

APPLICATION NO.	P16/S3254/FUL and P16/S3255/LB
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION and LISTED BUILDING CONSENT
REGISTERED	5.10.2016
PARISH	CHOLSEY
WARD MEMBER(S)	Jane Murphy Pat Dawe
APPLICANT	Thomas Homes Ltd. & Homes & Communities Agency
SITE	Former Farm Buildings and Pharmacy, Cholsey Meadows (Former Fairmile Hospital), Off Reading Road, Cholsey, OX10 9HJ
PROPOSAL	Conversion of existing buildings to provide 11 x 1 bedroom starter homes, 6 x 2 bedroom starter homes and 1 commercial unit (salon) and a farm shop, together with, parking, access and landscaping.
AMENDMENTS	As clarified and revised by marketing information and offer for farm shop (drawing no 964.04B) accompanying agents emails dated 13 and 22 February 2017.
GRID REFERENCE	459786/186157
OFFICER	Sharon Crawford

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the recommendation to grant planning permission conflicts with the views of the Cholsey Parish Council.
- 1.2 The buildings are part of the former Fairmile Hospital complex which was redeveloped as a new residential community following planning permission and listed building consent in 2010 (refs P09/W1313 and P09/W1314/LB). The 2010 permissions allowed for the use of the old farm buildings as offices and a café/restaurant/shop and for the use of the old pharmacy as a day nursery for the care of children.
- 1.3 The farm buildings are curtilage listed buildings and the old pharmacy is listed in its own right as part of the main hospital. They are located within the grade II listed Registered Parks and Gardens which surround the former hospital building.
- 1.4 The site is identified on the Ordnance Survey Extract **attached** at Appendix 1.
- 1.5 This application follows on from pre-application advice in 2016 (ref P16/S0023/PEJ).

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion of existing buildings (old farm buildings and the old pharmacy) to provide 11 x 1 bedroom starter homes, 6 x 2 bedroom starter homes and 1 commercial unit (salon) and a farm shop, together with, parking, access and landscaping.
- 2.2 The application has been amended to include the provision of a farm shop and to provide additional information in respect of the marketing of the buildings. The shop is

to be provided if there is a market for the shop and only 10 one bed units would be provided in that instance.

- 2.3 Reduced copies of the plans accompanying the application are **attached** at Appendix 2. Full copies of the plans and consultation responses are available for inspection on the Council's website at www.southoxon.gov.uk.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

Full responses can be found on the Council's website

- 3.1 Cholsey Parish Council The Parish Council is concerned that this will remove any promised retail offer from the Fairmile site. It is interesting to note that the developer has never carried out a retail viability exercise. The removal of the nursery removes forever the possibility of a new childcare facility in this growing village which, despite the developer's claims of nearby nurseries, would provide a much needed service. All local providers tell us that they are over or at capacity. There has been no engagement with Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan or local community about these proposals. The Parish Council consider that for the above reasons this proposal goes against the developer's much vaunted desire to provide a 'sense of community'. The Parish Council is also concerned that there is insufficient parking on the site and consider that the proposal is over-development of an already crowded site. This plan will create a gap in the safe pedestrian access to the main part of the village from the development which has only recently been completed.
- 3.2 OCC (Highways) No objection subject to conditions
- 3.3 Conservation Officer I am satisfied that the proposed conversion schemes are a sensitive response to the historic fabric of both the primary listed buildings and the curtilage listed buildings. In addition, the proposals will match the high quality finishes of the conversion works elsewhere across the site.
- 3.4 Historic England The applications should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again on this application.
- 3.5 The Gardens Trust We have considered the information provided in support of the above application and on the basis of this do not wish to comment on the proposals.
- 3.6 Economic Development South Oxfordshire District Council aims to support the local economy with the strategic objective to "create the right conditions for economic growth, so that businesses, residents and workers can prosper" and the corporate priority to "champion our SMEs in South Oxfordshire". The proposed application could help achieve this.
- The applicant has provided a detailed marketing strategy that clearly demonstrates that an active and comprehensive marketing campaign

has been conducted by VSL & Partners since 2012. Detailed records have been provided of all enquiries and inspections with reasons for lack of progress identified. The reasons for lack of progress are justified, particularly the site being an inappropriate size. This is consistent with findings of the Council's draft business and innovation strategy which outlines the needs of small and medium enterprises in the district. A significant issue identified is the need to secure premises of the right size in the right location and for an appropriate price.

