

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S3608/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	31.10.2016
PARISH	CROWMARSH GIFFORD
WARD MEMBER(S)	Felix Bloomfield Richard Pullen
APPLICANT	Bloor Homes and Hallam Land Management
SITE	Land to the east of Benson Lane Crowmarsh Gifford, OX10 8ED
PROPOSAL	Outline planning application for up to 150 dwellings together with associated access, public open space, landscaping and amenity areas.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	461829/189417
OFFICER	Cathie Scotting

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Permission is sought for new housing in Crowmarsh, identified as a 'larger village' in the Council's Core Strategy. The Core Strategy identified that larger villages would receive new housing and the subsequent Refined Options (2015) indicated that numbers would represent a proportional increase. However since that time new housing figures for Oxfordshire, including South Oxfordshire, have been determined through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and this council is having to cater for higher numbers. Whilst it is the Council's preferred route to allocate sites through the local planning process, South Oxfordshire no longer has an identified 5 year supply of deliverable housing. In such situations the National Planning Policy Framework advises that the council's housing policies are out of date and less weight can be attributed to these policies and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

1.2 The Refined Options describes Crowmarsh Gifford as one of our smallest 'larger villages'. It is located on the opposite bank of the River Thames from Wallingford, and it has its own separate village identity. It has a limited range of services and facilities (a shop, two pubs and a primary school) but benefits from being in easy reach of shops and services in Wallingford. A notable feature is the collection of large employment sites along Benson Lane, consisting of the environmental science cluster in the grounds of the historic Howbery Park and the council offices (recently damaged in a serious fire). The high frequency bus service between Oxford and Reading runs through Crowmarsh Gifford, providing opportunities for sustainable travel.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The site is greenfield agricultural land with public rights of way running adjacent and within the site. The site is within the setting of the Chilterns AONB although it is not within the designated AONB area. There are protected trees to the north of the site.

2.2 A location plan is attached (Appendix A). Permission is sought for up to 150 homes including 40% affordable housing on existing agricultural land. The application is in outline with all matters reserved except access. Vehicular access would be taken from Benson Lane to the west of the site. The development extends east to the public footpath running north – south in the field. Marsh Lane forms the northern boundary, along which lie a belt of trees protected by TPO. To the south is another public footpath

adjacent to which are the rear gardens of residential properties in The Street.

- 2.3 Attached is the Parameters Plan (Appendix B) Illustrative Masterplan (Appendix C), and the Access Plan (Appendix D).

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 A summary of representations is provided below. All of the representations and submitted documents received by stakeholders and interested parties can be viewed on the website:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P16/S3608/O>

Crowmarsh Parish Council	<p>Object:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of dwellings is more than 3 times the amount allocated to Crowmarsh in SHLAA • Drastic increase in traffic in the Street, Benson Lane and impact on the Wallingford Bridge and High Street • NPPF says preference should be given to brownfield sites • Pressure on local infrastructure – schools, doctors, dentists and sewerage system, • Legally protected owls and adders are on the site
Wallingford Town Council	<p>Object Amenity consideration – over development</p>
Benson Parish Council	<p>Object Cumulative impact to the Benson/Crowmarsh Gifford infrastructure and services such as roads, medical services and schools.</p>

- 3.2 Responses (108) objecting to the development have been received from local residents. Below is a list of the types of objections.

- **Local planning**

- Previous application dismissed at appeal – should be refused again for same reasons
- First of three phases inappropriate and out of scale for the village
- Site not in local plan - alternatives are already agreed with SODC via community consultation
- Granting permission would undermine local democracy
- Use former SODC site before building anywhere else – is brownfield site and in line with NPPF
- Granting permission will create a precedent for approval of remainder of Bloor land and undermine SODC’s ability to safeguard other greenfield sites/village character, leading to urbanisation of Crowmarsh
- Contrary to NPPF, Core Strategy and SODC Local Plan 2011
- Site plan inaccurate

- **Traffic impact**

- Increase risk of serious accident around Wallingford Bridge and on A4074 roundabout
- Site plan shows 3 site entrances within yards of each other – acceptable to highways?
- Traffic will overwhelm mini-roundabout at Benson Lane/The Street

