

APPLICATION NO.	P14/S0986/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	15.5.2014
PARISH	CHINNOR
WARD MEMBERS	Christopher Hood Lynn Lloyd
APPLICANT	SOHA Housing Ltd
SITE	Siareys Yard Station Road Chinnor, OX39 4HA
PROPOSAL	Erection of 12 sheltered flats & 10 dwellings.
AMENDMENTS	None
GRID REFERENCE	475570/200682
OFFICER	Tom Wyatt

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is referred to Planning Committee as the Officer's recommendations conflict with the views of the Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is an area of currently vacant land with a former industrial use. The site was part of a larger site extending to the south and outline planning permission under application P05/E1145/O was granted for a mix of uses on the larger site including housing, and replacement industrial units on the current application site. With the exception of the application site the larger site has now been redeveloped for residential and commercial uses.
- 1.3 The site is located off Station Road within the built up area of Chinnor. The surrounding built form is dominated by residential development with the exception of the office development between Station Road and the site. The site is not within any designated area.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application as amended seeks planning permission for the construction of 10 dwellings and 12 sheltered flats. This is a revised scheme following the grant of planning permission for 14 dwellings under application P10/E1215. This earlier planning permission is still extant given that it was granted in February 2012.
- 2.2 A copy of the plans accompanying the application is **attached** as Appendix B. Other documentation associated with the application can be viewed on the council's website, www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 **Chinnor Parish Council** – Objects due to over development, inadequate parking and no visitor parking spaces

Highway Liaison Officer – No objections subject to conditions and a financial contribution towards improved public transport.

County Archaeologist – The site is located in an area of archaeological potential and conditions to investigate the archaeology of the site are requested.

OCC Education and Property – Financial contributions requested towards education, healthcare, libraries, and waste

Chilterns Conservation Board – The building housing the sheltered flats is too high and bulky and contrived. Parking would be difficult to use and parking is likely to spill out on to adjacent land. The proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site. N.B. The Chilterns Conservation Board has stated that it has no specific comments in relation to the amended plans.

Urban Design Officer – Concerns expressed that the site will be dominated by cars and hard surfaces and will not be of a high quality.

Environmental Health Officer – No objections but suggest a working hours condition.

Neighbours – 7 letters of objection received in relation to the original and amended plans

- insufficient trees on the boundary with Siareys Close
- do not want a social housing estate
- insufficient parking
- loss of light to neighbouring property
- overdevelopment of the site
- lack of local infrastructure to support the development such as drainage and schools

4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P10/E1215](#) - Approved (15/02/2012)

Erection of 14 dwellings including 5 affordable units.

The site layout plan in respect of this application is **attached** as Appendix C.

[P07/E1616](#) - Approved (11/03/2008)

Mixed use development of 31 residential dwellings and 3 business units with associated access and parking.

[P05/E1145/O](#) - Approved (21/09/2007)

Demolition of existing industrial buildings. Erection of 3 business units, 4 industrial units (use classes B1, B2 & B8), 18 housing units and 12 affordable housing units. Creation of 2 new access roads and closure of existing access points onto Station Road and Meadow Road. Construction of new car park for The Lodge.

[P00/N0294](#) - Approved (12/06/2000)

Variation of planning condition no.7 of planning permission P99/N0426 dated 21 December 1999.

[P99/N0426](#) - Approved (21/12/1999)

Demolition of existing site buildings. Erection of commercial/industrial development.

[P99/N0176/R](#) - Approved (21/04/1999)

Demolition of all existing buildings except for the lodge and erection of new single and two storey buildings of 4856 sq mtrs for light industrial and B.1 office use. Construction of access roads and car parking. (Renewal of planning permission ref:P93/N0500)

[P93/N0500](#) - Approved (06/06/1994)

Demolition of all existing buildings except for the lodge and erection of new single and two storey buildings of 4856 sq. metres for light industrial and B1 office use, construction of access roads and car parking.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) policies

- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CSEN1 - Landscape protection
- CSH2 - Housing density
- CSH3 - Affordable housing
- CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
- CS11 - Infrastructure provision
- CSM1 - Transport
- CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
- CSQ3 - Design
- CSR1 - Housing in villages
- CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (SOLP) policies;

- C9 - Loss of landscape features
- 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
- D6 - Community safety
- EP2 - Adverse affect by noise or vibration
- EP8 - Contaminated land
- G2 - Protect district from adverse development
- G4 - Protection of Countryside
- G5 - Best use of land/buildings in built up areas
- H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
- R2 - Provision of play areas on new housing development
- T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
- T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issues to consider in relation to this proposal are:

1. The principle of the development
2. Impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area
3. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
4. Highway considerations
5. Affordable housing and housing mix
6. Local infrastructure and services

The Principle of the Development

- 6.2 The site used to be in industrial use and permission was granted for four industrial units on the site under application P05/E1145/O. However, the reserved matters application for these units (P10/E1212/RM) was withdrawn in March 2012 following the approval of the alternative housing scheme on the site under application P10/E1215. As such the loss of employment on the application site has been established and the principle of housing development on the site is acceptable.

The Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and its Surroundings

- 6.3 The site is a vacant area of land following the clearance of previous buildings. The surrounding area is dominated by residential development comprising a mix of dwelling types ranging from terraces, semi-detached and detached housing within the recently constructed Siareys Close development to the north, terraced housing within the 1960s development to the west within Ravensmead, and a substantial block of flats within Old Sawmill Place to the south.
- 6.4 Policy H4 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that the design, height, scale and materials of the proposed development are in keeping with its surroundings and that the character of the area is not adversely affected. The layout of the development in respect of the dwellings proposed on Plots 1 to 10 is similar to the layout approved under application P10/E1215 in relation to the siting and scale of this part of the development. The main differences between the two schemes in respect of this part of the development relate to an additional unit proposed in the north eastern corner of the site to create a terrace of four units, the omission of garaging and the positioning of the dwellings associated with Plots 1 to 7 closer to the north western boundary of the site.
- 6.5 The scale, height and general design of the proposed housing on Plots 1 to 10 are also similar to those permitted under application P10/E1215. The proposed dwellings are traditional in terms of design and not excessive in terms of scale. The formation of small blocks of terraced housing as proposed would respect the form, density and general plot sizes of the surrounding existing development within Ravensmead and Siareys Close in particular.
- 6.6 The omission of the garaging previously proposed would result in the open air parking areas being larger and more visible within the site. However, views of these parking areas would be limited to within the site and from the upper floors of adjacent development. As such the extent of the parking areas would not be visually prominent and would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The omission of the garaging would also help to provide significant open gaps between the terraced blocks particularly in views from Ravensmead and Siareys Close. Whilst there would be limited space for new soft planting within the site, there is space for some new tree and shrub planting and this would help to soften the urban form of the development.
- 6.7 The main difference between the previous scheme and the current proposal is the addition of the sheltered unit block. This effectively replaces a terrace of four units forming the most public facing part of the development in terms of views of the site when approaching at the junction off Station Road. The four units as approved would have provided an attractive terrace with a relatively modest scale and bulk due to the varied design and eaves and ridge heights. By contrast the proposed sheltered housing block would provide a more dominant form of development in terms of its

substantial scale, bulk and massing, which would be somewhat at odds with the scale of the housing proposed elsewhere on the site and in the surrounding area.

- 6.8 The applicant has submitted amended plans during the course of this application, which have reduced the height and overall bulk of the sheltered housing block. The building would be sited adjacent to the substantial three storey block of flats to the south and would be on lower ground. When viewed in context with the adjacent block of flats the proposed building would be more modest in height and scale and I do not consider that the proposal would be out of keeping with the surrounding built form. The sheltered block has a substantial footprint in terms of the width and depth of the building. Whilst this results in the building displaying wide public frontages to the north east and north west the depth and overall mass of the building would not be readily apparent in public views and in my view it would not cause any significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.9 Overall the proposal would result in an intensive form of development on the site equating to a net density of approximately 70 dwellings per hectare including the sheltered flats or approximately 50 dwellings per hectare excluding the flats. The site is in a sustainable location close to the services and facilities within Chinnor and public transport routes and I consider that the proposal represents an efficient use of the land within the site without undue harm being caused to the character and appearance of the site or its surroundings.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.10 Development on the site will inevitably have an impact on the amenity of existing adjoining occupiers through increased traffic, noise, and changes to outlook and levels of light and privacy. Amended plans have been submitted to address earlier concerns I raised regarding the relationship of Plots 7 and 8 to 13 and 14 Ravensmead respectively due to the staggered relationship between the proposed and existing dwellings and opportunities for mutual overlooking. The amended plans have re-introduced rear gables on Plots 7 and 8 to avoid direct overlooking to the front elevations of 13 and 14 Ravensmead and the relationship between the proposed and existing dwellings is now very similar to that of the approved scheme.
- 6.11 Amended plans have also been submitted to retain some of the existing vegetation close to the north western boundary with Siareys Close. This vegetation is not substantial, however, and will not provide an effective screen between the existing and proposed dwellings. The rear elevations of Plots 1 to 7 would be approximately 22 metres from the existing rear elevations of the closest properties in Siareys Close. This is under the recommended distance of 25 metres between facing habitable rooms as set out within the SODG, however, not significantly so. The approved scheme retained a distance of 25 metres between the proposed and existing dwellings, and clearly it would be preferable for this gap to be maintained within the current scheme. However, I do not consider that moving the dwelling 3 metres closer to the boundary with Siareys Close would lead to material harm when compared to the approved scheme.
- 6.12 The building housing the sheltered flats would lie 5 metres from the southern boundary of the site adjacent to Old Sawmill Place. The building would clearly affect the outlook from the north facing windows of 16-26 Old Sawmill Place, which relate to six flats spread over three floors. These windows currently have an open aspect over the application site and this would be significantly altered by the presence of the sheltered flats. The sheltered flats would have limited windows facing towards Old Sawmill Place with a distance of approximately 25 metres between the majority of the facing windows. The south elevation of the sheltered flats would partially be in a direct line of sight from

