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<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P19/S4178/RM</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	RESERVED MATTERS
<b>REGISTERED</b>	2.12.2019
<b>PARISH</b>	CHINNOR
<b>WARD MEMBERS</b>	Lynn Lloyd Ian White
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Persimmon Homes
<b>SITE</b>	Land to rear of Greenwood Avenue, Chinnor, OX39 4HN
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Reserved Matters application for the construction of 116 dwellings with associated infrastructure, landscaping, parking, open space and reptile habitat. Application considers details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, following grant of outline planning permission P16/S3284/O for up to 140 dwellings.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	As amended / clarified by plans and accompanying information received 28 August 2020, 8 September 2020, 6 October 2020 and 15 October 2020.
<b>OFFICER</b>	Emma Bowerman

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL**

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of Chinnor Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is positioned to the south of Chinnor. It is the middle field of what was once three fields between the rear of Greenwood Avenue and the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway (CPRR) heritage railway line. The two fields either side have been developed for housing in recent years. And the housing development on the former Chinnor Cement Works is to the south of the site, across the other side of the railway line.
- 1.3 The site is currently accessed by a single track off Greenwood Avenue. The site does not fall within any areas of special designation.
- 1.4 This application seeks approval of reserved matters following the grant of outline planning permission for up to 140 dwellings under application no. P16/S3284/O. The reserved matters are access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.
- 1.5 This reserved matters application proposes 116 dwellings with associated infrastructure, landscaping, parking, open space and reptile habitat. The application has been amended during the application process to try to address concerns raised by consultees and to resolve some design issues. Amongst other changes, the amendments have reduced the number of dwellings proposed from 132 dwellings in the initial submission, to 116 dwellings.
- 1.6 Access is proposed from Greenwood Avenue. Full planning permission was granted for the demolition of 17 and 19 Greenwood Avenue and the construction of an access to the application site under application no. P16/S2385/FUL.

1.7 The Land Use and Green Framework Parameter Plan approved under the outline planning permission is **attached** as Appendix B. The detailed layout proposed under this reserved matters application is **attached** as Appendix C.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

2.1 A summary of the latest responses received to the proposal is below. A full copy of all the comments made including those in respect of previous iterations of the proposals can be seen online at

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P19/S4178/RM>

Chinnor Parish Council	<p><b>Objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This development remains an urban style of development. To be in keeping with the surrounding area the layout needs to be a more rural design, containing a less formal appearance as has been done successfully in the other recent developments in the village.</li> <li>• Insufficient parking as this is a village of low employment opportunities with a lack of public transport most residents work and need a car 1 parking space per bedroom is required.</li> <li>• We need to clarify the distance for access to the rear of the properties.</li> </ul>
Neighbour Representations	<p>Comments received in relation to original plans <b>39 in objection</b>, raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many homes</li> <li>• Poor and unimaginative design</li> <li>• Development has an urban character</li> <li>• Layout like an army barracks</li> <li>• Will not be visually attractive</li> <li>• Cramped and dense</li> <li>• Overdevelopment</li> <li>• More suited to a town or city than a village</li> <li>• Additional traffic causing congestion</li> <li>• Lack of parking</li> <li>• Lack of infrastructure (schools, doctors, dentists, shops, drainage, highways)</li> <li>• Apartments are not suitable for families</li> <li>• Impact of flats on skyline</li> <li>• Impact on views of Chiltern Hills</li> <li>• Overlooking and loss of light</li> <li>• Noise during construction and from future residents</li> <li>• Noise from the electricity substation</li> <li>• Heights should be limited to 2 storeys</li> <li>• Loss of wildlife habitat</li> <li>• Lack of green space</li> <li>• Not enough trees</li> <li>• Pumping station should be moved</li> <li>• Changes in levels will result in overlooking</li> <li>• Should not link to developments either side</li> <li>• Health and safety risk from power line</li> </ul>