- Access to X39/X40 bus route to Reading via southbound side of A4074 will be extremely dangerous without better refuge arrangement for crossing road
- Traffic crossing Wallingford Bridge already at a maximum, bridge can be clogged with vehicles which then queue back to A4074 and into Wallingford
- Possible peak hour closure/one way working of Wallingford Bridge on air quality grounds will cause new residents to use the new bridge to access the town – potentially the number of cars waiting to leave Crowmarsh would be trapped and constant slow-moving traffic jams

- **Impact on Crowmarsh**
 - Unsympathetic to and entirely out of character with village
 - Large intrusion into countryside against NPPF
 - Overbearing and out of scale proposals will suffocate the village

- **Housing**
 - Would prefer 50 houses at most to provide gradual and managed expansion. Link Bloor access to Lane End not Benson Lane to reduce traffic in village centre, don't build site butting on to Marsh Lane – should be protected from adjacent housing devt.
 - Developer intends to build total of 450 houses in total on site, doubling the size of Crowmarsh and a massive overdevelopment of the agreed allocation of 48.
 - Design is out of character, does not demonstrate eco-standards or permeability, also ugly piecemeal ill-thought premature development
 - Extreme overdevelopment in a village already overpopulated by traffic
 - Density very high compared with existing village – plot sizes very small and parking inadequate, leading to parking and access nightmares.
 - Would suffer from noise from RAF Benson

- **Local infrastructure**
 - Too much development for existing village infrastructure: sewerage, schools, doctor, roads.
 - Local services limited (2 pubs 1 small shop) and would be under severe pressure
 - Proposed surrounding footpath not a good environment when fenced in and isolated at night or during quiet times
 - Residents will rely on access to Wallingford for most services. If restrictions imposed on access via Wallingford Bridge this will mean their driving to town via the bypass

- **Sustainability**
 - Loss of agricultural land will increase flood risk. The Bloor site is 5m N of geological flood plain
 - The field is marshy and groundwater levels high
 - Loss of wildlife – skylarks and badgers
 - Proposed single access point to development will create additional congestion and pollution
 - Wallingford already has poor air quality due to traffic. This will worsen with additional traffic using the bridge for access to the town.
 - Houses not specified in accordance with Home Quality Mark – should be a requirement

- **AONB**

- Adverse impact on views from AONB/AONB setting
- Need to maintain the existing envelope of Crowmarsh, adjacent to the AONB
- Sea of red roofed two storey cheap houses and their backs will be detrimental to views of AONB

3.3 A local residents group CRAG have objected to the application, on the grounds of sustainability making the following comments:

- Lack of education capacity, new development should provide costs for increased capacity
- Traffic and Wallingford bridge – development should be limited e.g 48 dwellings as bridge cannot cope, increased air pollution and lack of parking
- Wallingford medical centre is at capacity and new development should provide monies towards expansion
- Crowmarsh has just one shop and the facilities in Wallingford are poor. Developer should invest in infrastructure e.g. car parking
- There are few jobs in Crowmarsh
- Utilities – capacity of electricity and sewerage outdated

3.4 Comments from consultees:

Consultee	Comments
Oxfordshire County Council Transport	No objection subject to conditions and legal agreement to secure highway works to increase capacity and safety particularly for cyclists : - Portway (N&S, A4074) / Nosworthy Way (A4130) roundabout - Portway (A4074) / The Street / A4074 / Clacks Lane / Crowmarsh Hill (A4130) roundabout - Stop Line at the terminus of Benson Lane with the A4074 is required Contributions of public transport and infrastructure and travel plan sought.
Oxfordshire County Council Education	The existing school site at Crowmarsh is undersized to support expansion and additional land will be required. If the solution necessitates a cost in acquiring suitable land, a proportion of that cost will be sought from the applicant by way a s106 contribution. The county council would expect that any expansion of schools which is necessary as a result of local housing development, would be financially supported through CIL
Oxfordshire County Council - Minerals	No objection Mineral safeguarding areas in Oxfordshire have yet to be determined. Constraints imposed by existing adjacent housing would be likely to preclude mineral working within much of the proposed development site; and additional indirect sterilisation of mineral resources within adjoining land would be likely to be of relatively limited extent. There is not a sufficiently strong reason to justify the safeguarding of mineral deposits against sterilisation by the proposed development.
Oxfordshire County Council - Other	No objection subject to conditions (Archaeology, Fire hydrants)
Natural England	No objection The proposed development will not have significant adverse

