

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P19/S2138/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	5.7.2019
<b>PARISH</b>	EWELME
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Sue Cooper Andrea Powell
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Dr Mark Enfield
<b>SITE</b>	Land to the north of Fields End Farmhouse Parsons Lane/Chaucer Court Ewelme, OX10 6HP
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Proposed erection of a detached dwellinghouse with associated parking and amenity space provision.
<b>OFFICER</b>	David Millinship

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application was deferred from the committee on 6 November 2019 to allow members to visit the site. The site visit took place on Friday 29 November 2019.
- 1.2 The application has been referred to planning committee because the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Ewelme Parish Council who object to the application.
- 1.3 The site is located within the northern fringe of the rural village of Ewelme. It is mostly within a conservation area (a portion of the western part of the site is outside the conservation area). The site is also considered to be broadly within the historic farmyard setting of the grade II listed house at Field's End. The county council's records confirm that public bridleways (numbered 204/15/10 and 204/16/10) run in proximity to the northern site boundary crossing the existing field access.
- 1.4 Domestic properties about the south-eastern and south-western boundaries with the northern boundary shared with (what appears to be) an unadopted lane. The western boundary is shared with a large open field (used for informal grazing of horses). There are several trees within the northern area of the site, although these appear to be self-seeded, possessing little overall landscape merit. There is an existing gated field access in the north-eastern area of the site. Ewelme village and the surrounding landscape are within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.5 A plan identifying the site is **attached** as Appendix 1.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The proposal is to construct a single, detached dwelling with associated off-road parking and turning areas and general site landscaping. The existing field access would be used. The dwelling would be single storey, with rooms within the roof space. It would sit within the rectilinear plot, running broadly north-east to south-west, set back from the lane by approximately 20 metres (6.5 metres from the existing field gate). The dwelling would have a depth of approximately 17.5 metres with a width of 6.65m. It would be set into the site by approximately 8.9 metres (excluding the porch) from the south-eastern boundary shared with the nearest neighbouring property at Orchard House. The building would have an eaves height of 2.8 metres and a ridge height of 6.35 metres.

2.2 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are attached at Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Ewelme Parish Council – Objection;**

The Parish Council disagrees that this new dwelling meets the criteria of it being an infill development and it will increase traffic on this bridleway.

**Conservation Officer – No objection;**

The proposed dwelling will align with surrounding built form with the siting and massing of the new building being quite discrete in this location. However, a sense of openness should be preserved, high closed boarded fencing should be avoided on the north and western edges of the site. The plans show a 1.2m post and rail fence supplemented by hedging. This is acceptable, but a condition should be applied to prevent erection of high enclosures. Subject to conditions, the proposed dwelling would not harm the significance of the designated conservation area or conflict with the assessment of character as defined in the draft Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment. It is also not considered the contribution this site makes to the setting of nearby listed buildings would be impacted.

**OCC Countryside Access– No objection;**

Subject to conditions to prevent temporary obstructions to the adjacent bridleway.

**OCC Archaeological Services - No objection;**

The site is located in an area of archaeological interest however the development is of a relatively small scale and as such there are no archaeological constraints to this scheme.

**CPRE Oxfordshire – Objection;**

The site is within the Chilterns AONB, the Ewelme Conservation Area and the historic core of Ewelme. This proposal is contrary to the emerging Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan regarding the preferred type of housing & preferred location for housing. The application would appear to be contrary to CSR1 due to its situation outside the built form of Ewelme it cannot be considered an infill site. Regard should also be had to the AONB management plan.

**OCC Highways Liaison Officer - No objection;**

Subject to conditions to secure provision of off-road parking and turning areas.

**Contaminated Land – Objection;**

Cannot formally comment as no contamination information has been submitted. An informal questionnaire should be completed to identify whether further investigation is necessary.

**Neighbour responses:**

32 responses to the public consultation were received. 21 responses raised objections to the scheme with 11 responses offering support. The objections to the scheme have been summarised as follows:

- The site is beyond the current built-up area of the village as highlighted in the neighbourhood plan and would not comply with the district's policy CSR1 (as it would not be infill or closely surrounded by buildings).
- Supporting the scheme would be in conflict with recent appeals in the vicinity of the site.

