

**Agenda Item 6**  
**South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee –8 September 2014**

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P11/W2357</a> and P11/W2358/LB
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL and LISTED BUILDING CONSENT
<b>REGISTERED</b>	27.6.2012
<b>PARISH</b>	CROWMARSH GIFFORD
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Ms Kristina Crabbe
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Comer Homes Group
<b>SITE</b>	Former Carmel College Mongewell Park Mongewell Oxon, OX10 8BU
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Redevelopment to provide 166 residential dwellings (C3), refurbishment of Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings including provision of a restaurant community cafe and swimming pool and retention of boating facilities and associated landscaping, access and parking arrangements
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	As amplified and amended by drawings and additional reports. See appendix 4 for full schedule of drawings and reports.
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	460882/187560
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mrs S Crawford

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 These applications were deferred from the Planning Committee meeting on 23 July, following a site visit on Monday 21 July, to order to allow further scrutiny of the applicant's viability report. The applications have been referred to the Planning Committee because the proposal involves major redevelopment of the former Carmel College site and the recommendation conflicts with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 Mongewell Park occupies a site of 30 hectares between the River Thames and the A4074 road, to the south of the Wallingford/Crowmarsh bypass. Until 1997 it was occupied by Carmel College, a Jewish foundation boarding school, which acquired Mongewell Park in 1953. At that time the site included a substantial mansion house and roadside lodge (a Grade II listed building), a wet boathouse, a mill house and a stable block. Carmel College erected a number of buildings on the site from the 1960s onwards. They include a synagogue (a Grade II listed building designed by Thomas Hancock), a dry boathouse and art gallery (a Grade II\* listed building designed by Sir Basil Spence), and a Grade II listed open-air amphitheatre. Many of the other buildings are flat-roofed teaching blocks or dormitories, generally two storeys in height. There are also several prefabricated and temporary buildings on the site. To the north of the lake are the former headmaster's house, a bungalow and the former stables block, which was significantly altered and extended and used as a dormitory. All buildings on the site are showing signs of deterioration due to their lack of use and maintenance. To the east are a number of former staff houses (Carmel Terrace), which have now been sold off.
- 1.2i Immediately to the north of the lake, enclosed by the estate grounds but in separate ownership, are the ruins of the Church of St John the Baptist, a Grade II listed building. To the south of the main complex of buildings are extensive playing fields. The site lies within the Chilterns AONB and has an attractive parkland setting. The site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The unclassified road inside the eastern boundary is part of a bridleway which forms the Ridgeway Path and from this a public footpath leads to the former Church of St John the Baptist. The site is almost entirely within flood zones 2 and 3, is archaeologically sensitive and there are protected species on the site. The Air Quality management Area in Wallingford is also near by.
- 1.3 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The applications seek full planning permission for redevelopment for a mixed use scheme of private market housing to provide 166 dwellings/flats and refurbishment of Grade II and Grade II listed buildings including provision of a restaurant community cafe and swimming pool and

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retention of boating facilities. 24 existing buildings would be demolished; 13 new buildings are proposed between 2 and 3 storeys in height.

This would break down as follows

- Mongewell house – conversion and extension 3 houses, 3 flats and additional 9 flats in new extension (Mongewell Annex)
  - Retention, conversion, repair and extension of Grade II listed Synagogue into community hall, café and basement swimming pool
  - Retention, conversion, extension and repair of Grade II\* listed Boat House and Julius Gottlieb Gallery as dry boathouse, restaurant and exhibition space
  - Retention and refurbishment of Grade II listed amphitheatre
  - Construction of two residential blocks to provide 43 terraced flats with underground parking surrounding the amphitheatre (Amphitheatre Residences)
  - Demolition and replacement of existing ancillary structures to the south of the Lake, to provide 35 new-build residential flats and 36 terrace houses including underground parking (71 units in total) (Carmel Terraces, Mongewell Park Terraces, Park Views and Carmel Court)
  - Demolition and replacement of existing River Court building (former sanatorium north of the lake) to provide new-build flats (11 units) and associated underground parking. (Lake Views)
  - Demolition and replacement of existing Founder's House and bungalow (adjacent to St John the Baptist Church) to provide a building containing 12 new-build flats (Barrington Court)
  - Retention, conversion and extension of existing stables to provide 14 new houses to north of site (Carmel Stables and Carmel Villas)
  - The main access will be provided from the private driveway. A secondary access is provided off Constitution Hill. Access improvements are set out in transport assessment
  - Parking for 302 cars mostly underground in basement areas – only 87 surface parking spaces.
  - The building footprint across the site would slightly increase from 13,235 sq m to 13,554 sq m. Hardstanding areas are to be reduced from 20,791 sq m to 13,235 sq m
  - The tennis courts and gardens would be restored and the parkland walks retained. A new riverside footpath would also be introduced
  - Parts of the site will be raised so the development is at a minimum level of 45.25 m AOD and is entirely above the 100 year plus climate change flood level. Land near the playing fields will be lowered to compensate for loss of flood storage capacity.
- 2.2 Listed building consent is also sought for works to the listed buildings on the site. Namely;
- The Synagogue will be restored and converted into a swimming pool and cafe with community facilities
  - The open air Amphitheatre will be retained and refurbished
  - The Julius Gottlieb Gallery and Boathouse will be restored and adapted as an independent art gallery and restaurant with the boathouse retained
- 2.3 The application includes an Environmental Impact Assessment which includes the following documents;
- Statement of Community Involvement
  - Environmental Statement
  - Design and Access Statement incorporating historical background and listed building assessments
  - Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
  - Countryside Access Statement
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Renewable Energy Strategy
  - Arboricultural Method Statement
  - Tree Planting Strategy
  - Landscape Conservation Assessment

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A full list of revisions and amendments are set out in Section 6 of the Planning statement. Additional information/ amendments have been received in respect of;

- The top floor penthouses of the proposed amphitheatre buildings have been removed in order to reduce the height of these buildings
  - The void and gallery have been omitted from the proposed Barrington Court in order to reduce the massing
  - Further highways work has been undertaken and a Supplementary Transport Statement is submitted which provides additional information on the transport strategy including alternatives which have been considered and dismissed. This also sets out further measures which will be taken in order to ensure there will be no adverse impacts on the highway network
  - A number of minor changes have been made to the layout of the proposed buildings to address comments from the Forestry Officer.
- 2.4 The application includes a Masterplan which is **attached** at Appendix 2. Other plans are too large to attach to this report. Full copies of the supporting documentation and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)
- 2.5 A screening opinion submitted in 2010 determined that an environmental impact assessment was needed given the scale of development and the sensitivity of the site. A subsequent scoping opinion identified issues to be considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 2.6 The application has been advertised as major development accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement.
- 2.7 Prior to the submission of the application Savills carried out a public consultation exercise. A public exhibition was held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011. Leaflets were delivered to local residents and a notice placed in the Wallingford Herald. Full details of the public consultation undertaken, responses received and subsequent changes made to the scheme are set out in the Statement of Community.