	impacts on protected landscapes. We note that much of the 7.35ha site supports Grade 2 agricultural land but have no comments. Recommend condition in respect of soil handling.
Chilterns Conservation Board	No Objection Most appropriate mechanism to establish sites is through plan led process. This greenfield site is within the setting of the AONB. The site is visible from the rising land of the Chilterns escarpment to the south and south-east of the site and there are partial or glimpsed views of the site from public footpaths in the Chilterns AONB. The development site as proposed does not breach the 'reduced developable area' set out the 2014 Landscape Capacity Assessment for Sites ¹ If the LPA accept the principle the following conditions are Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Land east of footpath remains undeveloped in perpetuity ○ Retention and reinforcement of trees and hedgerows ○ New belts of planting ○ Controls over lighting ○ Controls over building heights / materials
Environment Agency	No response
Thames Water	No objection subject to conditions regarding drainage and water supply.
Monson Engineering (Drainage)	No objection subject to conditions re drainage and SUDs design
SGN Plant protection	A gas pipeline runs through the site. Safeguarding during construction required.
CPRE	Object: Scale of development, Impact on services and infrastructure including traffic and the Wallingford bridge. Development of the land would detract from the recreational value to local people.
Environmental Protection	No objection subject to conditions (Noise) No objection (Land Contamination) Air quality effects have not been quantified – mitigation is required e.g. Electric Vehicle charging points (Air Quality)
Housing	No objection subject to agreement on 40% affordable housing, tenure and mix and distribution.
Urban Design Officer	No objection Identifies several matters to consider at detailed stages, including character, design rationale, treatment of boundaries, open space and parking.
Landscape Consultant to SODC	The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment complies with good practice although there are a number of reservations including lack of valuation on sensitivity and visualisations. The LVIA agrees with the council's Landscape Capacity Study in terms of the sensitivity of the site, and the developable area recommended in the Study, however the density appears higher.

¹ Edges of the Larger Villages in South Oxfordshire, carried out by Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd/ Terra Firma for SODC

	The degree to which the proposals comply with the landscape requirements of the NPPF depends on the relative weight that is given to the protection and enhancement of landscape features and green space, against the loss of countryside that contributes to local character.
Countryside Officer	No objection subject to conditions The habitats present on the site are common and widespread and of relatively low ecological value. The illustrative masterplan demonstrates that the development could be achieved whilst protecting those areas of greater value and allowing for the creation of new habitats.
Forestry Officer	No objection subject to conditions The loss of existing vegetation is not a constraint to development but will need to be mitigated, as part of a well designed landscaping scheme.
Conservation Officer	No objection There are no designated heritage assets on the site. In view of the relationship of the proposed development to these heritage assets there would be no harm to any neighbouring designated assets that would diminish their significance or harm the setting.
Waste Management Officer	No objection Details of waste storage, vehicle tracking will need to be considered at detailed stages.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P16/S3883/SCR – EIA not required (16/12/2016)

Outline planning application for up to 150 dwellings together with associated access, public open space, landscaping and amenity areas, Crowmarsh Gifford.

The proposal constitutes Schedule 2 (category 10(b) urban development projects) and is above the indicative threshold of 5 ha (7.35 ha) and is visible from the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a sensitive area. Having regard to the characteristics of the development and other development currently proposed in the vicinity it is not considered that there is potential for significant environmental effects. All issues are considered to be of local significance only and can be examined through the normal planning process.

4.2 P09/W0201/O - Refused (24/06/2009) - Refused on appeal (02/12/2009)

Outline application for the erection of 210 dwellings (including affordable housing provision), associated landscaping and arboricultural works, parking, public open space provision, together with a vehicular and pedestrian access from Benson Lane and Lane End.