- This site could set a precedent for further development of land beyond the boundary of the village, specifically surrounding the access track leading from Chaucer Court.
- Chaucer Court is already a congested area with insufficient parking and has led to restricted access for service vehicles on numerous occasions. This site will add to this congestion.
- The lane between Chaucer Court and the site is privately maintained. Additional traffic will increase congestion and risk of damage to the lane and properties along it.
- Walkers, school children and horse riders use the adjacent bridle paths converging at the site entrance, raising serious safety concerns as increased conflict would occur.
- The site is in an unsustainable location and residents would rely on motor cars to access services.
- The development would cause harm to the rural setting of the village, the openness of the site, special character of the conservation area and setting(s) of nearby listed buildings.
- There is no Heritage Appraisal to allow a proper understanding of the impact on designated Heritage Assets. Ewelme's nearby church, almshouses and school are a rare, intact, 15th century survival of national importance. Its setting in the village deserves careful conservation.
- Any development should be low and use traditional materials.
- There is no need for new housing in this small village.
- The North West corner of this plot contains the grave of "Nancy", the war horse from Ewelme who survived the first World War in France.

Support for the application is as follows (11 responses):

- Local businesses and the school need the village population to increase so that local services continue to be supported, particularly as the village has an aging population.
- There is a need for new housing in the village, particularly smaller units for young families.
- The design is in keeping with neighbouring buildings and is small scale so will not harm views of the countryside or village from the footpath.
- The driveway onto the bridleway has been carefully planned to avoid walkers/horseriders.
- It would make good use of an unused piece of land.

Other non-planning related Matters were also raised:

- The contributions of the applicant to the village infrastructure and village shop should be recognised;
- Development will increase the costs to residents for the upkeep of the lane;
- New residents will contribute to the upkeep of the lane reducing financial burden to existing residents.
- The new dwelling would be seen within views from surrounding houses leading to loss in property value(s).

#### 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

##### 4.1 [P19/S0298/PEM](#) – Response (18/04/2019)

Proposed erection of a detached dwellinghouse with associated parking and amenity space provision.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **Development Plan:**

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. The council's adopted development plan comprises the *South Oxfordshire Core Strategy* (SOCS) and the saved policies of the *South Oxfordshire Local Plan* (SOLP).

**SOCS Policies:**

- CS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- CSS1 – The overall strategy;
- CSB1 – Conservation and biodiversity;
- CSEN1 – Landscape;
- CSEN3 – Historic environment;
- CSM1 – Transport;
- CSQ2 - Sustainable Design and Construction;
- CSQ3 – Design;
- CSR1 – Housing in villages.

**SOLP Policies:**

- C4 – Landscape setting of settlements;
- C6 – Biodiversity Conservation;
- C8 – Protected species;
- C9 – Landscape features;
- CON5 – The setting of listed buildings;
- CON7 – Conservation areas;
- CON11, 12 and 13 – Archaeology;
- D1 – Good design and local distinctiveness;
- D2 – Vehicle and bicycle parking;
- D3 – Outdoor amenity space;
- D4 – Privacy and daylight;
- EP1 – pollution;
- EP2 – Noise and vibration;
- EP3 – light pollution;
- G2 – Protection and enhancement of the environment;
- G4 – Development in the countryside and on the edge of settlements;
- H4 – Housing in villages;
- T1 and 2 - Transport requirements for new developments.

5.2 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

5.3 **Neighbourhood Plan:**

Ewelme Parish Council are currently working on a draft neighbourhood plan. The Parish Council recently ran the statutory pre-submission consultation on the draft plan, which ended on 27 July 2019. The local community and statutory consultees were invited to offer their comments on the draft neighbourhood plan. The parish council are reviewing comments received and making changes to the draft plan before formally submitting it to the district council.

Once the plan has been submitted, the district council will organise a further six-week publicity period, inviting comments from the public and statutory consultees. All documents and comments received are then submitted for independent examination.

As the plan remains at a pre-examination draft stage only limited weight can be given to it in this planning assessment.

**Emerging relevant policies;**

EP2: Protection of views

EP3 : A spatial Plan for the parish

EP4: Housing – Protecting our Heritage

EP7: Parking

EP8: Conservation and Heritage Assets

EP9: Sustainable and High Quality Design

**5.4 Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034.**

The council has submitted the Local Plan 2034 to the Planning Inspector for an independent examination following public consultation.

