

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S2861/O
APPLICATION TYPE	OUTLINE
REGISTERED	1.9.2016
PARISH	SHIPLAKE
WARD MEMBERS	Will Hall & Paul Harrison
APPLICANT	Miss Sarah Melton
SITE	Mount Ida, Reading Road, Lower Shiplake
PROPOSAL	Outline planning application for the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of 8 dwellings with matters of access, layout and scale for consideration (bat survey and statement of community involvement received 26th September 2016 & Contamination information received 13th October 2016, additional footpath link detail provided, arboricultural information updated and number, layout and scale of dwellings amended as shown on plans received 13th April 2017; width of access enlarged and waste vehicle tracking revised as shown on amended plans received 27th June 2017; additional sections received 4th October 2017; and footpath detail amended and additional arboricultural information as shown on amended plans received 15th September 2017 and 20th June 2018).
OFFICER	Paul Lucas

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to the Planning Committee due to Shiplake Parish Council's objection. Officers recommend that outline planning permission should be granted. This report explains how officers have reached this conclusion.
- 1.2 The application site is **attached** at Appendix A. It comprises a large residential plot extending to about 0.7 hectares at the western edge of the village of Lower Shiplake. There is a detached dwelling located towards the northern end of the site. The site takes vehicular access onto Reading Road, which forms the western site boundary consisting mostly of a red brick wall set behind the highway verge. The southern and eastern boundaries consist mainly of mature mixed vegetation and separate the site from the rear gardens of Lavender Cottage and Raleith. The northern boundary with an adjoining paddock is also mostly formed by established vegetation. The southern and eastern end of the site slope down significantly below the level of Reading Road due to part of the site belonging to a former gravel pit. Harpsden Footpaths 2 & 26 (PROW) cross the paddock to the north of the site, connecting Bolney Lane to the north of the site with Northfield Avenue, to the east of the site. There is presently no footpath link along this stretch of Reading Road. There are no special designations on this site. Although the site lies within Shiplake Parish, it is also within the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan area, which follows the line of the previous parish boundary.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and erection of eight dwellings with details of access, layout and scale to be considered at this stage and appearance and landscaping to be reserved matters. The

proposed development is shown on the current plans submitted with the application. The only details not provided at this stage are internal floor plans and elevations.

2.2 The application has been subject to several amendments to revise the following aspects:

- Change the layout so that most dwellings front onto Reading Road, remove back to back relationships and retain important trees;
- Access alterations to provide waste vehicle access;
- Revise the mix of market dwellings to include 2-bedroom dwellings, resulting in an additional dwelling;
- Reduce the height of the dwellings; and
- Provide a feasible solution to enable future occupants to safely connect to the village and local public transport on foot.



2.3 Copies of the current plans are **attached** at Appendix B whilst other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the Council's [website](#).

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 **Shiplake Parish Council** – The application should be refused due to:

- It is inconsistent with the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan and SODC have a 5+ year land supply
- It is inconsistent with the emerging Shiplake NDP due to being too large and it doesn't meet the need for smaller, less expensive units
- Not sustainable taking into account Thames Farm development
- Too large to be considered infill
- The plans for the footpath still put pedestrians at considerable risk – very hazardous

Henley-on-Thames Town Council – The application should be refused due to:

- This site is not in the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan
- The highway issues have not been resolved.

Harpsden Parish Council – The application should be refused due to:

- Rejected as an allocated site for housing in Henley & Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan
- Impact of more traffic onto narrow section of main road

- Insufficient footpath width

Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council) - No objection to revised site access and parking arrangements subject to conditions and no objection to proposed footpath link options, subject to the necessary highway works being secured through a pre-commencement planning condition

Forestry Officer (South Oxfordshire District Council) - No objection subject to on-site tree protection details being secured through a pre-commencement planning condition and appropriate landscaping at the reserved matters stage; no objection to replacement of Category B Trees along highway verge, if necessary to facilitate footpath link.

