

APPENDIX 3 – Application 201833 Report

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
201833	24 February 2021 (PPA)	Sonning	Sonning;

Applicant	Arlington Retirement Lifestyles
Site Address	Land South of Old Bath Road Sonning, RG4 6GQ
Proposal	Outline application with Appearance and landscaping reserved for the proposed 57 dwellings suitable for older persons accommodation (Use Class C3) with consideration of means of access, layout and scale to be determined. Following demolition of existing dwellings.
Type	Outline
Officer	Andrew Chugg
Reason for determination by committee	Major application

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 24 March 2021
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place

SUMMARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal would provide 57 no. 1 and 2-bedroom apartments for occupation by the 60's. While this does not meet a defined 'care accommodation' need within the borough, the principle of delivery of private C3 units on an existing 'within settlement' housing site (which already has permission for redevelopment for six detached dwellings) is acceptable in principle. • While being a significant increase in the scale and massing of the three existing properties on site, the proposed development would provide an appropriate transition in height and scale between the substantially larger Sunrise Nursing Home building and Redgrave when viewed from Old Bath Road. The proposal would also provide suitable separation between blocks in order that it respects the overall character and appearance of the surrounding area; including views to and from the countryside to the south. • Sufficient separation distances would be retained between the proposed blocks in order to protect the residential amenity of residents that occupy the existing dwellings located adjacent to the application site. • Adequate parking provision would be provided noting the nature of the development and likely lower car ownership levels. There are no highway safety concerns relating to the development. • Adequate surface water drainage measures have been provided with this application and further required details in respect of landscaping, ecology, sustainable design, archaeology or environmental health issues can be secured either under the Reserved Matters and/or via the recommended conditions.

- The proposal would provide full policy-compliant planning obligations in respect of financial contributions towards Affordable Housing within the borough and an Employment Skills Plan.
- Detailed issues of landscaping and appearance are reserved for determination at a later stage.

PLANNING STATUS

- Limited Development Location (Countryside directly to the south/rear of the site)
- Affordable Housing Thresholds
- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Model
- Tree Preservation Orders
- SSSI Impact Risk Zones
- Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
- Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Zone (mostly 1 in 1,000-year extent)
- Minerals Site Consultation Area
- Replacement Mineral Local Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

A. Completion of a legal agreement pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the provision of:

- 1) An index-linked commuted payment towards affordable housing in the borough,
- 2) An index-linked commuted payment for the provision of an Employment Skills Plan (ESP),
- 3) Provision of a Travel Plan to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car; and
- 4) Occupation of the units hereby approved shall be limited to where one or more of the proposed occupants of each dwelling is over 60 years of age, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

If the Agreement is not completed within 3 months of the date of this resolution, Planning Permission will be refused unless the Operational Manager for Development Management in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee agree to a later date.

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B. Conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

Outline permission – Time periods and submission of details

1. a) No development shall commence until details of the Appearance and Landscaping (including all the ecological enhancements specified within section 7.0 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal as prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, ref: LLD1856, July 2020) hereinafter called "the reserved matters", have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be carried out as approved.
b) Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than three years from the date of this permission. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
Reason: In pursuance of s.92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Approved plans and details

2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans, drawings and reports numbered:

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-0000-02- Site Plan

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-2000-01- Plans Block A

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-2000-02- Plans Block B

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-2000-03- Plans Block C

8339-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-Block B Visual

8339-BOW-A1-Block C front Visual

8339-BOW-A1-Block A front Visual

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-3000-03- Sections 3

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-3000-02- Sections 2

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-3000-01- Sections 1

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8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-Existing Site Plan

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-Location Plan

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (dated 17/07/20) as prepared by JUDWAA Consulting

as received by the local planning authority on 23 July 2020; and

2001 Floor Plans – Block A.pdf

2002 Floor Plans-Block B.pdf

2003 Floor Plans-Block C.pdf

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-000-02-Site Plan -P2.pdf

as received by the local planning authority on 02 September 2020; and

8399-BOW-A1-ZZ-DR-000-02-Site Plan-Existing Hatched

as received by the local planning authority on 26 August 2020; and

8399-bow-a1-00-dr-a-1003-p5_Proposed Site Plan.pdf

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as received by the local planning authority on 30 September 2020; and

Addendum No 1 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
as received by the local planning authority on 08 September 2020.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

External materials

3. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

Details of boundary walls and fences

4. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatment(s) shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for so long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6

Potential contaminated land

5. a) If contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval. Should no evidence of contamination be found during the development a statement to that effect shall be submitted to the local planning authority.

b) Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved 'remediation method statement' (submitted to comply with condition 5a above) and a final validation report shall be submitted to the local planning authority before the site (or relevant phase of the development site) is occupied.

Reason: To protect future occupiers and users of the site from the harmful effects of contamination. Relevant policy: MMD Local Plan policy CC06 and Core Strategy policy CP3.

External Lighting

6. No floodlighting or other forms of external lighting shall be installed unless it is in accordance with details which have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination. Any lighting shall be

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installed in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect residential amenity. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and Local Plan policy TB21.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

7. No development (including demolition and site clearance) shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to control the environmental effects of the demolition and construction work has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include measures for:
- the control of dust, odour and other effluvia
 - the control of noise (including noise from any piling and permitted working hours)
 - the control of pests and other vermin (particularly during site clearance)
 - the control of surface water run-off)
 - the control of noise from delivery vehicles, and times when deliveries are accepted and when materials can be removed from the site

Construction activity shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason: To protect residential amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Permitted hours of work

8. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or public holiday.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Communications Plan

9. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a Communications Plan. The Plan shall specify methods for communicating with local residents, including the creation of a liaison group to meet in accordance with an agreed schedule. The Plan shall be carried out as approved until the final completion of the development.

Reason: In order to minimise disturbance to neighbours during construction works.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3

Ground and building levels

10. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels (in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished roof levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building(s).

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

Visibility splays

11. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, details of the proposed vehicular access to include visibility splays of 43m x 2.4m. The access shall be formed as so-approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the occupation of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Demolition and Construction Method Statement

12. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:
- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
 - ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials,
 - iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
 - iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate,
 - v) wheel washing facilities,
 - vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction,
 - vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety & convenience and neighbour amenities. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Highway Construction Details

13. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the construction of roads and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage and lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The roads and footways shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details to road base level before the development is occupied and the final wearing course will be provided within 3 months of occupation unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible and safe development. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

Cycle parking

14. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities for the occupants of (and visitors to) the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle storage/ parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

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Reason: To ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Parking Management Strategy

15. Prior to the first occupation of the development, a Parking Management Strategy for the management of the parking arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted Parking Management Strategy shall include details of the management of all parking spaces and the monitoring and the delivery of additional electric vehicle charging spaces when required.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory development in the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP6, CP13 and CP21 and MDDL policies CC07 and TB20.

Electric Vehicle Charging

16. Prior to first occupation of the development, details for Electric Vehicle Charging points serving the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Electric Vehicle Charging points shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the charging of electric vehicles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure electric vehicle charging facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Protection of trees

17. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).
- b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place on site.
- c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
- d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

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Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Landscape Proposals

18. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals (including all the ecological enhancements specified within section 7.0 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal as prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, ref: LLD1856, July 2020) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB06 and TB21.

