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<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P11/W1806</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL
<b>REGISTERED</b>	11.11.2011
<b>PARISH</b>	DIDCOT
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Tony Harbour Bill Service Neville Harris
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Van Ren Developers
<b>SITE</b>	100 Abingdon Road Didcot
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Demolition of existing dwelling. Erection of 2 dwellings with single detached garage
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	453749/190623
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mr M.Moore

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to Committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Didcot Town Council.
- 1.2 The application site, which is shown on the **attached** plan, lies within the Ladygrove housing estate and extends to approximately 0.1 hectares. On site at present is a semi derelict bungalow of no architectural merit. The garden area is not maintained and is very overgrown.
- 1.3 The existing access to the site is taken direct from Abingdon Road. The site is surrounded by houses built over the last twenty years although directly to the south is a chalet bungalow constructed in the 1960s. Immediately to the north of the site is an open area of land maintained by Didcot Town Council and containing a number of trees recently protected with a Tree Preservation Order.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing semi derelict bungalow and the erection of two 4 bedroomed properties. The designs of the two dwellings are different but use the same pallet of building materials which comprise red brick, stained timber and a plain tiled roof. Plot 1 has an integral garage whereas Plot 2 has a detached single garage at the front. Access is proposed to be taken via a single access onto Abingdon Road serving both properties. The application was accompanied by a tree survey report and a design and access statement. A layout plan and elevation plans are **attached** to this report. Full details of the application can be found on the council's web site at [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Didcot Town Council - Object. They consider the development will be cramped and inappropriate and Plot 1 in particular has insufficient private amenity space.
- SODC Contaminated Land Officer - No objection. Requires condition.

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|--------------------------|---|---|
| SODC Waste Team          | - | No objection. Requires a collection point.  |
| SODC Forestry Officer    | - | No objection. Recognises the removal of one tree but considers it is not worthy of a Tree Preservation Order.                           |
| SODC Countryside Officer | - | No objection.   |
| Thames Water             | - | No objection.   |
| Neighbours (3)           | - | Express concern about windows and potential overlooking and one neighbour considers that the tree scheduled for removal should be kept. |

#### 4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 P11/W0418 – This application proposed three dwellings on the site and was refused by decision notice dated 21 July 2011. A copy of that decision notice is **attached** to this report.

#### 5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies (SOLP 2011):

- D1 – Good design and local distinctiveness
- D2 – Vehicle and bicycle parking
- D3 – Plot coverage and garden areas
- D4 – Privacy and daylight
- D8 – Promoting efficient use of energy
- D10 – Provision for the management of waste
- D11 – Infrastructure and service requirements
- H4 – Development in towns and larger villages
- H7 – A range of dwelling types and sizes
- H8 – Density of new development
- G2 – Protection and enhancement of the environment
- G5 – Making the best use of land
- G6 – Promoting good design
- T1 – Promoting a sustainable transport network
- T2 – Parking, cycling and turning provision
- C9 – Protection of landscape features

#### 6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are considered to be:
- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
  - Impact on the character and appearance of the area having regard to the criteria in Policy H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan
  - Impact on the amenities of occupants of nearby properties
  - Housing mix
  - Impact on trees
  - Sustainability
  - Infrastructure
- 6.2 i) **Principle**  
The site lies within the built up limits of Didcot which is one of the four main towns within the district where proposals for residential development will be permitted

provided they meet the provisions set out in Policy H4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

