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| <b>APPLICATION NO.</b>  | <a href="#">P14/S2440/FUL</a>  |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE</b> | FULL APPLICATION   |
| <b>REGISTERED</b>       | 5.8.2014   |
| <b>PARISH</b>           | WOODCOTE   |
| <b>WARD MEMBERS</b>     | Christopher Quinton  |
| <b>APPLICANT</b>        | Millgate   |
| <b>SITE</b>             | Former Chiltern Queens Bus Depot, Long Toll,<br>Woodcote, RG8 0RR  |
| <b>PROPOSAL</b>         | Demolition of existing vacant commercial buildings.<br>Erection of 14 dwellings plus access, parking, and<br>landscaping. (as amended by drawing<br>14_LTG_SP15 I to alter the parking layout of the<br>development received 6 October 2014) |
| <b>AMENDMENTS</b>       | None   |
| <b>GRID REFERENCE</b>   | 464625/181135  |
| <b>OFFICER</b>          | Tom Wyatt  |

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application is referred to Planning Committee due to the link between the application site and the development proposed under application P14/S2441/FUL at Star Works, Stoke Row.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is located beyond the edge of the large village of Woodcote, and is currently a vacant and derelict site located in an area of countryside but surrounded by a loose knit form of residential and commercial development within a woodland setting. The site is located within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.3 The site is one of the sites allocated for housing development within the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (Policy HS6).

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of 14 dwellings following the demolition and clearance of the existing buildings on the site. The proposed development comprises of 10 affordable housing units and 4 market housing units. The affordable units would be provided in two blocks comprising a terrace of three dwellings and a terrace of seven units. The market housing comprises of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings located on the south eastern part of the site. One parking space would be provided for each bedroom of the proposed development, equating to 32 spaces.
- 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](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

- 3.1 Woodcote Parish Council – The application should be approved provided that the mix of affordable housing is 5 social rented and 5 shared ownership.
- 3.2 Highway Liaison Officer – No objections to the amended plans subject to conditions.

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- 3.3 Oxfordshire County Council Education and Property – Financial contributions requested towards education provision, museum resource, waste infrastructure, health care and libraries.
- 3.4 Environment Agency - No objections subject to conditions to ensure the prevention of pollution
- 3.5 Countryside Access – The route of the bridleway (Green Lane) should not be used for any vehicles associated with the site.
- 3.6 Waste Management Officer – Advice provided regarding the size requirements of the communal bin store
- 3.7 Countryside Officer - No objections
- 3.8 Forestry Officer - No objections subject to tree protection and landscaping details.
- 3.9 Health & Housing - Air Quality – Measures to mitigate against the impact on air quality requested.
- 3.10 Contaminated Land Officer – No objections subject to Environment Agency approval
- 3.11 Environmental Protection Officer – No objections subject to working hours condition
- 3.12 Neighbours – Seven letters raising objections or concerns have been received:
- Trees should be retained
  - Loss of trees would result in overlooking from the development
  - Excessive height of Plots 11-14
  - Overdevelopment of the site and too high a density
  - Increased risk to highway safety from increased traffic
  - Potential impact from sewage plant
  - Potential flood risk from increased runoff
  - Affordable housing provision from Star Works should not be accepted
  - Potential impact on width of road from footpath

Two letters of support also received.

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P08/E1276](#) - Refused (20/01/2009) - Refused on appeal (08/09/2009)  
Demolition of derelict bus depot and erection of three open market houses and three social houses. New garage for Greenmore (adjacent house) (as amended by drawing no.08.LG.SP03.F accompanying letter from Agent dated 8 January 2009).