The applicant advises that Thomas Homes is prepared to offer the farm shop space rent free for a period of up to five years. If a suitable tenant was found, the shop will have a positive impact on the local economy and allow a local farmer or SME to diversify their business.

For the reasons outlined above, I confirm that an active marketing campaign of the site has been undertaken.

- 3.7 Countryside Officer As set out in Bioscan's letter one of the buildings subject to this application contained a minor bat roost which was destroyed under licence and mitigation incorporated into the refurbished building. The current proposals should not impact on the new roosting site however, as bats are a highly mobile and opportunistic species I recommend that an informative is used if planning permission is granted.
- 3.8 Forestry Officer No objection.
- 3.9 Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan steering group This site was allocated for employment uses when Cholsey Meadows was designed in order to help provide a more sustainable community in this relatively isolated housing development. The Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is still of the view that this would be the best use for this area. Cholsey residents are preparing a neighbourhood plan which will be ready for submission by June 2017, this plan will identify sites for new housing as required by the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan 2032 as far as information is known. This proposal will pre-empt and prejudice the preparation of the Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to allocate sufficient sites for housing in accordance with the community's views and to retain employment areas in the village. The Planning Statement correctly identifies that Local Plan 2011 policy E6 provides the most relevant detailed policy context for changes of use from employment to other uses. Unfortunately however the applicant has not referred to the guidance document which sits alongside policy E6 The applicant should be asked to supply all the information set out in the E6 guidance note. It is our view that the rental price of £14 – 16 per sq ft is overpriced for this rural area and we would wish to see comparative examples of premises where this rent is being achieved. We also understand that the parish council is aware of at least 1 potential occupier who has been turned away by the agents without their enquiry being properly considered. The information from the agents should detail all enquiries received and the reasons for them falling away. Now that the majority of Cholsey Meadows is occupied it has become clear how the site works and relates to the village and facilities which residents wish to use. A particular difficulty has been the isolation of

the site created by its location to the west of the A329 and the difficulty residents have in crossing this road safely. The only central island created for crossing the road is outside the entrance to this employment area, this provides access to the field track leading to Ilges Lane. The track is to be improved but even as it provides a pleasant and safe link to the main part of the village. The road through this part of the site is therefore well used by families and children walking to the village and helps to create a more sustainable environment. The layout of units proposed does not take account of the high pedestrian use of this roadway and does not provide a safe link to the A329 road crossing. Many parking spaces require reversing into the roadway and in one area actually use the identified footpath. There are no off-road turning areas so most residents will be reversing into the access road each time they use a space. The proposal is an overdevelopment of this corner of the site and does not provide a safe environment for any road users. There is already inadequate parking for the housing on Cholsey Meadows and this proposal will exacerbate this problem. Whilst the provision of low cost housing would undoubtedly be of benefit, the loss of potential employment floorspace and the problems with the detailed layout of this proposal outweigh the benefit and the steering group is of the view that the application is not sustainable development and should be refused.

3.10 Neighbours
Objecting (32)

There is a real need for more small and affordable properties in Oxfordshire.

There is not enough parking as it stands which leads to people parking on the roads. It is often the case that the roads are so congested there is no way an ambulance or fire engine would be able to get access to parts of the building.

We moved onto the development and were excited about the plans to convert these buildings into a farm shop as our nearest shop is not conveniently located for us. I also thought it would be a great community hub to meet and socialise with our neighbours. I oppose their application on two grounds.