6.3 ii) **Policy H4 Criteria considerations**

- i) Loss of an important open space  
The site at present is overgrown and unkempt. In my opinion it makes no contribution to the setting of the Ladygrove estate and is not an important open space.
- ii) Design – scale of the proposed development  
The surrounding area is a mixture of modern housing estates of the 1980s and 1990s. The design of the proposed dwellings follow this theme and I consider that the proposed materials and simple elevations are in keeping with the character of the area and would positively enhance the visual quality of the locality. In view of the steep roof pitch proposed the dwellings maybe slightly higher than the existing surrounding development but not in my opinion excessively so. Because they are served by their own access off Abingdon Road, they will not directly relate to the surrounding estate housing.
- iii) The impact on the character of the area  
The development represents a density of 20 dwellings per hectare. This favourably compares with existing surrounding development and although the Didcot Town Council consider that the development is cramped, I do not consider that a refusal of planning permission on grounds of density could be justified. There is a substantial frontage to Abingdon Road and sufficient depth to the properties to give adequate private garden areas which are above the minimum of 100 sq.m. set out in the design guide. Plot 1 has a garden size of 127 sq.m. whilst Plot 2 has a private amenity space of 260 sq.m.
- iv) There are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections. Policy H4 of the SOLP seeks to resist development that would be harmful to the amenity of occupants of nearby properties. This application does not propose windows which would unduly overlook adjoining property and with the distances involved I do not consider that the development would represent an unneighbourly form of development. Neighbours' concerns are principally to avoid the possibility of overlooking windows and I consider that with an appropriately worded condition restricting the insertion of new windows, such overlooking can be avoided.
- v) At the time of writing this report, OCC (Highways) have not responded. However, in respect of the previous application which proposed three dwellings served off the same access, no objection was raised. When planning the Ladygrove Estate, the number of access points onto Abingdon Road was carefully controlled. It comprises a major route through the Ladygrove Estate. However, the application proposes only a net gain of 1 dwelling and there is an existing access serving the site at present. The new access proposed has been moved further from the roundabout which lies to the north of the site than the existing access which I consider is an improvement on the existing situation.
- vi) The development does not constitute backland development.

6.4 iii) **Impact on the amenities of occupants of nearby properties**

As discussed above, I do not consider that the development would overlook, overshadow or impact by its general proximity on the residential amenity of occupiers of existing surrounding property.

- 6.5 iv) **Housing mix**  
In this case, the application proposes a net gain of only one dwelling. Consequently, I do not think that it is reasonable for the Council to insist on the usual housing mix.
- 6.6 v) **Impact on trees**  
The previous scheme was refused for, amongst other reasons the potential impact on trees. As a result of that application the SODC Forestry Officer inspected the site and the adjoining land and protected 2 Chestnut, 1 Oak, and 1 Poplar immediately to the north of the application site with a Tree Preservation Order. The present application has removed Plot 3 and the Forestry Officer is quite satisfied that there is now sufficient distance from the root protection areas of the trees to allow the construction of the properties and also the pressure to remove the trees because of loss of light etc is far less because of the distance involved.
- 6.7 vi) **Sustainability**  
The District Council encourages the use of renewable energy technologies particular in new build. The design and access statement submitted as part of the application demonstrates that the applicant has considered an energy efficient design both in the construction and fittings for the new dwellings. Solar panels have been incorporated into both properties and the applicant has advised that the new dwellings will be constructed to meet Code Level 3 of the code for sustainable homes. With an appropriate condition, I consider the provisions of Policy D8 of SOLP being met.
- 6.8 vii) **Infrastructure**  
On smaller schemes, the District Council do not normally request infrastructure payments. The cost of calculating the level of payments and their collection can often outweigh the benefits. In this case, the application proposes a net gain of only one dwelling.
- 6.9 However, the site is part of the Ladygrove major development area. The applicant, for instance, has advised that surface water drainage will go to soakaways. Soakaways on the Ladygrove estate generally do not function properly because of the ground conditions and major surface water drainage works have been required over the whole of the Ladygrove Estate. These have all been paid for by developer contributions and it is anticipated that this development will need to connect to the scheme. The application proposes no public open space or children's play area of its own but the Council do have a strategy for the whole of the estate which relies on additional contributions from the Ladygrove East part of the Ladygrove Estate.
- 6.10 Given the amount of work which has been undertaken to service the existing Ladygrove Estate and the further works necessary to ensure Ladygrove East has adequate services, I consider that contributions are required to be collected from this development to ensure that essential infrastructure is provided. At the time of writing this report, the applicant has confirmed their willingness to enter into an appropriate agreement to ensure payments of monies towards service water drainage, open space, community facilities, off-site recreation and the provision of the Ladygrove East park.
- 7.0 **CONCLUSION**
- 7.1 The development lies within the well defined confines of Didcot and there is no objection to the principle of housing development. The proposals comply with normal space and highway standards and the density of the development is considered appropriate for the area. The scheme is otherwise generally in accordance with development plan policies.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**8.1 It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the prior completion of appropriate agreement/undertaking to ensure the provision of delivery infrastructure as set out above and the following conditions:**

- 1) Commencement 3 years**
- 2) Compliance with approved plans**
- 3) sample materials required (all)**
- 4) Sustainable design**
- 5) Refuse and recycling storage (details required)**
- 6) No garage conversion**
- 7) Remove permitted development rights in terms of insertion of new windows**
- 8) Contamination (investigation)**
- 9) Such conditions as required by OCC (Highways)**
- 10) Tree protection**

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