Countryside Officer (South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse) - No objection subject to bat informative

Waste Management Officer (District Council) - No objection to revised access details, subject to collection points being secured through a pre-commencement planning condition

Drainage Engineer (South Oxfordshire - MONSON) - No objection subject to surface water and foul drainage pre-commencement conditions

Contaminated Land Officer – No objections subject to pre-commencement planning condition

Thames Water Development Control - No objection subject to informatives

Neighbours – 57 representations of objection to the original application, summarised as follows:

- Rejected as an allocated site by Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan
- Would not meet the criteria for infill development under SOCS Policy CSR1
- SODC currently has a more than 5 year housing land supply
- The SOCS excludes this level of housing development from isolated sites on the edge of villages
- Excessive density, bulk and mass out of keeping with local character of built form
- Substandard access increasing traffic congestion on a dangerous road and lack of road calming
- Increasing noise and air pollution
- Option of a footpath link to the village via Northfield Avenue would not meet minimum 2 metre standard and would be unsuitable
- Concern about urbanisation through loss of trees and appearance of footpath option to connect site with existing PROW at Bolney Lane
- Harm to important trees
- Inferior quality trees should be replaced
- Rear of dwellings facing towards Lavender Cottage resulting in loss of privacy from upper floor windows at a higher level
- Boundary vegetation is lower than indicated on the sections
- Permitted development rights should be removed for roof extensions and rooflights on the rear roof slopes
- Ridge heights and first floor windows heights should be fixed
- New residents would worsen over-subscription of primary school and doctors' surgeries

- Pressure on overloaded public transport
- Outline planning permission for residential development previously refused in 2002.
- Cumulative impact with approved Thames Farm development and potential redevelopment of the former Wyevale Garden Centre

The above representations can be read in full on the Council's [website](#).

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 [P02/S0582/O](#) - Refused (30/10/2002) - Appeal dismissed (27/06/2003)
Erection of two houses each with a single bedroomed annex and garaging with access.
Erection of replacement house at Mount Ida and alterations to access.
This appeal was determined in the context of more stringent infill and affordable housing policies and a now removed Area of Great Landscape Value designation.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) Policies
CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity
CSEN1 - Landscape protection
CSH2 - Housing density
CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
CSM1 - Transport
CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
CSQ3 - Design
CSR1 - Housing in villages
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy
- 5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) policies;
C4 - Landscape setting of settlements
C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity
C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
C9 - Loss of landscape features
D1 - Principles of good design
D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
D3 - Outdoor amenity area
D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
D10 - Waste Management
EP6 - Sustainable drainage
G2 - Protect district from adverse development
G5 - Best use of land/buildings in built up areas
H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users
- 5.3 Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan Policies;
H1 – Allocate land for 500 new homes
H3 – Type and size of new housing
H4 – Infill and self-build dwellings
T1 – Impact of development on the transport network
EN1 – Biodiversity
DQS1 – Local Character

Shiplake Neighbourhood Area was formally designated on 25 July 2017. The parish council has started the process of gathering evidence and engaging with the local

community. This is to give the plan a direction and draft policies that will form the neighbourhood plan. This document carries very limited weight due to its early stage in the process.

5.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG 2016) – Section 7 Plots & Buildings
South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment – Character Area 11

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
The policies within the SOCS, the SOLP 2011 and the JHHNP of relevance to this application are in general conformity with the provisions of the NPPF and NPPG and therefore this application can be determined against the relevant policies above.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The planning issues that are relevant to this application are whether the development would:

- be in accordance with the Council's strategy for housing development in rural areas;
- result in the loss of an open space or view of public, environmental or ecological value;
- conserve the landscape setting of this part of the village, including the retention of important trees;
- safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers and would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers of the development;
- demonstrate safe and convenient access and adequate off-street parking provision for the development;
- provide an appropriate mix of market housing; and
- give rise to any other material planning considerations

6.2 Principle of Development

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan currently comprises the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS), the saved policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP 2011) and the made Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (JHHNP).