- Possible future enforcement issues
- Back-to-back distances do not meet guidelines
- Flats should have balconies / private amenity area
- Previous decisions based on this site remaining open
- Limited options for sustainable travel
- Surrounding roads not wide enough for access
- Health risks due to proximity of pumping station
- No play area will result in overcrowding of other play areas
- Not infill development
- Impact on trees
- Changes in levels have not been considered
- Solar panels should be required
- Impact on operation of CPRR
- Impact of railway on reptiles in mitigation area
- Open space should not be at the back of the site
- Open space not in a location accessible to existing residents
- Inadequate separation to the railway line
- Reptile area too small
- Does not meet standards to reduce crime
- Failure to address climate change

Comments received in relation to the amended plans

**39 in objection**, raising the following concerns:

- Very limited changes in amended plans
- Design lacks inspiration and imagination
- Focus on highest number of homes possible
- Site too small for number of homes proposed
- Overcrowded
- Not in keeping with neighbouring developments or village location
- More suitable to a metropolitan setting
- High density blocks with small living areas
- Lack of infrastructure (schools, doctors, dentists, shops, drainage, highways)
- Does not reflect a village environment
- Should not include 2.5 storey properties as they dominate the skyline
- Overlooking and impact on light
- Noise during construction and from future residents
- Noise from the electricity substation
- Homes and gardens do not comply with standards
- All new properties should have private amenity areas
- All properties should have electric vehicle charging
- Design and look of development harsh
- Lack of green space
- No play area will result in overcrowding of other play areas
- Lack of parking provision
- Disruption to local residents
- Impact on trees

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion zone for pumping station not large enough</li> <li>• Road through neighbouring development not designed to take additional traffic</li> <li>• If development is linked up with neighbouring developments, then this would result in loss of green space in neighbouring development</li> <li>• Impact on flooding</li> <li>• No litter bins or dog waste bins</li> <li>• Lack of any effort to move to a low carbon economy</li> <li>• Changes in levels have not been considered</li> <li>• Open space not in a location accessible to existing residents</li> <li>• Impact on operation of CPRR</li> <li>• Not reflective of existing village architecture</li> <li>• Not included in Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Should provide access across railway to Old Kiln Lakes</li> </ul> <p>One additional representation received which did not raise any planning matters.</p>
<p>Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway (CPRR)</p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise Report does not take into account the noise from the diesel locomotives, the re-building of the railway to Aston Rowant, the noise from the workshop building or the use of the area adjacent to the site for loading and unloading</li> <li>• The homes should not be so close to the railway but if inevitable, the corner buildings could have less windows facing the railway</li> <li>• Proposals do not include vehicle access to the substation which is in breach of the undertaking that the developer gave in writing at the appeal inquiry</li> </ul>
<p>UK Power Networks</p>	<p>Raised <b>concern</b> about impact of the substation to the southeast of the site on future residents in terms of noise. Recommended a condition to mitigate the impact on future residents.</p>
<p>Crime Prevention Design Adviser</p>	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleased that applicant has incorporated some of the previous advice issued on creating safe places.</li> <li>• Provided guidance on other ways to prevent crime and increase security.</li> </ul>
<p>Oxfordshire County Council Single Response</p>	<p><u>Transport Development Control</u></p> <p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed layout accords with Manual for Streets and OCC Residential Design Guide.</li> <li>• Grampian condition recommended requiring completion of access to Greenwood Avenue.</li> <li>• Other conditions recommended to ensure timely provision of parking spaces, estate roads, including</li> </ul>

	<p>potential links to adjacent sites, and pedestrian visibility splays.</p> <p><u>Lead Local Flood Authority</u>  <b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following discussion with the district’s Flood Risk Engineer, the previous objection has been addressed with a condition recommended to specify the measurements of gullies and catchpits.</li> </ul> <p><u>Archaeology</u>  <b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning permission P16/S2384/O has conditions attached that require a phase of archaeological mitigation in advance of development.</li> </ul>
Urban Design Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleased that most of the outstanding issues have been resolved in the amended plans.</li> <li>• An acceptable proposal in urban design terms.</li> <li>• Minor points raised in relation to railings and visually screening the pumping station.</li> </ul>
Landscape Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amended scheme is now acceptable.</li> </ul>
Countryside Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amended plans incorporate a low knee rail to demarcate the reptile mitigation area from the wider landscaping proposals and is now acceptable.</li> </ul>
Forestry Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the submission of tree pit details, the proposal is now acceptable.</li> </ul>
Housing Development Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amended plans are much improved regarding affordable housing.</li> <li>• Would like the applicant to explore further distribution of the affordable units.</li> <li>• Registered Providers have previously indicated preference of terrace and semi-detached housing being in the same ownership and asked the applicant to explore the possibility of semi-detached and terrace house having identical tenures throughout the site.</li> <li>• The parking for affordable units is disproportionate with some two-bed units having two parking spaces and others having one.</li> </ul>
Drainage Officer	<p><b>No objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following discussion with OCC’s Drainage Engineer, the previous objection has been addressed with a</li> </ul>