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Crowmarsh Parish Council Refuse. Unsustainable location, contrary to RUR12, the Core Strategy and NPPF. Flood risk assessment is too sketchy, this level of development will have a huge impact on the road network, poor design, excessive height and massing. Harmful effect on Ridgeway trail.
- South Stoke Parish Council Objection. The A4074 at this point - between the roundabout at Nosworthy Way and the junction with the B4009 - a distance of some 300 yards, is already a very fast and very dangerous piece of road. To allow the provision of some 166 dwellings with the associated numbers of cars and delivery vans that this will mean trying to enter and leave this site, by one or other of these two entrances - from and onto the A4074 - is tantamount to asking for road accidents to happen! This planning application for the 166 dwellings should be re-submitted with much improved proposals for highway access to and from the Carmel College site. There are obvious ways in which this could be achieved.
- Wallingford Town Council Refuse. Unsuitable road network, number and size of units would not fit in well in the environment. Insufficient infrastructure improvements. The council is concerned about the impact on Wallingford and S106 monies should apply.

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Cholsey Parish Council	Refuse – objection on the grounds of: concerns over access for the number of units and volume of traffic as the access road is narrow onto a busy highway, a proportion of proposed houses not in keeping with area which is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and no infrastructure proposals.
Conservation Officer	This scheme has been the subject of pre-application advice including site visits with English Heritage. The proposals have evolved over the last two years and have largely been amended in response to earlier concerns, although a few areas of debate remain. No objection subject to conditions
English Heritage	<p>The revised proposals have effectively addressed concerns raised in our previous letter with regards to the Amphitheatre residences. Our comments in this letter regarding the design of Carmel Court, Park Views and Mongewell Park Terraces (that a more contemporary architectural approach would be better suited to the site) still stand, as the basic design philosophy of the proposals remains unchanged. Likewise comments made in this letter expressing concerns about the scale of development around the stables still stand.</p> <p>The proposals for the Synagogue are supported in principle as they provide a new use for the building while allowing the original open character of the interior to be restored.</p> <p>At present the application will still involve unnecessary harm to the grade II* listed boathouse. The extent of harm to the grade II listed synagogue is unclear, as is the justification for it. The design quality of several of the proposed new buildings, particularly Barrington Court, is not good and should be improved.</p>
The Twentieth Century Society	Welcome the fact that redevelopment of the site will give the opportunity to secure the future of the listed buildings. But as enabling development the large number of dwellings proposed should be able to generate sufficient funding to ensure the repair and renovation of the buildings as they are without the need to find alternative uses which inevitably generate alterations. In particular, the Julius Gottlieb Gallery is an outstanding and extraordinary building which was designed for the purpose of displaying works of art so that it is very difficult to re-use it for any other purpose without putting its unique character in jeopardy.
Forestry Officer	The amended plans and accompanying information have addressed a number of my previous concerns. Whilst some clarification on number of points is needed these can be addressed by condition and the method statements.
Countryside Officer	The site provides roosts for at least 4 species of bats in 11 different locations within seven of the existing buildings. The information submitted provides only very basic information how the loss of the majority of these roosting sites is going to be handled. This point has also been picked up by Natural England in their response dated 3 August 2012. In order to progress this application a significant amount of additional detail will be required to demonstrate that the mitigation proposals adequately compensate for the impacts of the development.
Natural England	This application falls within Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Having considered the contents of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Chapter 9 of the EIA), Natural England agrees with the conclusions drawn and the mitigation proposed. We suggest that if the proposed mitigation is attached as conditions to a permission, should your authority be minded to grant it, this development is unlikely to impact on the purposes of designation of Chilterns AONB.

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OCC (Archaeology)	<p>The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapter (10) of the submitted Environmental Impact Assessment carried out by WSP in 2012. No objection subject to conditions.</p>
OCC (Highways)	<p>No objection subject to the following conditions, the completion of legal agreements and informatives, as confirmed in the consultation response dated June 2014.</p> <p>The amended proposals now include modified or more detailed access arrangements in respect of the junction with the A4074 and the driveway within the site. The highway authority responded in detail in October 2013 in respect of development proposals for this site, commenting in particular on the following aspects -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access</li> <li>2. Traffic generation</li> <li>3. Sustainability</li> <li>4. Public transport</li> <li>5. Travel planning</li> </ol> <p>The highway authority has also previously submitted comments relating to Public Rights of Way.</p> <p>Transport Development Control issued a statement dated 21 July which is <b><u>attached</u></b> as Appendix 5.</p>
OCC (Developer funding)	<p><b>CONTRIBUTIONS REQUESTED</b></p> <p>PRIMARY( BASED ON NEW BUILD PRO-RATA CONTRIBUTION FROM THIS DEVELOPMENT) £ 690,300  SECONDARY £251,190  SIXTH FORM £35,624  SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS £14,686</p> <p>TOTAL EDUCATION £991,800</p> <p>LIBRARY £26,240  WASTE £20,480  MUSEUM £1,600  SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE £71,400</p> <p><b>TOTAL £1,111,520</b></p> <p>ADMIN &amp; MONITORING FEE £5,558</p>
Environment Agency	<p>The additional information submitted in respect of the flood risk assessment has addressed the EA concerns. No objection subject to conditions. The Flood Risk Assessment should be amended to include an assessment of flood risk from the upper lake, to ensure flood risk to existing properties is not increased as a result of the proposed development ( this was addressed by WSP on June 2014 and a copy of their technical note is <b><u>attached</u></b> as Appendix 6 .</p>

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Thames Water	No objection. Whilst the existing water supply infrastructure has insufficient capacity to meet the additional demands for the proposed development, this can be addressed by the following condition be imposed: Development should not be commenced until: Impact studies of the existing water supply infrastructure have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority (in consultation with Thames Water). The studies should determine the magnitude of any new additional capacity required in the system and a suitable connection point. Reason: To ensure that the water supply infrastructure has sufficient capacity to cope with the/this additional demand.
Monson	Thames Water should comment on foul drainage. The EA must give approval to the flood risk before this progresses. Details of Surface Water Drainage should be covered by condition
Housing Development and Regeneration	As the scheme comprises 166 units 40% affordable housing would generate the need for 66 affordable dwellings. Following scrutiny of the applicant's viability appraisal and recognising the challenges this site presents Housing have reluctantly accepted a commuted sum in lieu of provision of site is appropriate and £2,000,000 will enable up to 20 affordable units to be provided elsewhere.
Environmental Health (Air Quality)	We have reviewed the application from an air quality perspective and conclude that the air quality impact is minimal. The transport assessment states a green travel plan will be produced as part of the development; we would strongly encourage the promotion of sustainable transport measures. We have no objections to make on the application.
Environmental Health (Environmental Protection)	The proposed café and health centre are located within close proximity to proposed residential accommodation and there is a potential for problems to arise from noise from associated plant and equipment including but not exclusive to swimming pool pumps, air conditioning and extract systems. However, I am satisfied that it would be possible for the proposed businesses to operate without causing disturbance to neighbouring residential accommodation, provided that the following conditions are applied should planning consent be granted:
Environmental Health (Contaminated Land)	No objection subject to conditions.
Chilterns Conservation Board	The Board notes and welcomes the proposed reductions in height of some of the buildings. However, the proposal still mostly reflects that which the Board previously objected to and therefore the objection originally made still stands. The Board considers that the design of many of the buildings, though taking some account of their context, is considered to be inappropriate in the AONB. This is particularly applicable to the Amphitheatre Residences, Lake View and Carmel Terraces which all appear to be reflections of 1960s buildings that are considered to do nothing to enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. The Board considers that these buildings fail to take account of the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and accompanying materials technical notes. The Board considers that as currently proposed the application: fails to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB; does not comply with the Local Plan and emerging Core Strategy; does not accord with the Chilterns AONB Management Plan, Buildings Design Guide and supplementary technical notes on building materials, and is not in accordance with the NPPF and as such considers that the application should be refused.