The key reason for the dismissal of the appeal was the conflict with the Local Plan housing policies and housing land supply at the time of the proposal. The inspector also commented that the addition of 210 further dwellings would increase the size of the village in an ad hoc manner, ahead of the imminent Core Strategy, and use a disproportionately large area of land.

4.3 P08/W1028/O - Refused (19/12/2008) – Appeal Withdrawn (13/07/2009)

Outline application for the erection of 420 dwellings (including affordable housing provision), associated landscaping and arboricultural works, parking, public open space

provision and sports pavilion, together with a new vehicular and pedestrian access from Benson Lane and link road to the A4074.

- 4.4 P08/W1029/O – Withdrawn before determination (09/12/2008)
Outline application for the erection of 200 dwellings including affordable housing) associated landscaping and aboricultural works, parking and public open space provision together with a new vehicular and pedestrian access from Benson Lane and link road to the A4074.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2 National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

- 5.3 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy

CS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSS1 Overall strategy

CSM2 Transport assessments and travel plans

CSH1 Amount & distribution of housing

CSH2 Density: Minimum density of 25 dwellings/ha unless adverse impact on area

CSH3 Affordable housing:

CSH4 Meeting housing needs

CSB1 Biodiversity

CSG1 Green Infrastructure

CSQ3 Design:

CSEN1 Landscape

CSI1 Infrastructure

CSC1 Delivery and contingency: if sites not developed in accordance with timescales contingency measures will apply

- 5.4 Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan policy SD10; and policy M8 in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy, Proposed Submission Document August 2015

- 5.5 South Oxfordshire 2011 Saved Policies

G2 The district's countryside, settlements and environmental resources will be protected from adverse developments

G4 Protecting the countryside

C4 Landscape setting and Historic character and appearance of settlement

CON 12,13 and 14 Archaeology

EP1 Protection from polluting emissions

EP2 Noise

EP3 Lighting

EP6 Surface water

EP8 Contaminated Land

D1 Good design

D2 Vehicle and cycle parking

D4 Privacy and Daylight

D6 Community Safety

D7 Access

D10 Waste

H4 Housing

R2 Outdoor playing space

R3 Indoor sport
R6 Informal open space
R8 Public right of way
T1 Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
T2 Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

5.6 Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2032

The council is preparing a new Local Plan, which will set out how development will be planned and delivered across South Oxfordshire to 2032. Our third consultation on our 'Preferred Options' closed in August 2016. In relation to housing growth within our villages, our Preferred Options proposes to deliver homes through the Neighbourhood Plan process. Where Neighbourhood Plans are not being made the council are working with parishes to identify site allocations. Crowmarsh is not preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.7
- South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016
 - Landscape Capacity Assessment for Sites on the Edge of the Larger Villages in South Oxfordshire May 2014

5.8 EIA Regulations

As defined by the EIA regulations and guidance, the site is not within a sensitive area and nor will it have a significant urbanising effect (e.g. a new development of more than 1000 dwellings). The effects from this proposal are likely to be of local importance but not significant within the context of the EIA regulations and guidance. The LPA has determined that this proposal is not likely to give rise to significant environmental impacts and is therefore not EIA development and a full EIA statement is not required.

The EIA guidance states that local planning authorities (LPA) should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development. Other planning applications for development in Crowmarsh have been submitted for consideration. The LPA considered these proposals in the EIA screening report and concluded there would not be significant cumulative environmental effects in the context of the EIA regulations and guidance.

