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<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P11/E0906</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL
<b>REGISTERED</b>	14.06.2011
<b>PARISH</b>	CHINNOR
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Jeff Andrews & Christopher Hood
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Taylor Wimpey Developments Ltd
<b>SITE</b>	Land at former Chinnor Cement Works Hill Road Chinnor
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Development of three blocks totalling 1,550 square metres for use as all or a mixture of B1(a) offices and D1 nursery (alternative to P09/E0145/O).
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	475578/200289
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mr M.Moore

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to Planning Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of Chinnor Parish Council.
- 1.2 The site lies within the area previously covered by buildings which were used as part of the former Chinnor Cement Works. The works extended to around 75 ha to the east of Chinnor at the foot of the Chilterns. The site lies outside the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the boundary of which is about 200 m to the east. A site plan is **attached** which shows the development site relative to Chinnor and its surroundings.
- 1.3 All the buildings associated with the cement works have been demolished and works are continuing to implement the housing development granted planning permission in 2010 (see planning history). Access to the site is taken from the recently completed roundabout on Hill Road which also serves the residential development and a new car park for the Chinnor and Princes Risborough railway.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application has clarified that the proposal seeks detailed planning permission for the erection of two office blocks, one two storey and the other three storey, giving a total of 1374 sq m together with a single storey building with a floor space of 176 sq m to be used for office purposes or a children's nursery.
- 2.2 19 car parking spaces are proposed for the larger office, 11 spaces for the smaller office and 10 spaces for the nursery. The nursery would have an area for outdoor play on the side remote from adjoining (to be built) residential property. All three buildings have bin and cycle storage areas together with landscaped areas. A copy of the amended layout plan is **attached**.
- 2.3 The elevations of the buildings are proposed to comprise a mixture of stone, cedar boarding and brick with tiled pitched roofs. The three storey building will be the first non residential building to be viewed on entering the estate and both the three and two storey buildings would be of similar appearance to each other. The nursery would be of a different appearance because of the change in scale. However, it would be constructed in similar materials.

**3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor - No strong views
- 3.2 Thames Water Development Cntrl - No strong views
- 3.3 Health & Housing - Contaminated Land - No objection
- 3.4 Monson Engineering Ltd. - No strong views
- 3.5 Chinnor Parish Council - Object. Design not in keeping and lack of parking spaces.
- 3.6 OCC Highways - No objection – further comments to be reported at the meeting

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 P09/E0145/O: Following extensive negotiations and a Member site visit, planning permission was granted by decision notice dated 29 June 2010 for the construction of 174 dwellings together with a 60 bed care home and 1555 sq m of office. This application was a hybrid application with detailed planning permission being granted for the dwellings and access and outline planning permission being granted for the offices and care home.

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 PPS 1 General Policy and Principles and PPS 13 Transport.

SODC Local Plan Policies G2, G3, G6, D1, D2, D4, D7, D8, D10, D11, E5 and RUR11

SODC Design Guide

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy RUR11 of SOLP provides for the redevelopment of the Cement Works for housing and employment. It was supplemented by a planning brief which required 1 ha of the site to be for employment use. This was because the closing of the cement works had reduced the opportunity for employment in Chinnor. In permitting a care home and offices, the council considered that this would provide for a range of employment opportunities.
- 6.2 The present application seeks full planning permission. It cannot be a reserved matters application, because the siting and use have altered. However, the principle of office development has been established and I consider that the use as a day nursery complies with sustainable development principles, as it would allow the office workers and new dwelling occupiers to have child care facilities close to their home or place of work, whilst providing for a further range of employment opportunities.
- 6.3 In view of the above, I consider that the planning considerations are:
  - i Whether the design and layout acceptable,
  - ii Whether the use acceptable
  - iii Are the Section 106 contributions acceptable
  - iv Is the parking satisfactory and
  - v Are there any other planning issues.
- 6.4 i Is the design and layout acceptable.

The parish council have objected to the design as being out of keeping with the surrounding housing. The designs, in my opinion, are appropriate for an office

development. They, together with the outline approved care home, provide interest to the larger area of development. The three storey block is at a focal point acting as one side of the first 'square' encountered after entering the estate (see site plan). On the opposite side is a three storey block of flats of a distinctive residential design and they have recently been occupied. This block has Flemish bond brickwork and has been distinct design details which, although definitely residential, do not look like flats because of the entrance detailing. The scale of the first office block is therefore not out of keeping with the newly completed surrounding development. If the design was more of a residential style the building would compete with the residential units opposite, fail to punctuate the estate as a whole and could lead to pressure to convert to residential use at a later date. This would lead to a less sustainable form of development and an imbalance in the development of the site as a whole.