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Chiltern Society	Comments on original scheme. Ideal location for new housing but this is unsuitably large for the site- 3 storey blocks of flats are not appropriate. Concern about impact on Ridgeway and a nature reserve. The plans should be scaled down
CPRE	Original scheme. Object. We wish to object to the applicants' suggestion that these rights of way might be temporarily closed or diverted during construction work as we consider this to be neither necessary nor desirable. We therefore wish to urge your Council to ensure that BR8 and FP36 remain open during any construction work in order to minimise inconvenience to local rights of way users.
Ramblers (previously Ramblers Association)	We note that consideration has been given to a new access road to the site from A4130 to the north and the consultants have concluded that this would be unsafe and unacceptable to the Highways Authority. In the event that this new access proposal is after all pursued, we would like to make it clear that any access road that coincides or runs closely parallel with the Ridgeway National Trail would be dangerous, discomforting and totally unacceptable to users of the Trail and we would object in the strongest terms. Meanwhile, we continue to be concerned that the total Planning Application and its amendments have not yet included concrete proposals to meet the concerns we have expressed about the safety of users of the Public Rights of Way on this site, especially in the construction period.
Friends of the Ridgeway	The Friends of The Ridgeway are to some extent re-assured as to the safety and convenience of users of The Ridgeway National Trail during the construction period by the measures and undertakings set out in the Access and Outline Construction Management Plan (ss7.1.2-9) submitted on behalf of the developers. If properly observed these should reduce interference and traffic risk to a tolerable level. However, we remain concerned as to the longer term risks and interference from the increased traffic generated by the development. In particular, we are concerned at the increased risk posed to users of the Trail seeking to cross the A4074 Portway Road near to the Nosworthy Way junction. This is already a complicated and dangerous crossing, which will be exacerbated by the increased traffic seeking to turn in to the dual site entrances.
Jewish Heritage UK	<p>Carmel is of national significance to the Anglo-Jewish heritage. Carmel College was the only Jewish public school ever established in Britain. The synagogue at Carmel was the first – and remains the only - listed (Grade II) synagogue in the country that dates from after the Second World War (Thomas Hancock 1963).</p> <p><i>Architectural Suitability</i> Given the generic character of much post war and contemporary synagogue architecture, former modern synagogues can successfully be adapted to a variety of uses. The swimming pool/jacuzzi cum cafe solution proposed in this case could work quite well architecturally given the large amount of clear glazing in the building. We welcome the fact that the stained glass will be on public view and in no way obscured.</p> <p><i>Master Plan</i> We like the integration of the synagogue and amphitheatre into a designed Master Plan. The replacement of various <i>ad hoc</i> structures in the vicinity by a semi-circular development that follows the lines of the amphitheatre is welcome.</p> <p><i>Gottlieb Gallery and Boathouse</i> In the grounds, we would like to see retention and restoration of the stone memorial slab to Julius Gottlieb. Similarly, the coloured glass panels in the structure, featuring the initials 'JG'.</p>

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British Horse society	<p>In general the application shows good knowledge and concern for the local Public Rights of Way, and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) – this is a major improvement over most applications I noted the expected traffic movements and would add that since the site is no longer a school, the journeys may in fact take place all day long rather than at peak times. As there are individual dwellings, there are likely to be far more deliveries, trades people, guests/visitors and other comings and goings.</p> <p>Therefore I would urge that horse warnings signs are put in place, if they are not there, at relevant places on the Wallingford Road and the A4130. This is particularly important as horses are flight animals, so speeding cars and lorries can spook them.</p> <p>Regarding access to Portway/A4074, which horses have to use and cross to reach further bridle routes, it would be helpful if the developers would enhance the locale by putting in a safe crossing place or a Pegasus horse crossing, as well as horse warning signs as part of the section 106 Agreement.</p>
Churches Conservation Trust	<p>We are not objecting to the principle of development, we are concerned about the potential impact on the Church. We think there could be a significant opportunity here to improve the setting of the Church and so benefit the overall proposal and would welcome a meeting with the developer.</p>
Mongewell Residents	<p>It is the position of the Mongewell Residents Association that the additional detail and plan amendments submitted by the agent in March 2014 do not provide any information that addresses the concerns raised by the residents. We therefore maintain our OBJECTION to the development plans and all previous comments remain relevant. The objections are <b><u>attached</u></b> at Appendix 3.</p>
Neighbour Objectors (over 50 some of these are duplicated)	<p>Having reviewed the recently added Technical Report on Vehicular Access from the A4130 pertaining to application P11/W2357 we conclude the following:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The report is of limited scope and fails to consider all the available options for providing vehicular access to the proposed development. For example it does not consider the possibility of creating a roundabout in order to form a junction A4130.</li> <li>2. The report is predicated on the assumption that the current speed limit should be retained. Maintaining the current speed limit of 60 MPH consequently results in road layout for which there is simply not space. This is also cited as a reason for increased risk of traffic collisions within either of the options considered. The fact is that this is actually already a very short stretch of road, along which much traffic (including intrusive and dangerous motorcycle traffic) travels too fast. A traffic calming measure (such as a roundabout) is to be welcomed along this stretch of road, and the notion that the current speed limit could actually too high even now, or could in future be reduced has not been explored.</li> <li>3. In section 1.2 the report references a previous assessment that concluded the redevelopment of Carmel College would result in a net reduction of traffic associated with the site. This assessment has already been widely discredited, not least because part of it was undertaken on a bank holiday. This statement, which appears several times through the report is unqualified nonsense, defying all logic.</li> </ol>