1. There has been a lot of interest in taking on the premises as a farm shop and the developer has put a number of obstacles in their way to ensure it isn't a viable option. This demonstrates an unwillingness from day one to fulfil the promises they made to all residents buying into the development or worse, they never intended to fulfil this promise and chose to 'wait it out' until they could legitimately apply to convert to residential use for a profit. They presumably obtained planning consent to develop the farm because they were providing facilities that the village desperately needs. These needs have not evaporated nor has the interest in running a commercial business on this site, rather they have become financially impossible due to the restrictions and high rents proposed. There is no safe crossing on the Reading Road for a family (with a buggy) to access the village. I rely on my car to drive to buy groceries, something I didn't foresee when we bought our new home as I was told I could walk to the farm shop that would be up and running by the end of 2014.

2. There is a huge parking problem on the development. Adding a further 11 flats is only going to exacerbate this problem! Not only will 11 further resident parking spaces need to be found, but visitor bays

also. I hope this application is refused and Thomas Homes are told to fulfil the initial planning conditions to provide a much needed and wanted farm shop and other commercial opportunities on the fair mile. Otherwise it makes a mockery of the whole planning system.

Amended details

While it is encouraging to see that provision has been made for a hair salon and, potentially, a further small retail space, the rest of the residential plans still exist. The VSL states clearly that one of the main reasons there has been no uptake on renting either retail or office space is because the site remains undeveloped. No potential tenant will commit to renting while the site remains as it is. Thomas Homes should put their hands in their deep pockets and develop the site as originally promised and then go to market for potential retail tenants. If they have no take up after two years then, yes, apply for change of use. This site hasn't been given a fair chance because Thomas Homes only ever intended this to be residential and have not committed fully and properly to the original promised plan. The residential planning permission should still be refused.

Neighbour
approve (1)

There is a real need for more small and affordable properties in Oxfordshire. Many new developments mainly comprise of 2+ bedroom properties and those aiming to get onto the property ladder face years of saving to do so.

The help-to-buy scheme now aids those saving and properties such as the 1 and 2 bed starter homes proposed, give the next generation further help to get onto the property ladder quicker as house prices continue to increase.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 [P09/W1314/LB](#) - Approved (30/07/2010)

Demolition of curtilage listed and other buildings. Extensions, alterations, refurbishment and conversion of main buildings to form 130 homes (including 39 Affordable Homes), community uses, offices, nursery and leisure uses. Retention of Chapel in existing D1 use class. Conversion (including alterations and extension) of former farm buildings to form offices, cafe/restaurant/shop.

[P09/W1313](#) - Approved (30/07/2010)

Demolition of curtilage listed and other buildings. Extensions, alterations, refurbishment and conversion of main buildings to form 130 homes (including 39 affordable homes), community uses, offices, nursery and leisure uses. Retention of chapel in existing D1 use class. Conversion (including alterations and extension) of former farm buildings to form offices, cafe/restaurant/shop

and retention and refurbishment of cricket pavilion.

Erection of 224 new homes (including 67 affordable homes and 5 live work units) and allotment buildings. Provision of facilities for outdoor sport and play. Alterations to vehicular accesses, car and cycle parking and provision for the storage of refuse and recycling of waste. Provision of new roads, footpaths and lighting, including new SUDS drainage

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy policies

CS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CSB1 - Conservation and improvement of biodiversity

CSS1 - The Overall Strategy

CSC1 – Delivery and Contingency
CSEM1 – Supporting a Successful Economy
CSEN3 - Historic environment
CSQ2 - Sustainable design and construction
CSQ3 - Design
CSH1 - Amount and distribution of housing
CSH3 – Affordable Housing
CSH4 - Meeting housing needs
CSI1 - Infrastructure provision
CSR1 - Housing in villages
CSS1 – The overall strategy

- 5.2 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 policies;
- C8 - Adverse effect on protected species
 - CON3 - Alteration to listed building
 - CON4 – Change of use listed building
 - CON5 - Setting of listed building
 - CON7 - Proposals in a conservation area
 - CF1 - Protection of recreational or essential community facilities
 - D1 - Principles of good design
 - D3 - Outdoor amenity area
 - D4 - Reasonable level of privacy for occupiers
 - D7 – Access for all
 - D10 – Waste management
 - E6 – Loss of employment uses
 - EP1 - Adverse affect on people and environment
 - EP4 - Impact on water resources
 - G2 - Protect district from adverse development
 - H4 - Housing sites in towns and larger villages outside Green Belt
 - T1 - Safe, convenient and adequate highway network for all users
 - T2 - Unloading, turning and parking for all highway users

South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016

- 5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

Emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2032

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies with the NPPF.

