

APPLICATION NO.	P15/S3848/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	17.11.2015
PARISH	THAME
WARD MEMBERS	Jeannette Matelot David Dodds Nigel Champken-Woods
APPLICANT	Andrew Good
SITE	Goodson Industrial Mews, Wellington Street, Thame, OX9 3BX
PROPOSAL	Redevelopment of Goodsons Industrial Mews retaining existing commercial units 1A, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9 in employment use. Alteration of unit 1-4 to provide 4 no apartments at first floor. Demolition of units 5, 6, 7, 8 and erection of 8 houses, 2 maisonettes and 15 flats (29 residential units in total).
AMENDMENTS	As amended by drawings accompanying Agents letters dated 8 February 2016 and 11 February 2016 reducing unit numbers and amending design.
GRID REFERENCE	470991/205740
OFFICER	Emma Bowerman

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee as the officer's recommendation conflicts with the views of Thame Town Council.
- 1.2 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is a 0.61ha site, with a range of commercial units interspersed with areas of hardstanding. Access to the site is from Wellington Street. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with a cluster of other commercial buildings adjoining parts of the site.
- 1.3 The application site is within the defined town centre boundary and is within an area of archaeological constraint. Thame Conservation Area wraps around the east and south boundaries of the site, with a very small section of the conservation area extending into the site. The site is within the designated Thame Neighbourhood Plan area.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The existing commercial units on site are numbered from one to nine on Appendix A and are a mix of office and industrial units. It is proposed to retain unit nine, which is an office unit towards the east of the site. Units one to four are positioned along the western boundary of the site and contain a mix of office and industrial units. These would also be retained in commercial use as part of the development.
- 2.2 Unit five, which is an office building on the Wellington Street frontage, would be demolished as part of the proposals. Units six, seven and eight, which are mixed office / industrial units at the rear of the site would also be demolished. The building annotated on Appendix A as the Old DIY Shop has already been demolished.
- 2.3 The new build elements involve alterations to units one to four to create four residential

flats at first floor level. The ground floor of these units would be retained in office / industrial use.

- 2.4 A row of terraced properties are proposed towards the rear of the site in place of units six, seven and eight. This terrace would contain eight houses and two maisonettes. Vehicular access would be provided through the building to a rear parking courtyard. The accommodation in the terrace would be provided over three floors, with the second floor accommodation contained in the roof and served by dormer windows and roof lights.
- 2.5 An apartment block is proposed on the Wellington Street frontage to replace unit 5 and would extend back to where the Old DIY Shop was, prior to its demolition. This building would contain 14 apartments, with a separate house attached to the southern corner of the apartment block. The apartment block would be two storey towards Wellington Street and would increase in height further back into the site, with second floor accommodation contained predominantly in the roof space. An underground car park would serve the apartment building, which would also have an area of communal amenity space.
- 2.6 The housing mix outlined in the application is as follows:

	Market	Affordable	TOTAL
1 bed	4	1	5
2 bed	10	4	14
3 bed	8	2	10
TOTAL	22	7	29

- 2.7 The application plans were amended during the application process and this amendment included reducing the number of units in the apartment block by two. The other alterations included design changes to the apartment block and alterations to the window openings in apartments above units one to four.
- 2.8 The application plans are **attached** as Appendix B. The application is accompanied by a number of supporting documents, including a Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement. These are available to view on the council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk. The application was also accompanied by a confidential viability statement.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **Thame Town Council** - Recommend refusal for the following reasons:

- the mix does not derive from an objective assessment of the needs of Thame,
- overdevelopment that fails to respond positively to the context of the site or deliver a development of appropriate design quality, and would thus harm the character of the area,
- overlooking and perception of overlooking of 68 Wellington Street,
- lack of amenity space for future occupiers,
- parking strategy is not practical and realistic, would result in ad hoc parking and additional pressure for parking within and outside the site, to the detriment of pedestrian and highway safety,
- lack of contributions towards local services and facilities.

Also expressed disappointment that the 40% affordable housing requirement had not been met.