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4. The report also stated in section 1.2 that "The principle of the use of the private access drive as access to the development has been agreed with highway officers at OCC subject to local improvements." I am not sure that this is in fact the case and would welcome some clarity from both SODC and OCC on this point. It is my understanding there are fundamental objections to this approach from both the residents of Mongewell and the Highways officials.
5. Option 1 does indeed seem to present a challenging and undesirable approach. However referencing previous points it is predicated on an assumption that the current speed limit remains in place. It proffers no view as to the viability of this solution should the speed limit be reduced.
6. Option 2 is crafted to sound unviable, but actually there are even more gaps in information here that render this report not credible. For example, quite why visibility to the west cannot be achieved is not explained. The point made previously regarding speed limits also remains.
7. Option 2 states that the geometry of the highway "cannot be easily altered". This statement strikes me as being of limited use and clearly indicates that the geometry of the highway could be altered (albeit at a cost).
8. Both options reference trees and vegetation that are obstructing visibility. These could easily be cut back as they are (as I understand it) not uniquely protected (unlike the trees on the Private Drive). The report does not explore how much of this would need to be removed to improve visibility. This vegetation is dense and I envisage quite a significant amount could be removed without damaging the vista along Nosworthy Way at all.
9. The costs of these potential solutions are referenced frequently throughout the document in relation to the viability of this development. If a suitable Road Traffic solution cannot be found to the proposed development, the development itself is simply unviable in its proposed scale. Whilst I recognise this may be an uncomfortable reality for the developers themselves, it is not the concern of current or future residents of Mongewell, nor the road users of the surrounding area, whose safety should be the paramount consideration.
10. Notwithstanding all that has been outlined above, the fact remains that even if the vehicular access from the A4130 is indeed unviable, this does not therefore prove that the solution of the private drive is viable. It does nothing to enhance the viability of this solution by disproving the viability of another. Therefore our objection to the private drive solution.
11. Scale of development unacceptable for a small hamlet.
12. Carmel College is not suitable for a development of this size and the ensuing traffic, noise and pollution that would ensue. The traffic info on the history of the site is misleading.
13. Whilst it is difficult to establish how the developers propose to manage the flow of traffic within the site, we absolutely object to going from having no traffic to having all of the traffic that will be produced by

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166 dwellings, an 80 cover restaurant and leisure centre. This will be detrimental to our health and we are concerned about the potential for accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians, particularly across the Ridgeway Path. The road is less than 1 metre from the edge of our house and will therefore have a huge impact on our lives 24 hours a day. Flow of traffic into the site and access from A4074 of concern. Parking is inadequate 126 – No central meeting point for community and the sports facility is a fee paying leisure centre. The synagogue would provide a useful community space

14. In favour of developing site but infrastructure is not up to 166 houses. Roads, School and doctors. Speculative and opportunistic, something more sustainable should be pursued

15. Question in relation to surface water run off from site to main lake if Carmel Terrace lies between – no survey done on upper lake – pollution, other hazards? There is a high water table – how can basements be provided? Displaced water? It is functional floodplain – sequential test should be carried out. Floodplain storage will be reduced by the underground parking

16. Constitution Hill is not suitable as main cycle route as it is too narrow for cars to pass a bike and very steep. There is no footway either  
unsustainable, floodplain, light and noise pollution from south of the by pass, scale of buildings out of keeping and design is ugly.

17. Internal circulation of traffic in Mongewell will be impossible – alternative access is required

18. The Amphitheatre building which will be built to the rear of my house, is to be 3 storeys high with an added penthouse gallery, so in fact 4 stories, this on the plans will measure over 11m high. This is taller than any other building currently on the site, most are 2 storey with a flat roof, and taller than the current 2 storey building at the rear of my house. This will cut out all sunlight to my house and garden from mid day. Further the rooms in the rear of my house and garden will be overlooked by this part of the development. In fact new occupants will be able to directly look into my bedroom, living room, dining room and the whole of my back garden.

19 The proposal seems in no way to reflect the existing community, landscape and habitat that has always existed in the area. Sympathetically designed residential buildings considered in small number could feasibly enhance the environment. However, an over saturation of "quick builds" would, in my opinion, only serve the needs of profit chasing developers and result in long term damage

20. The section of River by the "Wet Boat House" and the grassed section between it and the ruin of "St John the Baptist's Church". Is one of the most beautiful and attractive sections of River in the Wallingford area. Special care must be taken to ensure that the beauty and nature of this section is kept.

21. Also the "Wet Boat House" should be protected as it is a very rare example of a WWII disused Pillbox. With the anti-tank casemate hidden within the structure. The whole area should be left as it is, to protect the historical nature of the site Norman church through to WWII anti-tank bunker.

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 P13/S2469/FUL and P13/S2358/LB – Current.

Demolition of existing Grade II Listed northern gate pier at the entrance to Carmel College and re-build, 1.5 metres north of existing location, and shorten the flanking wall. Additional quoins to north corner of wall

[P10/W1230/SCO](#)

Scoping opinion sought.

[P00/W0184/O](#) - Refused (20/06/2000)

Demolition and alterations to educational campus. Construction of 18 no. flats in two blocks. Conversion and change of use of Mill House from educational to 2 no. live-and-work units. Landscape works and parking.

[P99/W0087/O](#) - Refused (21/10/1999) – Dismissed on appeal (17/07/2000)

Demolitions & alterations to enhance educational campus; Construction of 24 flats in 3 blocks of 2 storeys; Replacement of 2 detached houses; Landscape works and parking; Conversion & change of use from education of the Mill House to 2 live-and-work units. (As amplified by drawings deposited on 23 February 1999 and by letters from Agent dated 12 February 1999, 31 March 1999 and 7 May 1999 and accompanying documents and as amended by document deposited on 30 July 1999).

Extensive history of applications in 1950's and 1960's in relation to the school use of the site.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSEN3 - Historic environment
- CSH2 - Housing density
- CSH3 - Affordable housing
- CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
- CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSR1 - Housing in villages
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;

- C3 - Special character of the River Thames
- C4 - Landscape setting of settlements
- C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity
- C8 - Adverse affect on protected species
- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- CON11 - Protection of archaeological remains
- CON12 - Archaeological field evaluation
- CON14 - Building record survey
- CON3 - Alteration to listed building
- CON4 - Change of use of listed buildings
- CON5 - Setting of listed building
- D1 - Principles of good design
- D10 - Waste Management
- D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles
- D3 - Outdoor amenity area
- D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
- D5 - Compatible mix of uses
- D6 - Community safety
- D7 - Access for all
- EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment
- EP2 - Adverse affect by noise or vibration
- EP3 - Adverse affect by external lighting
- EP4 - Impact on water resources

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- EP6 - Sustainable drainage
- EP7 - Impact on ground water resources
- EP8 - Contaminated land
- EP9 - Hazardous substances
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- G4 - Protection of Countryside
- H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
- R2 - Provision of play areas on new housing development
- R6 - Public open space in new residential development
- R8 - Protection of existing public right of way
- RUR12 - Mongewell Park

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

#### **5.3 National Planning Policy Framework**

Section 1 – Building a strong competitive economy – we need to secure economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity.

Section 3 – Supporting a prosperous rural economy.

Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes – we need to plan for a mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community. Our aim should be to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

Section 7 – Requiring good design.

Section 8 – Promoting Healthy communities

Section 10 – Meeting the challenge of flooding

Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – we should make effective use of brownfield land where it is not of high environmental value. Within AONBs great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty.

