approved 25.11.1977

Demolition of temporary office and erection of new office together with car parking area.

P77/V5243 – Refused 27.6.1977

Demolition of existing temporary office, toilets and store. Erection of office, toilets and store and construction of parking area.

P75/V5137 – Approved 13.6.1975

Retention of accommodation including lavatory and new vehicular access

## 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

DC10 - The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling

DC8 - The Provision of Infrastructure and Services

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

GS2 - Development in the Countryside

H12 - Development in the Smaller Villages

H13 - Development Elsewhere

H15 - Housing Densities

H17 - Affordable Housing

HE1 - Preservation and Enhancement: Implications for Development

HE4 - Development within setting of listed building

### 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 relevant emerging policies with the NPPF. Whilst the plan has been through examination the inspector's report 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 7 Providing supporting infrastructure and services

Core Policy 8 Spatial Strategy for 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 37 Design and local distinctiveness

Core Policy 39 The historic environment

Core Policy 42 Flood risk

Core Policy 44 Landscape

Core Policy 46 Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

### 5.3 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Design Guide – March 2015
  - Sections 2 – responding to the setting*
  - Section 3 – establishing the structure*
  - Section 4- streets and spaces*
  - Section 5 – building design*
  - Section 6 – buildings in rural/lower density areas*
- 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.

5.7 The neighbourhood plan has been formally submitted to the council and is out for consultation at the time of writing but has yet to be formally examined.

### 5.8 **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.

### 5.9 **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:

1. Principle of the development
2. Cumulative Impact
3. Use of Land
4. Locational Credentials
5. Affordable Housing and Housing Mix
6. Historic Environment
7. Design and Layout
8. Residential Amenity
9. Landscape and Visual Impact
10. Flood Risk and Surface/Foul Drainage
11. Highway Safety
12. Ecology and Biodiversity
13. S106 Contributions

6.2 **Principle of development**

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. The development plan currently comprises the saved policies of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011.

6.3 Other material planning considerations include national planning guidance within the NPPF and NPPG and the emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan: Part 1-Strategic Sites and Policies and its supporting evidence base, and the Longworth Neighbourhood plan.

6.4 Current policy position

Policy H12 of the adopted local plan seeks to restrict development on unallocated greenfield sites and housing developments outside the built up areas of the smaller villages of the district. This site would therefore be contrary to this policy.

6.5 Emerging policy position

The emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 1 identifies Longworth as a smaller village where limited infill development may be appropriate within the existing built up area or if it is allocated within an adopted neighbourhood plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. Core policy 4 sets out that 1900 dwellings remain to be identified and will be allocated through the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 or neighbourhood plans or through the development management process.

6.6 National policy position

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision-taking this means *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless: – any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or – specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*"

6.7 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.

- 6.8 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"*.
- 6.9 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF provides that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given). Whilst the proposal may be contrary to policy H12, this policy is not consistent with paragraphs 47 and 49 of the NPPF in light of a lack of five year supply of housing and therefore this policy has very limited weight. The emerging local plan 2031 has limited weight at this time as it is still under examination and the Inspectors report has not been received.
- 6.10 Longworth Neighbourhood plan has been submitted and is at the time of writing out for consultation. It has not been examined or adopted. As set out above 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.
- 6.11 Longworth Parish Council strongly argue that the neighbourhood plan should have material weight given its stage of preparation. It argues that the local community of Longworth do not want to grow the village beyond its existing boundaries and that the development is contrary to the neighbourhood plan.
- 6.12 In your officers view, given the neighbourhood plan has not been through examination, very limited weight can be attributed towards its policies at the current time.
- 6.13 Even if it were adopted the latest advice set out by Government in the NPPG for when a neighbourhood plan has been adopted and forms part of a development plan but where the local planning authority has no five year supply of housing, is as follows: *"In such instances paragraph 49 of the Framework is clear that "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." Paragraph 49 applies to policies in the statutory development plan documents which have been adopted or approved in relation to a local planning authority area. It also applies to policies in made neighbourhood plans."*
- 6.14 Therefore in the absence of a five year supply of housing sites, relevant housing policies, even in adopted neighbourhood plans, are not up to date and have little weight.
- 6.15 Consequently the proposal should be assessed paragraph 14 of 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 five 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.