Emerging Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan.

The Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated in June 2016. The Neighbourhood Plan is currently at the draft stage of development. At this stage no weight can be afforded to it in the determination of this planning application.

- 5.4 **Other Relevant Legislation**

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010 section 149

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The main issues in this case are;

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- NPPF policies
- Loss of employment and community facilities
- S106 implications
- Implications from the original conditions
- Highways issues
- Parking issues
- Impact on the character and setting of the listed buildings
- Provision of gardens
- Provision of affordable housing
- Starter homes
- Mix of units
- Ecology
- Neighbour impact
- CIL

All of these matters relate to the consideration of the planning application only bullet point 8 relates to the consideration of the listed building consent application.

6.2 **Principle.**

The 2010 planning permission and listed building consent allow for the conversion of the old farm buildings for use as offices, café/restaurant and shop and the old pharmacy for use as a day care nursery. Works on the conversion of these buildings commenced but has not been completed. The current applications seek planning permission and listed building consent for the use of the buildings for primarily residential purposes, but also include a salon with office/store and a small farm shop (should there be a demand). The principle of redevelopment and alternative uses has, therefore, already been established by the existing planning permission and listed building consent. The question in the case of the current applications is whether the proposed alternative uses also accord with the development plan policies.

6.3 **NPPF Policies.** The most relevant paragraphs of the NPPF in the consideration of these applications are;

- Paragraph 14 which establishes that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, **granting permission unless:**
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - **specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.**
- Paragraph 22 of the NPPF makes clear that “Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations

should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities”.

- Paragraph 47 requires local planning authorities to boost significantly the supply of housing.
- Paragraph 51 requires that Local planning authorities identify and bring back into residential use empty buildings. They should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.
- Paragraph 70 emphasises the importance of planning positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- Paragraph 132 assigns great weight to the conservation of a designated heritage asset
- Paragraph 134 makes clear that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

6.4 **Loss of employment and community facilities.** Saved policies CF1 and E6 of the SOLP aim to protect employment sites and essential community facilities as follows:

Policy E6

Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of redundant land or buildings in employment or service trade use to non-employment uses will be permitted if:

- (i) **the site is less than 0.25 ha and buildings under 500 sq.m and in the towns of Didcot, Henley, Thame, or Wallingford; or**
- (ii) **the existing use is no longer economically viable and the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year for that and any other suitable employment or service trade uses.**

And

Policy CF1

Proposals that result in the loss of a recreation facility or an essential community facility or service, through change of use or redevelopment, will not be permitted unless:

- (i) suitable alternative provision is made for the facility (or similar facilities of equivalent community value) on a site elsewhere in the locality, or
- (ii) in the case of recreational facilities, it is not needed, or
- (iii) in the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.