On 10 October 2019 the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government issued a Holding Direction on the Council in relation to the emerging Local Plan 2034. The holding direction has been made under the provisions of Section 21A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This means that the emerging plan has 'no effect whilst the direction is in force', this is set out in section 21A(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The emerging Local Plan holds no weight at present.

**5.5 Supplementary Design Guidance:**

The *South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016* (SODG).

- Part 2 - Sections 6 (parking) and 8 (ensuring quality);
- Part 3 – Section 2 (Trees and Landscaping).

**5.6 Other Guidance:**

- *Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019*;
- *Chilterns Building Design Guide* (February 2010);
- *Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033* (November 2017).

**5.7 National Planning Policy:**

- *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF)
- *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG)

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The site is located within a conservation area and within the wider historic setting of the grade II listed farmhouse at Field's End. There are also public rights of way that converge at the point of access to the site. As such, the main issues to consider are as follows:

- **The principle of the development (having regard to new housing and countryside policies of the development plan);**
- **Landscape impact (having regard to the protected characteristics of the AONB in the locality);**
- **Impact on designated heritage assets;**
- **Highways impacts and impacts on public rights of way;**
- **Impact on neighbours.**

**Principle of development**

- 6.2 Policy CSS1 of the SOCS details the spatial strategy for new development across the district during the plan period. It sets out a settlement hierarchy that seeks to direct major new development to the growth point of Didcot, with smaller developments supported in the main towns and various sizes of village across the district, specifically:

*(iv) supporting other villages in the rest of the district by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment and by the provision and retention of services; and*  
*(v) outside the towns and villages, and other major developed sites, any change will need to relate to very specific needs such as those of the agricultural industry or enhancement of the environment...*

So, the general principle of new residential development within the village is supported by the overall spatial strategy as it is considered in policy terms to be a sustainable location. However, if the site is considered to fall outside of the village the proposed dwelling must be justified by other, very specific needs.

- 6.3 Further to the spatial strategy above, SOCS policy CSR1 and SOLP policy H4 together set out the development plan provisions (and limitations) for the development of new housing in the rural villages across the district. SOCS policy CSR1 supports limited new housing developments on infill sites within ‘smaller villages’ such as Ewelme. In this case the development site sits at the edge of the village with an open field (thought to be used for some form of informal grazing land) extending to the west. CSR1 limits new housing sites in ‘smaller villages’ to not exceed 0.2ha in site area (equivalent to 5-6 houses). In this case the site is approximately 0.1ha in area with the current proposal being to construct one dwelling. The development is therefore within the scale supported by CSR1.
- 6.4 SOCS paragraph 13.10 defines infill development 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”. In this case, I do not consider the development of the site could be considered to be filling a gap in an otherwise built frontage. However, it is bounded on three sides by domestic properties and is clearly separated from the open field to the west. Whilst I am unconvinced the use of the site is as domestic garden land, I consider it does possess a more domestic character than the adjacent field and is readily seen (within the most available public views) within the context of the adjacent domestic buildings. As such, I accept the site is “closely surrounded by buildings” so the broad principle of some form of development is supported by policy CSR1.
- 6.5 There is some discrepancy with the emerging Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan policy EP3 which also allows for infill development within the village’s Built Up areas. Objectors to the proposal state that the site is not within the Built Up limits of the village. The lower-case text of this policy defines the Built-up areas as a group of existing non agricultural buildings of a permanent nature and their immediate surroundings. The definition specifically excludes gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where they provide a transition between the surrounding countryside and the Built-up areas of the settlement. The ENP does however go on to say the “Proposals located outside the Builtup area of the village will be supported only if they are appropriate to a countryside location and they are consistent with development plan policies”. Under the Neighbourhood Planning Act. 2017 (as amended) the plan possesses limited weight so at this stage its policies do not outweigh those of the development plan and I have already set out why I consider the site to be acceptable infill under Policy CSR1 of SOCS.