5.9 CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended)

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

Principle of the development, including:

- how the development of the site fits with the council's spatial strategy
- the council's housing land supply position

Matters of detail / technical issues, including:

- affordable housing and housing mix
- transport and highway matters
- landscape impact
- trees and ecology
- design and layout
- flood risk and surface / foul drainage
- other environmental matters
- neighbour amenity and amenity of future residents

Infrastructure requirements, including:

- cumulative impact of proposed development in Crowmarsh
- provision for education
- on-site infrastructure and highway works to be secured under a legal agreement

Council's spatial strategy

- 6.2 The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) allocated development in the main towns and these are either allocated in the Core Strategy or in Neighbourhood Plans. In addition the plan supports development for the Larger Villages, including Crowmarsh. The Core Strategy does not allocate a target number of homes to Crowmarsh, but in setting out the spatial vision for the district it requires the 'Larger Villages' to provide for 1,154 dwellings as part of a total housing requirement for 11,487 homes in the district to 2027. In September 2013, the Council's Cabinet Committee approved a draft housing distribution for the Larger Villages, which included about 48 homes to be allocated to Crowmarsh. However the Preferred Options in 2016 reported that the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA (2014) requires a higher delivery thereby giving an overall Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for South Oxfordshire 2011 to 2032 of 15,750 based on 750 houses per annum. This is a sizable uplift from the requirement for 547 homes per annum set out in the SOCS. This does not include an unmet need for Oxford which could make the total figure 19,500. Development for housing in Crowmarsh therefore complies with the principles of the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

Housing land supply

- 6.3
- 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".
 - Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date permission should be granted 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".
 - 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).
- 6.4 Successive appeal inspectors in 2016 advised that South Oxfordshire should use the SHMA figures and that South Oxfordshire does not have a five year supply of housing. Based on the evidence of the SHMA and past delivery (including the need for a 20% buffer due to under delivery) South Oxfordshire's housing supply is currently estimated to be 3.8 years. This means that the policies for the supply of housing in the SOCS are given significantly less weight. Applications for housing should now be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and should be permitted unless there is planning harm that outweighs the benefit of providing new housing. Sustainability including cumulative impacts and infrastructure are considered further in the report.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

- 6.5 Policy CSH3 requires that the council seeks 40% of the total housing to be affordable and a tenure mix of 75% rented/ 25% shared ownership. This is agreed by the applicant and would be secured by S106 agreement.
- 6.6 The Housing team have advised that an affordable housing mix along the following lines is appropriate. A final mix that meets the housing need objectives would be agreed in the S106 agreement.

Table1: Affordable Housing mix

	1 bed flats 46sqm	2 bed flats 57sqm	2 bed 4 person House 75sqm	3 bed 5 person House 90sqm	4 bed 6 person house 105sqm	Total
Rented	6	6	17	13	3	45
S/O	0	0	10	5	0	15
Total	6	6	27	18	3	60

- 6.7 The proposed market mix closely follows the recommended SHMA mix and is acceptable. A condition will ensure that the proposed mix is delivered, unless an alternative mix is agreed but it will need to be in general conformity with the SHMA guidance. In addition the council will seek lifetime homes on all affordable homes with a ground floor entrance and 10% of market dwellings.

Table 2 : Market mix

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
SHMA guidance	6%	27%	43%	24%
Proposed %	6.6%	24.4%	44.4%	24.4%
Proposed number	6	22	40	22

Transport and Highway matters

- 6.8 This application is an outline application with all matters reserved except access. Vehicular access would be taken from Benson Lane – see Appendix D. Subject to detailed design this access is acceptable. Around 87 trips in the peak hours are estimated (although this is based on 175 dwellings). The Transport Assessment accepts that capacity at the following roundabouts need improving.
- Portway (N&S, A4074) / Nosworthy Way (A4130) roundabout
 - Portway (A4074) / The Street / A4074 / Clacks Lane / Crowmarsh Hill (A4130) roundabout
- In addition the highway authority are requiring improvements at the Benson Lane / A4074 junction. The Transport Assessment advises that the junction of Benson Lane and the Street and the Wallingford Bridge will operate within capacity and the highway authority has not identified any measures for these infrastructure elements.
- 6.9 The development is just over 1km from the centre of Wallingford and would take 15-20 minutes to walk. Additionally there are buses that serve the site and Wallingford and wider destinations. There are some facilities in Crowmarsh (two pubs, a school, a small shop, playing fields, pavilion, play area and swimming pool and park) and the site is reasonable distance / time from all other services and facilities in Wallingford e.g. supermarket and shops, health and secondary school. This site is in a sustainable location.
- 6.10 A financial contribution is sought to pump-prime the X39 / X40 bus service (Oxford to

Reading) which passes the site to a service frequency of three buses per hour with a view to eventual commercial sustainability. Monies are also sought for the bus stop improvements (shelter and real time display) opposite the site. In addition monies are sought for travel plan monitoring.