- 6.5 The Council aims to support the local economy with the strategic objective to “create the right conditions for economic growth, so that businesses, residents and workers can prosper” and the corporate priority to “champion our Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in South Oxfordshire”. The approved offices, nursery, restaurant and shop would provide for employment opportunities and their loss will only be acceptable if the facilities have been marketed for at least a year and for no demand to have been found.
- 6.6 Objectors to the planning application have claimed that there has been a lot of interest in taking on the nursery and shop premises but the developer has put a number of obstacles in the way to ensure they were not a viable option. The applicant has provided a detailed marketing strategy with the application and further additional marketing information during the course of the application. The council’s economic development team have been consulted on the marketing information. They have concluded that an active and comprehensive marketing campaign has been conducted by VSL & Partners since 2012. Detailed records have been provided of all enquiries and inspections with reasons for lack of progress identified. The reasons for lack of progress are justified, particularly the site being an inappropriate size. This is consistent with findings of the Council’s draft business and innovation strategy which outlines the needs of small and medium enterprises in the district. A significant issue identified is the need to secure premises of the right size in the right location and for an appropriate price.
- 6.7 Thomas Homes has found that the only unit where there is demand is the hairdressing salon and that has been retained in the proposal. In addition as a result of comments made on the application, the applicant is prepared to offer a farm shop unit rent free for a period of up to five years (in lieu of one of the 1 bed units). If a suitable tenant is found, the shop will have a positive impact on the local economy and allow a local farmer or SME to diversify their business. In the circumstances, it is your officer’s view that the applicant has provided sufficient evidence to show that the buildings have been marketed adequately and that there is no viable demand for the approved employment uses and community facilities other than the salon and farm shop.
- 6.8 **S106 implications.** The 2010 planning permission is the subject of agreements between the developers and South Oxfordshire District and Oxfordshire County Councils. The agreements relate to a number of issues including the phasing of the development, highway works, the provision of affordable homes, the provision of community facilities allotments and open space, community trust, and a number of financial contributions (cycling, libraries, education, public transport, museum, social and healthcare, youth centre, travel plan, art, recreation and sport, community safety, street naming, recycling and waste, and maintenance). The S.106 agreement between the District Council and the developers provides in Clause 12 that nothing in the agreement prevents the development of the site in accordance with a new planning permission. The buildings to which this application relates are noted in the S.106 agreement as being the “commercial units” and do not form part of the community facilities provided. As such there are no obstacle to the current application in the legal

agreement.

6.9 Implications of conditions from the 2010 planning permission.

Condition 49 of the 2010 planning permission requires the following;

Within 12 months of commencement of development a plan for the marketing of the commercial premises within the development shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The commercial premises shall be marketed in accordance with the approved Plan continuously from the date of approval of the Marketing Plan until the date 12 months after first occupation of the final Dwelling unless an earlier date is agreed in writing by the Council.

Reason: To encourage a mixed use development on the site in accordance with Policies RUR 10, E8 and CON4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.

The marketing information submitted with the application clearly shows that there has been compliance with this condition and there are, therefore, no obstacles to the current application as a result of conditions on the original application.

6.10 Highways issues.

With respect to highway safety matters the advice from Central Government set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is as follows:

Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe.

The term severe is locally interpreted as situations, which have a high impact, likely to result in loss of life, or a higher possibility of occurrence with a lower impact.

6.11 Substantial work to improve the accesses has been undertaken as part of the 2010 planning application. In addition substantial financial contributions have been made in respect of highway matters. The proposals to create 17 new dwellings (or 16 if the farm shop is provided) (11 (10)x 1 bedroom units and 6 x 2 bedroom units), will likely see the number of trips decrease, when compared to the already permitted use of a café, restaurant and offices. The permitted use will attract larger numbers of people to the site and often have their majority of trips centred on peak times. Particularly, for B1 use, these traffic flows can be unidirectional in nature, with most people travelling to the site in the am peak and then away from the site in the peak pm. The extra trips created by these dwellings will also be distributed northwards and southwards along the A429, towards Wallingford and Reading, respectively. In the circumstances the change from commercial uses to residential will not have a detrimental impact upon the highway from a traffic and safety point of view.

6.12 Parking issues.

Many of the objectors have commented that there are not enough parking facilities for existing residents as it stands which leads to parking on the roads. Objectors are concerned that the roads are so congested that access for ambulances or fire engines would be difficult to parts of the building. There is also concern that that the parking pressure for the proposed residential uses will be in the evenings and at weekends rather than during the working day as it would be for the permitted uses.

6.13 The proposal includes the provision of one space per unit for the 4 units in the old pharmacy (2 x 2 bed and 2 x 1 bed units) and 19 car parking spaces for the 13 units (or 12 with farm shop) in the old farm buildings (4 x 2 bed and 8 x 1 bed (or 7 with farm shop)). Whilst, neighbour concerns are acknowledged, the provision of parking for the units is considered acceptable in this sustainable location with good access to public

transport.

