

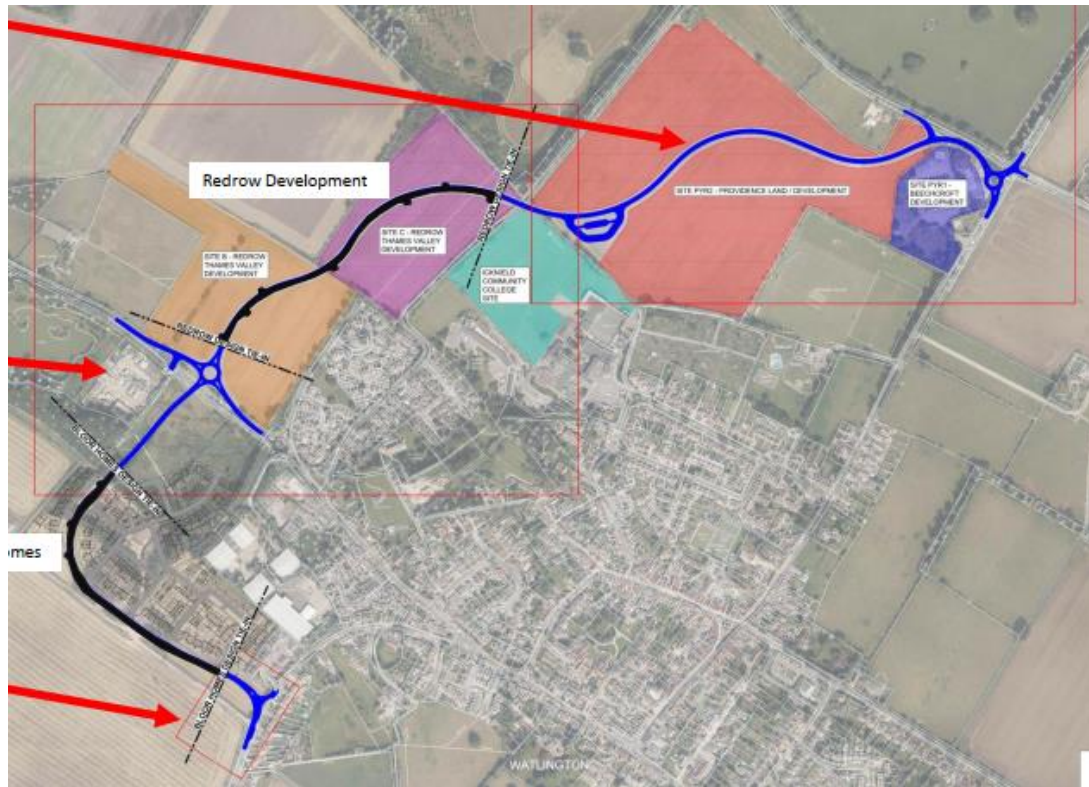
APPLICATION NO.	P22/S1640/FUL
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION
REGISTERED	28.4.2022
PARISH	WATLINGTON
WARD MEMBER	Freddie van Mierlo
APPLICANT	Redrow Homes Limited
SITE	Cuxham Road Watlington
PROPOSAL	Temporary vehicular access off Cuxham Road for construction traffic.
AMENDMENTS	As amended/clarified by amended plans and additional information submitted 21 October 2022 and 27 January 2023.
OFFICER	Emma Bowerman

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This report sets out the officer's recommendation that planning permission should be granted having regard to the material planning considerations and the development plan.
- 1.2 The application is referred to planning committee at the request of the former ward member Anna Badcock. The reason for her call in to planning committee is:
- “There is no perfect solution for traffic to the development sites as all surrounding villages and Watlington centre are not suitable for high volume heavy vehicles as recognised by the current weight restriction zone. The current proposals would result in unsafe levels of traffic through Cuxham and that additional traffic through Cuxham could impact on listed buildings. Alternative routes would be equally impactful. I believe local parish councils and residents should be offered a democratic forum to discuss the best options for this traffic route, bearing in mind other sites will also need traffic routes.”*
- 1.3 The application site (which is shown on the OS extract **attached** as Appendix A) is formed of two agricultural fields to the northwest of Watlington. These fields are allocated for housing in the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan ('WNDP') and are referred to as Site B and Site C. These two sites have planning permission for a total of 130 new homes.
- 1.4 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of a temporary vehicular access off Cuxham Road. The access is required to serve a compound area and will be used by construction traffic associated with the delivery of the new homes on Sites B and C. A temporary access is required to provide an alternative access into the site whilst Oxfordshire County Council construct part of the 'Watlington Edge Road.'
- 1.5 The plan below shows the proposals for the Watlington Edge Road. Some sections of the Edge Road have/will be directly delivered by housebuilders