6.3 The determination of this application is to be based on its accordance with the development plan. Paragraph 29 of the NPPF states that neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and deliver sustainable development in their area. The JHHNP was made on 14 April 2016 and forms part of the development plan. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that where a planning application conflicts with a neighbourhood plan that has been brought into force, planning permission should not normally be granted.

6.4 The Council has recently published an updated Five-Year Housing Land Supply Position, which concludes that the District has a supply of 7.7 years when applying the calculation in the revised NPPF. On this basis, officers consider that the Development Plan Policies relevant to this application are not out of date and carry full weight. Consequently, the presumption in favour of sustainable development at Paragraph 11 of the NPPF does not apply.

6.5 The JHHNP allocates sites to provide for 450 dwellings. This was the subject of robust public consultation. This figure is based on the SOCS housing requirement for 11,487

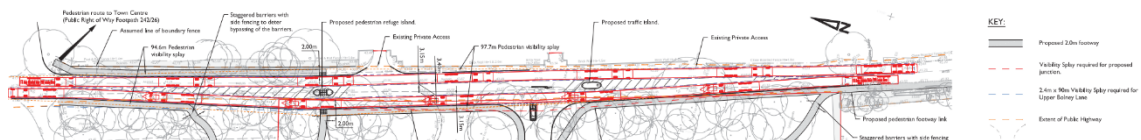
homes in the District to 2027. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) and Oxford City's unmet housing need could lead to a requirement for more housing in the neighbourhood area, although this has yet to be adopted in policy requirements as part of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033. The application site was put forward for consideration as an allocated site in the JHHNP, however, following a criteria-based site assessment process, it was not included in the 450 dwellings in favour of what were deemed to be more suitable sites. Consequently, the redevelopment of this site would not be supported by JHHNP Policy H1.

- 6.6 Within Appendix 4 of the SOCS Lower Shiplake is listed as a 'smaller village'. Within such settlements SOCS Policy CSR1 allows for infill housing development on sites of up to 0.2 ha – equivalent to 5-6 houses. Infill is defined as 'the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or on other sites within settlements where the site is closely surrounded by buildings'. The site area is 0.7 hectares, which would be larger than the infill limit. However, Policy CSR1 also states that "redevelopment proposals in all categories of settlement may be acceptable but will be considered on a case by case basis through the development management process in line with other policies in the Development Plan." There is no site area limit set out for redevelopment proposals. JHHNP Policy H4 supports infill development where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would constitute sustainable development. The sub-text to JHHNP Policy H4 explains that the provision of new housing through infill and redevelopment opportunities are classed as 'windfalls' that would be in addition to the 450 allocated dwellings.
- 6.7 Officers have considered whether the application would constitute sustainable development for the purposes of JHHNP Policy H4. A proposed net gain of seven dwellings would represent an increase of only one dwelling more than the 5-6 dwellings cited under the SOCS Policy CSR1. Consequently, it could not be said to represent a disproportionate addition to the settlement. Whilst the concerns about the cumulative impact with the Thames Farm planning permission are understood, it is an established planning principle that each application must be assessed based on its individual merits.
- 6.8 Although closely related to the established built form of Lower Shiplake, Mount Ida has no pedestrian link to the rest of the village. The application seeks to address this through the provision of one of two footpath links:
- A. the construction of a pedestrian footpath of not less than 1.2 metres width between the site and Bolney Lane along the route indicated on plan number RL21/10J and replanting of trees identified as Category B in the Tree Survey dated 31.08.2017 and on plan number 46428-1 and indigenous hedge planting; or
 - B. the pedestrian footpath in accordance with planning permission P16/S0970/O and as indicated on approved drawing 3537/201 Rev. N from that permission together with any off-site works necessary to deliver safe pedestrian access to and from the site.
- 6.9 In relation to Option A, the Highway Liaison Officer is satisfied that an approximate 90 metre length of footpath of a minimum 1.2 metres could be achieved. Whilst this would be below the current adopted Oxfordshire County Council minimum standard of 1.5 metres, the HLO would be prepared to accept a reduced width in this instance. The Forestry Officer has agreed that the existing foliage on the highway verge would not be a constraint to development and the replacement of all Category B trees and hedging could be secured alongside the footpath. The removal of existing trees would enable the footpath to be constructed with a standard-height kerbing, preventing the need for protective railings alongside the road, so that with the soft landscaping it would not