19. Landscape management

Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Obscure glazing on windows

20. The first and second floor windows in the west elevation of units 9, 10, 16 and 17 of Block A of the development hereby permitted shall be fitted with obscured glass and shall be permanently so-retained. The window shall be non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the finished floor level of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently so-retained.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3

Drainage

21. No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the submitted details; i.e. the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy and Addendum No 1 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, as outlined in Condition 2 above. The sustainable drainage scheme shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.
Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Archaeology

22. No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition.
Reason: The site lies within an area of archaeological potential. A programme of archaeological work is required to mitigate the impact of development and to record any surviving remains so as to advance our understanding of their significance.
Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB25.

Protected Species

23. No works affecting the bat roosts shall commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England) and a copy (or an email from Natural England that the site has been registered under the bat mitigation class licence) has been submitted to the local planning authority. Thereafter mitigation measures approved in the licence shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details. Should conditions at the site for bats change and / or the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting bats is not required the applicant is to submit a report to the council detailing the reasons for this assessment and this report is to be approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to commencement of works.
Reason: To ensure that bats, a material consideration, are not adversely affected by the development. Relevant policy: Policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan and Core Strategy Policy CP7.

Biodiversity Enhancements

24. Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the ecological enhancement measures specified in paragraphs 4.16 to 4.32 and appendices I and II of the submitted Method Statement for Planning given in Section 8 of the submitted Bat Activity Surveys report (Crossman Associates, ref: A1144.001, August 2020), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.
Reason: To secure a net gain for biodiversity as per NPPF paras. 170 and 175.

Sustainable Energy requirements

25. Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for generating 10% of the predicted energy requirement of the development from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (as defined in the glossary of Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (December 2007) or any subsequent version) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development is first occupied and shall remain operational for the lifetime of the development.
- Reason: Reason: To ensure developments contribute to sustainable development.
- Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1, Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC05 & the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant in terms of:
 - justification for proposed parking levels;
 - demonstration of acceptable vehicle 'swept paths' and manoeuvrability on site;
 - surface water drainage measures;
 - crime prevention design amendments, and
 - discussing over financial viability of the scheme and the necessary planning obligations.

The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

2. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. This is a matter for the developer. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see -
<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>
3. The requisite Travel plan would need to comply with the latest national and local guidance:
 - 1) NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport)
 - 2) The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, March 2008)
 - 3) Delivering Travel Plans Through the Planning Process (DfT, April 2009)
 - 4) A Guide on Travel Plans for Developers (DfT)
 - 5) Making Residential Travel Plans Work (DfT, June 2007) All accessible at:
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-local-transport>WBC Transport Plan 3 and Active Travel Plan 2011 – 2026

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WBC Workplace Travel Plan Guidance and Residential Travel Plan Guidance Documents, covering workplace travel plans and residential travel plans provide local guidance and are available on the Borough's website.

4. Waste information for developers can be found here:
<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/collections/waste-information-for-developers/>
5. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.
6. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act dated [INSERT], the obligations in which relate to this development.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Proposal	Decision
200354	<i>'Red Lodge and side garden of 'The Range':</i> Full application for the proposed erection of 7no. detached residential dwellings with garages, widening of the existing access road, plus associated works on land currently comprising 'Red Lodge' and part of the garden of the adjacent property 'The Range', following demolition of 'Red Lodge'.	WITHDRAWN - 16 April 2020
190693	<i>'The Lawns':</i> Full planning application for the proposed erection of a 1no. dwelling including landscaping.	APPROVED – 26 Nov 2019
182797	<i>'The Lawns':</i> Full planning application for the proposed erection of a 1no. dwelling including landscaping.	REFUSED – 25 Feb 2019
171424	<i>'Red Lodge and 'The Range':</i> Full planning application for the demolition of two existing dwellings and the erection six replacement dwellings (net gain of four), garages and ancillary landscaping accessed of the existing drive including landscaping.	APPROVED – 26 April 2018
122418	<i>'The Range':</i> Proposed erection of single storey side and rear extensions plus change of pitched roof to flat roof terrace on rear elevations, and conversion of garage to habitable room and erection of triple detached garage.	WITHDRAWN – 12 March 2012
082164	<i>'The Range':</i> Proposed single storey side and rear extensions plus change pitched roof to flat roof terrace on side elevation, conversion of	WITHDRAWN – 22 May 2008

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	garage to habitable rooms and erection of triple detached garage with rear and front dormer windows at first floor level.	
081776	<i>'The Range'</i> : Proposed erection of single storey side and rear extensions plus change pitched roof to flat roof terrace on rear elevations conversion of garage to habitable room and erection of triple detached garage.	APPROVED – 04 Nov 2008
071462	<i>'The Range'</i> : Proposed erection of single storey side and rear extensions plus first floor rear terraces with spiral staircase and conversion of garages to habitable rooms. Erection of 2-storey linked detached triple garage with habitable space at first floor level and front and rear dormer windows.	REFUSED – 17 Oct 2007

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area – 1.18ha

Existing units – 3 large detached dwellings ('Red Lodge', 'The Lawns' and 'The Range')

Proposed units – 57 apartments (49 no. 2-beds and 8 no. 1 beds)

Existing density – 2.5 dwellings per hectare (DPH)

Proposed density – 48 dwellings per hectare (DPH)

Number of affordable units proposed – Nil but full policy compliant financial contribution proposed

Existing land use – Residential

Proposed Public Open Space – Communal amenity spaces to serve each block

Existing parking spaces – In excess of requirements for the existing three dwellings

Proposed parking spaces - 63 spaces (including 10 disabled spaces)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal:

WBC Growth & Delivery (Planning Policy)	No objection given the sites in-settlement location. The proposal falls within the PPG definition of <i>'age-restricted general marketing housing'</i> as it would provide lower levels of care and communal facilities.
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WBC Strategy and Commissioning People (Adult) Services

No objection but the proposal doesn't meet the Council's Adult Social Care needs given the low levels of care proposed.

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WBC Housing Policy Officer	No objection subject to securing an index-linked financial contribution in-lieu of 40% affordable housing.
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Landscape & Trees	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Environmental Health (Public Protection Partnership)	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Economic Prosperity & Place (Community Infrastructure)	No objection subject to an Employment Skills Plan or a financial contribution in lieu being secured via s106.
WBC Drainage	No objection.
WBC Ecologist	No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Cleaner & Greener (Waste Services)	No objection. Recommends standard informative.
<u>External:</u> TVP Crime Prevention Design Officer	No objection following the submission of amended plans that address initial concerns raised regarding improvements needed to provide secure access lobbies.
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to condition
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust	No response received
ESP Utilities Group	No objection
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	Commented that the proposal would impose an additional burden on the Fire Authority's existing infrastructure.
Natural England	No response received
Southern Gas Networks	No objection
SEEN Power Distribution	No objection
Thames Water	No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

Sonning Parish Council: Object on the following grounds:

- Proposal is overly dense in contrast with its low-density surroundings.

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- Lack of local amenities (e.g. buses, shops, medical facilities etc) to serve the development.
- Site is not in a sustainable location.
- Adverse impact on highway safety.
- Additional burden on medical services due to the aged population it would serve.
- Detriment to residential amenities and privacy.

Charvil Parish Council: Object on the following grounds:

- While not in Charvil Parish, proposal is overdevelopment and out of character with the area
- Unacceptable overlooking
- Impact on local traffic would be excessive
- Lack of amenities to serve the development

Local Members: Cllr. Firmager objects on the following grounds:

- Proposal is overdevelopment and out of character with the area
- Adverse impact on already congested roads especially on match days at the nearby rugby club
- Site is served by infrequent bus links and is a long way from local amenities.