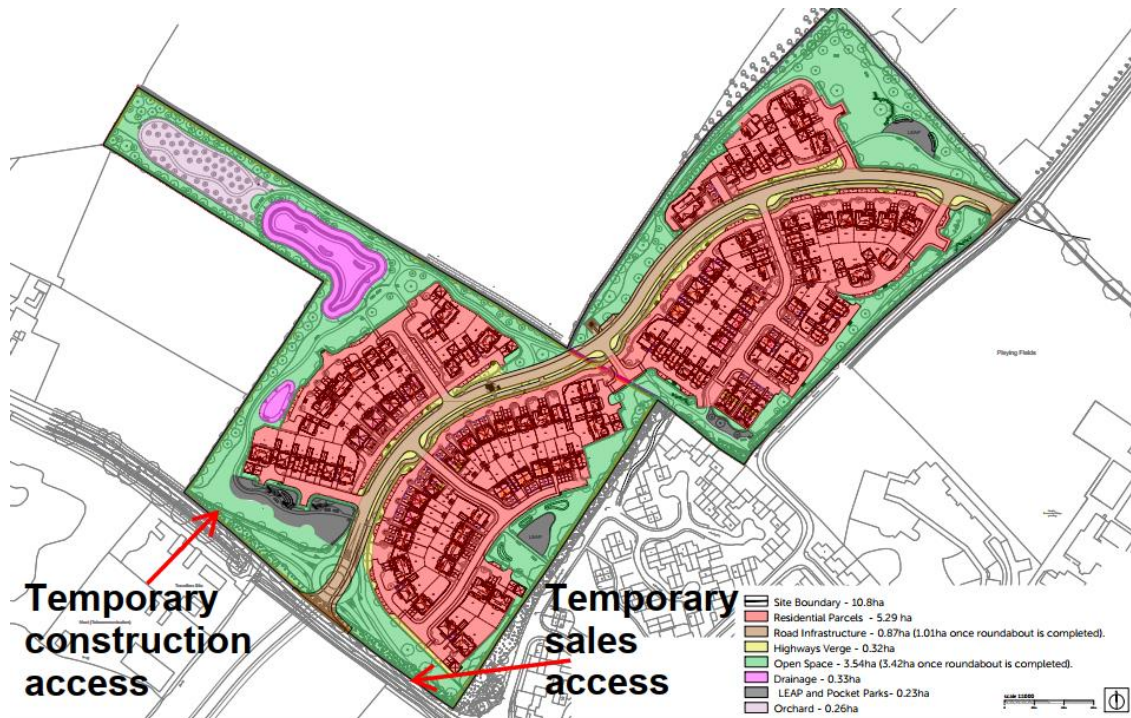
where the road forms an integral part of the housing developments. Other sections will be delivered by the County Council. The provision of the Watlington Edge Road sits at the heart of the WNDP as it would divert traffic around Watlington to reduce through traffic in the heavily congested town centre.

- 1.6 The application site is labelled as 'Redrow Development' on the plan below. The roundabout at the entrance to Site B, which will be delivered by the County Council, is the roundabout to the west of this plan:



Plan taken from Oxfordshire County Council planning application ref R3.0010/24

- 1.7 The County Council have submitted their planning application for the remaining parts of the Edge Road and this application is currently under consideration. Oxfordshire County Council are the determining authority for the application and the documents can be viewed on their website [here](#). The County Council's current timeframes are that development is expected to begin in Summer 2024 and anticipated to last approximately 18 months.
- 1.8 The application for a temporary construction access has been submitted alongside another planning application for a second temporary sales access to serve the show homes. Both proposals are annotated on the plan below, and the access to serve the show homes is being considered under planning application P22/S1642/FUL.