- 3.2 **Oxfordshire County Council Highways** - No objection subject to conditions and the completion of a legal agreement. Recommended conditions relate to travel pack, access details, vision splays, vehicular and cycle parking and a Construction Traffic Management Plan.
- 3.3 **Oxfordshire County Council Archaeology** - No objection subject to conditions requiring an archaeological written scheme of investigation and a programme of evaluation and mitigation.
- 3.4 **Oxfordshire County Council Infrastructure** - No objection subject to funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy towards necessary mitigation of schools, library, day care, museum and waste management.
- 3.5 **Thames Water** - No objections.
- 3.6 **Drainage Consultant (Monson)** – No objection subject to conditions requiring details of foul and surface water drainage.
- 3.7 **Leisure & Economic Development Officer** - Supportive of the redevelopment, improvements and modernisation to six of the units but apprehensive about the demolition of the four remaining units. Cautious of any loss of business accommodation in a town centre location.
- 3.8 **Contaminated Land Officer** – No objection subject to a condition requiring an assessment, investigation, and if necessary, remediation of any contamination.
- 3.9 **Air Quality Officer**– No objection subject to a condition requiring the agreement of measures to mitigate the impact on air quality.
- 3.10 **Environmental Protection Officer** – No objection subject to a condition to restrict hours of construction and approval of external lighting.
- 3.11 **Neighbour representations** – 4 received in objection to the development raising the following concerns:
- neighbour impact – overlooking, overshadowing, intrusive and overbearing,
 - height excessive, should be limited to two storey,
 - density too high – overdevelopment – cramped,
 - impact on character of conservation area,
 - dominance of hard surfacing and lack of space for landscaping,
 - scale out of keeping with surrounding area,
 - lack of parking provision and overspill parking onto road,
 - conflict between parking for residential units and business units,
 - impact on highway safety,
 - no details of how potential contamination will be dealt with,
 - impact of building works on adjoining foundations, drainage etc,
 - noise / disturbance during construction,
 - concern about the impact of the construction works on the operation of the existing businesses on site,
 - potential for underground car park to be used for anti-social behaviour,
 - contrary to Thame Neighbourhood Plan,
 - no need for further homes in Thame,

One received from a neighbouring occupier asking a number of questions about the details of the development.

One received in support from an occupier of an adjoining business unit. This consultation raises a few minor matters in relation to access for maintenance and location of bin store.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There have been numerous planning applications at the site. The majority of these are historical applications related to the industrial use of the site and are not of direct relevance to the current application.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 NPPF Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

5.3 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) 2027

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

CSC1 - Delivery and contingency

CSEN3 – Historic environment

CSH1 - Amount and distribution of housing

CSH2 - Housing density

CSH3 - Affordable housing

CSH4 - Meeting housing needs

CSI1 - Infrastructure provision

CSM2 - Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

CSQ3 - Design

CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

CSTHA1 - The Strategy for Thame

5.4 South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) 2011 saved policies

C6 - Maintain & enhance biodiversity

C8 - Adverse affect on protected species

C9 - Loss of landscape features

CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area

CON13 - Archaeological field evaluation

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

EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment

EP2 - Adverse affect by noise or vibration

EP4 - Impact on water resources

EP6 - Sustainable drainage

EP8 - Contaminated land

G2 - Protect district from adverse development

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

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

5.5 South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) 2008

Sections 3, 4 and 5

5.6 Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP)

H5 – Integrate windfall sites

H6 – Design new development to be of high quality

H7 – Provide new facilities

H8 – Provide affordable housing

H9 – Provide a mix of housing types

H10 – Provide a Thame specific affordable housing and dwelling mix strategy

WS7 – Retain small scale employment in town centre

WS13 – Support improvements to existing employment areas

GA1 – Provide good pedestrian and cycle connections

GA3 – Provision of cycle route

CLW2 – Actively involve local people in consultations

CLW 4 – Contributions required to fund additional healthcare facilities

ESDQ4 – Provide public open space on windfall sites

ESDQ10 – Sports facilities

ESDQ11 – Incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage systems

ESDQ12 – Drainage strategy

ESDQ14 – Produce a green living plan

ESDQ15 – Reinforce Thames's character

ESDQ16 – Development to relate to site and surroundings

ESDQ17 – Contribute towards distinctive character of town

ESDQ18 – Create a sense of place

ESDQ19 – Provide sufficient detail

ESDQ20 – Building style appropriate to historic context

ESDQ23 – Streets in developments to be pleasant places to be

ESDQ26 – Design to reflect traditional buildings

ESDQ27 – Consider functional elements at start of design process

ESDQ28 – Provide good quality outdoor space

ESDQ29 – Car parking in keeping with character

D1 – Provide appropriate new facilities

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

- The principle of the development, including:
 - the loss of employment land,
 - the provision of housing