	condition recommended to specify the measurements of gullies and catchpits.
Environmental Protection Officer	<b>No objection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The amended plans have improved the noise levels to the rear of the properties closest to the railway line.</li> </ul>
Waste Management Officer	<b>No objection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided details about bin storage and collection.</li> </ul>

### 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 [P20/S3523/FUL](#) - Currently under consideration

Removal of condition 23 (play area) on planning application P16/S2380/O.

[P16/S3284/O](#) - Refused (01/06/2017) - Appeal allowed (24/12/2018)

Outline planning application for erection of up to 140 dwellings, new public open space, associated landscaping and site infrastructure. All matters reserved.

[P16/S3285/FUL](#) - Refused (01/06/2017) - Appeal allowed (24/12/2018)

Demolition of two dwellings and construction of new access road.

### 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 This proposal does not exceed 150 dwellings, the site area is under 5ha and is not within a 'sensitive area' as defined by the EIA regulations. Consequently, the proposal is beneath the thresholds set in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. An Environmental Impact Assessment is not required as the majority of issues are considered to be of local significance only and can be examined through the normal planning process.

### 5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

#### 5.1 Development Plan Policies

In the case of South Oxfordshire, the Development Plan currently consists of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, and the saved policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. The Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 is also gaining weight as it progresses through to adoption. Chinnor's Neighbourhood Plan also forms part of the Development Plan.

#### South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) Policies:

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

CSEN1 - Landscape protection

CSEN3 - Historic environment

CSG1 - Green infrastructure

CSH2 - Housing density

CSH3 - Affordable housing

CSI1 - Infrastructure provision

CSM2 - Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

CSQ3 - Design

CSQ4 - Design briefs for greenfield neighbourhoods and major development sites

#### South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) Policies:

C4 - Landscape setting of settlements

C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity

C8 - Adverse affect on protected species

- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- CON5 - Setting of listed building
- D1 - Principles of good design
- D10 - Waste Management
- D12 - Public art
- D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
- D3 - Outdoor amenity area
- D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- D7 - Access for all
- EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment
- EP2 - Adverse affect by noise or vibration
- EP6 - Sustainable drainage
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- G5 - Best use of land/buildings in built up areas
- R6 - Public open space in new residential development
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users
- T6 - Protection of existing or former rail facilities

### **South Oxfordshire Emerging Local Plan (ESOLP) 2035 Policies**

The ESOLP is at Examination. Following hearings in July and August 2020, the Planning Inspector asked the council to prepare a 'Schedule of Main Modifications' to the plan. The schedule reflected modifications, or changes, that the Inspector considers necessary to make the plan sound before it can move to the adoption stage.

We carried out a six-week consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications between 21 September and 2 November 2020 and all responses have been submitted to the Inspector. The Inspector will consider all the responses received and decide whether any further hearings are necessary, or if any issues need to be revisited. The Inspector will then present his final conclusion in a report. If the report concludes that the Local Plan is 'sound', the Council can consider the adoption the Local Plan, subject to making the Modifications identified in the report.