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies
- CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
  - CSEN1 - Landscape protection
  - CSH1 - Amount and distribution of housing
  - CSH2 - Housing density
  - CSH3 - Affordable housing
  - CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
  - CS11 - Infrastructure provision

CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction  
CSQ3 - Design  
CSR1 - Housing in villages  
CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

**5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;**

C4 - Landscape setting of settlements  
C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity  
C8 - Adverse affect on protected species  
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  
EP3 - Adverse affect by external lighting  
EP4 - Impact on water resources  
EP8 - Contaminated land  
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  
T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users  
T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users  
T7 - Protection and improvement to footpath and highway network

**5.3 Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) policies;**

C5 – Developer contributions  
T1 – Traffic congestion  
T7 – Pedestrian footways  
T8 – Residential car parking spaces  
E1 – Green space and landscaping  
H1 – Number of new homes  
H2 – Tenancy mix  
H3 – Affordable housing  
H4 – Allocation of affordable housing  
H6 – Type of homes  
H7 – Size of homes  
H8 – Lifetime home standards  
D1 – Good design  
D3 – Secure by design  
HS1 – Site allocations  
HS6 – Former Bus Depot, Long Toll

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008  
Chilterns Buildings Design Guide

**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
3. Affordable housing and housing mix
4. Impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area
5. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers
6. Highway considerations
7. Other material considerations

The Principle of the Development

6.2 Planning permission was refused, and dismissed on appeal, for the redevelopment of the site for housing under application P08/E1276 for a number of reasons, including the loss of employment land and the location of the site outside of the main built up area of the village. However, since this decision there has been a material change in planning policy with the making of the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). Policy HS6 of the WNP allocates the application site for 14 dwellings subject to a number of criteria as set out within the Policy. As such the principle of the redevelopment of the site for the provision of 14 dwellings is acceptable.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

6.3 Policy HS6 of the WNP requires 7 out of the 14 dwellings proposed to be provided as affordable homes. The proposal provides for 10 affordable homes and therefore results in an overprovision of affordable housing on the site. However, the additional 3 affordable homes are being provided partly in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision at a site called Star Works in Stoke Row also owned by Millgate Homes and proposed for redevelopment under application P14/S2441/FUL for 10 open market dwellings. Previous planning permissions for housing development at Star Works have established the acceptability of no on-site affordable housing provision and previously the council has secured a sizeable financial contribution in lieu of this. However, if affordable housing cannot be provided on an application site it is the council's preferred approach that the housing is provided on an alternative site. The affordable housing provision under this application reflects this approach.

6.4 The proposal provides for a mix of units comprising 4 x 1 bed units, 4 x 2 bed units and 6 x 3 bed units. This is a general reflection of the housing needs requirements outlined under Policy CSH4 of the SOCS. Whilst the market housing is uniform and larger than the affordable housing units, it is still relatively modest and not disproportionate in scale.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Site and Surrounding Area

6.5 The site has been a blight for a number of years due to the vacant and derelict state of the existing buildings. The loss of the existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site has the potential to significantly improve the site's appearance and for it to make a positive contribution to its surroundings and the landscape qualities of the Chilterns AONB, of which the site forms a part.

6.6 The site is located beyond the edge of the main built up area of the village where housing development is more piecemeal and set within generous plots within a woodland setting. Long Toll is dominated by the woodland and the spaciousness of the few buildings in the vicinity allows for a strong rural setting to this part of the village.

The existing site is somewhat of an exception to this having regard to the scale and appearance of the buildings. The proposed housing would also be an exception to this as it would involve an intensive form of housing development more suitable to an urban location than the rural location of the application site. The developable area of the application site, which is slightly smaller than that shown under Policy HS6 is approximately 0.33ha, and therefore the density of the proposed housing development is approximately 42 dwellings per hectare.