- Matters of detail / technical issues, including:
 - affordable housing and housing mix,
 - design and layout,
 - neighbour amenity and amenity of future residents,
 - highway safety and traffic impact,
 - flood risk and surface / foul drainage,
 - archaeology,
 - environmental matters (air quality, contamination and noise).

- Infrastructure requirements, including:
 - on-site infrastructure to be secured under a legal agreement,
 - off-site contributions pooled under the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The principle of the development

The loss of employment land

- 6.2 The application proposals would involve the demolition of four of the buildings on site that are within employment use (office / industrial). Unit five is currently occupied. Unit six has been vacant since 2015, unit seven has been vacant since 2011 and unit eight since 2013.
- 6.3 Policy E6 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) resists the redevelopment or change of use of redundant land or buildings in employment use to non-employment uses. In Thame, this policy is applied to sites over 0.25 ha and buildings over 500 sq.m. As the site is 0.61ha and contains buildings over 500sq.m, this policy is relevant to the consideration of the application.
- 6.4 The loss of the employment land is permitted under policy E6 of the SOLP if the existing use is no longer economically viable and the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year. Policy WS7 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) takes a similar stance to policy E6 of the SOLP.
- 6.5 The supporting information accompanying the application outlines the marketing that has been carried out in relation to the vacant buildings (units six to eight) and I am satisfied that these vacant buildings have been marketed in excess of the requirements of policies E6 of the SOLP and WS7 of the TNP.
- 6.6 Given that unit five is still occupied, it is clear that this unit is still attractive as a commercial premises and it is regrettable that this unit would be lost as a result of the redevelopment proposals. A number of factors need to be weighed in the balance in considering whether the loss of this unit would be sufficient to withhold planning permission for the scheme.
- 6.7 One of the key factors to be taken into consideration is that the Government has introduced permitted development rights that allow for some offices to be converted to residential without the need for full planning permission. The applicant could seek to convert the buildings and this would result in a far less comprehensive development and no requirement to provide affordable housing.
- 6.8 In addition to the potential permitted development fall-back position, the Commercial Viability Report submitted with the application paints a positive picture of the available employment accommodation in the wider area and the TNP allocates a minimum of 2ha of land for new employment. Also, it is important to note that whilst the proposals would result in the loss of some employment buildings / land, the development would be mixed use, with the retention of other employment floor space and so the site overall would still contribute to the level of employment within Thame / the district.
- 6.9 Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) takes a more flexible approach to the loss of employment land. The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to approve applications for change to residential use from commercial where there is an identified need for additional housing and there are not strong economic reasons why the development would be inappropriate. Given that the council is currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a very clear identified need for additional housing.
- 6.10 Weighing up all of these matters, I have no objection to the loss of some of the commercial buildings / land on the site. Thame Town Council also have no objection in

principle to the loss of employment land subject to the long term retention of the employment uses shown to be retained as part of the scheme in units one to four and unit nine.

- 6.11 To achieve the retention of the commercial units of site, the Town Council have requested the removal of permitted development rights for the conversion of the retained commercial buildings to residential. Given that the retention of some of the commercial buildings provides some justification for the development, I consider this to be reasonable and have attached such a condition to my recommendation.

The provision of housing

- 6.12 The site is located within Thame town centre and is a highly sustainable location. Policies CSTHA1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (SOCS) and H5 of the TNP support housing on suitable redevelopment sites. Policy H4 of the SOLP also supports new housing within the main towns in the district subject to a number of environmental and amenity considerations, which are addressed below. On the basis of these policies, I consider that the principle of housing on the site is acceptable.