- 6.11 The exact parking arrangements will be considered at reserved matters. However the Transport Assessment (para. 3.29) advises that minimum standards will be met and will include visitor parking.

Landscape

- 6.12 Policy CSEN1 Landscape requires that the district's distinct landscape character and key features will be protected against inappropriate development and where possible enhanced. The Council has sought advice from an independent consultant and also has regard to the Landscape Capacity study which considered site CR02 which comprises the fields south and north of Marsh Lane. See Appendix E attached. It recommends that only part of CR02 is considered further on landscape and visual grounds, due to the strong links with the wider countryside and the possible harm to the Chilterns AONB. In relation to this reduced area, the study indicates that the density should be around 25dph (dwellings per hectare). The current application site is consistent with the approach in this study as it is within this reduced recommended area and there is a net density of around 33.5 dph and a gross density of 20 dph.
- 6.13 Subject to conditions requiring landscaping and tree planting both around and within the residential development, this development will not give rise to material adverse effects upon the setting of the AONB. It is not within the sensitive area identified by the Landscape Study. It is not considered appropriate to restrict the use of land outside the application site. If there are any future proposals these will be determined on their merits. It is clear however that the landscape character of the site will materially alter including the view and enjoyment from public footpaths within and immediately adjoining the site. This matter needs to be weighed against other sustainability criteria and is discussed in the conclusion.
- 6.14 The agricultural quality of the land is within the best and most versatile agricultural land. However the site area (less than 20 ha) means it does not fall to be considered by Natural England. NPPF Para 112 states that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. The site is Grade 2 very good agricultural land quality. Development of this site will reduce the availability of very good agricultural land by 7.35 ha and this needs to be weighed against the benefits of housing supply. This site is considered a sustainable location for housing and in the context of the need for housing, there is not an alternative area of poorer quality agricultural land that could be used.

Forestry

- 6.15 There are no objections in relation to trees. New access will involve removal of existing vegetation along Benson Lane, the majority of which are dead or dying due to Dutch Elm disease. New planting will be proposed along this boundary and elsewhere on the site.

Ecology

- 6.16 The Countryside officer has no objection to the scheme, subject to a condition requiring the enhancement of biodiversity on the site. Following representations regarding certain species being present the Countryside officer has further advised that such species are unlikely to be present.

Flood risk and surface / foul drainage

- 6.17 A flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application. The site strata comprises sand and gravel underlaid by chalk. The river Thames lies to the west of the site yet the site is lies within Flood Zone 1, the lowest category of risk. Thames Water and Monson (Drainage) require conditions in respect of the detailed drainage design for foul and surface water, and management of SUDs. The SUDs will comprise on site attenuation in the form of swales and attenuation basins.

Environmental matters

- 6.18 The application is accompanied by a noise assessment, which includes assessment of aircraft noise. There is no objection subject to conditions requiring mitigation set out in the noise report. Additionally there will be some minor effects on air quality and conditions are recommended to promote more sustainable travel e.g. electric car charging and cycle parking, plus tree planting.

Design and Layout

- 6.19 The parameters plan (Appendix B) show the respective areas of land use on the site and the accompanying masterplan is illustrative (Appendix C). In general terms the areas of open space and landscaping and SUDs are on the periphery of the site surrounding the residential development. The open space represents about 39% of the site. Significant trees including large species will be required within the development to assimilate the development into the landscape. This can be secured by condition and dealt with at reserved matters. Comments have also been made upon the suitability of 2.5 storey dwellings which are located in the centre of the built development. Provided there is tree planting with higher species within the development a proportion of higher storey will be acceptable and can assist with character in the development.