6.14 **Impact on the character and setting of listed buildings and the Historic park and garden.**

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

The farm buildings are curtilage listed buildings and the pharmacy is listed in its own right as part of the main hospital. They are located within the grade II listed Registered Parks and Gardens which surround the former hospital building. The conservation officer, Historic England and The Gardens Trust are satisfied that the proposed conversion schemes are a sensitive response to the historic fabric of both the primary listed buildings and the curtilage listed buildings. In addition, the proposals will match the high quality finishes of the conversion works elsewhere across the site and secure a viable alternative to bring the buildings back into use.

6.15 **Provision of gardens.** Minimum standards for new residential development are recommended in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and in Policy D3 of the Local Plan. In this case a minimum of 50 square metres of private garden area would be required for each 2 bedroom units and 35 square metres for one bed units. Some of the units have their own private garden areas, other have small paved terraces and are below the required standard. However, there is easy access to the extensive communal gardens and open areas on site and access to the river which more than makes up for any lack of private space.

6.16 **Affordable housing.** Policy CSH3 of the SOCS requires that 40% of affordable housing will be sought on sites where there is a net gain of three dwellings. The site has already delivered the required planning policy amount for affordable housing through the 2010 planning application. However, with the provision of new housing through the conversion of buildings there is a further requirement for affordable housing. This proposal is for all the units to be Starter Homes which now fall within the definition of affordable housing (Housing and Planning Act 2016).

6.17 **Starter homes.** The Government aims to deliver 1 million new homes to boost housing supply significantly and have committed to building 200,000 high quality starter homes exclusively for young first time buyers under 40, to be sold at a minimum of 20% below the open market value capped at a price of £250k (outside Greater London). The Housing and Planning Bill sets out the statutory framework for the delivery of starter homes, and will be supported by changes to national planning policy, which were subject to public consultation ending on 22 February 2016. The policies to bring starter homes forward have not been brought into effect to date.

The detailed implementation of key aspects for the statutory framework for starter homes will be set out in regulations made by the Secretary of State, including:

- elements of the definition of a starter home;
- the starter homes requirement (regulations specifying the number of starter homes to be delivered and the types of site on which the requirement should be imposed, such as those of a reasonable size) and
- the reporting arrangements for starter homes delivery.

It is important to secure the homes as 'starter homes' with the age limit, a 20% discount

and a capped price of £250K as, otherwise, they cannot be classed as Starter Homes and we would then need to seek a percentage of the units as affordable houses. As such, a condition is recommended to ensure that the units are provided as starter homes in accordance with the limitations and definition set out in the Housing and Planning Act and any subsequent enabling legislation.

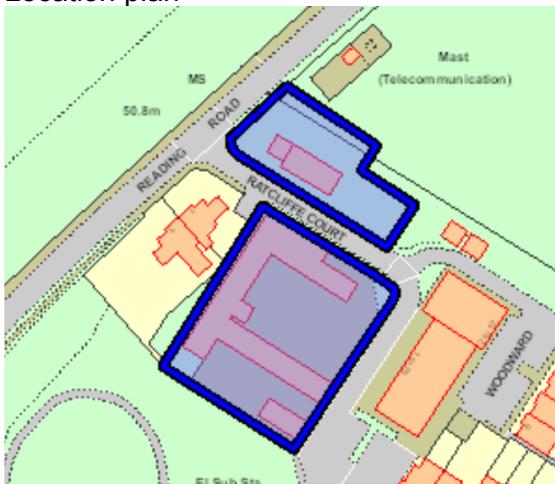
6.18 **Housing mix.** Policy CSH4 of the SOCS requires a mix of units to be required in any scheme. This application seeks to deliver small units for starter homes and the mix is limited to 1 and 2 bedroom units only. However, given the range of property sizes across the site and the need for small units there is no objection in this case.

6.19 **Ecology.** One of the buildings subject to this application contained a minor bat roost which was destroyed under licence and mitigation incorporated into the refurbished building. The current proposals should not impact on the new roosting site however, as bats are a highly mobile and opportunistic species an informative should be added to any planning permission.