Matters of detail / technical issues

Affordable housing and housing mix

- 6.13 Policy CSH3 of the SOCS specifies that 40 per cent of new homes shall be affordable, with a tenure mix of 75 per cent social rented and 25 per cent intermediate housing. Policy H8 of the TNP repeats the requirements of policy CSH3 but emphasises that developments should meet the specific needs of Thame.
- 6.14 This is expanded on further in policy H10 of the TNP, which requires applications to be accompanied by a 'Thame specific affordable housing and dwelling mix strategy.' This strategy should set out the identified housing needs within Thame and demonstrate how the proposed development would meet those needs.
- 6.15 The application was accompanied by a financial appraisal which concluded that the balance of costs and values associated with bringing forward the site restricted the ability of the development to deliver a policy compliant scheme of 40% affordable provision. The viability appraisal was reviewed on behalf of the council by an independent consultant who concluded that there was potential for a higher contribution towards affordable housing than outlined in the submitted viability appraisal.
- 6.16 The difference in opinion about the level of affordable housing that can viably be delivered on the site was subsequently superseded by the (re) introduction of the vacant building credit in May 2016. The vacant build credit is a national policy that provides an incentive for brownfield development on sites containing vacant buildings. The 'credit' allows for the floor space of any vacant buildings demolished as part of a scheme to be deducted from the overall affordable housing contribution calculation.
- 6.17 Taking into account the vacant building credit, the proposal would need to provide seven affordable units and this amounts to 24 percent (a scheme providing 40 percent would be 11 units). Our housing development officer considers that the affordable units would be best delivered with the apartment block on Wellington Street provided as just rented units. This is because registered providers prefer to keep affordable tenures separate for management purposes.
- 6.18 In addition to the six rented apartments, one three bed house would be a shared

ownership property. This would result in a tenure mix that is slightly weighted towards rented accommodation but reflects the need to keep the apartment component in a single tenure and sits well with the very high demand for affordable rented properties.

- 6.19 Our housing development officer is satisfied that the proposed affordable provision meets local demands and I am satisfied that it represents a workable delivery strategy. A legal agreement would require the units to be built “tenure blind” in respect of external design and features so they are materially indistinguishable from the general market housing. Subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure the affordable housing provision, I consider that the scheme is acceptable in this respect and generally complies with the above policies.
- 6.20 The market mix is outlined at para.2.6 and provides a mix of one, two and three bedroom units. The application was not initially submitted with a Thame specific affordable housing and dwelling mix strategy but a housing mix statement was provided with the amended plans. I am satisfied that this provides sufficient justification for the mix, which is reflective of the sites position in the town centre.
- 6.21 A number of the proposed homes include a small study. The provision of home offices encourages home working and contributes towards a sustainable way of living. The studies also provide some flexibility in terms of providing a small bedroom to meet the individual needs of future occupiers. The parking requirements for the homes with studies would be the same regardless of whether the study is counted as a bedroom and so this added flexibility does not have any effect on other planning requirements.
- 6.22 Overall, the development would provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the needs of current and future households, in accordance with policy CSH4 of the SOCS. The layout also avoids large areas of uniform type and size, in accordance with policy H9 of the TNP. In my opinion planning permission could not be withheld on the basis of housing mix.

Design and layout

- 6.23 Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states, “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.*” Paragraph 58 of the NPPF requires new development to create a sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, respond to local character and create a safe and accessible environment. The design policies of the SOCS (particularly CSQ3) SOLP policies (particularly D1-D4) and a number of TNP policies echo these requirements.
- 6.24 The overall appearance of the site is of 1980’s style buildings arranged around areas of hardstanding. There is very limited landscaping and there is an opportunity to improve the overall character of the site. Given the limited contribution that the existing buildings have to the character and appearance of the area, I have no objection to the demolition of the buildings that are proposed for removal. The appearance of units one to four are dated and I have no objection to altering the design of this terrace. The proposals would create a more pleasing roof form for units one to four.
- 6.25 The apartment block would be two storey fronting Wellington Street, increasing to two and a half / three storey further back into the site. The second floor accommodation would be predominantly contained in the roof space and the highest part of the building would be around 11m. There are a range of building heights in the local area and I do not consider that the height of the building would be harmful to the overall character of this part of the town centre. The amended plans have reduced the overall bulk of the

apartment building, simplified the roof form and removed the majority of flat roof areas from the building. Although a large building, I consider that the design is effective in breaking up the elevations and creating some visual interest. The parking for the apartments would be underground and there would be sufficient space around the building for landscaping to soften the building.