Plan taken from planning application P23/S0431/RM

1.9 The applicant provided additional information during the application process to address issues raised by consultees. The only application plan is a technical drawing showing the details of the temporary assess and this is **attached** as Appendix B.

2.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

2.1 The summary below refers to the most recent consultation response unless otherwise indicated. A full copy of all comments received, including those in respect of previous iterations of the proposal, can be seen on the council's website [here](#).

2.2 Parish Councils, local bodies and residents:

<p>Watlington Parish Council</p>	<p>No Objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about the possible contamination of the chalk stream on the opposite side of Cuxham Road. Drainage measures to mitigate surface water runoff must be implemented before operational use of the entrance. A condition is necessary to fully restore the land within the site and along the bank adjoining Cuxham Road.
<p>Cuxham with Easington Parish Council</p>	<p>No comments received on amended plans/additional information.</p> <p>Objection to initial consultation for the following reasons:</p>

South Oxfordshire District Council - Planning Committee - 20 February 2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear why the temporary access is required. • The implied use of B480 through Cuxham as the route for construction traffic is unacceptable. • Cuxham has been blighted by construction traffic from another development. • Construction traffic impacts on heritage assets in Cuxham. • Construction traffic has highway safety implications for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. • Impact of construction traffic on chalk stream. • Construction traffic should use alternative routes to access the site such as Pyrton Lane or Watlington Town Centre.
Pyrton Parish Council	No comments received
Shirburn Parish Meeting	No comments received
Watlington Environment Group	<p>No comments received on amended plans/additional information.</p> <p>Comments on initial consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential impact on trees. • Cumulative impact of all new accesses will be significant. • Conditions required to ensure reinstatement of trees and vegetation when access is no longer required, and these should have a greater or equivalent biodiversity value. • Close attention must be given to the method statement for the construction of the access to protect the chalk stream. • Drainage strategy must ensure that the stream is fully protected from contamination run-off or silt.
Local Residents	<p>Two received in objection raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction traffic from a different development has caused significant damage to verges in Cuxham. • Highway safety issues in relation to construction vehicles. • Construction vehicles cause congestion and residents are not able to access driveways

South Oxfordshire District Council - Planning Committee - 20 February 2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are alternative routes that are preferable for construction traffic, such as Pyrton Lane. • Impact of pollution from construction vehicles on a chalk stream.
--	--

2.3 Technical consultees:

Oxfordshire County Council	<p><u>Transport</u> No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility splays in accordance with guidance. • Arrangement would allow turning movements of a HGV in and out of the compound area. • Conditions required to ensure that access is laid out to specification, that it is stopped up and reinstated after use and that visibility splays are not obstructed. <p><u>Lead Local Flood Authority</u> Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The drainage and drawings appear satisfactory.
Environment Agency	Application is not a development that they wish to be consulted on.
Ecology Officer	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would prefer to see the construction site access in the location of the long-term site access to minimise ecological harm. • Condition required to secure a Construction Environmental Management Plan to ensure that up-to-date survey information and ecological mitigation is secured.
Forestry Officer	<p>No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trees that would need to be removed to accommodate the proposal are not a constraint to the development. • A condition should secure replacement planting.
Heritage Officer	<p>No objection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of the road would not harm Cuxham Conservation Area • There would not be any vibration impact to listed buildings during construction period. • Unlikely to be any risk to historic fabric from construction works.

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY/CURRENT APPLICATIONS**

3.1 [P23/S1800/DIS](#) - Fully discharged (05/01/24)

Discharge of condition 9 (Phasing Plan) of application P19/S1927/O.

[P23/S1802/DIS](#) - Fully discharged (05/01/24)

Discharge of condition 9 (Phasing Plan) of application P19/S1928/O.

[P23/S0433/RM](#) – Reserved matters approval (27/07/23)

Reserved matters in relation to 60 dwellings, including details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

[P23/S0431/RM](#) – Reserved matters approval (27/07/23)

Reserved matters in relation to 70 dwellings, including details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

[P22/S3854/DIS](#) – Fully discharged (05/01/24)

Discharge of condition 12 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) of application P19/S1927/O.

[P22/S3856/DIS](#) – Fully discharged (05/01/24)

Discharge of condition 12 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) on application P19/S1928/O.