Neighbour amenity and amenity of future residents

- 6.20 The layout has been designed so that the public right of way at the southern boundary remains and is set within a landscaped green corridor. Proposed housing will face this public footpath (and other footpaths) which meets design objectives in terms of security. The privacy of the residents in the Street will be protected - the Parameter and Illustrative Masterplan indicate that front elevations of new dwellings would be approximately 30 m from the rear boundaries of properties in the Street and approximately over 60m from rear elevations. The residential properties in

Benson Lane will be closer to the proposed development being an approximate distance of 30m away (elevations). A buffer area of landscaping and SUDs would be sited in between the rear boundary and new housing, and new housing can be side / gable ended to avoid direct overlooking.

- 6.21 The amenity of existing and future residents will be considered in detail at reserved matters stage. At a net density of 33.5 dwellings there should be adequate space for amenity and compliance with overlooking distances.

Cumulative development and Infrastructure

- 6.22 Local residents and CRAG have commented on the capacity of the local infrastructure to cater for this development and other sites, both consented (e.g. Carmel College and CABI) and potentially other sites currently in the planning process. At the time of the writing decisions on two other current applications have not been made however an update will be made at Planning Committee. The two other applications comprise P16/S3852/FUL for 100 homes at Newnham Manor and P16/S3665/O for 80 homes West of Old Reading Road and both are within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The parish council and residents have also commented on the fate of the former council offices and whether this brownfield site might be used for housing. The former offices are currently unavailable, exist as an employment land use, however an update on its future is expected later this year.
- 6.23 Many have commented that the scale of this development is out of proportion with the existing village, a factor the appeal inspector considered in 2009. It is true that this development and potentially others represent a material increase over the existing village housing numbers. The census information 2011 advised that there were 636 dwellings in the parish and this will now be higher due to the development at Lister Wilder site. The policy context today is very different from the 2009 position when the council had a policy compliant supply of housing. The question now is whether this development is harmful and unacceptable in planning terms. Above it has been explained that the site is in a sustainable location and subject to conditions, the environmental impacts are not unacceptable. The remaining issue is infrastructure.

Education

- 6.24 In particular the capacity of the primary school in Crowmarsh Gifford has been highlighted as an issue. This development could generate 50 early and primary school children. The Education Authority are exploring the possibility of acquiring additional land to extend the school, which could also cater for other developments. If the education authority need to purchase land they require a sum of c. £68k from the developers of Benson Lane as a proportional cost of the extra land. This is in addition to education building costs which they will seek from CIL. As such extra provision for education is planned but the exact provision will depend on progress with acquiring land and the scope of the funds available to proceed with expansion. In terms of this development however, the scheme would still be considered acceptable even if land at Crowmarsh school was not ultimately acquired as the developers are prepared to pay the contribution towards extra land to increase school capacity. We know from the OCC education response that pupils interchange between Crowmarsh and Wallingford and provided there is sufficient capacity in the locality, education needs will be met.

Other Infrastructure

- 6.25 Highway works and contributions towards public transport and infrastructure and travel plan monitoring have been mentioned above. These will be subject to indexation are current costs are:

OCC item	Amount
Public transport	£150,000 (index-linked, RPIX Nov 2016)
Bus stop infrastructure	£46,134 (Index-linked, BCIS Nov 2016)
Travel Plan monitoring	£1240

- 6.26 The district will seek on site infrastructure for public open space and play. Two play areas are proposed on the parameters plan and one could be integrated with the parish council village hall land. The district will also seek monies for recycling, street naming and a monitoring fee, in accordance with fees applicable at the time of payment. These have recently been updated as of 1 March 2017. If current fees are applied this is in the order of:

District item	Amount
Recycling	£170 per dwelling
Street naming	£134 per 10 dwellings
Monitoring fee	£2268

- 6.27 The development will be subject to CIL (£150 per sq. m index linked) and were 150 dwellings built (90 market dwellings), at an average dwelling size of 100 sq. m and some with garages (indicative for the purposes of calculation) the CIL amount would be in the region of £1.5 million. CIL is mandatory and the applicants have agreed to all the S106 contributions, on site infrastructure and off site highway works.