appear as an overly suburban feature. The footpath would connect the site to the PROW and enable access to the village centre via Northfield Avenue. Whilst this has been described as an unsuitable arrangement by objectors, the Thames Farm Inspector commented that this route into Lower Shiplake via the PROW is a realistic and usable alternative to the route via Reading Road and Station Road, as below:



- 6.10 In respect of Option B, this would involve a shorter 10 metre section of footpath to connect into the footpath links approved under outline planning permission P17/S0970/O. This would enable future occupiers to access the village centre via the PROW and Northfield Avenue as above, or via an approved refuge island to cross to the approved footpath link along the western side of Reading Road to cross back over to Station Road near the War Memorial to the south. The construction of this route involves some significant changes to the alignment of the carriageway, including the building out of the verge on the eastern side of the road to create room for the footpath. This would be secured through Condition 3 of outline planning permission P17/S0970/O, securing implementation of the development in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans, which would include the highway works shown on plan 3537/201 Rev. N, extract shown below:



- 6.11 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF explains that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Officers consider that the proposed footpath connections, which could be secured through a pre-commencement planning condition, would provide pedestrian access to the closest services and facilities and bus and rail routes as realistic alternatives to the private car. As such, officers are satisfied that the principle of this development is acceptable under the SOCS Policy CSR1 and the JHHNP Policy H4 as a redevelopment of a site within the village confines. Consequently, the proposal falls to be assessed primarily against the criteria of SOLP 2011 Policy H4, which are addressed below.

6.12 Loss of Open Space

Criterion (i) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt. The site has contained a dwelling and its domestic garden for many years and there is no public access to it. The Countryside Officer has recommended an informative to address any potential impact on ecological habitats. In any public viewpoints from Reading Road and the PROW, the site is largely enclosed by established foliage and

- 6.15 The Council's Forestry Officer is satisfied that the proposed development would retain the important trees on the site to help the development blend into its surroundings. The proposal would see the removal of many Leylandii along the northern boundary that are of low arboricultural quality. These trees provide a screening function, but they are considered not to be in keeping with the local landscape character. The development therefore represents an opportunity to secure replacement planting with better quality species, which could be secured at the reserved matters stage. This would help to offset the impact on the landscape setting of the village caused by Plots 1 and 2 being positioned further north than Mount Ida. The visual impact of the proposed footpath link is discussed in paragraphs 6.9 and 6.10 above. Officers are also mindful that the granting of outline planning permission P17/S0970/O for 95 dwellings directly opposite the site to the west means that the immediate site context would be subject to change in the near future. In overall terms, the proposed development would accord with the above policies to safeguard the local built and natural environment.
- 6.16 Residential Amenity Impact
Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that there are no overriding amenity objections. Policy D4 of the SOLP 2011 requires that all new dwellings should be designed and laid out to secure a reasonable degree of privacy for the occupiers. The development would represent a significant change in orientation eastwards towards Lavender Cottage from the existing north to south orientation of Mount Ida. However, officers are satisfied that the level of separation between the rear elevations of closest Plots 2-6 and the rear windows of Lavender Cottage would exceed the 25-metre window to window distance, which would comply with the relevant guidance in Section 7 of the SODG 2016. The shortest window to boundary distance would be 21 metres and this too would comply with the 10-metre minimum garden depth set out in that guidance. Plot 8 would be located close to some of the boundary with Raleith, but its orientation would be north-south, so any views towards Raleith would be at an oblique angle and about 38 metres from that dwelling. Otherwise, both the layout of Plots 7 and 8 points the rear aspect towards the driveway rather than garden of Raleith. As such, the proposed layout would not result in significant loss of light, outlook or privacy to the adjoining residential occupiers.
- 6.17 The relationship between the proposed plots would be mostly linear, apart from in the southern corner, where appropriate privacy could be secured through detailed design at the reserved matters stage. The garden sizes for the proposed dwellings would be in accordance with the 50 and 100 square metre recommended minimum standards as set out in Section 7 of the SODG 2016. Based on the above assessment, the proposal would accord with the above policies and guidance.
- 6.18 Access and Parking
Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the SOLP 2011 also requires that there are no overriding highway objections. Policy T1 seeks to ensure that development would not be prejudicial to highway and pedestrian safety. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF explains that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Taking account of the proposed pedestrian link discussed above, the Highway Liaison Officer (HLO) has not raised any objection to the impact of the additional seven dwellings on highway capacity. The HLO is also satisfied that the proposed access and parking arrangements would comply with the relevant standards, including enabling large waste vehicles to enter and turn within the site. As such, there would be no objections to the proposal on other highway safety grounds in compliance with the above policies.