- 6.26 The row of terraces at the back of the site would be traditional in appearance. The highest parts of the terrace would be around 11m and the accommodation in the roof would be facilitated through dormer windows and gables, which are of appropriate proportions to the building. The parking for these homes would be at the rear of the terrace with the bin store and cycle storage incorporated into the building. The conservation area runs along, and slightly within, the southern boundary of the site and our conservation officer is satisfied that the scale and appearance of the terrace would preserve the character of the conservation area, in accordance with policies CSEN3 of the SOCS and CON7 of the SOLP.
- 6.27 In terms of the overall level of development on the site, the development would result in a density of 47 dwellings per hectare. Although this is a high density, it is reflective of the position of the site within the town centre boundary and represents an efficient use of the land. With the inclusion of the underground car park, the development would provide an acceptable level of parking, there would be space for some landscaping and an area of public open space would be provided. All of the units would have access to either a terrace, communal or private garden.
- 6.28 Given these factors, I consider that the proposal would not represent an overdevelopment of the site and that the density would create a character appropriate to the sites context. In my opinion the scheme represents an appropriate response to the constraints of the site and its surroundings. I am satisfied that the development would achieve an appropriate layout, provide a mix of homes and adequate green space, generally meeting the NPPF objectives and the development plan policies outlined above.

Neighbour amenity and amenity of future residents

- 6.29 Policy D4 of the SOLP requires new development to secure an appropriate level of privacy for existing residents. The proposed flats above units one to four would be close to the offices in St Andrews Court. The amended plans have provided a solution to address mutual overlooking between the proposed flats and offices and this includes high level roof lights and small roof projections to incorporate side facing windows. In my opinion these amendments would ensure that there would be no significant impact on the adjoining occupiers in St Andrews Court.
- 6.30 The proposed apartment block would be to the east of Nos. 68 to 72 Wellington Street, with the greatest impact on No. 68 Wellington Street as this is the closest neighbour. Given the position of the apartment block and the path of the sun, I do not consider that the apartments would result in any unacceptable overshadowing of No. 68 Wellington Street. The apartment block would have some impact on outlook from the rear windows and garden of No. 68. I do not consider that this impact would be significant as the proposed building would be to the side, and a more open aspect would be retained to the rear of No.68.
- 6.31 In terms of overlooking, there would be a number of windows in the rear elevation of the apartment block that face the garden of No. 68. The majority of these serve stairways and halls and so would not be areas that would be used by the occupants for any period of time and the actual level of overlooking from these windows would be limited.

There would be one balcony on the rear of the apartment block. This would allow for views over the rear garden of No.68 but given there would be a separation of around 16m to the boundary with this neighbour, I do not consider that the balcony would result in any unacceptable level of overlooking of this neighbour.

- 6.32 The only rear window on the house attached to the apartments (diagonally to the rear of No.68) would serve a bathroom. I have recommended conditions requiring this to be obscure glazed and to remove permitted development rights for the insertion of other windows in this unit to help protect the privacy of No.68. Overall, although the apartment block would have some impact on No. 68, I do not consider that this would be significant and would not be sufficient to withhold planning permission. I have recommended a condition requiring details of boundary treatments to ensure that appropriate boundaries are provided between the site and neighbouring buildings.
- 6.33 The proposed terrace at the back of the site would be some 38m from main rear elevations of Nos. 68 to 72 Wellington Street. The council's back to back overlooking distance in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide (SODG) is 25m and so the development would achieve in excess of this guideline. This separation would be sufficient to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on Nos. 68 to 72 in terms of light, outlook and privacy.
- 6.34 The proposed terraced homes would be positioned further from the southern boundary than the existing commercial building. The distances achieved between the proposed terrace and the residential properties to the south would be in excess of the separation of 25m recommended in the SODG and I consider that the development would have an acceptable impact on these neighbours. I have recommended a condition requiring details of bin storage to ensure that these are provided in appropriate locations and in a manner that would have an acceptable impact on the commercial building adjoining the southern boundary of the site.
- 6.35 In my opinion the proposals would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with the above policies. Policy D3 of the SOLP requires all new homes to benefit from either a private garden, outdoor amenity space or a shared amenity area. Given that this development responds to the context of the site in a town centre location, some of the homes would not have the benefit of individual garden areas. However, the design has incorporated individual terraces and all new homes would have access to the public open space. On this basis, I consider that the development would create an appropriate living environment for future residents.