Section 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

#### **5.4 South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008**

- Section 1.3 The policy context
- Section 1.4 The design process
- Section 2.4 Development setting
- Section 3 Establishing the structure
- Appendix A Biodiversity and planning
- Appendix F Landscape proposals

#### **5.5 Corporate Plan 2012 -2016 Strategic objectives**

- excellent delivery of key services
- effective management of resources
- meeting housing need
- building the local economy
- support for communities

#### **6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **6.1 The main issues in this case are;**

- Background
- Principle
- RUR12 criteria
- Highway and transport issues
- Ecology
- Trees
- Leisure and footpaths
- Affordable housing
- Mix of units
- Density, height and scale

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- Neighbour impact
- Amenity and open space

6.2 **Background.** Carmel College, a Jewish boarding school, became established at Mongewell Park in the 1950's. The school erected a number of buildings on the site from the 1960s onwards. They include a synagogue (a Grade II listed building designed by Thomas Hancock), a dry boathouse and art gallery (a Grade II\* listed building designed by Sir Basil Spence), and a Grade II listed open-air amphitheatre. Many of the other buildings are flat-roofed teaching blocks or dormitories, generally two storeys in height. There are also several prefabricated and temporary buildings on the site. To the north of the lake are the former headmaster's house, a bungalow and the former stables block, which was significantly altered and extended and used as a dormitory. Carmel College left Mongewell Park in 1997 and the buildings have sat empty and unused ever since. All buildings on the site are showing signs of deterioration due to their lack of use and lack of maintenance. The Council are keen to see this site brought back into use and the site has been allocated for redevelopment in the SOLP. RUR12 is one of the saved policies. The Council have been involved in pre-application discussions on the site since 2005 in relation to proposals for a retirement village with hotel complex and a large scheme for market housing. No applications other than the current 2011 applications have come forward. The listed buildings, in particular, are deteriorating.

6.3 **Principle.** The proposal involves major development in the AONB. The NPPF advises that planning permission should be refused for major developments in AONBs except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated development is in the public interest (para 116). In this case the site is a brownfield site and has a lawful use as a school with up to 500 pupils. In addition, the site is allocated for redevelopment in the saved Policy RUR12 of SOLP and is identified in the Core Strategy for the delivery of 150 homes. The principle of redevelopment is in line with NPPF advice in my view.

6.3i The main objective of policy RUR12 is to secure the long-term future of the historic assets within a comprehensive, high quality, sustainable, mixed use development of the whole site. Originally, the Council's preferred re-use of the site was to continue as a residential institution but this use has not come forward and alternative mixed uses need to be considered. Saved Policy RUR 12 of SOLP allows for the re-use of Mongewell Park subject to 12 criteria.

Each of these criterion is considered in detail below in paragraphs 6.4 – 6.15.

6.4 **(i) provide a comprehensive scheme for the re-use of the buildings worthy of retention and for the future management of the site;**

- Mongewell House – conversion and extension 3 houses, 3 flats and additional 9 flats in new extension (Mongewell Annex)
- Retention, conversion, repair and extension of Grade II listed Synagogue into community hall, café and basement swimming pool
- Retention, conversion, extension and repair of Grade II\* listed Boat House and Julius Gottlieb Gallery as dry boathouse, restaurant and exhibition space Retention and refurbishment of Grade II listed amphitheatre
- Retention, conversion and extension of existing stables to provide 14 new houses to north of site (Carmel Stables and Carmel Villas)
- The tennis courts and gardens would be restored and the parkland walks retained. A new riverside footpath would also be introduced

The proposed scheme accords with this criteria as it is a comprehensive approach and will safeguard the future management of the site. The formation of a management company to oversee the future operation of the site will be secured within the Section 106 Agreement.

6.5 **(ii) secure a mix of uses on the site which reflect the nature of the buildings to be re-used and take into account the policies for particular uses in this plan;**

Whilst the scheme proposes 166 residential units the proposal does secure a mix of uses including a restaurant, health club with cafe and swimming pool and reuse of the wet and dry boathouses. The buildings to be reused, in particular the listed buildings, are unique and

due to their characteristics are not suitable many types of use. The uses proposed are considered to reflect the nature of the buildings to be re-used. In particular the wet and dry bathouses which will be restored to their intended use.

**6.6 (iii) provide for the demolition of buildings unsuitable for re-use;**

It is not a viable proposition to expect the buildings not worthy of retention to be demolished for altruistic purposes. From a commercial point of view their demolition needs to be secured through funding by new development. The current scheme proposes the demolition of 24 existing buildings none of which contribute to the setting of the listed buildings or landscape beauty of the area. Apart from the Sports Hall and Refectory, all of the buildings proposed for demolition are shown to have little or no architectural merit. Some consultees consider that the Sports Hall and Refectory should be retained but it is in poor repair and its removal enables the comprehensive redevelopment of the amphitheatre part of the site. This allows the new buildings to be framed around the amphitheatre thus creating an appropriate setting and the removal will improve the overall layout of the site.

**6.7 (iv) protect the listed buildings on the site and their setting;**

The removal of the modern school buildings and the general layout of the new buildings provide for an enhanced park land setting and will be in keeping with the layout and design of the surrounding context and form an improved overall layout of the site, improves the setting of the listed buildings and landscape features, and hence will result in a significant improvement in the visual impact.

**6.7i Synagogue**

The proposals to convert the grade II synagogue into a swimming pool and cafe are acceptable from the listed building point of view given the large amount of clear glazing in the building and the fact that the stained glass will be on public view and in no way obscured is welcomed.

**6.7ii Boat store and Gottlieb Art Gallery listed grade II**

The proposal is to convert the gallery into a restaurant and to keep the boat store as a boat store with some minor reduction in its footprint to accommodate some new facilities. A new kitchen, with a new lantern will be needed. Facing the river, a significant change is proposed namely the removal of part of the existing solid wall and its replacement with a glazed screen to open-up views across to the river. The existing pyramid roof will be covered in zinc, the original material. These alterations will result in the loss of some historic fabric and details, but given the need to find a suitable new use for the building, I consider them acceptable although the success of these proposals will totally depend on ensuring that the materials and details are all of the highest possible quality.

**6.7iii Boat house**

The proposals to restore the boat store/store, and to use the upper floor as a study lounge appear acceptable.

**6.7iv Mongewell House**

Though not specifically listed, it has always been agreed that this building should be treated as if it was actually listed. The loss of the existing service wing and the replacement with a much larger modern addition is therefore regrettable. However, the proposed internal alterations have been developed with some respect of the original layout and details, and generally I consider them to be acceptable.

**6.8 (v) retain as open land the undeveloped parts of the site and make provision for any additional car parking needs within the existing complex of buildings;**

The Landscape Conservation Assessment submitted with the application concludes that the proposals are sympathetic to the most significant features of the park and that many intrusive features would be removed, with replacement buildings confined to the areas which are previously developed. The majority of trees will be retained, including those which may relate to the eighteenth century landscape with additional planting proposed. The areas of parkland which remain to the south will be retained within the proposal. The new housing to the north of the parkland is close to the current footprint. The Park View houses and flats to the east extend slightly further into the landscape but will be screened by the proposed new planting.

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The amount of parking proposed is considered appropriate and its location primarily in basements will ensure it does not impinge on the open area of the site.

