

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P14/S2441/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	6.8.2014
<b>PARISH</b>	STOKE ROW
<b>WARD MEMBERS</b>	Judith Nimmo-Smith
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Millgate Homes
<b>SITE</b>	Star Works Kit Lane Stoke Row, RG8 0TY
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Erection of 10 dwellings plus associated parking, access, and landscaping following demolition of the 2 existing dwellings and commercial buildings. (as amended by drawings 2116/PL 110C; 2116/PL 111B; 2116/PL 112A; 2116/PL 114C and 2116/PL 115A received on 23rd September 2014 to change garage position and fencing to Plot 10)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	Yes – as above
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	466960/184292
<b>OFFICER</b>	Tom Wyatt

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**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) lies within the parish of Stoke Row in a relatively isolated location approximately 1 km to the north-west of the centre of the village of Stoke Row and 2 km to the north-east of Checkendon. The application site area extends to some 1.9 hectares and comprised a substantial range of buildings which were constructed over a period of many years. There was approximately 2400 sq.m. of industrial floor space together with large areas of hardstanding for parking and servicing, open store spaces, portacabins and lorry trailers. Access is currently taken from the north-east of the site from Kit Lane which is a narrow road running between Stoke Row and Nuffield.

1.3 The site is surrounded by woodland and at the front of the site are a number of trees which act as a screen. The whole area lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**2.0 PROPOSAL**

2.1 The application seeks permission for the redevelopment of the site and the construction of 10 detached dwellings, resulting in a net gain of 8 dwellings on the site. This scheme is a revision to the scheme for nine dwellings granted planning permission under application P13/S0602/FUL. The site layout for this extant scheme is **attached** as Appendix C.

2.2 The majority of the proposed dwellings are substantial units comprising 5 or 6 bedrooms although there would be two smaller 3 bedroom units located in the north east corner of the site. 9 of the units would be accessed via an existing access with access to Plot 2A being via the second retained access.

2.3 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 Stoke Row Parish Council – Objects due to the lack of on-site affordable housing provision and the diminution of the design of the development compared to earlier schemes.

Highway Liaison Officer - No objections subject to conditions

Oxfordshire County Council Education and Property – Financial contributions requested towards education provision, museum resource, waste infrastructure, health care and libraries.

Health & Housing - Air Quality – No objections subject to condition.

Forestry Officer - No objections subject to conditions.

Countryside Officer - No objection subject to the protection of protected wildlife species

Environment Agency - No objections. Standing advice provided.

Health & Housing - Contaminated Land – No objection subject to condition

Neighbours – One letter of objection:

- The design of the development is out of keeping with the character of the AONB and the rural location
- The buildings are too bulky and top heavy with an excess use of brick
- The development has an urban character
- Lack of affordable housing provision

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P13/S0602/FUL](#) - Approved (18/11/2013)

Change of Use from B1 to C3. Demolish existing premises including associated storage enclosures and erect 9 no. new dwellings.

[P10/E1213](#) - Approved (03/02/2012)

Demolish existing premises including associated storage enclosures, and erect 7no. new dwellings.

[P11/E0086/EX](#) - Approved (10/03/2011)

Extension of time for planning permission P08/E0857 (Demolish 2 No existing dwellings and outbuildings; construct 2 No new dwellings and associated landscaping (as amended by additional information accompanying architect's letter dated 5 September 2008 and as clarified by email from agent dated 7 March 2011).

[P08/E0857](#) - Approved (10/09/2008)

Demolish 2 No existing dwellings and outbuildings; construct 2 No new dwellings and associated landscaping (as amended by additional information accompanying Architect's letter dated 5 September 2008).

[P07/E1003](#) - Approved (15/10/2007)

Temporary storage building.

[P07/E0122/RET](#) - Approved (14/03/2007)

Maintenance shed to replace garage/workshop (demolished). Retrospective. (As amended by Drawing No. 07 3 1A accompanying Agent's letter dated 5th March 2007).

**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

CSI1 - 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;**

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

E6 - Loss of employment uses

G2 - Protect district from adverse development

G3 - Development well served by facilities and transport

G4 - Protection of Countryside

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

T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008

Chilterns Buildings Design Guide

**5.3 National Planning Policy Framework**

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

Chilterns Buildings Design Guide

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

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

1. The principle of the development

2. Affordable housing

3. 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

6.2 The Principle of the Development

Planning permission remains extant for the redevelopment of the site to provide nine dwellings (net gain of seven) following the grant of planning permission under P13/S0602/FUL. This permission followed an earlier scheme for 7 dwellings on the eastern part of the site, which was granted planning permission in February 2012 and itself remains extant. As such there are currently two separate housing schemes that remain capable of being implemented as a fallback position to the applicant. This proposal is for a modest increase in the number of units as well as an increase in the floor area of residential development within the site, however, this does not change the fundamental nature of the proposal and given the fallback position and the lack of any material change to planning policy or change to the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings, I consider that the principle of the redevelopment of the site for housing remains acceptable.