Highway safety and traffic impact

- 6.36 With respect to highway safety matters, the advice in the NPPF is that *Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe*. Policies D1, D2, T1 and T2 of the SOLP also require an appropriate parking layout and that there would be no adverse impact on highway safety. Policy ESDQ29 requires car parking to be in keeping with the character of the area.
- 6.37 The County Council highways officer has raised no objection to suitability of the access and is satisfied that the submitted transport assessment is broadly acceptable in its conclusions. The location of the site is highly sustainable and the County have requested a contribution towards public transport provision, which is consistent with other developments in the area.
- 6.38 A total of 83 parking spaces would serve the whole of the site and these would be for

the commercial units and the new homes. I am satisfied that the level of parking would be appropriate for the level of development on the site and the County highways officer has commented that, given the nature of the accommodation and location of the site, that the parking level would be in line with the guidance in the NPPF. As such, I consider that the development would be acceptable in terms of highway safety, in accordance with the above policies.

Flood risk and surface / foul drainage

- 6.39 The application site is within Flood Zone 1 (least probability of flooding) and as such, there are no objections to the development in relation to flood risk.
- 6.40 As is now standard practice, a detailed scheme for the site would need to incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) compliant strategy to ensure that all surface water run-off is accommodated within the confines of the site and discharged in a controlled manner. As required by the council's drainage consultant, the details of this can be secured by condition.
- 6.41 With regards to foul drainage, Thames Water have raised no objection to the development. There is infrastructure capacity to serve the development and details of foul drainage can be agreed through condition, as recommended by our drainage consultant.

Archaeology

- 6.42 Policy CON13 of the SOLP requires appropriate archaeological investigation for developments that affect sites of archaeological importance. The site is located within an area of some archaeological interest and the County archaeologist has recommended a staged programme of archaeological investigation ahead of any development. This can be achieved through conditions.

Environmental matters (air quality, contamination, noise)

- 6.43 Policy EP1 of the SOLP seeks to secure mitigation measures to ensure that developments do not have an adverse effect on the health and amenity of future occupiers. Based on the size of the proposed development, basic good practice design should be applied to this site in order to help mitigate against the air quality impacts and the potential cumulative effects of piecemeal developments, and to enable future proofing of the development.
- 6.44 I have recommended a condition requiring air quality mitigation measures to be agreed. Mitigation measures can include measures such as electric vehicle charging points and sustainable travel packs for residents. Subject to the imposition of this condition, I consider that the development would comply with the above policy.
- 6.45 Policy EP6 of the SOLP sets out the council's approach to development on contaminated land. Our contaminated land officer has considered the details submitted with the application and has recommended that adequate contaminated land investigations are carried out to ensure that the land is safe and suitable for its intended use. This can be achieved through condition.
- 6.46 Policy EP2 of the SOLP, requires development to not have an adverse impact on surrounding occupiers in terms of noise. In order to ensure that construction activities are carried out within reasonable hours, I have recommended a construction hours

condition, and this is in accordance with our environmental health officer's recommendation. Given the proximity of the site to neighbouring properties and that demolition works that would be involved in the redevelopment works, I have also recommended a condition requiring the agreement of measures to reduce noise and dust during construction.

- 6.47 In accordance with the consultation from our environmental health officer and policy EP3 of the SOLP, I have recommended a condition requiring approval of external lighting. Given that the flats may require security lighting, I consider it reasonable to attach this condition to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupants.