- 6.9        **(vi) provide a comprehensive landscaping scheme which includes provision for the protection and enhancement of the AONB and parkland and the maintenance of important trees or groups of trees and other landscape features, such as lakes, ponds and the bank of the River Thames;**  
The masterplan shows the proposed landscaping scheme. As many trees as possible are retained and replacement planting is proposed. The impact on trees and proposed landscaping are explained in detail in the Arboricultural and Landscaping Reports. The currently depleted parkland planting will be reinforced with new tree planting.
- 6.10       **(vii) provide a management plan for the future maintenance and enhancement of the site including the listed buildings and its amenity and biodiversity value;**  
The re-use of the site for residential and associated purposes will facilitate the future maintenance and enhancement of the site, including landscape and buildings which will be secured as part of a Section 106 Agreement. This is unlikely to be economically possible if the site was re-used for lower value uses, for example hotel, residential institution or B1 employment use, due to the costs involved with refurbishment and maintenance and the values associated with these uses.
- 6.11       **(viii) protect the archaeological interest of the site;**  
The County Archaeologist is satisfied with the findings of the submitted desktop archaeological assessment and has no objection to the redevelopment of the site subject to conditions to provide a written scheme of investigation and a watching brief.
- 6.12       **(ix) ensure that there is no loss of flood storage capacity;**  
The site is within the floodplain of the Thames and is almost entirely within flood zones 2 and 3. It is therefore at a very high flood risk. A detailed flood risk assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application. The FRA states that the proposed residential development will not lead to an adverse change in flood vulnerability as Carmel College was a boarding school which would be classed as 'More Vulnerable' in the NPPF Technical Guidance. Additionally the art gallery, restaurant and leisure uses would be classed as less vulnerable uses.
- 6.12i      The proposed development will be located within the footprints of the demolished buildings or in the lowest areas of flood risk. The FRA sets out the mitigation measures proposed such as land raising, flow path removal and associated flood plain compensation to ensure that post development the properties are in flood zone 1, and that the flood plain extents and volumes remain at least the same.
- 6.12ii     The Sequential Test Report confirms that the development complies with the water environment aspects of the local plan and the development has been steered to ensure that it is located in the areas of lowest risk. The approach to the sequential assessment has been agreed with the Council and the Environment Agency.
- 6.12iii    The FRA explains that to ensure that the development is not at risk from fluvial flooding, the main development platform and other localised areas will be raised above the 100 year plus climate change flood level (45.1 m AOD) to a minimum level of 45.25 m AOD, with finished floor levels at least 300 mm above this.
- 6.12iv     The raised development platform would remove the flow paths from the River Thames to the developed area south of the lake. This means that safe access and egress from all buildings in the southern portion of the site is possible without any additional land raising. However, the position of the Julius Gottlieb Gallery adjacent to the floodplain means that a flood management plan has been developed, as described in the FRA, which includes signage to direct people to safe routes.
- 6.12v      To ensure that there is no adverse impact elsewhere on the site level for level, volume for volume floodplain compensation will be provided on site. There is potential for floodplain compensation to be provided with a slight betterment on the existing playing fields in the

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south of the site. These playing fields are hydraulically linked to the area of flood plain which will be lost as a result of the development as flood waters currently flow across this area to the developable part of the site as such there will be no changes in connectivity or loss of gravity drainage. It is considered that this land can be re-profiled to provide the required flood plain volumes whilst enhancing the meadow area without any adverse impacts upon the trees in full in the FRA.

6.12vi The FRA concludes that the proposed development can be undertaken in a sustainable manner without increasing the flood risk either to the site or to any third party land subject to the following additional mitigation measures:

- Any basements or underground parking should be tanked to prevent groundwater flooding and non return valves should be incorporated within the drainage network at suitable locations.
- A surface water drainage strategy should be incorporated into the detailed design based around the conceptual strategy outlined in Section 3 and designed in accordance with SUDS principles, with consideration given to exceedance events.
- Thames Water have indicated that proposals to retain and augment the existing northern pumping station and provide a new southern pumping station, both discharging via the existing rising main, are acceptable in principle.

6.13 **(x) comply with the policies for encouraging sustainable and high-quality development in Section 4 of the plan;** The sustainability objectives of SOLP have been superseded by policies CSQ2 and CSQ3 of the Core Strategy. The scheme will be of a high standard design with only good quality materials used and this can be secured by condition.

6.14 **(xi) make provision for adequate access and for sustainable transport measures;** The site is not in a particularly sustainable location given the distance from key facilities and services. Importantly the reuse of the existing buildings to provide housing and commercial buildings is a considerable contribution to providing a sustainable development as well as preserving the heritage asset.

The sustainability of the site's location will be improved through measures set out in the green travel plan. The site is served by the local road network and is under two miles from Cholsey station with services to London and Oxford.

Pedestrian links will be improved. The Public Right of Way (PROW) to Nosworthy Way and Wallingford Town Centre will be upgraded and a new PROW will be constructed along Nosworthy Way from the existing PROW to bus stops along this road.

6.15 **(xii) provide for any necessary on- or off-site infrastructure.**

The County Council have requested contributions to education, library, waste, museum and health and social care facilities. As originally presented the application did not make any provision towards the contributions required by the County Council. The applicant argued that the costs associated with flooding issues, clean up costs and repairs and restoration of the listed buildings together with off site infrastructure contributions would render the scheme unviable.

6.15i A detailed viability assessment of the development was been submitted with the application and this has been analysed by a third party consultant. It is standard practice to apply a viability benchmark of 20% to development proposals and anything over a 20% profit then becomes susceptible for S106 contributions etc. This provides the developer a guaranteed 20% profit as an incentive to bring development forward. The council's consultant initially advised that as profit levels were below 20% the scheme did not have the capacity to provide S106 contributions at this stage. The viability of the scheme is obviously closely related to the residential values and the advice was caveated to reflect that any increase in residential values between the granting planning permission and the time of sale (which is likely in the current market) would result in a surplus and that therefore there should be a claw-back clause in the S106 Agreement.

6.15ii The Applicant's position remains that the Mongewell Park is a challenging site to develop and will incur a number of abnormal costs which mean the scope for financial contributions



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is very limited. However further scrutiny of the applicant's viability information and negotiations have resulted in the applicant offering a total of just over £2,600,000 towards affordable housing and infrastructure, with the apportionment of the monies being at SODC's discretion. Having regard to the form and mix of the development and to the fact that the overall sum falls significantly short of normal requirements you officers consider that there should be an appropriate adjustment to OCC's infrastructure contributions and propose that £611,520 should be secured by a legal agreement.