A Direction by the Secretary of State requires the Plan to be adopted by December 2020. The policies in the Emerging Plan can be attributed various levels of weight depending on whether they have been subject to modification and the extent to which there are unresolved objections. The relevant policies include;

- CF5E - Open space, sport and recreation in new residential development
- DES1E - Delivering high quality development
- DES2E - Enhancing local character
- DES3E - Design and Access Statements
- DES4E - Masterplans for allocated sites and major development
- DES5E - Outdoor amenity space
- DES6E - Residential amenity
- DES8E - Efficient use of resources
- DES9E - Promoting sustainable design
- ENV11E - Pollution - Impact from existing and/or previous land uses on new dev
- ENV1E - Landscape and countryside
- ENV2E - Biodiversity designated sites, priority habitats and species
- ENV3E - Biodiversity non designated sites, habitats and species
- ENV5E - Green infrastructure in new developments
- ENV7E - Listed buildings
- ENV8E - Conservation areas
- EP1E - Air quality

EP3E - Waste collection and recycling  
EP4E - Flood risk  
H11E - Housing mix  
H9E - Affordable housing  
INF1E - Infrastructure Provision  
INF2E - Electronic communications  
TRANS2E - Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility  
TRANS4E - Transport assessment, transport statements and travel plans  
TRANS5E - Consideration of development proposals

### **Chinnor Review Neighbourhood Plan (CRNP)**

Chinnor Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in October 2017 and is now part of the district council's Development Plan. The Parish Council is making a review of the plan. The modified plan has been submitted to the District Council, and if made, it will replace the adopted plan. Following the independent examination of the Chinnor Review Neighbourhood Plan, the District Council have made the decision to progress the plan to referendum. Regulations linked to the Coronavirus Act 2020 postpones neighbourhood plan referendums until May 2021. In response to these delays, Government guidance has been updated and as a consequence the Chinnor Review Neighbourhood Plan can be given significant weight in the decision making process. The relevant policies are:

CH H1 – Infill Residential Development  
CH H2 – Affordable Housing  
CH H2 – Tenancy Mix  
CH H6 – Site Allocations  
CH H8 – Sustainable Homes  
CH H7 – Development Boundary  
CH C1 – Design  
CH GP2 – Protection of Habitats of Significance

### **5.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents**

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (SODG) (November 2016)  
Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (April 2016)

### **5.3 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance**

### **5.4 Other Relevant Legislation**

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application, the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

### **6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant Development Plan policies are outlined above.

6.2 The principle of up to 140 dwellings on this site is established through outline planning permission P16/S2384/O. There is also an extant planning permission for access onto

Greenwood Avenue under application P16/S2385/FUL. The main planning considerations for this reserved matters application are:

- **Density**
- **Housing mix** – affordable and market housing
- **The design of the development** including the reserved matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping
- **Residential amenity**
- **Highway matters and parking** including the reserved matter of access
- **Infrastructure** - Section 106 contributions / obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy

### **Density**

- 6.3 This proposal will result in a housing density of around 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) and there is concern locally that this is too high. This is a matter that was considered under the outline planning permission and the Inspector who determined the appeal considered that the site could accommodate 'up to' 140 dwellings.
- 6.4 The proposal has significantly reduced the number of dwellings that the site was anticipated to be able to accommodate, from 140 homes to 116. One of the key reasons for this reduction in numbers is the requirement to provide an on-site ecological reptile habitat for an 'exceptional' population of slow worms that have been identified on the site. A significant proportion of the green space to the southeast of the development will be reserved for this purpose.
- 6.5 At 30 dph, the proposed development is a higher density than the recently constructed developments either side of the site. The Carriages to the northeast and Oak Hill Park to the southwest, both have densities of around 23 dph. Policy CSH2 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) requires a minimum density of 25 dph unless this would have an adverse effect on the character of the area.
- 6.6 The proposed development would incorporate significantly more smaller homes, whereas the neighbouring developments are heavily weighted towards larger properties. The higher percentage of smaller homes on the application site does increase the density of the development.
- 6.7 In my opinion, the higher density of this development would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the recent developments either side of the site, or the more established parts of the surrounding area. The proposal would represent an efficient use of land and would result in a greater mix of house sizes across the three neighbouring development sites.