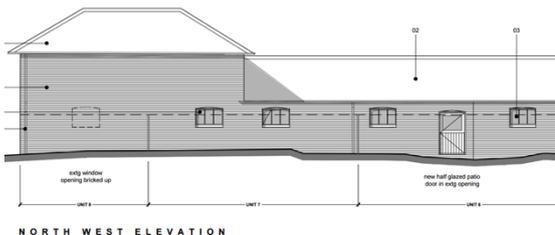
6.20 **Neighbour impact.**

Old farm buildings. The old farm buildings are in close proximity to an existing pair of semi-detached properties 1 and 3 Reading Road. There are no extensions proposed to the old farm buildings and for the most part existing openings will be used for windows and doors or will be blocked. A pedestrian walkway providing access to the rear units 5, 6, 7 and 11 is proposed but windows and the access will be screened from 1 and 3 by a 1.8 m fence on the boundary. There are also no windows proposed in the nearest first floor block adjacent to 1 Reading Road. As such the neighbour impact is considered acceptable.

Location plan



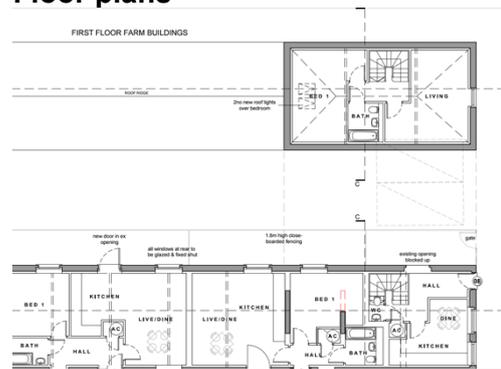
Elevation to 1 and 3 Reading Road



Layout



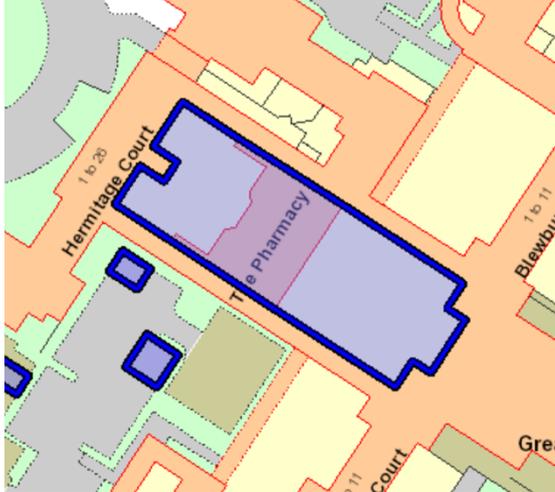
Floor plans



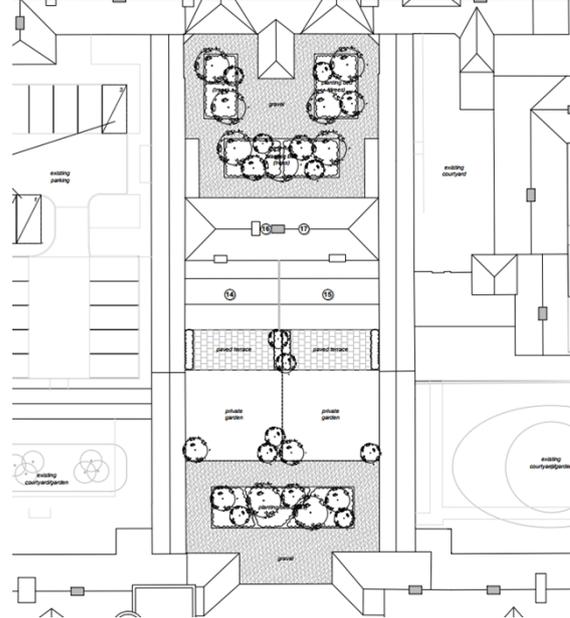
6.21 The Old Pharmacy is surrounded by existing flats. There are no extensions proposed to

the old farm buildings and for the most part existing openings will be used for windows and doors. Use of the old pharmacy for 4 flats is likely to be a less disruptive use of the building than the approved nursery in terms of noise generation, parking and disturbance during pick up and drop off times.