Neighbours: 17 objections received from neighbours, including Rt Hon Theresa May MP (Maidenhead) and Sonning & Sonning Eye Society:

- Inaccuracies in the planning submission; e.g. parking numbers and minimum age for residents (*amended plans were submitted to address these points*)
- Adverse impact on highway safety and traffic congestion; especially when the nearby rugby ground hosts events (*addressed in Paras. 42 to 45 below*)
- Inadequate parking provision (*addressed in Paras. 46 to 49 below*)
- Overly dense development with excessive height and bulk (*addressed in Paras. 16 to 29 below*)
- Loss of privacy and overlooking to neighbours, including 4 Sonning Gate (*addressed in Paras. 30 to 41 below*)
- Lack of local amenities (e.g. buses, shops, medical facilities etc) to serve the development (*addressed in Paras. 50 to 52 below*)
- Insufficient soft landscaping would be retained to protect the overlook of neighbours and protect the skyline and visual amenity of the area (*addressed in Paras. 16 to 29 and 30 and 41 below*)
- Detrimental noise and disturbance (*addressed in Paras. 63 to 65 below*)
- Detrimental impact on wildlife (*addressed in Paras. 74 to 79 below*)
- If approved, conditions and planning obligations should be imposed to secure cycle storage, solar panels, a pedestrian crossing point across the A4, electric vehicle charging bays, landscaping, and a Traffic Management Plan (*addressed in Officer's recommendation above and Para. 46 to 49 below*)

APPLICANTS POINTS

- The proposal makes full policy-compliant contributions towards affordable housing and Employment Skills Plan.
- The site is within the settlement boundary and the principle of its redevelopment has been accepted following approval of application 171424.

- The proposed development of specialist housing for older people responds to an ageing trend that is intensifying throughout Wokingham borough.
- Proposal does not detract from the character of the area. The Sunrise 3 storey assisted living and care home adjoining the site, as well as Sonning Gate, Seagrave Close and the Birchley redevelopments have changed the character of the area.
- Residential amenity of neighbours is protected by suitable back-to-back distances. The drawings demonstrate that there are sufficient separation distances would be retained to protect properties from any significant overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing impacts in compliance with the adopted design guide.
- The application is supported by a Landscape Masterplan which demonstrates how green infrastructure has informed the development proposals with existing vegetation along the site boundaries being retained and enhanced to maintain the visual amenity with neighbouring properties.
- The layout ensures that the majority of trees and hedgerows will be retained and enhanced as part of the wider landscape strategy. The proposal ensures that the trees of high (Category 'A') and moderate (Category 'B') value are retained with 3 only low value Category 'C' and 'U' trees being proposed for removal.
- There would be no adverse highway impacts. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken of the site access proposals and is acceptable to highways. Car parking for occupants and visitors is acceptable, as is refuse collection access.
- Sustainability of the location. The Inspector on the Sunrise scheme noted that the site is sustainable within *“easy walking distance to a significant residential area and of frequent bus service.”*

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP4	Infrastructure Requirements
	CP5	Housing mix, density and affordability
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP10	Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits

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	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC05	Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
	CC06	Noise
	CC07	Parking
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB05	Housing Mix
	TB06	Development of private residential gardens
	TB07	Internal Space standards
	TB12	Employment Skills Plan
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 4
	DS	Sonning Parish Design Statement (2004)
	SPD	Affordable Housing SPD
	SPD	Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
	NDSS	DCLG – Nationally Described Space Standards

PLANNING ISSUES

Description of Development:

1. The proposal seeks outline planning permission for up to 57 dwellings (1 and 2-bed apartments) for older persons, i.e.: over 60's, with matters of appearance and landscaping reserved for future determination. The proposed units would be delivered across three separate blocks (refer to Fig 2.0 below) that would include ancillary communal lounges and guest suites to cater for the needs of prospective residents; with ancillary facilities including refuse areas and house manager's office also provided within each block. The development would utilise the existing vehicular access that would be widened and upgraded.
2. Communal landscaped garden spaces are proposed for the three blocks. 63 parking spaces provided including 10 disabled and spaces for the offices. The total internal floorspace for the development would be 4769.3sqm (Block A - 1689.5sqm; Block B – 1655sqm and Block C - 1424.8sqm).

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3. The applicant has advised that *“the proposal is intended to be considered as a wholly C3 (residential) development offering ‘independent living’... There will be ongoing maintenance/ cleaning across the development but not enough to classify this as elements of care”*. Hence, this outline proposal for ‘Access’, ‘Layout’ and ‘Scale’ has been duly considered as a C3 residential proposal as discussed below.
4. The applicant has agreed to enter into a s106 legal agreement to secure policy compliant financial contributions in lieu of 40% Affordable Housing provision and an Employment Skills Plan (ESP) that would be required to support this development. In addition, the applicant has advised that they would be amenable to a restrictive clause in the s106 legal agreement that would limit residential occupancy of the proposed units to the over 60s only.

Fig 1.0 - Location Plan extract:

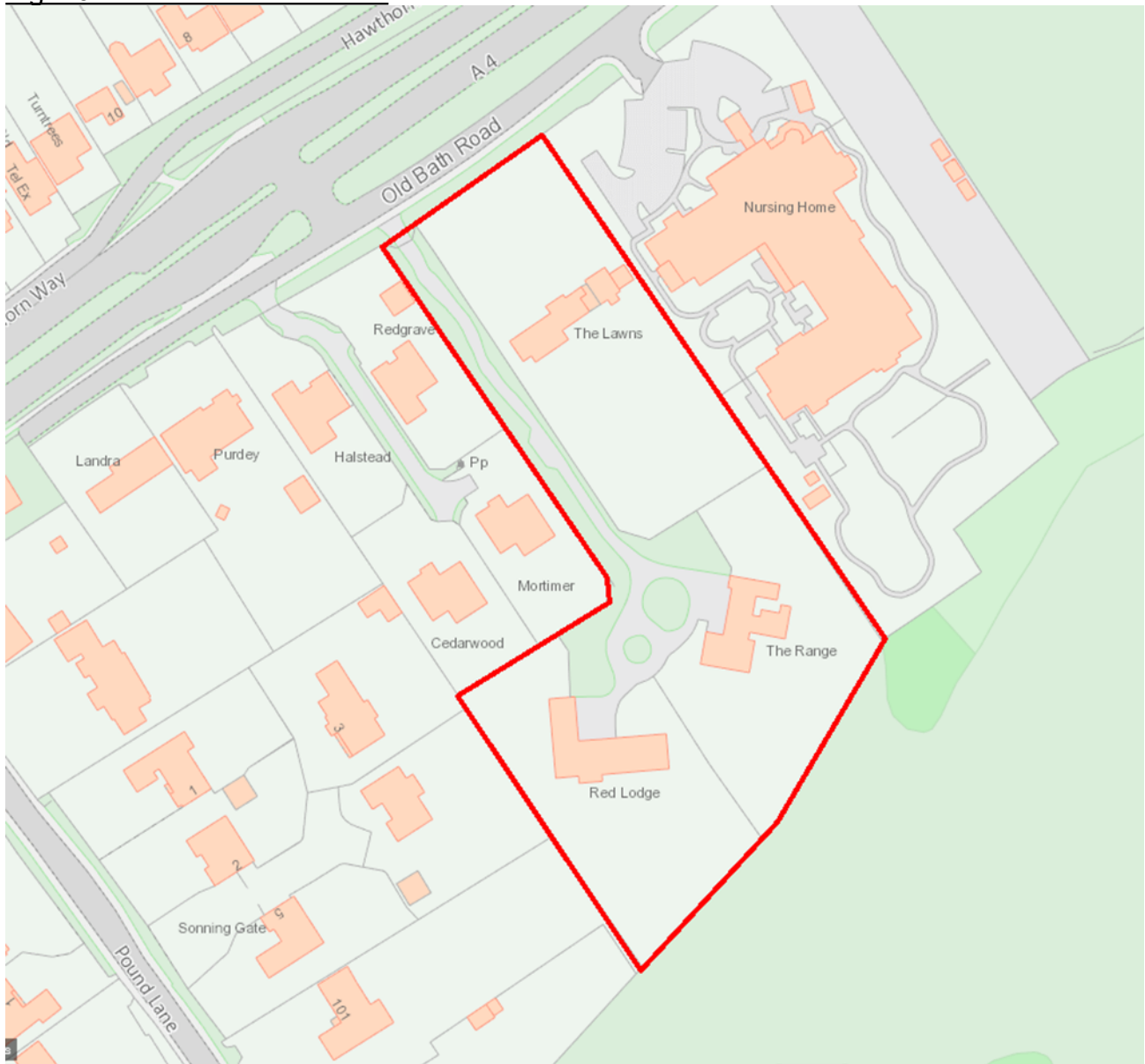
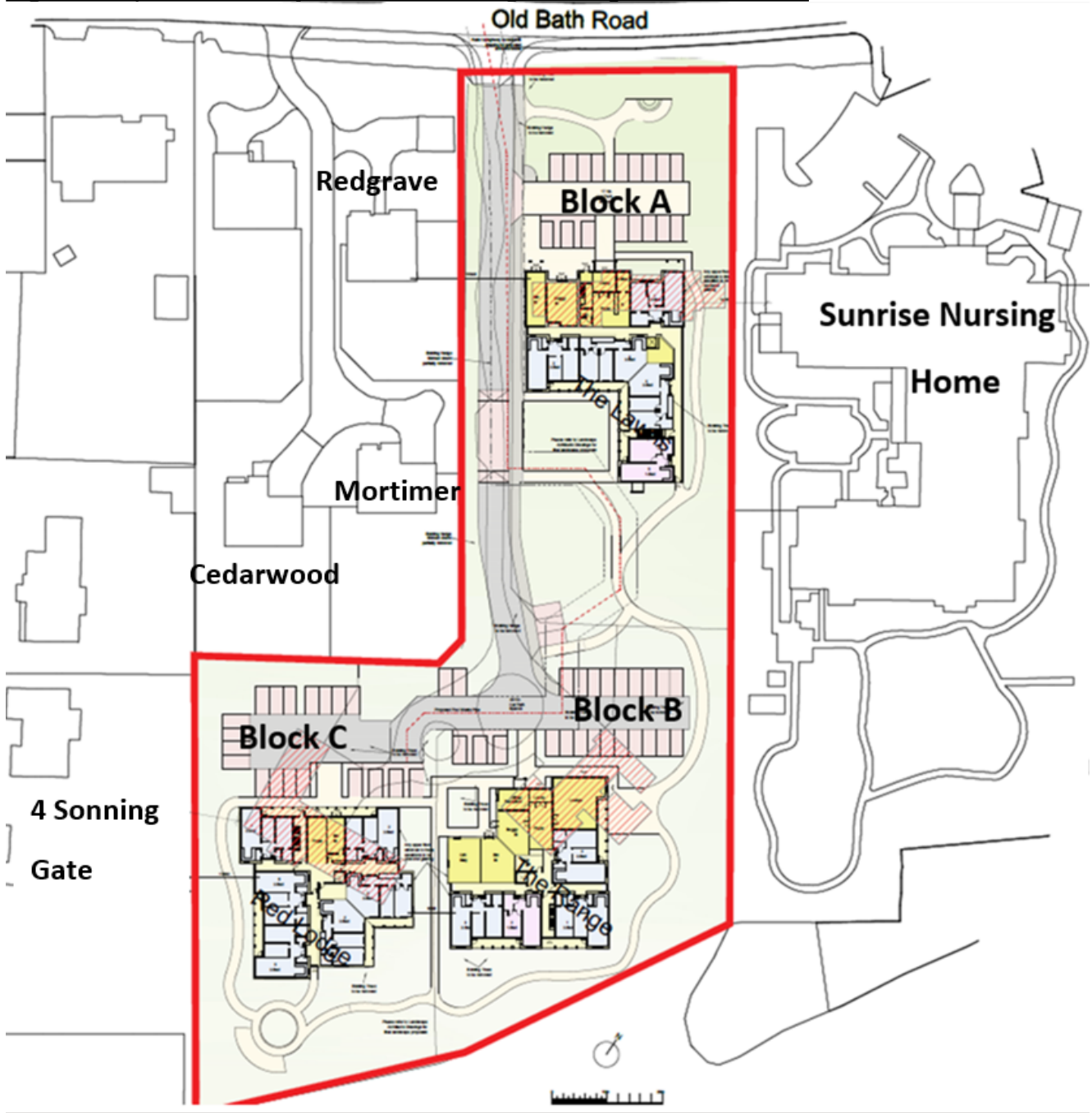


Fig 2.0 Proposed Site Layout Plan - Existing dwellings hatched in red



5. The site is located on the eastern edge of the smaller settlement of Sonning, which is classified as a Limited Development Location as defined by Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy (2010), recognised as having '*a basic range of services and facilities and are physically and socially cohesive*'. The site (1.18ha) currently comprises three large, detached dwellings know as 'Red Lodge', 'The Range' and The Lawns' and their shared private access road. The site is set back from Old Bath Road (a spur road from the newer A4 Bath Road) to the north. The site is well screened with trees and mature vegetation along most boundaries.
6. Immediately to the east the site abuts the site of a very large three storey building that currently operates as Sunrise Nursing Home, an assisted living and care home. Further

east lies the Redingensians Rams RFC. The southern boundary of the application site also defines the edge of the settlement boundary with designated countryside lying beyond (refer to Location Plan extract below), including the Sonning Golf Course. To the west there is a cluster of residential dwellings served off Sonning Gate and Pound Lane and a cul-de-sac of four dwellings ('Redgrave', 'Halstead', 'Cedarwood' and 'Mortimer') is also served off Old Bath Road and sits to the north-west of the application site. Generally, residential dwellings in the surrounding area predominately comprise of a suburban and large, detached form.

7. Following initial concerns raised by the Thames Valley Police Crime Design Advisor (TVPCDA) amended plans were submitted which include revised layouts for more secure access lobbies. The submitted amended plans also addressed initial concerns raised by the WBC Highways Officer in respect of justification for proposed parking levels and demonstration of acceptable vehicle 'swept paths' and manoeuvrability on site. An addendum to the FRA and Drainage Strategy was also submitted following comments from the WBC Drainage Officer.

