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<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/S1374/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	1.5.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	WALLINGFORD
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Mr Marcus Harris Mr Imran Lokhon
<b>APPLICANT</b>	SOHA Housing Limited
<b>SITE</b>	25 Saxon Close, WALLINGFORD, Oxon, OX10 0SR
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Construction of 5 one bedroom flats with associated parking and access from Saxon Close. (as amended by drawings P01b and P02a accompanying e-mail from agent dated 23 July 2014)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	Reduction in the height of the building.
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	460122/189398
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mr P Bowers

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to committee as the recommendation of the Wallingford Town Council conflicts with the views of officers.
- 1.2 The application site comprises an area of hard standing previously containing single storey garage blocks. It is located at the northern end of the Saxon Close development which is comprised of predominantly two storey terraced 1970's properties. To the west behind a high bank of trees is the former Habitat site and the north and north east properties on Charter Way.
- 1.3 The site is not within a designated area.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission to erect a two storey building with accommodation in the roof space comprising 5 one bedroom flats.
- 2.2 The application has been amended reducing the scheme in height from three full storeys to a two storey building with accommodation in the roof space with dormer windows at the rear. The overall reduction in height was 1.8 metres from its highest point.
- 2.3 A plan identifying the site can be found at **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 2.4 Full plans can be found at **Appendix 2** to this report. In addition the supporting information accompanying the application and full representations that have been submitted to the Council can be viewed on the Council's website.

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 **Wallingford Town Council** – Recommend refusal of planing permission to both the originally submitted and amended plans for the following reasons;
- Ovedevelopment of the site,
  - Not in keeping with the existing properties.
  - Insufficient parking.

- Drainage issues.

**Neighbour Representations –**

4 x objection to the plans as originally submitted raising the following issues;

- The building is too high.
- Issues of overlooking nearby properties.
- Insufficient parking.
- Overshadowing.
- Fire access.
- Noise from construction.

1 x objection to the amended plans raising the following issues;

- Not in keeping with the existing properties.
- The building is still too high.

**OCC Countryside Access –** No objection.

**OCC Historic and Natural Environment Team -** No objection subject to conditions relating to archeology.

**OCC Highways Liaison Officer -** No objection subject to conditions relating to parking and manoeuvring and cycle facilities areas being retained.

**Housing Development-** No objection confirms that at least 2 units would need to be affordable.

**Health & Housing - Contaminated Land -** No objection subject to condition.

**Forestry Officer -** No objection subject to a landscaping condition.

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 None.

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 **South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027** policies

CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction

CSQ3 - Design

CSWAL1 – Housing Strategy for Wallingford

**South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011** policies;

C9 - Loss of landscape features

CON14 - Archeology

D1 - Principles of good design

D2 - Safe and secure parking for vehicles and cycles

D3 - Outdoor amenity area

D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers

D6 - Community safety

EP8 – Contaminated Land

G2 - Protect district from adverse development

H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt

T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users

T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

**South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008**  
**National Planning Policy Framework**  
**National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance**

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

**6.1 The main issues to consider as part of this proposal are;**

- **Whether the principle of development is acceptable.**
- **Impact on the character and appearance of the area with regard to the provisions of Policy H4.**
- **Impact on the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties.**
- **Affordable housing provision.**
- **Impact on archaeology.**
- **Impact on trees.**
- **Whether the development includes a high standard of sustainable features.**
- **Contamination**

**Whether the principle of development is acceptable.**

- 6.2 Wallingford is one of the four main towns in the district. Where new housing will be allowed under Policy CSWAL1 the principle of new housing within the settlement is acceptable but the detail must be assessed against the criteria of Policy H4 contained with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP).

**Impact on the character and appearance of the area with regard to the provisions of Policy H4.**

- 6.3 Provision (i) states *'an important open space of public, environmental or ecological value is not lost, nor an important view spoilt.'*
- 6.4 This is a previously developed site currently just a hard standing but up until relatively recently was occupied by garage blocks. It does not compromise an important open space and is of no ecological value. The high bank of trees at the rear of the site ensures that there are no views of any kind that would be lost once the development is to be built.
- 6.5 Provision (ii) states *'the design, height, scales and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings.'* whilst Provision (iii) states that the *'character of the area is not adversely affected.'*
- 6.6 The building is higher and deeper than the adjoining terrace, which are typical shallow pitched roofed, 1970's dwellings. If this had been a development located more centrally in Saxon Close this difference in height could be potentially harmful to the character of the area. However it is located at the end of the line of development in a corner of the cul-de-sac. It acts a visual full stop to the terrace and its position will mean that it will not be overly prominent or visually intrusive in wider views of Saxon Close. The character of the area will not be adversely affected by the proposed building.
- 6.7 *Provision iv) of Policy H4 states that there should be no overriding amenity or environmental or highway objections.*

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- 6.8 For a single bedroom property the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 advises that a dwelling should have at least 35 square metres of private amenity space. This would mean that there should be 175 square metres on the basis of 5 units. It is proposed to have a communal area for the occupants of the flats. This space amounts to 113 square metres of private amenity space below what would normally be expected. However in isolation this under provision does not amount to an 'overriding amenity' issue when in all other respects the proposal is acceptable. There will be meaningful space to be enjoyed by the occupants which will not be compromised by the under provision of available space.
- 6.9 For the level of development the amount of car parking is considered appropriate. The site is located at the end of a cul-de-sac and vehicles entering and exiting the site will not have to undertake manoeuvres which would cause a harmful impact to the safety of the users of the public highway.
- 6.10 Provision v) relates to back land development and seeks ensure that it would not *create problems of privacy and access and would not extend the built up limits of the settlement.*
- 6.11 The site is contained wholly within the settlement and located on a road frontage.