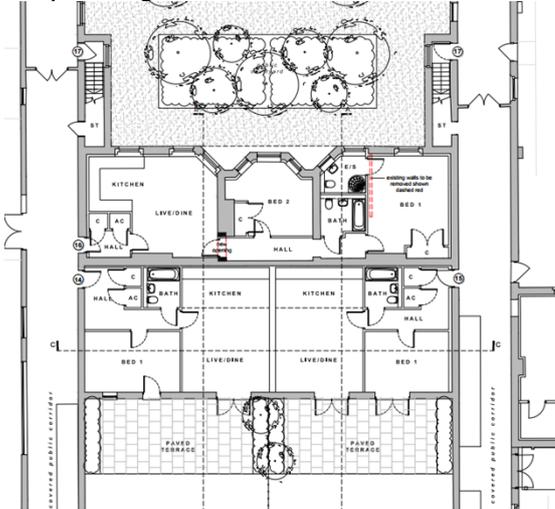
Location plan



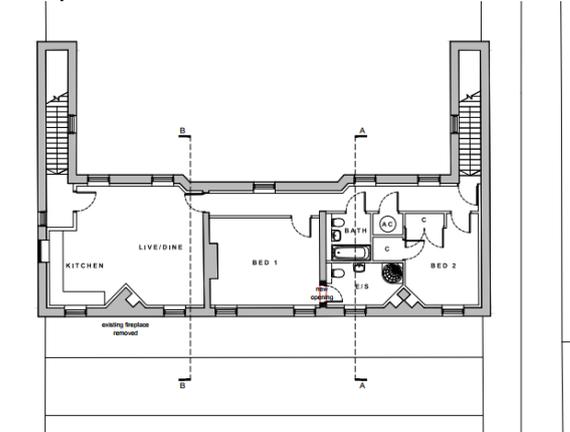
Block plan



Proposed ground floor



Proposed first floor



6.22 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).** The council's CIL charging schedule has been adopted and applies to relevant proposals from 1 April 2016. CIL is a planning charge that local authorities can implement to help deliver infrastructure and to support the development of their area, and is primarily calculated on the increase in footprint created as a result of the development.

CIL is not liable on schemes for affordable housing.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 As set out under the 'principle of development' section of this report this application needs to be assessed against the presumption in favour of sustainable development at paragraph 14 of the NPPF unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The report describes the

proposals in full and assesses the proposal against the relevant material planning considerations. The three strands of sustainable development are set out at paragraph 7 of the NPPF as economic, social and environmental. My conclusions against each of the strands is summarised below.

Economic role

The Government has made clear its view that house building plays an important role in promoting economic growth. In economic terms, the scheme would provide construction jobs and some local investment during its build out, as well as longer term expenditure in the local economy supporting the ongoing vibrancy of the village. I consider that moderate weight should be afforded to this benefit.

Social role

The proposal helps to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of starter homes towards those required to meet the needs of present and future generations. It also does this by creating a high quality built environment, in a location where limited new growth is acceptable. I consider moderate weight should be given to these social benefits.

Environmental role

In environmental terms, the scheme offers opportunities for enhancement of the area by bringing back the buildings into a viable new use, which is a matter to which I afford moderate weight.

Taking into account the benefits of the development and weighing these against the limited harm, I consider that the proposal represents a sustainable development, consistent with Para.14 of the NPPF and Policy CS1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy. The proposal would contribute towards the objective to boost the supply of housing, consistent with Para.47 of the NPPF.

Therefore, placing all of the relevant material considerations in the balance I conclude that the limited adverse impacts would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal and recommend the application for approval.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions.**

1. **Commencement three years - full planning permission.**
2. **Approved plans.**
3. **Joinery details.**
4. **Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.**
5. **Surface water drainage works (details required).**
6. **Details of refuse vehicle turning.**
7. **Works to match existing**
8. **Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class A) - no extensions etc.**
9. **Construction traffic management.**
10. **Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings etc.**
11. **Travel information pack.**
12. **Cycle parking facilities.**
13. **Starter homes.**
14. **Market farm shop for a period of one year from commencement.**

8.2 **That listed building consent is granted subject to the following conditions.**

1. Commencement listed building consent - three years.
2. Approved plans.
3. Joinery details.
4. Works to match existing.

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