Principle of Development:

8. The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
9. Policy CC02 of the MDD sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map and therefore replaces the proposals map adopted through the Core Strategy, as per the requirement of policy CP9. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. As the site is within a limited development location, the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Need for the development:

10. Policy TB09 states that *"the Council will in principle support proposals which provide for... types of accommodation to provide for peoples' needs over a lifetime"* including extra care homes, dementia extra care units, enhanced sheltered schemes and proposals that allow the elderly and those with disabilities to remain in their own homes or purpose-built accommodation.
11. Supporting text of the Core Strategy states that *"for older people, delivering more choices in the housing and care available to them, including extra care housing, is a priority."* (para 2.40)
12. The NPPF defines 'older people' as those *"over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs"*.
13. The supporting Planning Statement makes considerable reference to the need for older persons accommodation including extra care facilities. Referring to Policy

TB09, the applicant states that the types of housing promoted under this policy “...include ‘Enhanced sheltered schemes’ which in effect is what is proposed in this application”. However, this statement sits contrary to the applicant’s subsequent confirmation that “the proposal is intended to be considered as a wholly C3 development offering ‘independent living’... There will be ongoing maintenance/cleaning across the development but not enough to classify this as elements of care”.

14. The Council’s Housing and Adult Social Care team has noted that this is effectively a scheme of private dwellings with low levels of care and that this is not a development that WBC Adult Social Care would have any stake in because does not meet any defined care need. While there may be a market for individuals (as self-funders) wishing to downsize to smaller properties such as the apartments proposed, the eventual care aspects of these individuals in later years would clearly not be addressed by the proposal.
15. Therefore, the proposed provision of units for the over 60’s (as would be secured via s106 legal agreement) would, on its own, add significant additional weight in favour of the scheme over and above the delivery of regular C3 housing units.

Character of the Area:

16. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Policy CC02 (Development Limits) of the MDD ensures new development ‘respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape’. Policy TB06 states that the Council will resist inappropriate development of residential gardens where they would cause harm to the local area.
17. The Sonning Parish Design Statement (2004) highlights that new buildings should respect the scale, massing and height of neighbouring properties and seek to create an appropriate balance between building scale and plot size.
18. As mentioned above, this Outline application is for ‘Access’, ‘Layout’ and ‘Scale’ matters only as discussed in the sections below. Matters of ‘Landscaping’ and ‘Appearance’ are reserved for consideration at a later stage. The proposal would result in the demolition of three existing detached dwellings and erection of three three-storey apartment blocks; Block A (units), Block B (18 units) and Block C (20 units) with extended and widened access road and parking provision.
19. The maximum dimensions of each block are outlined in the Table 1.0 below:

Table 1.0: Proposed block dimensions

	Width	Length	Height
Block A	28.8m	40.5m	13.5m
Block B	29.1m	31.2m	12.0m
Block C	31.2m	31.8m	11.4m

20. The submitted Design and Access Statement highlights that “...the character of the area was traditionally that of two to three storey detached dwellings, however, this

has been eroded in recent years with the introduction of the Sunrise of Sonning, a 3-storey assisted living and care home, Sonning Gate, Seagrave Close and the Birchley redevelopment”. The applicant has also suggested that the neighbouring Sunrise development was based on the equivalent of 80 units which equates to 86 dwellings per hectare. The applicant has provided the following street-scene/section drawing (see Fig. 3.0 below) which shows Block A in context with the existing Sunrise building (on the left) and Redgrave (on the right).

Fig. 3.0 Block A – Streetscene/section drawing.



21. The applicant has also made reference to the nearby Sonning Golf Club planning application (161529) for 13 dwellings on Duffield Road/Pound Lane; a site which lies within the Countryside and was allowed at appeal (APP/X0360/W/17/3167142) in July 2018.
22. Following initial comments from the WBC Tree and Landscape Officer seeking a more detail appraisal of the development in the context of the surroundings, the applicant has submitted a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The LVIA identifies publicly accessible viewpoints within the relatively close proximity to the site at which locations where significant visual effects may be likely; it concludes that the *“overall effect on the character and appearance of the landscape would be a balance of limited to no visual effects on views from the local landscape”*.
23. The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer has assessed the proposal in light of the submitted DAS and LVIA and concluded that *“...it is important for the development to sit within the established landscape context of Old Bath Road, the southerly rural backdrop with the countryside and long views to the south as well as the integration of the development within the built environment is important to comply with Policy CP3 and CC03. The scale and intensity of the blocks within the site will be screened by the existing key trees and screening, new structural tree and hedge planting should be sufficient to provide this along with the other demands of the scale of this development”*.
24. Purely in density terms, the proposal would represent a significant increase (2.5DPH to 48DPH), however, this alone is not a clear indication that the proposal would adversely change the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As has been noted above, the neighbouring Sunrise Nursing Home is a very dominant and sprawling building that provides partial context to this part of Old Bath Road.
25. While the bulk and massing of the proposed blocks are considerably larger than that of the host dwellings on the application site, they would be sufficiently spread apart from each other to avoid appearing cramped or overly dominant in the context of the surrounding area. From most locations on Old Bath Road, the only part of the proposed development that would be visible would be Block A. This building, while

large, would provide itself as a suitable 'transition building' between the substantially larger Sunrise Nursing Home and 'Redgrave'; as is highlighted in the submitted streetscene/section drawing (refer to Fig. 3.0 above).

26. In respect of MDD Local Plan Policy TB06, the proposal would integrate with the character and appearance of the surrounding area largely due to the context set by the neighbouring Sunrise Nursing Home. The proposal would be compatible with the general building height of this and other neighbouring properties especially given the separation distances and spaces around the proposed buildings. Adequate boundary treatments and landscaping could be achieved at reserved matters stage and/or via condition.
27. In terms of the development's impact on longer distance views to, and from, the countryside to the south, proposed Blocks B and C benefit from being set in from the rear boundary of the site; the combination of existing and proposed soft landscaping along this boundary would help soften these buildings in this setting. Moreover, it must again be considered that these blocks would be seen from the south in the context of the adjacent Sunrise Nursing Home building.
28. I considered that the submitted LVIA demonstrates that the proposal achieves an appropriate balance between 'building scale' and separation on site which would respect the overall character and appearance of the area as well as not unduly impacting on views to and from the countryside to the south.
29. Therefore, the proposed development in terms of its 'Layout' and 'Scale' would not harm the local area and is considered acceptable and compliant with the aforementioned design-based planning policies and guidance.

Residential Amenities:

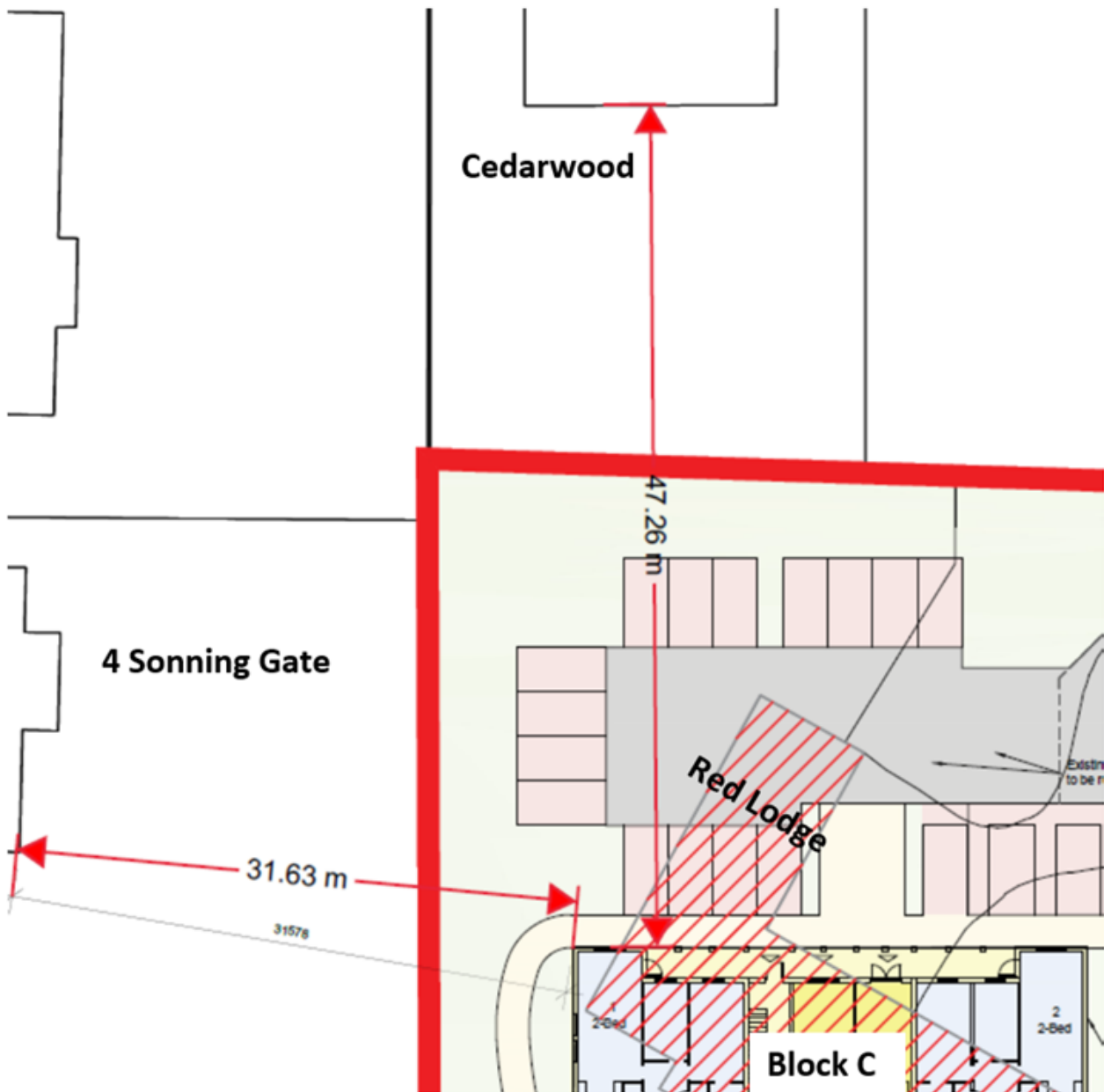
30. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. The Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) stipulates that a minimum back-to-back distance of 30m should be provided between new flatted developments and existing housing in order to maintain privacy and limit the sense of enclosure and that dwellings must be designed to provide appropriate levels of daylight and sunlight to new and existing properties.
31. The proposal would introduce three much larger three-storey flatted blocks to replace the existing three dwellings on site. This would also involve the removal of a significant amount of vegetation mainly from within the middle of the site to facilitate both buildings and car parking areas. While the development would clearly represent a significant change in the form of development on site, the extent to which the proposal impacts on the amenities of neighbours must still be considered in the usual manner with reference to Core Strategy CP3 and separation distances referred to the Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG).

Overlooking:

32. At its closest point, Block C would be sited approximately 31m from the rear of elevation of 4 Sonning Gate and 47m from the rear of elevation of Cedarwood (as demonstrated in Fig. 4.0 below). These separation distances exceed the guidance in the Council's Borough Design Guide and, as such, no significant overlooking or loss of privacy to these, or other, neighbouring properties would occur. It is noted that a

significant amount of existing landscaping would be removed from the application site in order to facilitate the development; however, the proposed layout retains sufficient space for the retention of soft landscaping in order to provide a buffer and screening between the boundaries of other existing residential properties. Moreover, conditions are recommended to secure details of boundary treatments around the application site and replacement soft landscaping and tree planting.

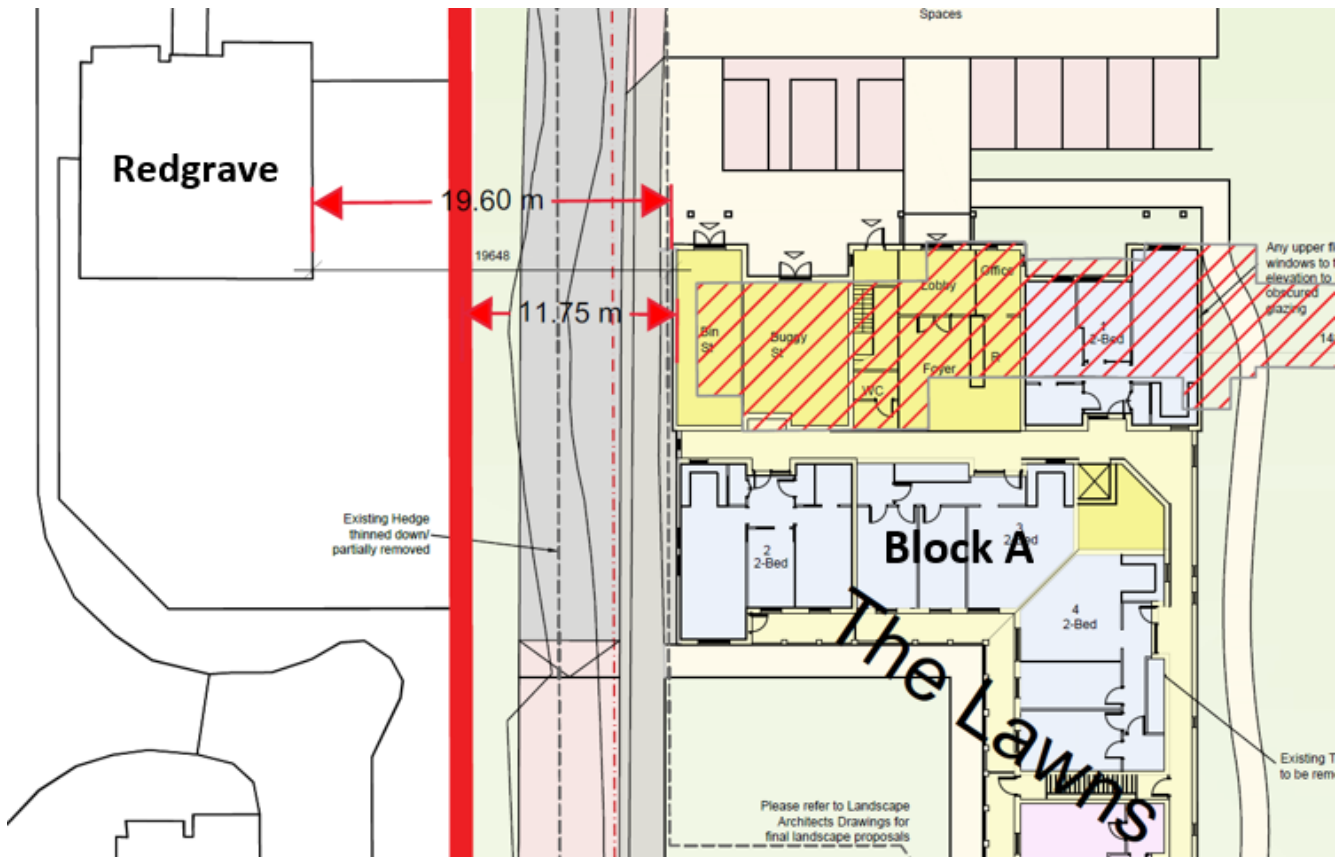
Fig. 5.0 - Relationship between Block C and 4 Sonning Gate and Cedarwood



33. In respect of Block A's proposed relationship with 'Redgrave', a 12m separation distance would be retained between the property boundary line and 19m would be retained between the flank wall of this existing property (refer to Fig 5.0 below). This exceeds the 15m 'back to flank' separation distance (for development over 2 storeys) advocated within the Borough Design Guide. In addition, the proposed layout retains sufficient space for the retention of, and enhancement of, soft landscaping in order to provide a suitable visual green buffer and screening from this neighbour.