[P19/S1927/O](#) - Approved (17/01/2022)

Outline planning permission for up to 60 homes with associated open space and sustainable drainage with all matters reserved.

[P19/S1928/O](#) - Approved (17/01/2022)

Outline planning permission for up to 70 homes with associated open space and sustainable drainage with all matters reserved.

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 Given the scale of the proposed temporary access works, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development comprises:

- The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035
- Any relevant Neighbourhood Development Plans

5.2 **Development Plan Policies**

South Oxfordshire Local Plan ('SOLP') 2035 policies

STRAT1	The Overall Strategy
TRANS2	Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
TRANS3	Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes

TRANS4	Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans
TRANS5	Consideration of Development Proposals
EP1	Air Quality
EP4	Flood Risk
ENV1	Landscape and Countryside
ENV3	Biodiversity
ENV4	Watercourses
ENV6	Historic Environment
ENV7	Listed Buildings
ENV8	Conservation Areas
ENV9	Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
DES1	Delivering High Quality Development
DES2	Enhancing Local Character

Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan ('W NDP') 2017-2033 Policies

P1	Protect and enhance the character of Watlington and the historic setting of the town
P2	Transport
P3	Conserve and enhance the natural environment

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.4 Other Relevant Legislation

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been considered in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report. The recommendation to approve this proposal has been taken within the scope of normal planning policy and will not detrimentally impinge on the human rights of the applicant or any other person. The decision has been made in a legitimate and balanced way.

Equality Act 2010

In considering this planning application, officers have had regard to the council's equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The proposal will not cause detrimental harm to any person with protected characteristics and has been made in a legitimate and balanced way.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The relevant planning considerations are the following:

- **Principle of development**
- **Impact on highway safety**
- **Impact on biodiversity**
- **Impact on heritage assets**
- **Drainage**

Principle of development

- 6.2 Policy STRAT1 of the SOLP set out the overall strategy for development and this includes supporting the role of larger villages. Watlington is classed as a larger village in the SOLP. The proposed temporary access would facilitate the delivery of housing, which supports the role of Watlington as a local service centre.
- 6.3 The delivery of housing on this site is intrinsically linked to the delivery of the Watlington Edge Road. SOLP policies TRANS1b and TRANS3 support the delivery of new roads that are linked with Neighbourhood Development Plans. The WNDP is also supportive of the Edge Road and safeguards land for the road under policy P2.
- 6.4 The proposed temporary access will enable construction vehicles to access the site whilst the County Council construct the roundabout. The development is linked to the delivery of housing on an allocated site and road infrastructure that is supported in the development plan. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable.

Impact on highway safety

- 6.5 In their role as Highways Authority, Oxfordshire County Council have assessed the proposals and have raised no objection in relation to highway safety. The County Council highways officer has commented that the arrangement of the temporary vehicular access would be suitable to accommodate the turning movements of a single 16.5m long articulated HGV into and out of the compound area.
- 6.6 Cuxham with Easington Parish Council, the former ward member and two residents have raised concern about construction traffic being routed through Cuxham. The concerns include matters of highway safety.
- 6.7 A Construction Traffic Management Plan and a Phasing Plan for sites B and C have been approved. These were required under the conditions on the outline planning permissions for the housing development and have been approved through discharge of condition applications [P23/S1800/DIS](#), [P23/S1802/DIS](#), [P22/S3854/DIS](#) and [P22/S3856/DIS](#).
- 6.8 The approved Construction Traffic Management Plan routes construction traffic from Junction 7 (Milton Common) of the M40 via Stadhampton and through Cuxham. This arrangement would remain in place until such a time that the part of the Edge Road that joins the B480 Shirburn Road to the application site is constructed. Construction vehicles would then be routed from Junction 6 of the M40 (Lewknor) and through Shirburn. This arrangement is reflected in the approved Phasing Plan.
- 6.9 Given that the discharge of condition applications for the Construction Traffic Management Plan and Phasing Plan have been approved, the routing of construction traffic is not a matter that can be considered under this application for a temporary construction access.

- 6.10 The Local Highways Authority has no objection to the proposed temporary access, which will meet with the necessary standards in terms of visibility. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant highways policies, including policy TRANS5 of the SOLP and policy P2 of the WNDP.