- 6.6 SOLP policy H4 sets out the following criteria, supporting new housing within the built-up limits of settlements providing that:
- i. an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important public view spoilt;*
  - ii. the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings;*
  - iii. the character of the area is not adversely affected;*
  - iv. there are no overriding amenity, environmental or highway objections; and*
  - v. if the proposal constitutes backland development, it would not create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built limits of the settlement.*

The policy refers to land within the built-up limits of a defined settlement as a potentially acceptable (sustainable) location for new housing development. In line with my consideration of SOCS policy CSR1, I accept the site is within the built-up limits of the village. It is seen predominantly within the context of adjacent domestic buildings and garden areas and has a clear (and historic) functional link to the house at Field's End rather than the larger open field to the west. The village conservation area (CA) also includes the application site, with the western site boundary being the village CA boundary. The inclusion of the site within the CA does not necessarily define the site as being within the built-up limits of the village but, I feel it is a material consideration that weighed against my other observations strengthens my view of the site being within the Built up limits. The construction of a dwelling within the land would not be seen as an extension to the built-limits of the village in my view. SODC's Conservation Officer agrees with this view stating that the proposed building would be aligned with the existing barn at Fields End to the south (and existing converted former barns to the north) building in this plot would square-off the built-up area, without extending the village boundary further into the countryside.

- 6.7 I have noted comments relating to a recent appeal that was dismissed for the construction of one dwelling on land at North Barn, Chaucer Court (LPA ref: P18/S2451/FUL). Whilst I must acknowledge the two sites are located in proximity to one another, I consider the North Barn site possesses a much more rural character, sitting to the north of a fairly well-defined boundary between the northernmost dwelling at Chaucer Court and open countryside (see below map for comparison). The appeal proposal would clearly have extended the village into the open countryside. The application site has a more domestic character and is seen within the context of surrounding residential properties rather than the larger open field that extends to the west. I am satisfied therefore that the proposed development at the application site would not have the same impact as the appeal development and would not extend the built-limits of the village into the countryside.

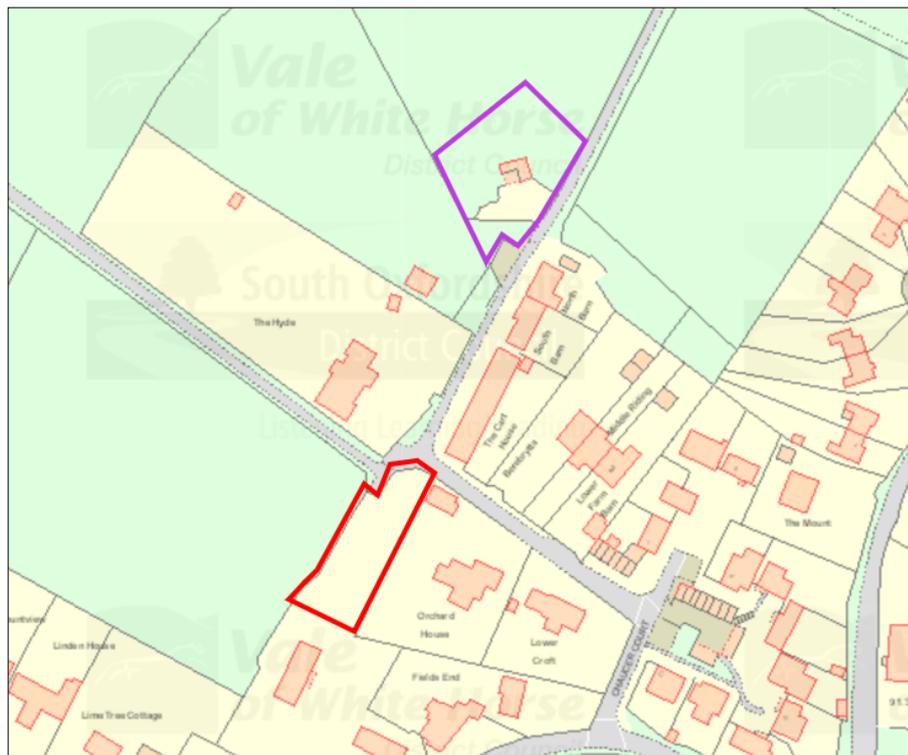


Figure 1 - Application site in red to south, approximate appeal site in purple to north