**Impact on the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties.**

- 6.12 The two most affected properties are number 25 Saxon Close and 26 Charter Way.
- 6.13 In respect of 25 Saxon Close the new building will be located to the north which means that there will be no loss of direct sun light to that property. The gap between the buildings and the extent of the overlap in the footprint of the buildings means that the overall bulk and mass of the building will not cause a materially harmful overbearing or oppressive impact.
- 6.14 A small secondary window on the southern side elevation at first level is proposed serving a living room. It is necessary to ensure that this is obscure glazed to ensure that a harmful degree of overlooking is not created over the rear garden of 25 Saxon Close.
- 6.15 As originally submitted the impact to number 26 Charter Way was unacceptable due to the height and the level of overlooking from the second floor windows on the front of the building. The amended plans addressed this issue by reducing the height of the building and having the second floor contained within the roof space with the rear dormer windows providing the outlook for that unit.
- 6.16 The position of the building in conjunction with the distance and oblique views from the first floor windows across to number 26 Charter Way, in conjunction with obscure glazing to the side window, is such that the level of harm that would be caused to the amenities of the occupants of that property are not significantly harmful in your officers view.

**Affordable housing provision.**

- 6.17 Policy CSH3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy requires that where there is a net gain of three or more dwellings 40% affordable housing will be sought on all sites.
- 6.18 In this case 40% equates to two of the units. South Oxfordshire Housing Association

(SOHA) is the applicant and although they have confirmed that the intention that all five units will be affordable units the policy only requires two. Therefore a legal agreement is required to secure the provision of these units. Without this agreement the units could not be secured and the development would be contrary to Policy CHS3. This recommendation therefore is to seek member's agreement to delegate the grant of planning permission to this application subject to the completion of the legal agreement.

- 6.19 There is concern locally about who may occupy the units on the basis that they are one bedroom. This is not however a material planning consideration.

**Impact on archaeology.**

- 6.20 The site is located in an area of archaeological potential 280m west of the Saxon defences of Wallingford. An Iron Age ditch was recorded in the 1970s ahead of development approximately 20m east of the application site. Medieval and early post medieval settlement has been recorded to the south east. In addition further Iron Age and Roman settlement evidence has been recorded 130m north west of the site.
- 6.21 In consultation with the Oxfordshire County Council Archaeologist it is recommended that the applicant should be responsible for ensuring the implementation of an archaeological monitoring and recording action (watching brief) to be maintained during the period of construction. Conditions to this effect form part of this recommendation.

**Impact on trees.**

- 6.22 Due to the existing site conditions the impact on the adjacent trees which form the western boundary of the site will be minimal. One of the Sycamores will need to be pruned back by a small amount but provided this is done in accordance with the British Standard then the tree will not suffer any long terms effects.
- 6.23 To assist in the assimilation of the development with it surroundings a condition is proposed requiring the applicants to providing a scheme for landscaping for the councils approval prior to the commencement of development.

**Whether the development includes a high standard of sustainable features.**

- 6.24 Policy CSQ3 requires that proposals for dwellings shall attain a four star rating in respect of the code for sustainable homes. A sustainability statement has been submitted with the application setting out what measures are being undertaken under the relevant categories such as energy and CO2 emissions, materials, waste etc. To ensure that the new dwelling meets the high standard expected in the policy a condition is proposed seeking to ensure that the building will be built to at least Code Level 4.

**Contamination.**

- 6.25 The proposed residential development is regarded as a particularly sensitive use to any land contamination. For this reason, the developer should conduct adequate contaminated land investigations to ensure that the land is safe and suitable for the intended use. As a minimum, the developer should complete a contaminated land desk study and site reconnaissance to ensure that the development is not put to an unacceptable risk from land contamination. This research would establish if land contamination has the potential to be present at the development site from historic land uses like industrial use and landfills, or more recent activities including fuel storage, in filled ground and vehicle maintenance.

6.26 To ensure that any land contamination is addressed as part of the permission a condition requiring investigation and remediation forms part of this recommendation.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 In your officers view the principle of development is acceptable. The site can accommodate an adequate amount of parking and sufficient amenity space that will ensure that the proposal does not amount to an overdevelopment of the site. The design, scale and height of the building in this position does not materially harm the wider visual amenity of the area and does not give rise to a harmful impact to nearby properties. Following the completion of the legal agreement securing the affordable housing units the proposal is acceptable. As such the proposal accords with the development plan policies.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **That the application be delegated to the Head of Planning Permission and that upon the completion of the Section 106 Agreement securing affordable housing planing permission shall be granted subject to the following conditions;**

- 1 : Commencement 3 years - full planning permission**
- 2 : Approved plans**
- 3 : Sample materials required (all)**
- 4 : Obscure glazing**
- 5 : Code Level 4**
- 6 : Parking and manoeuvring areas retained**
- 7 : Cycle parking facilities**
- 8 : Landscaping scheme (trees and shrubs only)**
- 9 : Contamination (remediation and validation)**
- 10 : Archaeological watching brief**
- 11 : Implementation of programme or archaeological work**

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