34. Moreover, following discussion with the applicant on this point, a condition is recommended to ensure that first and second floor windows in the west elevation of units 9, 10, 16 and 17 of Block be fitted with obscured glass and hall be non-opening below 1.7 metres. These are secondary windows within dual aspect flats and a westward outlook is not essential for these units. Adherence with the condition would further ensure that the privacy of 'Redgrave' is protected from any unacceptable overlooking.

Fig. 4.0 - Relationship between Block A and 'Redgrave', Old Bath Road.



Overbearing:

35. The proposal would be partially visible from the rear of immediate neighbouring dwellings and would represent a change from the existing situation on site. However, the proposal would not constitute a development that could be considered oppressive or overbearing to the extent that it would significantly detract from the amenities or surrounding dwellings largely because of the considerable separation distances proposed between these existing properties and the retained and enhanced soft landscaping treatments that could also be put in place.
36. Moreover, while 'appearance' is a reserved matter for consideration at a later time, the submitted draft visuals for the development (refer to example at Fig 6.0 below) indicate a development that is well articulated with relief in the massing of the building provided by well-proportioned gables, rooflines, fenestration and balconies which would help in 'breaking up' the significant volume and mass of the building when viewed from surrounding locations.

Fig. 6.0 – Draft visual for Block C – Front elevation.



Loss of light

37. R18 of the Borough Design Guide highlights that the British Research Establishment (BRE) methodology for 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight' should be used to assess the potential impact of a new development of the daylight in existing habitable rooms.
38. Due to the considerable separation distances that would be retained between the proposed development and existing neighbours, no significant overshadowing or loss of light to the neighbouring properties would occur as a result of this proposal. For example, 4 Sonning Gate would have the closest relationship with the proposed development - in respect of how its rear outlook may be impacted upon. This existing property's relationship with Block C has been assessed in line with the BRE methodology and the development would not obstruct a 25-degree line taken from this existing dwelling.
39. In respect Block A's proposed relationship with the existing property 'Redgrave' (refer to Fig. 4.0 above), the proposed development would not obstruct a 45-degree line taken from the centre line of a rear facing habitable room window as advocated within R.18 of the Borough Design Guide.
40. As such, no significant loss of daylight would occur to any of the existing neighbouring dwellings.

41. The proposal therefore protects the amenities of existing residential properties and complies with Core Strategy Policy CP3 and the Council's Borough Design Guide in this respect.

Access and Movement:

42. MDD Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards. Core Strategy Policy CP6 requires developments to provide appropriate vehicular parking, having regard to car ownership. P3 of the Borough Design Guide SPD notes that parking spaces should be safe and convenient, close to the dwelling and sited to minimise impact upon safety. Visibility splays and swept path analysis are also required to be specified on the plans.

Highway Safety:

43. WBC Highway has been consulted on this application and raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. Following initial comments from the WBC Highways, the applicant has submitted 'swept paths', including large cars accessing the parking spaces and refuse vehicles accessing the main access door of Block A. In addition, a Road Safety Audit Stage with designer's comments has been submitted which WBC Highways advise is acceptable subject to a condition to secure visibility splays.
44. In respect an objector's suggestion that the development should provide for a signalised crossing across the A4, WBC Highways Officer has commented that this would not be a suitable location for such a measure.

Traffic Impact:

45. WBC Highways have advised that a worst-case scenario based on trip rates for houses would result in a two-way trip rates of 33 and 29 for the AM and PM peak hours respectively. This rate would need to be used as some occupants may still be in employment. WBC Highways have advised that due to the level of traffic on the A4, the resultant trip rates associated with the development would not have an adverse impact on the main highway network.

Parking:

46. WBC Highways have advised that, using the Council's parking calculator, there would be a requirement for a range of between 52 and 80 spaces depending on if these were allocated or unallocated.
47. The proposal intends 63 car parking spaces (including 10 disabled spaces) located in three separate car park areas; one close to the frontage of the site in front of Block A and two located more centrally within the application site. Following initial comments from the WBC Highways, the applicant has submitted evidence to demonstrate the average parking rate for a development such as this 0.79 per unit. What is being proposed is higher than this at a rate of 1.11 per unit totalling 63 spaces. This is considered sufficient for both occupants of the development and any staff or visitors.
48. The applicant has indicated that one parking space would be allocated to each flat. WBC Highways have recommended that the parking spaces are left unallocated and a condition is recommended to secure a Parking Management Strategy for the site to secure the specific parking arrangements. Electric vehicle charging spaces may form part of the applicant's strategy for the requirement to generate 10% of the predicted energy for this development from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon

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sources. The Parking Management Strategy would also outline the monitoring and the delivery of additional electric vehicle charging spaces when required.

49. 12 cycle parking spaces are proposed which falls short of the Council's normal standards for 1 space per flat. However, the applicant has provided a review of other similar sites which has identified that cycle use there is very low and the WBC Highway's Officer accepts that, in this particular instance, the 12 spaces proposed are suitable to serve the development. A condition is recommended to secure these details.

Sustainability:

50. WBC Highways have advised that the local bus services cannot be described as a good service under CP6. Bus route 128/129 has only 6 return journeys during the peak period with no off peak or weekend services. Bus route 850 has an hourly journey during the day and one evening service Monday to Saturday. There is no Sunday service. However, the site is located 'in-settlement' (and hence considered to be in a reasonably sustainable location with access to services) and the westbound bus stop is within an acceptable walk distance from the centre of the site. Implementation of an acceptable Travel Plan for this development could include items how to improve the sustainability of the site through measures such as mini-buses, taxis, on-line services to improve deliveries etc; these would all be of assistance for those residents who do not own a car.
51. Hence, a draft Travel Plan was submitted with the application but is not considered sufficient in terms of travel surveys going forward for the development. However, WBC Highways accept that a condition could be imposed to secure the final version of the Travel Plan and this is duly recommended.
52. Subject to compliance with these highways-related conditions, the proposal complies with Policy CC07 of the MDD Local Plan and Core Strategy Policy CP6.

Flooding and Drainage:

53. MMD Local Plan policy CC10 states that all development proposals must reproduce greenfield runoff characteristics and return run-off rates and volumes back to the original greenfield levels, for greenfield sites and for brownfield sites both run-off rates and volumes be reduced to as near greenfield as practicably possible.
54. The site is located within Flood Zone 1. Following submission of an acceptable addendum to the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy the Council's Drainage Officer has no objection to the proposal. The submitted addendum provides a suitable surface water drainage design and layout, full drainage calculations (including 100-year return period and 40% allowance for climate change increase for the proposed drainage strategy) and a topographic survey indicating the surface water runoff and its infiltration management.
55. Thames Water raise no objection to this proposal either in respect of waste water capacity, surface water drainage or water network capacity.
56. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in flooding and drainage respects being in accordance with MDD Local Plan policy CC10.