- 6.8 However, I consider an important public view of the village could potentially be spoilt by an inappropriate form of development so there may be a conflict with criteria i). To an extent this may be dependent on design matters (also directly relevant to points ii and iii) which I intend to explore in further detail below.
- 6.9 Overall, due to the scale of the proposal and individual site characteristics I consider the principle of the development is supported by SOCS policy CSR1 and SOLP policy H4.
- 6.10 **Landscape Character and village setting**  
 There is little uniformity in terms of the general plot layout and character of buildings in the vicinity of the site. In the main, surrounding buildings are one-and-a-half to two-storey structures. Several buildings clearly have historic origins (as former agricultural buildings now converted to domestic use), whilst others are more modern additions to the village (the dwellings at The Hyde to the north-west and Orchard House to the east).
- 6.11 The proposed footprint and location of the dwelling is appropriate and not out-of-alignment with adjacent plots. It would sit broadly in line with the converted barns at The Cart House, North Barn and South Barn to the north and the existing two-storey barn (now domestic in use) at Field's End to the south, following a rectilinear layout within the plot. The dwelling would be seen as a single storey building, taking design queues from the nearby converted barns. It would have low eaves with a dual-pitched roof. A small porch and bike store would project from the south-eastern elevation and part of the roof of the south-western elevation would overhang a private patio/terrace.
- 6.12 There are some trees within the site but, these are semi-mature and likely to be self-seeded. After viewing them on site, I consider them to be of low landscape quality. The larger mature trees lining the southern site boundary are much more prominent landscape features that should be protected through any development at the site. SODC's Forestry Officer was given chance to comment on the scheme and has raised

no fundamental objections providing tree protection and planting scheme conditions are used. In my view the site should not be planted with many new trees (see heritage section below for detailed explanation) so, any future planting scheme should be kept mainly to shrubs or a few judiciously planted small native tree species to add some green screening at a local level without obscuring wider landscape views.

- 6.13 The site and wider village are within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) where the NPPF places the highest protection on landscape character. To an extent, this area of Ewelme is quite enclosed in terms of wide landscape views. The surrounding buildings, topography of the surrounding land and presence of field boundaries in close proximity to the site screens it within most landscape views in the surrounding area. Due to the small-scale of the development and the design of the proposed building, I consider the development would not increase the presence of Ewelme within the AONB and I do not feel there is a great potential for the development to cause harm to the wider setting of the village or landscape character of the area. The visual impacts are likely to be much more localised with potential impacts on the character of the conservation area, nearby listed buildings and character of the street scene.
- 6.14 However, I have had regard to the Chilterns Building Design Guide (CDG) and consider the design of the proposed dwelling would be in line with the core principles of it (to conserve the rural character of the AONB villages and use natural materials where possible). I have assessed the proposed house design against the checklists at 3.9 and 3.10 of the CDG and consider the scale and form of the proposed building would fit in well in relation to the site and neighbouring buildings. For the most part it would be subservient in scale but, would reference the form of many of the former agricultural buildings in the vicinity. The natural materials and finishes proposed would also reflect many of the neighbouring buildings and I consider the proposal would not create a type of ‘anywhere’ development the CDG seeks to avoid.
- 6.15 On balance, I am satisfied the landscape impact of the development would be marginal and, in any case, the design, scale and layout of the building would reflect the pattern, scale and form of nearby buildings conserving the rural setting of the village and wider landscape character of the AONB.

***Street scene, conservation area and setting of listed buildings***

- 6.16 As stated above, I consider wider views of the site and the landscape setting of the rural village would not be harmed by the development. However, at a local level the site is considered to positively contribute to the conservation area and semi-rural character of the street scene at this edge-of-village location. This contribution is partly derived from the open nature of the site. It is not uncommon to find small land parcels used for semi-domestic/private purposes located at the fringes of rural villages. Often such sites would feature buildings (storage or stables for example). The application site has retained an open nature, with no permanent buildings, despite much modern development occurring at adjacent sites. It is this openness that allows views from the PROW into the village and conservation area, particularly from the east.
- 6.17 Partly, this is thought to be due to the use of the land in association with Field’s End Farm. Historic maps show the application site as having had very similar boundaries for a substantial period of time, so its use is highly likely to be closely linked to the former farmyard rather than previously being part of the adjacent agricultural land. This functional link to the farmhouse appears to have persisted as the wider farmstead has been redeveloped and converted into a residential use. The land has been retained by the current occupiers of the farm house, informally used as garden for the last ten years. As such, the land maintains some historic significance as part of the former

farmstead but, this has been greatly diminished by modern housing development on surrounding land (that is prominently visible within the backdrop of the site).