- 6.15iii The need for infrastructure and services has been assessed in relation to the facilities that are to be provided on site and the mitigation required to meet the demands from the development bearing in mind the capacity of existing facilities and the viability of the scheme. Given the amounts of open space, playing fields etc on site SODC have concluded that no other S106 infrastructure contributions are required for the District Council. The highway improvements within the site and at the junction of the A4074 have been included in the build costs for the viability appraisal and will be provided in any event
- 6.15iv **Thames Water.** The existing water supply infrastructure has insufficient capacity to meet the additional demands for the proposed development. Thames Water have, however, indicated that proposals in the application to retain and augment the existing northern pumping station and provide a new southern pumping station, both discharging via the existing rising main, are acceptable in principle.  
Thames Water has recommended conditions to address the inadequacies of the existing infrastructure.
- 6.16 **Highways and transport issues.** The main access to the site will be the private access road to the north of the site, with a secondary access via Constitution Hill. One of the main areas of concern from the local community and the Highway Authority relates to problems with the existing highway network. The junction from the private driveway onto the A4074 is inadequate and the private driveway, Constitution Hill and the road in front of Carmel Terrace are all substandard and can not accommodate the traffic associated with the residential use of the site. In the case of Constitution Hill and Carmel Terrace there is no scope to improve the existing situation as the applicant does not own adjoining land (please see Mongewell residents' comments at Appendix 3).
- 6.16i The Mongewell residents group have no objection to the principle of redevelopment on the site but strongly object to the proposal being accessed via the existing road network. They consider that a new alternative access is the only solution to avoid funnelling traffic onto the A4074. Their preferred solution to the access problems is to provide a new access to the site from Nosworthy Way (Wallingford by-pass) across Monument Field. An access across Monument Field is not part of the current application and Monument Field is not within the current application area but the Agent has commissioned a report to consider the Monument Field access and 2 junction options onto the by-pass. This report has concluded that access Options 1 and 2 cannot be delivered within prescribed technical standards as sight lines to the west fall significantly short of the required level for the speed of the road as a consequence of being obstructed by the bridge parapet and the vertical alignment of the highway. If the sight line requirements are relaxed to one step below desirable minimum sufficient visibility still cannot be achieved. To the east, visibility can only be achieved with the removal of vegetation and mature trees.

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- 6.16ii In the absence of an alternative access, proposals have been developed to improve the existing network involving widening the access road at the gateway near to the lodge, thereby removing a traffic constraint and facilitating two-way traffic. The width between the gateway pillars would be increased to 6.0 metres. The highway authority recognises that a width of 6.0 metres would be sufficient to accommodate 2-way traffic between kerb lines and do not have an objection to the proposed access width.
- 6.16iii The existing private access drive varies in width from between 4.1m and 4.8m, with a number of passing bays located along its length (5.75m in width). The Manual for Streets (2007), indicates that a 4.1m wide street allows two cars to pass each other, a 4.8m side carriageway allows a car and a HGV to pass, and a 5.5m wide carriageway allows two HGV's to pass each other. In its current form the access road allows two cars to pass each other along the entirety of the road (minimum road width of 4.1m), whilst the section of road which widens to 4.8m allows a car and a HGV to pass each other. There are a number of existing passing bays located along the length of the access road which are 5.75m in width and these enable two HGVs to pass each other.
- 6.16iv Whilst the Highway Authority has no objection to the scheme as a whole they consider that the driveway in its current form is inadequate to cater for the proposed use, both during construction and operation. In their view the private driveway should be improved to adoptable standards, however, this is not possible because of the damaging impact this would have on protected trees and the parkland setting of the site. Therefore a number of improvements are proposed with the planning application these include some road widening, the extension of existing passing bays and the provision of new permanent passing pays and temporary passing bays for the construction phase of the development. It is proposed that the temporary measures will benefit from compacted stone and wooden edging, whilst the permanent improvements will benefit from a bound road surface. All measures temporary and permanent will be implemented prior to construction. It is proposed that any damage caused to the Private Access Drive and the Ridgeway National Trail, will be made good by the developer / contractor. It should be noted that the existing site has an established use as a boarding school for up to 500 pupils which could generate significant amounts of traffic and no improvements to the access would be required. In the circumstances the improvements proposed are considered acceptable.
- 6.16v **Parking** would be provided for 302 cars, mostly underground in basement areas. Space would be laid out at surface level for 87 parking spaces. OCC highways have no objection to the level of parking spaces provided.
- 6.16vi **Pedestrian access** to the site will be via the private access road from the east and from a footpath from the north which connects the site with Nosworthy Way. To the south a footpath connects the site to North Stoke. Whilst there are no dedicated footways provided along the private access drive, it is considered that this is a suitable means of access for pedestrians given the relatively low level of vehicular movements and speed. The private driveway was used as a pedestrian access to the site when it was in use as a boarding school. In addition a public footpath runs through the woods on the northern boundary to the site parallel to the road and offers an alternative pedestrian route to the A4074.
- 6.16vii **Cycles.** 313 cycle parking spaces are proposed. In addition there will be 83 cycle stands for visitors (166 spaces). It is proposed that cycle access to the site will be via the existing access roads (Private access road and Constitution Hill). The main cycle access to the site will be via Constitution Hill as traffic flows will be lower along this access road.
- 6.16viii The road improvements have all been included in the build costs for the scheme and do not affect the viability.
- 6.17 **Ecology.** The site provides roosts for at least 4 species of bats in 11 different locations within seven of the existing buildings. The information submitted provides only very basic information how the loss of the majority of these roosting sites is going to be handled. The previous bat surveys on the site are more than 3 years old and updated survey work is required before the application is determined. Natural England has been consulted to

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determine whether this survey can be dealt with adequately by condition and comments will be reported verbally at the committee meeting.

- 6.18 **Trees.** The amended plans and accompanying information have addressed a number of the Forestry Officer's previous concerns. Whilst some clarification on number of points is needed these can be addressed by condition and the method statements.
- 6.19 **Leisure, footpaths.** The proposal includes provisions to upgrade footways, bridleways and cycleway in the vicinity of the site. This is in addition to improvements to the vehicular access. The proposal also includes leisure and community facilities on the site which will be available to members of the local community. These provisions can be secured in the legal agreement.
- 6.20 **Affordable housing.** Policy CSH3 seeks to achieve 40 per cent affordable housing on all sites where there is a net gain of three or more dwellings subject to the viability of provision on each site. Affordable housing should generally be provided on site and be fully integrated within the market housing. The policy recognises that there may be sites on which 40% affordable housing would render the development uneconomic and or prejudice the realisation of other policy objectives. In these circumstances the applicant has to provide a full development viability assessment for scrutiny. Exceptional site costs and the site's existing use value will be taken into account.

The applicant's costing analysis indicated that the scheme was below the required 20% viability benchmark at current land and residential values. They argued that requiring affordable units would undermine the viability of the scheme and on that basis no affordable units were proposed.

Further scrutiny of the applicant's viability information and negotiations have resulted in the applicant offering £2,000,000 towards the provision of affordable housing elsewhere.

Following liaison with the housing development and regeneration team and in recognition of the viability challenges presented by Mongewell Park your officers have concluded that there are appropriate circumstances to accept a financial contribution in lieu of the provision of affordable housing on site.

- 6.21 **Mix of units.** Policy CSH4 of the Adopted Core Strategy requires that on all sites that are capable of accommodating two or more dwellings, 45% of the development should be two bedroom units unless this provision for small dwellings would adversely affect the character of the area.

Property Type	No. of units
4+ bedroom house	16
3 bedroom house	33
2 bedroom house	4
4+ bedroom flat	3
3 bedroom flat	19
2 bedroom flat	75
1 bedroom flat	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>166</b>

In this case 98 of the units are either 1 or 2 bed units which represent over 50% of the total number of units and in this case the mix of units is considered acceptable.