- 6.7 The density of the development would be substantially greater than the housing in the vicinity and the intensity of the development is further increased by the area of land set aside for parking to meet Policy T8 of the WNP, which seeks that one parking space is proposed for each bedroom of new housing. Whilst a lower density of development allowing for a greater degree of space between buildings and soft landscaping would be more in keeping with the character and appearance of the surroundings, the policies of the WNP are clear in terms of the quantum of development expected on the site.
- 6.8 Having regard to Policy HS6 of the WNP it is expected that there will be new trees and hedging to screen the site. There is clearly insufficient space to ensure that new and existing planting screens the site in public views from Green Lane and Long Toll, however, there is some new hedging and tree planting proposed on the street frontage, which will in time help to soften the development in views from Long Toll. The proposal would retain the woodland on the southern part of the site, and with the woodland elsewhere in the locality there would be no long range views towards the site. Indeed, the development would not be visually prominent beyond the site's immediate environs.

#### The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.9 The application site lies adjacent to an existing dwelling to the north, Greenmore, and there are also existing dwellings located close to the site's eastern boundary along Green Lane. Modern office buildings and a County Council depot lie opposite the site to the west.
- 6.10 The side elevation of Plot 1 would lie against the proposed boundary with Greenmore. There would be a gap of approximately 1.5 metres to the boundary with Greenmore with a further gap of over 20 metres to the main elevation of Greenmore. Given this separation distance and the relationship between the proposed and existing dwellings Officers do not consider that the amenity of the occupiers of Greenmore would be adversely affected.
- 6.11 The development, particularly through its intensity, would alter the outlook from the front of the nearby dwellings along Green Lane. However, there would be a separation distance of over 50 metres between the development and the front of these neighbouring properties. Despite the presence of windows and terraces facing towards Green Lane, this separation distance as well as the intervening vegetation would ensure that there would be no significant loss of privacy as a result of the development.
- 6.12 All of the dwellings, including the flats, would be provided with private gardens. Some of the garden areas are below the recommended areas within the SODG, however, not to the level where Officers consider that the application should be resisted. The garden areas of the proposed dwellings are necessarily limited by the allocation of the site for 14 dwellings and the parking provision.

#### Highway Considerations

- 6.13 The proposal complies with Policy T8 of the WNP in relation to providing one parking

space for each bedroom of the development. The proposed affordable housing (Plots 1-10) would share a single access point off Long Toll, whilst the market housing would be provided with individual access points off Long Toll with a small shared parking area on the edge of the woodland to the south.

- 6.14 The Highway Liaison Officer has raised no objections to the proposal based on the parking and access arrangements. There is currently no footway provision between the site and footways within the main part of the village. The proposal includes the provision of a 2 metre wide footway to the front of the site and a 1 metre wide footway between the junction with Green Lane and Greenmore. The provision of these footways is a significant benefit helping to link the site with the local footway network in terms of providing safer and more convenient access to the services and facilities within the village.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.15 There are no objections from relevant consultees in relation to the impact of the development on wildlife, drainage or other technical matters although conditions are required to address some of the issues raised by consultees such as tree protection.

Planning obligations are required to secure the affordable housing provision and financial contributions towards district and county infrastructure requirements.

**7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The development accords with the requirements laid out within the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan and would respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

**8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**To delegate authority to grant planning permission to the Head of Planning, subject to the prior completion of Section 106 planning obligations with Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council to ensure infrastructure payments and the provision of affordable housing, and the following conditions:**

- 1. Commencement three years**
- 2. Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans.**
- 3. Proposed ground and floor levels to be agreed.**
- 4. Materials to be agreed.**
- 5. Landscaping scheme to be agreed and implemented prior to occupation.**
- 6. Tree protection in accordance with submitted details.**
- 7. Wildlife protection in accordance with approved details.**
- 8. Development in accordance with the contamination remediation strategy**
- 9. Code Level 4 construction.**
- 10. Parking and turning to be provided prior to occupation.**
- 11. Provision of vision splays.**
- 12. New footway provision.**
- 13. Construction traffic management plan.**
- 14. Travel plan to be agreed.**
- 15. Drainage to be agreed prior to occupation.**
- 16. Secure by design standards.**
- 17. Obscure glazing to windows in side elevations of Plots 1 and 11 – 13.**
- 18. Withdrawal of Class A permitted development.**
- 19. Working hours of construction.**

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