- 6.18 Constructing a large, overly suburban, modern house within the site would be very likely to cause harm to the semi-rural character of the site and wider conservation area (CA). A two-storey building (of a commensurate scale to The Hyde or Orchard House for example) would block views into the village particularly those limited views of historic buildings (the farmhouse and its barn). However, the current proposal is for a building of a modest scale, commensurate to a large stable block or agricultural storage building. It is also of a similar form and materials palette to the converted former barns that would have once been part of Field's End farm. The low eaves and ridge height would preserve the long views into the village CA, particularly from the adjacent public bridleway that extends to the north-west of the site. The building would also sit broadly in line with the ribbon of buildings that runs from North Barn to the listed barn to the south of the site, preserving the more domestic appearance of the site without encroaching into the open countryside to the north-west. The most prominently visible of the surrounding buildings are two-storey (and mainly modern/suburban designs) and the proposed dwelling would be subservient in scale to these larger dwellings maintaining a form and overall character much more rural in appearance. This would help the application site to retain its semi-rural character with the new building sitting quite discretely within public views.
- 6.19 The placement of a hard-surfaced area between the site access and building would be least harmful location and is not an uncommon visual feature along the lane. A planning condition can ensure that full details of hard-surfacing locations and materials are agreed prior to construction in order to secure natural materials sympathetic to the distinctive character of the area. External lighting can also be restricted in order to ensure light spill from the development into the AONB is controlled. Excessive planting of large trees within the site should also be resisted in order to preserve the relatively open views from the adjacent countryside into the CA as well as views of the listed farmhouse. Some tree planting in the northern area of the site (between the lane and parking area) would be beneficial to add some green screening into the street scene as well as serving as replacement of the poor-quality self-seeded trees.
- 6.20 The district's Conservation Officer has reviewed the details and has agreed with the above assessment. However, they have stated that a sense of openness should be preserved, with concern raised that high closed boarded fencing should be avoided on the north and western edges of the site. The plans show a 1.2m post and rail fence supplemented by hedging. This is acceptable, but a condition should be applied to prevent erection of high enclosures under permitted development rights. I consider such a condition to be reasonable and necessary. I also consider a condition preventing further extensions to the dwelling and construction of substantial outbuildings should be used to ensure the key landscape characteristic of the site (its openness) is preserved into the future. Subject to conditions, the Conservation Officer concludes the proposed dwelling would not harm the significance of the conservation area or conflict with the assessment of the village character in the locality (as defined in the draft Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment). It is also not considered the contribution this site makes to the setting of nearby listed buildings would be impacted.
- 6.21 Subject to the recommended conditions I consider no harm would be caused to the special character of the conservation area, settings of nearby listed buildings or the general character of the site and locality. The development does not conflict with the aims of SOCS policies CSEN1, CSEN3 or CSQ3 nor SOLP policies C4, C9, CON5, CON7, D1, EP3, G2, G4 and H4.

**Highways impacts**

- 6.22 The application site is accessed via a private lane that extends some 95 metres from the metalled section of Chaucer Court. Beyond Chaucer Court the private lane serves several dwellings, it has no pavement but is wide enough to accommodate two vehicles passing. Public Right of Way (PROW) number 204/15/10 runs along the private land from south-east to north-west extending into open countryside beyond the rear (north-western boundary) of The Hyde. A PROW numbered 204/16/10 runs north-east perpendicular to the PROW 204/15.
- 6.23 The site is sufficiently large enough to accommodate off-road parking and turning areas to serve the new dwelling. Vehicles would be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear via the existing gated access that is set back from the private lane by approximately one domestic car length. There is some potential for users of PROW 204/15 to meet vehicular traffic entering and exiting the site but, as I have assessed on site, visibility to and from the access is good and users of the PROW will reasonably expect to meet with some traffic on entering a village. The County Council Highways Liaison Officer has stated that, given the characteristics of the lane, vehicular traffic numbers and speeds are considered to be relatively low and the proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network.
- 6.24 The County Council Highways Liaison Officer has offered no objection to the development subject to the use of conditions to secure provision of the off-road parking and turning areas. In order to avoid conflict with users of the adjacent PROW during the construction period conditions have been requested to ensure the PROW is kept free of temporary obstructions and the PROW route and signage are left unaltered. I consider a condition requiring that no construction site deliveries or contractor vehicles are allowed to take place/park outside of the site is also reasonable.
- 6.25 Several third-party objections have raised concerns over additional traffic and conflict with existing road users. It has been noted that Chaucer Court is heavily parked at evenings and weekends, when local residents are not at work. It would seem unreasonable to expect that future occupiers of the new dwelling would need to park at Chaucer Court and traffic increases from the development are likely to be low (particularly taking into account that the existing access has some use already). I cannot consider that the development would result in an adverse impact on current users of the highway at Chaucer Court.
- 6.26 Subject to the recommended conditions I consider that safe access can be achieved along with enough off-road parking and turning. The development will not cause harm to highway safety in the locality over and above the existing situation and is in accordance with the provisions of policies CSM1 of the SOCS and D2, H4, T1 and T2 of the SOCS.