6.19 Market Housing Mix

The SOCS Policy CSH4 requires developments providing market housing to demonstrate an appropriate housing mix. The proposal would incorporate two 2-bedroom dwellings, two 3-bedroom dwellings and four 4+bedroom dwellings. This would not exactly mirror the housing need for South Oxfordshire identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), as set out in the table below:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Proposed	0%	25%	25%	50%
SHMA	6%	27%	43%	24%

6.20 However, the SHMA is not intended to be a prescriptive document and the proposed development would provide reasonable proportions of smaller and medium dwellings. It should also be noted that one of the 4+ bedroom dwellings is a direct replacement for the existing 4+ dwelling, so that the additional seven dwellings are more balanced between the different house types. As such, given that this application is not within the major residential category, officers consider that the proposed mix would be in general conformity with the SHMA and therefore in compliance with Policy CSH4.

6.21 Other Material Planning Considerations

A planning condition is deemed necessary to remove certain permitted development rights for extensions, dormer windows, outbuildings and hardstandings, to enable the Council to retain control over future householder development that might otherwise have an unacceptable visual impact or be harmful to neighbouring amenity or retained trees. The cill level of rooflights could be controlled through a planning condition to be imposed at the reserved matters stage, once the position of openings is known.

6.22 Community Infrastructure Levy

The proposed development would be CIL liable at a charge of £150 per square metre (index linked) at the reserved matters stage. This charge could go towards local education, health and transport provision. As there is a made neighbourhood plan, 25% of the funds collected by CIL from the proposed development would be passed to the Parish Council.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The application proposal would comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would accord with the District's Housing Strategy, would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the locality or the residential amenity of nearby residents. The development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers of the proposed dwellings, would not result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety and would provide a suitable market housing mix.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To grant outline planning permission subject to the following planning conditions.**

- 1 : Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.**
- 2 : Timescales for the commencement of development.**
- 3 : No change in levels other than on approved plans.**
- 4 : Refuse and recycling collection points to be agreed in writing prior to the commencement of development.**
- 5 : Housing mix.**
- 6 : Withdrawal of permitted development rights for extensions, outbuildings and Hardstandings.**

- 7 : New vehicular access to be provided prior to first occupation.
- 8 : Close existing access prior to first occupation.
- 9 : Vision splays to be provided.
- 10 : Turning area and car parking to be provided prior to first occupation.
- 11 : Construction traffic management details to be agreed prior to the commencement of development.
- 12 : No garage conversion into accommodation.
- 13 : Details of off-site highway works for footpath link to be agreed.
- 14 : Tree Protection details to be agreed prior to commencement of development.
- 15 : Contamination preliminary risk assessment to be carried out prior to commencement of development.
- 16 : Details of surface water drainage works to be agreed prior to commencement of development.
- 17 : Details of foul drainage works to be agreed prior to commencement of Development.

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