the adjacent flats, however, the majority of the neighbouring flats would look directly onto the communal amenity space allocated to the sheltered flats. In light of this and the fact that the sheltered flats would occupy a lower building on lower ground to the north of the existing flats I consider that the development would not cause significant loss of light or outlook to the detriment of neighbouring amenity.

- 6.13 The open parking areas would potentially result in some additional noise disturbance to the occupiers of the closest neighbours in Ravensmead and Siareys Close as the garaging previously approved would have acted as a sound barrier. However, the frequency and speed of movements within the parking areas will be low and I do not consider that any disturbance would be significant.
- 6.14 The proposed amenity areas for the new housing is comparable to that relating to the approved scheme and the garden areas already existing in the surrounding area. The amenity area for the sheltered flats would be overlooked by the proposed flats and the adjacent flats but would otherwise provide a well sheltered and private amenity space for the occupiers of the flats.

Highway Considerations

- 6.15 The proposed development allows for two parking spaces for each of the dwellings with 3 visitor spaces and 5 parking spaces for the sheltered flats. The parking provided for units 1 to 7 would be provided within tandem bays, and this was the case in respect of the approved scheme. The access to the site from Station Road is existing and would be shared with the adjacent business units. The Highway Liaison Officer has considered the proposal and has raised no objections to the proposal.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

- 6.16 Although the applicant is a registered social housing provider, under Policy CSH3 of the SOCS there is still only a requirement for 40% of the development to be provided as affordable units. This would be secured through the proposed planning obligation. The general housing mix of the development comprises mainly of smaller units with there being 4 one bed units, 15 two bed units and 3 three bed units. This housing mix is a reflection of the relatively high density of the development, which in this case is appropriate given the site's location close to the centre of Chinnor and the character of surrounding housing.

Impact on Local Infrastructure and Services

- 6.17 Policy CSI1 of the SOCS states that new development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off site infrastructure and services. In this case the County Council has requested financial contributions to mitigate the impact of the additional housing on local services, including education, libraries and healthcare and contributions to the District Council will also be required in relation to community infrastructure. These contributions will be secured through a planning obligation.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application proposal is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and national planning policy as, subject to conditions, the development would respect the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area and would not cause any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In addition the proposal would not cause a severe impact in respect to highway safety and convenience.

Agenda Item 7

South Oxfordshire District Council – Planning Committee – 17th December 2014

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended that the grant of planning permission be delegated to the Head of Planning, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 planning obligation with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure infrastructure payments are made towards education, transport, and community services, and the prior completion of a Section 106 planning obligation with South Oxfordshire District Council to ensure infrastructure payments are made towards community facilities and the provision of affordable housing, and the following conditions:-

- 1. Commencement within 3 years**
- 2. Development in accordance with approved plans**
- 3. Samples of materials to be submitted and agreed**
- 4. Finished floor and ground levels to be agreed**
- 5. Landscaping scheme to be agreed**
- 6. Dwellings to meet Code Level 4**
- 7. Drainage details to be agreed**
- 8. Withdrawal of permitted development rights for extensions and outbuildings**
- 9. Contaminated land assessment to be carried out**
- 10. Archaeological watching brief to be submitted and agreed**
- 11. Findings of archaeological watching brief to be submitted**
- 12. External lighting to be agreed**
- 13. Hours of construction to be limited**
- 14. Formation of new access prior to occupation**
- 15. Laying out of estate road before occupation**
- 16. Parking and turning areas to be provided and maintained**
- 17. Construction traffic management plan to be agreed**
- 18. First floor bathroom windows in Units 7 and 8 to be obscure glazed and no further windows in rear elevation of Units 7 and 8**

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