### **Housing Mix**

- 6.8 In accordance with the relevant policies, the application proposes 40 percent of the units as affordable housing. This reserved matters application proposes 116 homes overall and so this amounts to 46.4 affordable homes. Of these, 75 percent (35 homes) will be for rent and 25 percent (11 homes) will be for shared ownership. The 46 units will be provided on-site, and the 0.4 'part' unit will be provided as a commuted sum for off-site provision.
- 6.9 The S106 agreement accompanying the outline planning permission specifies a mix of dwelling sizes and floor areas for the affordable housing. At the request of the council's housing development officer, the affordable housing mix differs slightly from the mix

specified in the S106 for the outline planning permission. An alternative mix is allowed under the terms of the agreement.

- 6.10 The mix that has been agreed with the council’s housing development officer is as follows:

	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	2 bed house	3 bed (5 person)	3 bed (6 person)
Affordable rented	3	3	16	9	4
Shared ownership	0	0	8	3	0

- 6.11 The initial submission for this reserved matters application proposed 33 of the 52 affordable homes as flats (the initial scheme was for a total of 132 units). This was not acceptable as houses are more suitable for families needing rented accommodation. The high proportion of affordable units delivered as flats would also distinguish them from the market homes.
- 6.12 The amended plans have significantly improved the layout and form of the affordable units and the proportion of flats has been reduced from 63 percent under the initial submission to 15 percent proposed now. Furthermore, the applicant has added some market flats into the scheme and as such, this form of housing would not be unique to the affordable units and would help ensure that the affordable housing would not be distinguishable from the market housing.
- 6.13 The amended plans have also dispersed the affordable units across the site instead of clustering them in one area, which would have been significantly more apparent with the higher proportion of flats. The council’s housing development officer asked if the units in the central block could be broken up further. Although this central block (plots 30-63) contains 19 affordable homes, these are spread amongst 15 market homes and would not be a cluster of purely affordable units.
- 6.14 The council’s housing development officer has also highlighted that Registered Providers prefer terrace and semi-detached homes to be delivered with the same tenure. This is not the case with the amended plans, where some of the affordable terraces and semi-detached homes contain a mix of affordable rented units and shared ownership units. This would not be a reason to object to the application as integrating different tenures will contribute towards achieving a mixed and inclusive community.
- 6.15 In relation to market mix, the most recent evidence available to inform the mix is the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014. The proposed market mix compared against the percentage split for the market mix outlined in the SHMA for South Oxfordshire is as follows:

Market homes	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
SHMA	6%	27%	43%	24%
Application proposal	6%	50%	34%	10%

- 6.16 The application proposal is heavily weighted towards two-bedroom units, at the expense of three and particularly four-bed units. I support this approach as developments are often weighted the other way, with the focus on larger homes. The neighbouring developments provided a much higher percentage of larger homes and so overall, the three sites together would provide for a greater range of house sizes to meet the needs of different groups in the community.

### The design of the development

- 6.17 The NPPF highlights that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning process should achieve. This is reflected in the design policies in the Development Plan with policy CSQ3 of the SOCS requiring development that is of a high quality and inclusive design, and policy D1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) setting out a number of principles of good design. Policy CH C1 of the Chinnor Review Neighbourhood Plan (CRNP) requires development to be of high quality and respect residential amenity and local character. Similar requirements are set out in the design policies of the ESOLP.