Infrastructure requirements

On-site infrastructure to be secured under a legal agreement

- 6.48 On-site infrastructure can be secured through a legal agreement under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The plans show an area of landscaped public open space between the apartments and retained commercial unit nine. This could be dual purpose, providing open space for residents and employees of the retained commercial units.
- 6.49 Although below the size standard usually required under policy R6 of the SOLP, I am satisfied that this level of green space is appropriate to the characteristics of site. It is usually preferable for developments to provide children's play equipment but given the constraints of this town centre location and the number of units proposed, I consider it reasonable that play area is not incorporated into this development.
- 6.50 In accordance with the council's S106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, the following additional financial contributions would be required towards on-site infrastructure:
- Street naming and numbering - £215.60
 - Provision of cycle bins - £4930
 - Monitoring fee - £565.95
- 6.51 As required by the County highways officer, the following site specific highways contributions would also need to be secured under the S106:
- Public transport contribution - £25,800
 - Provision of additional double yellow lines - £2,500
- 6.52 I consider that these contributions / obligations accord with policy CSI1 of the SOCS, which requires new development to be supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. They accord with the relevant tests in the NPPF as they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, are directly related to the development and are fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.53 There are a number of TNP policies that seek to secure financial contributions towards types of infrastructure. This includes contributions towards a Green Living Co-ordinator (policy ESDQ14), healthcare facilities (policy CWL4) and the Thame to Haddenham cycle route (policy GA3). As these are contributions that will be pooled towards off-site infrastructure, they can no longer be secured under a S016.

Off-site contributions pooled under the Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.54 The council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1 April 2016. With the exception of the affordable housing, the additional floor space would be CIL liable at a rate of £150 per sq.m. The money collected from the development can be pooled with contributions from other development sites to fund a wide range of off-site infrastructure to support growth, including schools, transport, community, leisure and health facilities.
- 6.55 Under the CIL regulations, the Town Council will receive a proportion of CIL money. This can be spent on infrastructure projects that are priorities for the community. As the Town Council have a Neighbourhood Plan in place, they would receive 25 percent of the CIL money collected from the development (as oppose to 15 percent without a Neighbourhood Plan). The Town Council could chose to spend it on local projects or contribute towards strategic infrastructure.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 Although the loss of some of the employment land at Goodson Industrial Mews is regrettable, this loss is justified in this case and the proposal would provide for much needed housing, including affordable housing. The proposal generally complies with the relevant development plan policies and would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the site or the surrounding conservation area, would not be unneighbourly, would not result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety, and would secure an appropriate level of infrastructure to support the development. When considered against the development plan as a whole, the proposal would represent a sustainable form of development and would boost housing numbers.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

To delegate authority to grant planning permission to the head of planning subject to:

i) The prior completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure the affordable housing, financial contributions and other obligations stated above; and

ii) The following conditions:

- 1. Commencement three years – full planning permission.**
- 2. Approved plans.**
- 3. Removal of permitted development rights to convert retained commercial buildings.**
- 4. Materials to be agreed.**
- 5. Levels to be agreed.**
- 6. Landscaping scheme and management to be agreed.**
- 7. Rear bathroom in house 15 to be obscure glazed.**
- 8. Removal of permitted development rights for further windows in rear of 15.**
- 9. Details of boundary treatments to be agreed.**
- 10. Details of bin storage to be agreed.**
- 11. Access in accordance with highway authority's specification.**
- 12. Vision splay to be provided / retained.**
- 13. Car parking spaces to be provided and retained.**
- 14. Cycle parking facilities to be provided.**
- 15. Construction traffic management plan.**
- 16. Surface water drainage to be agreed.**
- 17. Foul drainage works to be agreed.**
- 18. Preparation of an archaeological written scheme of investigation.**

19. Staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation.
20. Air quality mitigation to be agreed.
21. Contaminated land investigation / remediation to be agreed.
22. Construction hours restriction.
23. Measures to reduce noise and dust to be agreed.
24. Details of external lighting to be agreed.

Author: Emma Bowerman
Contact No: 01235 422600
Email: planning@southoxon.gov.uk