- 6.22      **Density, height, scale.** Other than the mansion house, stables and wet boathouse the existing buildings on the site are typical school buildings dating from the 1960's, 70's and 80's; they are mostly flat roof, some are of a large mass and of a range of heights up to three storeys. The buildings are not attractive but they do sit well within the site and are largely screened from surrounding vantage points due to existing tree screening. The design approach is a mix of contemporary and traditional depending upon the position on the site. The Chilterns Conservation Board has objected to the scale of development and that the design does not reflect the advice in their own design guide. However a fully traditional approach would not, in your officer's view, sit particularly well with the 1960's design of the synagogue, dry boat house, art gallery and amphitheatre and mix of contemporary and traditional approaches put forward have merit and sit well within the landscaped setting of the site.
- 6.23      **Neighbour impact.** There are immediate neighbours to the site in Carmel Terrace and a number of neighbours have objected to the size and scale of the blocks of flats in Lake Views and the Amphitheatre Residences and to overlooking from the flats in general.
- 6.23i      **Lake Views.** This is a three storey, flat roof, block of 11 flats, that would stand on a similar footprint to that of an existing single storey flat roof building. Neighbours in Carmel Terrace (a two storey, flat roofed terrace) are concerned about the building being oppressive and about overlooking. The distance between the rear wall of the proposed flats and the rear of Carmel Terrace houses is 32 metres at the closest point and the block would be some 8.2 metres in height (Carmel Terrace is just over 6 metres in height). There is also a line of conifer trees along the boundary of the site with Carmel Terrace that effectively blocks all views into the Carmel College site. The new block of flats is of a comparable height to a pitched roof two storey dwelling and the elevation (east elevation) facing Carmel Terrace only has two windows, one at ground and one at first floor height. Given the distance between the two blocks, the screening and the lack of windows on the east elevation the impact of Lake Villas on Carmel Terrace residents would not be unneighbourly.
- 6.23ii      **Amphitheatre residences.** These are two, three storey blocks of flats that circle the seating area of the amphitheatre. The amphitheatre blocks would be some 9 metres in height and would be 24 metres from the nearest point of 10 Carmel Terrace (just over 6 metres in height); the terrace block is angled away from the two blocks. Whilst these blocks would be close to 10 Carmel Terrace, this building is already closely surrounded by the existing Refectory block and the sports hall at 16 metres and 19 metres respectively; these buildings are not as tall as the amphitheatre blocks but they are both large masses with a much closer relationship. Given the size of the existing buildings, the orientation of the respective buildings and the distance it is your officer's view that the new amphitheatre blocks will not be unduly overbearing or oppressive. It is acknowledged that there will be an element of overlooking from the end unit in the first and second floor flats from windows and balconies but in achieving a comprehensive design and acceptable layout around the listed amphitheatre the relationship is considered acceptable.
- 6.24      **Amenity and Open space.** Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in Policy D3 of the Local Plan. A minimum of 35 square metres is required for 1 bed properties, 50 square metres of garden space for 2 bed properties and 100 square metres for three, four bed dwellings or above is required. A mixture of private gardens and balconies provide amenity space for the proposed residential units rather than private garden areas which may compromise the setting of buildings. The future occupiers will have access to the significant area of parkland and river frontage and as such the provision of dedicated private sitting out areas is not essential in this case.
- 7.0      **CONCLUSION**
- 7.1      The applications propose a high quality comprehensive mixed use development of Mongewell Park which has not been in active use since 1997. The restoration and re use of the listed buildings, significant improvements to their settings and enhancement of the parkland landscape are all most welcome. The scheme is generally in line with Policy RUR 12 and the Core Strategy although it involves more market housing, no affordable housing provision on site and less infrastructure contributions than would normally be required.

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7.1i Officers recognise that there are a number of exceptional site costs including the restoration of the heritage assets and significant flood defence works. Further scrutiny of the viability appraisal and negotiations have secured financial contributions towards infrastructure and the provision of affordable housing off site. These contributions are considered appropriate taking into account the site circumstances and viability of the development. As such, subject to legal agreements and conditions, the applications are considered acceptable having regard to the NPPF, development plan policies and all the relevant material considerations.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION on planning application ref P11/W2357**

8.1 **Officers recommended that the grant of planning permission be delegated to the Head of Planning, subject to**

- i. the prior completion of a Section 106 planning obligation with Oxfordshire County Council to secure infrastructure payments of £ 611,520
- ii. the prior completion of a Section 106 planning obligation with South Oxfordshire District Council to secure a financial contribution of £2,000,000 to affordable housing
- iii. Detailed conditions in accordance with the summary of conditions set out below (these may be subject to variation during the course of drafting the legal agreement)

1. Commencement 3 years – full planning permission
2. Compliance with approved plans
3. Samples of all materials
4. Development to be in accordance with Flood Risk Assessment
5. Phasing of development
6. Construction Management Plan
7. Tree Protection – Method statement overall strategy
8. Landscape Masterplan and Management Plan
9. Archaeology - Implementation of Staged Programme of Work
10. Contamination (investigation)
11. Implementation of a species / habitat scheme
12. Scheme to eradicate Japanese Knotweed
13. Surface Water Drainage Details – each phase
14. Foul Drainage Details – each phase
15. Tree protection – each phase
16. Landscaping Scheme – each phase
17. Windows and external doors to specification
18. Sample materials required for each phase – buildings and landscaping
19. Parking – to be provided in accordance with highway specification
20. Parking – unallocated parking
21. Cycle Parking Facilities to be provided
22. Development to be constructed in accordance with Sustainability Statement
23. Update the wildlife survey if development not commenced within 1 year
24. Hours of operation - construction/demolition sites
25. Noise from commercial premises [and gym]
26. Odour from commercial food premises
27. Hours of commercial premises
28. Noise Assessment and control (roads)
29. External Lighting - General
30. Construction of site access junction(s)
31. New estate roads
32. Section 38 Agreement
33. Section 278 Agreement
34. Residential Travel Plan to be agreed
35. Withdrawal of PD (Part 1 Classes A & D) - no extension/alteration or porches
36. Withdrawal of PD (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings/enclosures
37. Withdrawal of P.D. (Part 2 Class A) - no walls, fences etc
38. Withdrawal of P.D. - no roof extensions or alterations
39. Secure by Design

**Agenda Item 6**  
**South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee –8 September 2014**

9.0 **RECOMMENDATION on listed building consent application ref P11/W2358/LB**  
9.1 **Officers recommend that listed building consent is granted subject to the completion of;**

- i. **A management plan to secure long term maintenance and upkeep of listed buildings**
- ii. **The following conditions (these may be subject to variation)**
  - 1. **Commencement 3 yrs - Listed Building Consent**
  - 2. **Compliance with approved plans**
  - 3. **Commencement Date (Detailed Apps)**
  - 4. **Submission of detailed drawings for repairs**
  - 5. **Method statement for cleaning buildings**
  - 6. **Submission of detailed drawings for restoration of specific elements**
  - 7. **Specification and schedule of repairs, replacement and samples of doors and windows**
  - 8. **Protection and retention of historic landscaping and walls**
  - 9. **Works to match existing fabric**
  - 10. **Details of miscellaneous e.g. signs, vents, flues**

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