#### *Layout*

- 6.18 The layout that was presented in the initial submission was not acceptable. It was dominated by hard standing with limited landscaping to break up the development. There were several blocks of flats which provided no amenity space for future residents and were surrounded by car parking. For comparison, the layout as initially submitted is **attached** as Appendix E.
- 6.19 The amended plans have significantly improved the layout of the scheme having reduced the number of units proposed from 132 to 116. Most of the apartment blocks have been omitted from the plans and this has allowed more space for landscaping to break up the built element of the development. Several parking solutions have also been incorporated into the amended plans, with areas of hard standing broken up through a mixture of front, side and rear parking areas.
- 6.20 The Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway (CPRR) line has influenced the layout, with the proposed homes set back from the railway and separated by a road. The buildings closest to the railway have also been arranged so that their gardens are to the rear (instead of initially proposed side on to the railway) so that the private amenity space of these properties can be shielded from the railway by the houses and their garages.
- 6.21 The proposed layout is based on perimeter blocks and some of the objections raised to the scheme are that this would result in a regimented appearance, which would not be in keeping with the rural character of the village. In contrast, the council's urban design officer has raised no objection to this design concept and supports the clear perimeter block structure that the layout is based upon.
- 6.22 The South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) encourages the use of perimeter blocks and adds that these should respond to the pattern and shape of blocks in the local area. Although the layout of the blocks has a more regimented appearance in plan form, this would not translate in the same way to street level. Users of the site would experience short sections of straight roads, broken up by different surface treatments.
- 6.23 The positive aspect of the use of perimeter blocks is that they create a clear definition between public and private spaces. The block structure ensures that the rear gardens of properties back onto each other and remain private, whilst maintaining an active streetscene with the fronts of the properties providing passive surveillance of streets and the open space. They also create a network of streets that are connected instead of cul-de-sacs.
- 6.24 In terms of the spaces between buildings, the SODG recommends the following minimum distances between the habitable rooms in new homes:

- 25m between homes that are positioned back to back
  - 12m between homes that have a back to side relationship
  - 10m between the fronts of homes
  - 10m from the back of the property to the rear boundary
- 6.25 For the houses, the proposed layout achieves the above separation distances throughout the scheme. The garden depths for a handful of the corner plots are below the recommended 10m (plots 67, 70, 83 and 99). These are corner plots so the end of the gardens back onto parking spaces and would not overlook neighbouring gardens.
- 6.26 The SODG also includes a recommendation for the minimum size of private amenity area and 25 percent of the gardens of the proposed houses fall below this recommended standard of:
- 1 bed = 35 sq.m
  - 2 bed = 50 sq.m
  - 3 bed = 100 sq.m
- 6.27 Of the 27 houses that fall below the recommended minimum size, eight of these are affordable homes which would be occupied by families. This is a factor that weighs against the development.
- 6.28 The affordable apartment block (plots 45 – 50) will have some shared amenity space, albeit limited in size. Two of these apartments will have balconies. The market apartments (plots 110-113) have shared amenity space that would accord with the above standards.
- 6.29 In terms of the public open space, although lots of the land at the southeast of the site will remain undeveloped, this is not usable open space. Much of this area will be fenced off (with a low knee rail) for slow worms. The amount of usable open space will amount to around 7 percent of the site area, which is below the usual 10 percent required for informal recreation use in the SOLP.
- 6.30 At outline stage, it was anticipated that a play area would be provided on the open space. However, given the amount of public open space proposed, it is unlikely that a play area could be adequately accommodated on the site. In addition, the Parish Council have expressed a preference for a financial contribution towards the provision of off-site play in lieu of an on-site play area.
- 6.31 The play area at the neighbouring development Oak Hill Park adjoins the application site and so future residents would have a facility very close by. The play area at The Carriages is also nearby. And although the open space on site would not be equipped, it would provide a space for informal recreation. Given these factors, I have no objection to the play element of this site being delivered as a financial contribution for off-site play, especially as this is at the request of the Parish Council.
- 6.32 The combination of the limited size of the open space, and several gardens being below the recommended size is not ideal and is indicative that the layout provided is not of the highest quality. However, the close proximity of the open space in the adjoining development helps mitigate this issue and it is noted that several of the gardens in the neighbouring developments were also below the recommended standard. On balance, I do not consider that this issue alone would render the layout unacceptable and would not in itself warrant refusal of the application.
- 6.33 The principles incorporated into the layout comply with the parameter plan that was approved under the outline planning permission (**attached** as Appendix C) and this

includes the location of the open space. The detailed layout has been improved significantly through the submission of amended plans and in my opinion, is now acceptable.

*Scale*

- 6.34 The building height parameter plan approved as part of the outline planning permission showed the centre of the site incorporating buildings up to 2.5 storeys and the surrounding development up to 2 storeys. The proposed building heights accord with the parameter plan, with the 2.5 storey homes focused in the central area.
- 6.35 The proposed two storey homes will generally be in the region of 8m – 8.5m in height. The amended plans have reduced the height of the remaining apartment block by 1m to around 10.5m. This is lower than the apartment blocks to the northeast and to the east. In my opinion, the height, width and scale of the proposed buildings will be in keeping with the surroundings of the site.