Affordable Housing

- 6.3 Having regard to Policy CSH3 of the SOCS the proposal should provide for 40% affordable housing provision. As the proposal seeks a net gain of 8 dwellings, the proportionate affordable provision equates to 3.2 dwellings. Although the Council would normally expect the provision to be made on site, there may be circumstances where the Council and the Developer consider that the requirement for affordable housing could be made through a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing on another site in the Local Planning Authority's area.
- 6.4 The council accepted the site's lack of suitability for on-site affordable housing in respect of the previous planning applications and in this regard financial contributions for off-site provision were secured. The main reasons for the lack of on-site affordable housing were originally explained on the basis of the relatively high build costs of the original scheme approved under P10/E1213 and the site's relatively poor location in terms of access to local facilities and services by any other means to the private car. The site lies outside of the village of Stoke Row and there are no footways leading from the site to the village making pedestrian access to the village unfavourable.
- 6.5 Having regard to the sequential approach to the provision of affordable housing, the applicant is proposing that the affordable housing requirements of the development are met by providing three units off-site at Long Toll on the edge of Woodcote, which is a development subject to a separate planning application, P14/S2440/FUL, and through a financial contribution of £300,000. This proposal in relation to the financial contribution on top of the three off site units has been realised following extensive negotiations between council officers and the applicants and the Housing team considers that it represents an acceptable outcome for the provision of affordable housing in relation to the scheme.
- 6.6 The previous scheme secured a financial contribution of up to £775,000 in relation to a net gain of 7 dwellings. However, to utilise this contribution sites would have needed to have been secured as no actual affordable units would have been built out on the application site. The provision of the off site units now proposed is a considerable benefit arising from the development in lieu of on-site affordable housing, whilst the financial contribution would provide for affordable housing needs.

Housing Mix

- 6.7 Policy CSH4 of the SOCS seeks to ensure that a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households are sought. The current proposal only seeks to provide 2 three bed properties with the remainder being 5 bed or greater in size. This mix is contrary to Policy CSH4, however, on this occasion I do not consider that this would justify the refusal of planning permission. This is because both of the extant planning permissions have a greater proportion of larger dwellings but more importantly, due to the relatively unsustainable location of the site and its rural setting, I consider that a higher density development with a greater proportion of smaller units would not be appropriate.

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

- 6.8 The commercial buildings on the site are not particularly attractive and the redevelopment to provide housing remains appropriate. The layout of the proposed development is similar to the previously approved scheme under application P13/S0602/FUL and as such the altered impact on the site and its surroundings mainly relates to the design approach.
- 6.9 In relation to the layout of the development there are improvements over the previous scheme in relation to the softening of the proposed built form through a central planted area and moving the dwellings closer to the boundaries of the site thereby opening up a greater degree of open space within the centre of the site. This will visually help to break up the built form within the site. In addition the visual impact from Kit Lane will be softened by positioning units 1A and 2A further back from the highway edge than the dwelling previously approved in this location.
- 6.10 The proposed dwellings are substantial in size ranging from between 8 metres and 10 metres in height. However, the larger dwellings are located towards the rear of the site from Kit Lane and would be sited on lower ground. This would help to mitigate the visual impact of the development from public vantage points but in any case the proposed dwellings are not materially higher than those forming the already approved scheme.
- 6.11 The applicant has sought to respond to the local vernacular and has stated that the scheme has been designed to reflect advice contained within both the SODG and the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide. The applicant has cited several design elements as according with the above documents, such as the use of traditional materials (brick, flint and timber detailing), the provision of chimneys and the proportions and alignments of the proposed openings. The dwellings are of traditional design with good spacing between them and I consider that this design approach along with the use of traditional materials is an appropriate response to the site's rural location within the Chilterns AONB. The proposed dwellings are clearly large but not disproportionately so having regard to the overall site area and the resultant size of the individual plots. The density of the development is only approximately 5 dwellings per hectare, which is extremely low given that Policy CSH2 of the SOCS generally seeks to achieve a minimum density of 25 dwellings per hectare. In this case such a high density would not be appropriate given the rural character of the site and its surroundings and the site's location outside of the main village.

The Impact on the Amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.12 Due to the site's position within the countryside, the only neighbours affected are those occupying the existing residential properties to the west of the site. The rear elevations

of Plots 8 and 9 face towards the nearest neighbouring property. There would be a separation distance of approximately 28 metres between the rear elevation of Plot 9 and the western boundary and a separation distance of approximately 18 metres between the closest part of Plot 8 to the western boundary. Having regard to these distances and the existing and proposed planting on the western boundary of the site I do not consider that the development would cause any significant loss of light, privacy or outlook to the neighbouring occupiers.

- 6.13 All of the proposed dwellings have been laid out with spacious gardens well in excess of the SODG guidance. There are some areas within the layout where side facing windows will need to be obscure glazed to preserve mutual privacy and this requirement forms part of the suggested conditions.

#### Highway Considerations

- 6.14 Although the site is located in a relatively unsustainable location in transport terms, the proposed housing development should result in a lower level of traffic overall and a significantly reduced number of large commercial vehicles compared to the existing situation. The Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposal. The development utilises the existing accesses into the site as previously agreed and each dwelling would be provided with either detached or integral garaging as well as open parking and turning space meaning that there would be sufficient off-street parking for the development.

#### Other Material Considerations

- 6.15 There are no objections from the 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.
- 6.16 Updated planning obligations are required to secure the terms previously agreed with the County Council and to secure the affordable housing provision.

#### 7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The development involves the erection of ten houses in a relatively unsustainable rural location. However, the proposal would result in an improvement to the visual appearance of the site and a reduction in the number of traffic movements currently generated by the business. The development would not be unneighbourly or prejudicial to highway safety.

#### 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 the provision of affordable housing, and the following conditions:-**

1. **Commencement 3 years**
2. **Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans**
3. **Levels as shown on approved plans**
4. **Materials as shown on external materials schedule**
5. **Landscaping scheme to be agreed and implemented prior to occupation**

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6. Tree protection in accordance with submitted details
7. Code Level 4 construction
8. Habitats Regulations licence to be submitted
9. Visibility splays to be agreed
10. Parking and turning areas to be provided prior to occupation
11. Construction traffic management scheme
12. Contamination remediation to be carried out
13. Drainage to be agreed prior to occupation
14. Secured by design standards
15. Obscure glazing to specified first floor side facing windows
16. Details of balcony screens to be agreed

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