**Impact on neighbours**

- 6.27 The proposed dwelling would be relatively low in height (compared to neighbouring buildings) and in my view due to the orientation within the site it would not have potential to cause any loss of light to neighbouring property. There would be roof lights serving habitable rooms but, these would face away from Orchard House (the nearest neighbouring property). Ground floor windows would be screened by an existing boundary wall (and in any case separation distances would exceed the SODG 2016 guidelines). Planning conditions can be used to prevent the installation of rooflights within the south-eastern roof plane (that could overlook the garden at Orchard House). Subject to the recommended conditions I consider the development would comply with the aims of SOCS policy CSQ3 and SOLP policies D1, D4, G2 and H4.

- 6.28 There is some potential for noise and disturbance to be caused to neighbours during the construction period of the development. Given the site access location, potential highways issues and proximity of the PROWs I consider (as stated above) that a condition of the permission should ensure that all site deliveries and contractor parking takes place within the site. Other more relevant legislative controls should limit excessive noise and dust, although due to the small-scale of the development there would be a low risk of excessive disturbance. Subject to the recommended condition the development would comply with the aims of SOLP EP1 and EP2.

**Other matters**

- 6.29 Several neighbour objections raised concerns over the added costs relating to the maintenance of the private lane that may occur as a result of the development. This would be a civil matter to be negotiated between existing residents and future occupiers/owners of the site and is not a material planning consideration with any bearing on the assessment of this application. Similarly, any drop in the value of neighbouring properties is not a material planning consideration nor are the previous actions of the applicant that may have benefitted village businesses and infrastructure.
- 6.30 Several third-party comments have also raised the matter of compliance of the proposed development with the emerging Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan. A draft version of the plan has progressed through the first public consultation but, has yet to proceed to independent examination. Under the Neighbourhood Planning Act. 2017 (as amended) the plan possesses limited weight so at this stage its policies do not outweigh those of the development plan.
- 6.31 The district council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule applies to all relevant proposals from 1 April 2016. CIL is a planning charge that local authorities can implement to help deliver infrastructure and to support the development of their area. It is primarily calculated on the increase in footprint created as a result of new development. A CIL charge will be liable to be paid for the proposed dwelling.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 Officers recommend that planning permission is granted because the development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the street scene, the special character of the village conservation area, settings of nearby listed buildings, landscape setting of the rural village or landscape character of the wider Chilterns AONB. Further to this, the development would not give rise to harm to neighbouring residential amenities and sufficient mitigation can be secured to minimise impacts on biodiversity, the local environment and highways network. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the relevant development plan policies. Subject to the recommended conditions it would be a sustainable form of development and planning permission should be granted in line with the provisions of policy CS1 of the *South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2026*.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 **Planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions**

1. **Three-year time limit;**
2. **Approved plans;**
3. **Tree protection (prior to commencement);**
4. **Schedule of materials (prior to above-ground construction);**
5. **Planting scheme (trees and shrubs);**
6. **Boundary enclosures (construction prior to occupation and retained);**
7. **Drainage (foul and surface water systems installed prior to occupation);**

8. Provision of parking and turning areas (in accordance with full construction details, prior to occupation);
9. Access improvements (full construction details prior to occupation);
10. Public right of way - no obstructions/diversions;
11. Unexpected contamination;
12. External lighting restriction;
13. Removal of PD rights Classes A and E (AONB and con. area reason).

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