**6.16 Cumulative Impact**

The NPPF does not suggest that populations of settlements should be limited in some way or not be expanded by any particular figure. It expects housing to be boosted significantly. There have not been any significant developments in Longworth in recent years although there is currently an application pending for ten new dwellings on the opposite side of Hinton Road from the application site. None of the technical consultees have raised any cumulative concerns.

**6.17 Use of Land**

The NPPF identifies the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from development (paragraph 112). The agricultural land classification map for the South East identifies Longworth village within an area classified as grade 2 land. The site is just under one hectare in size. The whole of the nursery site is approximately five hectares, therefore a fifth of the site would be lost.

6.18 Of material consideration is the recent appeal decision (19 February 2016) for 59 dwellings at Longcot Road in Shrivenham. That proposal involved the loss of 0.5 to 0.8 hectares of grade 1 agricultural land and 3.5 hectares of grade 2 or 3a. The inspector did not see that proposal as 'significant' development as defined by paragraph 112 of the NPPF and, although he saw some harm arising through the loss of the agricultural land, he considered the harm to be slight when taking account of the size of the site and the grade of agricultural land.

6.19 Given this site is grade 2, and is much smaller than that appeal site, the harm arising would be very slight in this case and would not justify a refusal on this point.

**6.20 Locational Credentials**

At paragraph 29 the NPPF recognises that with regards to transport, different policies and measures will be required in different communities, and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. Paragraph 34 of the NPPF sets out planning decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. However this needs to take account of policies set out elsewhere in the Framework, particularly in rural areas.

6.21 The NPPF at paragraph 55 states "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby". The Planning Practise Guidance on Rural Housing supports sustainable development in rural areas to help underpin thriving rural communities. It also states that "... all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas.."

6.22 In the council's settlement hierarchy Longworth is recorded as having a primary school, church, pub, village hall, mobile library, bus service, a playground and as being within 5km of an employment site.

6.23 Objectors have pointed to the dismissed appeal for two dwellings at Cow Lane in October 2013 (ref P13/V0373/FUL). A copy of the inspector's decision is **attached** at Appendix 3. The inspector dismissed the appeal on the landscape impact of the proposal but with regards to the location of the development stated the following (paragraphs 9 and 10):

*“... although the proposed development is outside the built up area of the village, the proposal would adjoin the existing settlement. It would be within walking distance of a bus stop with regular daily services and other local facilities such as a primary school and pub. In commenting on the appeal application, the local highway authority considered the site’s accessibility and commented that the level of dependence on the private car is likely to be high, but raised no objection in principle.*

*Taking these factors together it has not, in my view, been demonstrated that the proposal’s relationship to services and facilities would lead to an unacceptable increase in private vehicle use. In this regard it would accord with the Framework which, whilst seeking to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside, notes that to promote sustainable development in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.”*

6.24 The current application is for up to 13 dwellings as opposed to two in the appeal and will therefore generate more cars. However a footpath link is proposed to the village and the county highways officer has raised no objections. Officers are mindful of the fact that whilst the NPPF seeks to avoid isolated housing in the countryside, it is supportive of housing located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and services. Your officers consider that would be the case here.

6.25 It is commented by a number of objectors that the primary school is full and that the bus service through the village is under threat. The provision of additional infrastructure to support new housing is dealt with in the section below and the county council have provided comments in this regard.

**6.26 Affordable housing and housing mix**

The application makes provision for 40% affordable housing which accords with Policy H17 of the adopted local plan. The proposed affordable housing mix and tenure split is shown in the below table. This is in accord with the mix suggested by the council’s Housing Development Team.

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
Rent	0	2	1	0	3
Shared Ownership	0	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

6.27 Policy H16 of the Adopted Local Plan requires 50% of houses to have two beds or less. However, as stipulated at paragraph 47 of the NPPF this policy is out of date as it is not based on recent assessments of housing need. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) is the most recent assessment and estimates the following open market dwelling requirement by number of bedrooms (2011 to 2031) for the District:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
SHMA %	5.9%	21.7%	42.6%	29.8%	
SHMA Expectation no’s	0.5	2	3.5	2	8
Proposed	0	2	4	2	8

6.28 The above market housing mix would meet the SHMA mix and is appropriate for the number of units on the site.

**6.29 Historic Environment**

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

requires a local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Considerable importance and weight should be given to this requirement.