Similarly, the second, two storey block, continues the design theme and would relate more to the care home rather than the housing. The day nursery is single storey and in my opinion has the appearance of a nursery whilst continuing the general theme of the other two buildings.

6.5 ii Is the use acceptable

The principle of up to 1555 sq m of office floorspace has already been established. Policy RUR 11 is seeking to ensure a mixed development at the former cement works, including employment uses. In this case, 1374 sq m of office is proposed with the remainder being the day nursery. Comparing the staffing levels of a day nursery with an office is difficult. However, a day nursery generally employs 1 member of staff per 3 children. This would equate to 10 staff plus a chef, cleaning and management staff giving an approximate total of 14 staff. I estimate that an equivalent size of office could employ approximately 16 staff. As such slightly fewer people are likely to be employed. However, the nursery would still represent a sustainable form of development being sited close to both dwellings and other employment sites.

Outdoor play areas are an important constituent of a nursery but are often the subject of noise complaints from adjoining residents. In this case, there is an approved scheme for housing which proposes a new dwelling sharing a boundary with the nursery. The boundary is proposed to be lined by a brick wall. As amended, the application proposes the access and car park to be located adjacent to the common boundary with the outdoor play area just over 11 m from the boundary. The play area would be surrounded by a 1.8m high acoustic fence and with appropriate conditions I am satisfied that the nursery can be accommodated without being un-neighbourly on the grounds of noise and disturbance.

6.6 iii Are Section 106 contributions acceptable.

Prior to the issue of the planning permission in respect of the major development of the site, a complex tri-partite Section 106 agreement was entered into which makes provision for a wide variety of required infrastructure. Some of the contributions related specifically to the employment uses and others were jointly calculated on the basis of the employment floor space (e.g. such as public art and bus subsidies). Rather than re-calculating all the figures and relating them to the current proposal, it seems easier for the applicant to submit a unilateral undertaking (UU) confirming that they intend to comply with all the current clauses of the present agreement. In my opinion, this will be less confusing and easier to monitor than having a revised agreement. Work is well advanced on the preparation of the UU which should be in place prior to the grant of planning permission and will ensure the proper provision of infrastructure.

6.7 iv Is the parking satisfactory.

The parking provision shown is below the maximum standard for such developments. However, recent (Jan 2011) changes to Planning Policy Statement 13 suggest that maximum standards should not be a target, but rather a level of provision that should not be exceeded. In this case the parking areas are as shown on the plans and set out in paragraph 2.2 above. In addition, every encouragement is now being given to sustainable development. It would be hoped that some of the employees would come from the surrounding new houses and would not therefore drive to work. In addition, as part of the overall package of Section 106 payments is a bus subsidy paid to the county council to encourage bus rather than car journeys to work. It would therefore be possible to live in other parts of Chinnor or Thame and come to the site by bus and a bus stop is proposed outside the middle unit.

If the level of parking provision was found to not be adequate, there are areas presently used for landscaping which could provide some additional spaces (subject to a further planning permission). Any on street parking caused by inadequate provision would be wholly contained within the estate and would not give rise to difficulties on the local road network.

6.8 v Are there any other planning issues.

An energy and water statement has been submitted with the application to demonstrate how the buildings will achieve a BREEAM rating of 'excellent' as required by the South Oxfordshire Design Guide. I consider that this can be covered by condition.

All three units have bicycle storage and provision for on site storage of refuse and recycling bins.

The site is located away from other residential units other than those being constructed by the applicant. To the west lies a portion of the yard area associated with the Chinnor Princess Risborough railway. Other than as discussed above in section 6.5 above, I do not consider that the development will have any adverse impact on adjoining property.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposals represent a sustainable form of development and are of an appropriate design relative to the development of the cement works site and is otherwise in accordance with Policy RUR11 and other relevant policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **It is recommended that the grant of planning permission be delegated to the Head of Planning subject to the completion of an appropriate undertaking to ensure that section 106 payments already agreed will be payable in respect of the present scheme and the following conditions:**

1. **Commencing Date 3 years**
2. **Compliance with submitted plans**
3. **Samples of all materials**
4. **Surface water drainage scheme**
5. **Foul drainage scheme**
6. **Sustainable building measures**
7. **Such highways conditions as considered appropriate**
8. **That the D1 use shall be restricted to the single storey building only.**

- 9. That no more than 30 children shall be catered for on the site.**
- 10. That the play area shall not be used for children’s play other than between 9:30 and 4:30 Monday to Friday and shall not be used on Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holidays.**
- 11. Landscaping scheme.**

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