*Appearance*

- 6.36 Several of the comments received refer to the appearance of the proposed homes lacking inspiration and imagination. Streetscenes and visuals are **attached** as Appendix D.
- 6.37 Although some of the buildings will have a uniform appearance, the articulation of the house types provides some visual interest. The mix of detached, semi-detached, terraces and apartments will also create some variety in the appearance of the proposed homes, and differences in height adds further variation.
- 6.38 The corner buildings will incorporate windows to the side to avoid prominent blank facades. The council's urban design officer is satisfied that the materials will be appropriate to the character of the area and considers that the appearance of the house types is acceptable.
- 6.39 In terms of the appearance of the spaces between the buildings, the streets are defined and enclosed and a variety of surface treatments will ensure that they do not appear stark. Brick walls will be used to enclose side gardens and the parking courtyard for the apartments, which is appropriate given that these are visible in the streetscene. Railings will also be used in combination with planting behind to help soften the appearance of these features.
- 6.40 Overall, I am satisfied that the appearance of the development is acceptable. Although it is disappointing that the applicant has not considered a more imaginative approach to the appearance of the dwellings, it is unlikely that a reason for refusal on these grounds could be sustained at appeal.

*Landscaping*

- 6.41 The amended plans have significantly improved the landscaping proposals. The initial submission showed 27 trees to the front / side of the dwellings in the built-up element of the development. The amendments to the layout have enabled this to be increased to 47 trees, which will help to soften the built-up area of the development and improve the quality and appearance of the scheme.

- 6.42 The landscaping has been designed in coordination with above and below ground utilities. And the council's forestry officer is satisfied that an appropriate volume of soil can be accommodated within the layout for the long-term health of the trees.
- 6.43 The SODG advises that parking spaces to the front of properties should have a maximum of eight spaces in a row with a maximum of five spaces before an adequate planting break. The landscaping scheme will achieve this.
- 6.44 The council's landscape officer has been involved in the evolution of the amended plans and the applicant has addressed all the landscape matters that were raised in relation to the initial submission. The council's landscape officer has no objections to the amended scheme.

### **Residential amenity**

- 6.45 In relation to the new dwellings, all homes will be provided with either private or shared amenity area, albeit some of these spaces will be below the recommended size in the SODG. The unit sizes for the affordable homes will meet the floor space requirements secured in the S106 legal agreement. As referred to above, the layout of the development complies with the separation distances referred to in the SODG and the new homes will be afforded a good level of privacy and light.
- 6.46 Following the submission of amended plans, the council's environmental health officer has no objection to the development in terms of the noise that future residents will experience from existing neighbouring land uses. This includes noise from the operation of the CPRR.
- 6.47 With regards to existing residents surrounding the site, given the distances to the properties in Greenwood Avenue, the proposed new homes will not have an adverse impact on these neighbours in terms of light or outlook. With regards to privacy, a condition is recommended to ensure that the first-floor window facing No.15 Greenwood Avenue is obscure glazed. This is the only plot that is close to the rear boundary of the neighbours in Greenwood Avenue.
- 6.48 The proposed layout works with the recently constructed development to the northeast (The Carriages). A condition can ensure that the first-floor windows in the side of plots 16 and 28 are obscure glazed to not overlook the closest neighbouring gardens in The Carriages. Because of the intervening landscaping and open space, the proposed new dwellings will be a sufficient distance from the neighbours in Oak Hill Park to the southwest.
- 6.49 Some residents have raised concern about the location of the pumping station and possible health and safety implications. The council's drainage engineer has not raised any objection to the position of the pumping station and health and safety is controlled through other legislation that falls outside of planning considerations.

### **Highway matters and parking**

- 6.50 Although technically a reserved matter, access has already been permitted under planning permission P16/S3285/FUL. This permits the demolition of No.15 and No.19 Greenwood Avenue and the provision of a vehicular access to join the site to the highway network. The details of this access point have already been assessed through the grant of this planning permission.