- 6.28 There is good access to other facilities including two pubs and a small shop. More housing will assist with the long term viability of these facilities. There are playing fields, a pavilion, the Riverside pool and park close by, and the river Thames path which provides amenity. Other facilities such as health, secondary school and shops are in Wallingford, which is within walking and cycling distance. This site is considered to be in a very sustainable location with good access to a range of facilities.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The development is in a sustainable location with good access to facilities and services. The NPPF advises a presumption in favour of sustainable development and where there is a lack of 5 year housing supply, paragraph 49 is engaged, determining that housing policies restricting the supply of housing are out of date. Paragraph 14 requires that the council should grant permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In order to judge whether a development is sustainable it must be assessed against the economic, social and environmental planning roles.

- 7.2 The provision of housing including 40% affordable housing is a significant social benefit and a key policy requirement of the NPPF and Local Planning Authorities. The development incorporates public open space and play areas which will benefit proposed and existing residents. Significant however is the impact upon the capacity of existing social and economic infrastructure, a matter highlighted by parish councils and

local residents. The current primary school is at capacity and cannot cater for the development unless it is extended. There are proposals to extend the capacity of the school albeit these are at an early stage and the exact provision cannot yet be confirmed. There is however a proposed solution and the applicants of this development are prepared to provide S106 monies for education land for the expansion of primary schools that could serve the site.

- 7.3 The development will have an economic role in that it will bring construction jobs to the area for a temporary period and the extra housing in the village will assist with the viability of existing services and facilities. Improvements to the highway junctions in the area will assist traffic flow and improve safety for cyclists. There will be a minor economic dis-benefit due to the loss of the agricultural land. In addition there will be temporary environmental impacts resulting from construction and some negative impacts on air quality, however effects can be mitigated.
- 7.4 The key environmental impact will be upon the landscape however the material impact will be upon the local character of the site and the enjoyment of public footpaths within and immediately adjoining the site. Taking into account the landscape advice the council has received including the Landscape Capacity Study, the comments of the Chilterns AONB Board and an independent consultant it is not considered the impact on the wider setting of the AONB would be harmful, provided there is satisfactory mitigation. Accordingly the impact is not considered to be significant.
- 7.5 When assessing the planning balance the only negative impact of note is upon the local landscape. This is not considered to be significant and demonstrable against the benefits this housing scheme can bring. In the context of a lack of a 5 year supply of housing the proposed scheme incorporating a mix of housing, open space and landscaping, together with provision for infrastructure is considered to materially outweigh the dis-benefits of the development and it is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To authorise the head of planning to grant planning permission subject to:**

A. The completion of a S106 agreement securing:

1. **40% of total housing to be affordable housing (75% of which to be affordable rented) and minimum size dwellings (in Housing response).**
2. **Transport contributions for an improved bus service and bus stop serving the site (identified in Oxfordshire County Council response).**
3. **Contribution for land to expand school capacity (identified in Oxfordshire County Council response).**
4. **Off-site highway works (S278 agreement) (identified in Oxfordshire County Council response).**
5. **On site public open space and play and provisions for maintenance.**
6. **Contributions for on-site recycling/waste bins and street naming and S106 monitoring (fees applicable at time of implementation).**

B. Conditions in respect of the following:

1. **Approved plans.**
2. **Reserved matters – submitted within two years.**
3. **Tree protection.**
4. **Archaeology.**
5. **Construction and traffic management plan.**

6. Hours of Construction including hours.
7. S278 off site highway works.
8. Access and vision splays.
9. Turning area and parking.
10. Estate roads, access and footpaths.
11. Foul drainage strategy and details.
12. Surface water drainage details.
13. Water supply study.
14. Biodiversity enhancement strategy.
15. Soil handling.
16. Landscape scheme.
17. Landscape management and maintenance.
18. External and street lighting.
19. Noise protection scheme.
20. Electric charging points.
21. Housing mix.
22. Location / distribution of affordable housing.
23. Lifetime homes.
24. Cycle parking.
25. Material samples.
26. Recycling and waste storage.

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