Impact on biodiversity

- 6.11 A chalk stream, the Chalgrove Brook, runs along the opposite side of Cuxham Road to where the temporary access will be located. Chalk streams are a rare and sensitive habitat, with fauna dependant on good quality water. Given the proximity of the site to this feature, the applicant may require a permit or exemption to be obtained from the Environment Agency. This is a separate process that falls outside of scope of the planning system.
- 6.12 To minimise biodiversity harm, the council's ecologist has expressed a preference for the temporary access to be located where the long-term access is. Given that the County Council will be constructing a roundabout in this location, this is not possible.
- 6.13 To ensure that up-to-date survey information and ecological mitigation is secured, the council's ecologist has recommended a condition requiring the approval of a Construction Environmental Management Plan for Biodiversity. Subject to the imposition of this condition, the proposal will comply with the relevant policies that seek to protect habitats and species.
- 6.14 The proposal will result in some tree loss. The council's forestry officer has considered the quality of these trees and does not consider them to be a constraint. The trees have signs of Ash dieback and have a limited life expectancy. The council's forestry officer has recommended a condition to secure replacement planting but given the temporary nature of the access, and that a detailed landscaping scheme has been secured as part of the housing development, I do not consider that this is necessary.

Impact on heritage assets

- 6.15 Cuxham with Easington Parish Council and the former ward member have raised concerns about the impact of construction traffic on listed buildings within the conservation area of Cuxham. I have raised these concerns with the council's heritage officer who has confirmed that the routing of construction vehicles through Cuxham does not conflict with any heritage policies.
- 6.16 For completeness, the full comments from the council's heritage officer are provided below:

'I am aware of the concerns raised by Cuxham with Easington Parish Council in relation to the potential impact of construction traffic on the listed buildings within the village.

In terms of the impact of construction traffic to historic buildings, if the highways officers have not raised any concerns about the suitability of the road itself to accommodate the construction vehicles then we have to trust that the drivers of the vehicles can make the journeys safely.

As Cuxham is now subject to a 20mph speed limit at its narrowest points, I do not consider there would be any vibration impact to the listed buildings during the construction period. It has been established by various studies that vibration impacts are only likely at very prolonged periods of high speed traffic. I recognise that it will seem worse as air vibration will make historic windows and doors rattle more than modern ones but there is unlikely to be any risk to the historic fabric from the construction works.

The increased use of the road temporarily would not harm the Conservation Area, it is after all a through route from settlement to settlement. I do not consider that any harm would arise and do not find it to be in conflict with heritage policies.

Drainage

- 6.17 The application plan shows that part of the temporary access road will drain into a road drain, and a small section up to the highway boundary will drain onto the existing carriageway.
- 6.18 Oxfordshire County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, have considered these details and have raised no objection to the proposed drainage layout. The drainage will need to be implemented in accordance with the details shown on the plans.

Other matters

- 6.19 The Section 106 agreement attached to the outline planning permission for the housing development on Site B (P19/S1928/O) required an area of land alongside Cuxham Road to be set aside as 'Road Improvement Land.' The provisions of the legal agreement restrict any works to take place on this land. The proposed temporary access will cross the Road Improvement Land and as such, the applicant will need to secure a Deed of Variation to the legal agreement to allow for the access works to take place.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development will be temporary and will facilitate access to a development site for construction vehicles whilst an important piece of road infrastructure is delivered by Oxfordshire County Council.
- 7.2 There are no technical objections to the proposal and, subject to conditions, the development will have an acceptable impact on highway safety and biodiversity. The application has been submitted with an acceptable drainage solution and the proposal will not conflict with any heritage policies.
- 7.3 When considered against the development plan as a whole, I consider that the proposal represents a sustainable form of development and there are no valid reasons to withhold planning permission.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

To authorise the head of planning in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee to grant planning permission subject to:

A) The prior completion of a Deed of Variation to the Section 106 legal agreement attached to P19/S1928/O, and

B) The following conditions:

Standard

1. Planning permission – temporary time limit
2. Development to be in accordance with approved plans

Compliance

3. Vision splays to not be obstructed

Pre-commencement conditions

4. Construction Environmental Management Plan to be approved

End of permission condition

5. Stopping up and reinstatement of highway verge at end of use

Full condition wording can be found **attached** as Appendix C.

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

This page is intentionally left blank