- 6.51 The application shows the potential for vehicular access links to the developments either side and the proposal will not inhibit any future proposals to provide vehicular access between the sites. Pedestrian access will be provided to the sites either side to facilitate integration between the developments and a condition is recommended to ensure that these are provided and remain open. This will also enable access to the adjoining open space and play area.
- 6.52 Oxfordshire County Council have raised no objection to the proposed road layout, or the level of parking provided. They have suggested conditions to ensure the timely provision of parking spaces, estate roads, and pedestrian visibility splays and these are included as part of the recommendation.

### **Infrastructure**

- 6.53 Several of the objections to this application refer to there being insufficient infrastructure in Chinnor to accommodate further housing. This is a matter that was considered under the outline planning permission which concluded that the principle of 140 new homes on this site is acceptable. This is not a matter that can be revisited under this reserved matters application, which can only consider the details of the development in relation to layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access.
- 6.54 A Section 106 legal agreement attached to the outline planning permission secured the affordable housing and the following contributions to mitigate the impact of the development:
- Bin provision and street naming
  - On-site public art
  - Contribution towards new bus stop
  - Contribution towards public transport
  - Costs of monitoring travel plan
  - An on-site local area for play (LAP) and local equipped area for play (LEAP) together with public open space
- 6.55 As referred to above, the development will not deliver an on-site play area. The developer will instead pay a financial contribution of £74,500 towards off-site play. This will be secured through a variation to the legal agreement attached to the outline planning permission. There is also a current application being processed to remove a condition on the outline planning permission which required the approval of details of the play area.
- 6.56 The appeal decision on the outline planning permission was made after the council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The development is CIL liable, although relief can be claimed for affordable housing. The CIL rate is £150 per sq.m (index linked from 2016 and currently £182.18 per sq.m).
- 6.57 The money collected through CIL can be pooled with contributions from other development sites to fund a wide range of off-site infrastructure to support growth, including schools, transport, community, leisure and health facilities. Under the CIL Regulations, Chinnor Parish Council will receive 25 percent of the CIL collected to spend on infrastructure that is a priority to the community.

## Other Matters

- 6.58 In relation to ecology, a condition would ensure that the development is constructed in accordance with the reptile mitigation strategy. The plans show that a low knee rail to demarcate the reptile area, which would restrict access into this space.
- 6.59 The outline planning permission was granted subject to several planning conditions requiring matters to be agreed before commencement. The conditions included the agreement of noise and odour mitigation, a contaminated land assessment, archaeological assessments, tree protection and landscape management. Drainage was also a matter to be agreed through a condition and the requirements of the council's drainage officer can be considered through a request to discharge the drainage condition.
- 6.60 Some representations have referred to the need to incorporate measures that will reduce energy consumption at the site. As the outline planning permission is the main planning permission, it is unfortunately not now possible to add any further requirements to combat climate change.
- 6.61 The proposals do include some electric vehicle charging points, which were secured under a condition attached to the outline planning permission requiring air quality mitigation measures. These will be provided on 58 of the proposed homes.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The reserved matters conform to the parameters of the outline planning permission granted at appeal in December 2018. The proposal will deliver an appropriate mix of homes and will have an acceptable impact on residential amenity and highway safety. The details in respect of layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access are all acceptable in relation to the policies of the Development Plan.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 **To delegate authority to grant reserved matters approval to the Head of Planning subject to:**

**i) The prior completion of a variation to the Section 106 agreement to secure a financial contribution towards off-site play, and**

**ii) The following conditions:**

- 1. Development in accordance with approved plans**
- 2. First floor window in the sides of plots 7, 16 and 28 to be obscure glazed**
- 3. Estate roads and footpaths provided before occupation of each dwelling**
- 4. No more than 88 dwellings to be occupied until all estate roads, driveways and footpaths provided**
- 5. No garage conversion into accommodation**
- 6. Reptile Mitigation Strategy**
- 7. Pedestrian access points to neighbouring developments**

**Author:** Emma Bowerman  
**Contact No:** 01235 422600  
**Email:** [planning@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southoxon.gov.uk)