- 6.30 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF confirms that *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be”*. The NPPF adds at paragraph 133 that proposals causing substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should be refused unless the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF explains that less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.31 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this case considerable importance and weight is given to the desirability of protecting or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.32 Policy HE1 of the adopted local plan seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. Policy HE4 of the adopted local plan seeks to protect the setting of listed buildings.
- 6.33 The site is not within the conservation area, but its boundary runs parallel to the eastern boundary of the site and includes the properties along Rectory Lane. There are intermittent views available of the site between these properties, across their gardens. Further to concerns raised by the conservation officer, a more detailed heritage statement has been submitted to assess the potential impacts of the proposals, in line with paragraph 128 of the NPPF. The statement identifies the significance of the conservation area and the potential impact of the development. A revised illustrative layout plan has also been submitted as part of this.
- 6.34 The conservation officer is satisfied with submitted heritage information. The exact details of the design and layout are reserved, however the revised plan shows that an informal layout and a mix of buildings that reflect the local vernacular and rural character of Longworth can potentially be achieved on site, and therefore would not appear out of keeping with the village. The density would be higher than Rectory Lane, however your officers are satisfied that the layout, form and height of the buildings can be designed to reflect a rural character. The density of the site would be 13 dwellings per hectare.
- 6.35 There would be some views of the development from the properties along Rectory Lane and within views across their gardens. As shown on the illustrative plan, buildings can be orientated with their gable end towards Rectory Lane to reduce their prominence in views and there would be sufficient space for good landscaping to be achieved. The prominent poplar trees would be retained, as would the existing boundary treatments along Hinton Road. Your officers consider that, whilst there would be some views from the conservation area, they would not be not detrimental to its character and appearance.
- 6.36 The closest listed building is Well Cottage, to the north of the site along Rectory Lane. It is considered that given the distance between, and boundary treatments, the development would not harm the setting of this listed building.

6.37 **Design and Layout**

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.

6.38 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). The new design guide was adopted by the council in March 2015.

6.39 Details of the appearance and layout are reserved matters and will therefore be considered at that stage. As set out above, the revised illustrative site plan shows that up to 13 dwellings can be accommodated on the site in a way that would not harm the setting of the conservation area. An informal, more organic layout is appropriate here. Both private gardens and some informal open space would be achievable. The detailed design of the buildings and materials should reflect their rural location and these can be controlled at reserved matters stage. There is no objection raised by the urban design officer at this stage.

6.40 **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.

6.41 The closest residential properties would be Wishing Well and Nayland Croft along the eastern boundary of the site. Both of these properties are sited adjacent to Rectory Lane, and have their gardens running along Rectory Lane and up to the boundary of the application site. Wishing Well is over 6m away from the boundary and Nayland Croft is over 12m. Officers are satisfied that the development can be designed to ensure that the amenity of these dwellings is not harmed through overshadowing or overlooking.

6.42 **Landscape and Visual Impact**

The NPPF seeks to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109). The landscape officer has reviewed the application.

6.43 The existing site is seen in the context of the existing built form along Hinton Road and Rectory Lane. The development will result in an increase in built form in these views but these are against the backdrop of existing vegetation which encloses the existing site and restricts the visual impacts of the proposed development to the locality for the site, rather than in wider views across the Corallian Ridge.

6.44 The landscape officer is of the view that the proposed development would result in a minor visual impact with a minor-to-moderate impact on the local landscape character. No objection is raised from a landscape perspective to the development.

6.45 A tree survey report has been submitted with the application, which the forestry officer has no objections to. Within the survey a draft tree protection plan has been included. A confirmed tree protection plan can be agreed by condition should permission be granted.

**6.46 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). 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).

6.47 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.

6.48 The drainage engineer has reviewed the application and submitted flood risk assessment and has no objection subject to fully detailed sustainable surface water and foul water drainage schemes being agreed. These can be ensured by conditions. The county council have re-reviewed their comments with regards to drainage and have no objection on this ground. Thames Water have no objections with regards to sewerage infrastructure capacity or water infrastructure capacity.

**6.49 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) 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.

6.50 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.”*

6.51 The existing access to the site onto Hinton Road would be used for the development. Hinton Road at this point is 30 mph. The necessary visibility splays can be achieved and the highway officer has not raised any objections on highway safety grounds to the development. Parking can be achieved on site and can be conditioned as part of the reserved matters stage.

6.52 A new footpath link would be created to the north, which would offer an alternative link to the centre of the village. This land is in the applicant’s ownership and therefore the provision of this footpath can be ensured by the use of a condition.

6.53 There is significant population growth forecast along the A420 corridor between Swindon and Oxford which is leading to an increased demand for transport. A strategy for movement along this corridor is under review by the county council. There is currently a local bus service through Longworth village however its future is uncertain at this time. The county highways officer has indicated that the requested financial contribution towards bus services can be used to help support this service.

6.54 **Ecology and Biodiversity**

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...”

6.55 The countryside officer has reviewed the application and the submitted Extended Phase 1 Habitats Survey. There are no existing ecological records relating to this site. There are records for a number of protected species from within 250 metres of the site however he is satisfied that it is unlikely that the proposals would have any significant impact on these species.

6.56 An Extended Phase 1 Habitats Survey provides an assessment of the habitats present and the potential for the site to support populations of protected species. No habitats or international national or local importance were found on the site and due to the current land uses the site does not provide conditions suitable for supporting any significant populations of protected species.

6.57 The site does provide opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity value of the area and in accordance with paragraph 109 and 117 of the NPPF it is recommended that if planning permission is to be granted that a condition is imposed to ensure that the ecological potential of the site is maximised within the reserved matters.

6.58 **Section 106 contributions**

The NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests (paragraph 204):

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.59 Policy DC8 of the Adopted Local Plan provides that development will only be permitted where the necessary physical infrastructure and service requirements to support the development can be secured.

6.60 The application includes five affordable dwellings. The only other district council contributions sought are for refuse bins which is reasonable. No contributions have been sought by the leisure team given the relatively small size of development.

6.61 The county council has requested a financial contribution towards the planned expansion of John Blandy Primary School in Southmoor by a total of 3.90 places. A contribution is also requested to increase the library bookstock to meet the need this development would generate. There is also a contribution towards the enhancement of bus services along the A420 corridor, which could support the local bus service through Longworth village and help it to continue. No contribution requests have been received from the parish council.

6.62 The following developer contributions have been requested. These contributions are considered fair and proportionate. The agent has agreed them:-

Vale of White Horse District Council	Proposed Contributions
Refuse bins - £170 per property	£2210

Administration and monitoring costs	£360
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2210</b>
<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>	<i>Proposed Contributions</i>
Enhancement of bus services in the A420 corridor - £1000 per dwelling	£13,000
Expansion of John Blandy Primary School capacity serving the area	£49,483
Library book stock	£715.60
Administration and monitoring costs	£1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£64,698.60</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>£66,908.60</b>
<b>Per dwelling</b>	<b>£5,146.82</b>

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 through increasing housing stock, it would contribute to an expansion of the local housing market and could potentially improve the affordability of open market housing. In addition, the additional houses would contribute towards the future vitality and viability of this community and help to maintain existing infrastructure, creating investment in the local and wider economy. The scheme would have a social role as it will provide in general additional housing that the district needs together with much needed affordable housing units.

7.3 The proposal will have some very limited environmental implications resulting from localised landscape impact and on the setting of the conservation area. Considerable importance and weight is given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. Any harm to the setting of the conservation area will be less than substantial harm and this will be outweighed by the public social and economic benefits of the development.

7.4 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 adverse effects do not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits. Consequently, following paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and a legal agreement to secure affordable housing and developer contributions.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. **A S106 agreement being entered into in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing; and**
2. **Conditions as follows:**
  1. **Commencement of development – outline permission.**
  2. **Reserved matters submission.**
  3. **Approved plan.**
  4. **Provision of footpath link.**
  5. **Foul water drainage scheme to be submitted.**
  6. **Sustainable surface water scheme to be submitted.**
  7. **Method statement for biodiversity enhancements to be submitted.**
  8. **Existing access and visibility splays to be retained.**
  9. **Tree protection details to be submitted and implemented.**

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