Landscape and Trees:

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57. Policy CC03 aims to protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features as well as existing Green Routes. Core Strategy Policy CP3 aims to create a sense of place in the way buildings integrate with their surroundings including the use of appropriate landscaping.
58. The applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment which has been assessed by the WBC Trees and Landscape Officer. There are 6 protected trees within the site which are covered by TPO 1252/2008. Across the whole site there are 74 single trees, 9 groups of trees and 10 hedgerows; 3 'A' quality, 16 'B' quality and 57 'C' quality and 17 'U' trees. The majority of the tree stock across the site are graded 'C' (57 No.) and over half of these trees will be removed. All trees classified as 'U' will be removed. All 'A' and 'B' quality trees will remain.
59. WBC Trees and Landscape Officer comments that while *"the overall tree stock will be reduced by at least 66%... Many of the removals are located in the interior site consisting of trees, hedges and shrubberies that formed the gardens and structural buffer planting between the existing plots"*.
60. The removal of this vegetation will no doubt change the character of the plot making way for a more urbanised form of development. However, the applicant has submitted a Landscape Visual Assessment which has been assessed by the Council's Tree & Landscape Officer who concludes that it demonstrates *"...the development can be contained within the existing landscape structure and setting with minimal impact on the suburban character of the area, and with visual impacts limited to a number of dwellings close by but acceptable within the residential character"*.
61. While landscaping details would be for consideration at a later stage as a subsequent Reserved Matter application, the applicant has also submitted a Landscape Masterplan which identifies that there is sufficient room for amenity space and future soft landscaping; this could allow for significant increases in tree planting at key locations across the site; e.g. adjacent to property boundary lines and along the southern boundary adjacent to the golf club. In light of the above, the WBC Trees & Landscape Officer raises no objection to this application subject to conditions to secure tree protection details, landscape proposals and a landscape management plan.
62. Subject to compliance with these conditions, the proposal complies with Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan and Core Strategy Policy CP3.

Environmental Health:

63. Policy CC06 and Appendix 1 of the MDD Local Plan requires that development protect noise sensitive receptors from noise impact. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity.
64. The site falls outside of any potential contaminated land consultation zone. However, the proposal has been considered by the Council's Public Protection Partnership - Environmental Health Officer in respect of both Potential Unexpected Contaminated Land, Noise, Lighting and Demolition and Construction Impacts. No objection to this proposal has been raised subject to conditions to deal with the following:

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- Any unexpected contamination found during site clearance, groundwork or construction;
- No floodlighting or other forms of external lighting without separate approval
- Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
- Construction hours limited to 08:00 and 18:00 Mon-Fri and 08:00 to 13:00 Sat and at no time on Sun or public holidays.

65. Subject to compliance with the above conditions, the proposal would suitably protect existing neighbouring residents from any excessive pollution during construction and after the development is constructed. Moreover, the proposal would protect future occupants from any unexpected land contamination and therefore complies with Policy CC06 of the MDD Local Plan and Core Strategy Policy CP3.

Amenity Space for future occupiers:

66. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that provide functional amenity space. The Borough Design Guide states that all dwellings should have access to amenity space, preferably in the form of private or communal garden space.
67. Although landscaping detail is a reserved matter, this outline application is accompanied by a Masterplan for Landscaping Proposals plan. This plan indicates that the proposed apartments would have access to four communal garden areas (one on the site frontage, one the middle of the site and two at the rear of the site) in addition to space for a bowling green located behind Block A. These areas comprise over 4,000sqm of external communal amenity space that would be connected by footpaths around the development. Although some this space would be tree-covered, it would equate to more than 25sqm per each habitable room within the proposed development thereby providing usable outdoor amenity space for future occupants.
68. These areas of open space would also provide a setting for the three blocks of apartments proposed as well as providing a suitable outlook for windows within habitable rooms for the development. Many of units proposed would also have access to a private balcony overlooking these areas. Specific details of landscaping would be secured by the subsequent Reserved Matters application and relevant conditions.
69. Therefore, the proposal would provide adequate outdoor amenity space in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy CP3 and with guidance contained within the Borough Design Guide.

Internal Space Standards:

70. Policy TB07 of the MDD and R17 of the Borough Design Guide SPD require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity. The Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (NDSS) sets out minimum internal floor areas.
71. Table 2.0 below demonstrates that the proposal meets all the NDSS requirements; the right-hand (green) column shows respectively by how much each flat exceeds the minimum standard. In summary, all the units proposed meet the following floorspace criteria:
- Have a GIA above the NDSS standard

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- Single room width over and above NDSS standard
- Single room floor space over and above NDSS standard
- Double room width over and above NDSS standard
- Double room floor space over and above NDSS standard

Table 2.0: Gross Internal Floorspace comparison (Proposed units and NDSS)

Plot no	House Type	House Details			Proposed	National Standards	Difference
BLOCK	C	Floors	Beds	Person	GIA	GIA	GIA
1	Flat	1	2	3	77.9	61	16.9
2	Flat	1	2	3	78.8	61	17.8
3	Flat	1	2	3	86.3	61	25.3
4	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
5	Flat	1	1	2	66.6	50	16.6
6	Flat	1	1	2	66.6	50	16.6
7	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
8	Flat	1	2	3	86.3	61	25.3
9	Flat	1	2	3	78.8	61	17.8
10	Flat	1	2	3	78.4	61	17.4
11	Flat	1	2	3	73.0	61	12.0
12	Flat	1	2	3	77.9	61	16.9
13	Flat	1	1	2	66.6	50	16.6
14	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
15	Flat	1	2	3	86.3	61	25.3
16	Flat	1	2	3	78.8	61	17.8
17	Flat	1	2	3	78.4	61	17.4
18	Flat	1	2	3	73.0	61	12.0
19	Flat	1	2	3	77.9	61	16.9
BLOCK	B						
1	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
2	Flat	1	1	2	56.1	50	6.1
3	Flat	1	2	3	78.3	61	17.3
4	Flat	1	2	3	77.8	61	16.8
5	Flat	1	2	3	86.9	61	25.9
6	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
7	Flat	1	2	3	78.1	61	17.1
8	Flat	1	1	3	77.8	61	16.8
9	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
10	Flat	1	1	2	56.1	50	6.1
11	Flat	1	2	3	78.3	61	17.3
12	Flat	1	2	3	86.9	61	25.9
13	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
14	Flat	1	2	3	78.1	61	17.1
15	Flat	1	2	3	77.8	61	16.8
16	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
17	Flat	1	1	2	56.1	50	6.1
18	Flat	1	2	3	78.3	61	17.3
BLOCK	C						
1	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
2	Flat	1	2	3	79.3	61	18.3
3	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
4	Flat	1	2	3	86.5	61	25.5
5	Flat	1	2	3	77.8	61	16.8
6	Flat	1	2	3	78.1	61	17.1
7	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
8	Flat	1	1	2	56.1	50	6.1
9	Flat	1	2	3	79.3	61	18.3

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10	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
11	Flat	1	2	3	86.5	61	25.5
12	Flat	1	2	3	77.8	61	16.8
13	Flat	1	2	3	78.1	61	17.1
14	Flat	1	2	3	78.0	61	17.0
15	Flat	1	1	2	56.1	50	6.1
16	Flat	1	2	3	79.3	61	18.3
17	Flat	1	2	3	86.1	61	25.1
18	Flat	1	2	3	86.5	61	25.5
19	Flat	1	2	3	77.8	61	16.8
20	Flat	1	2	3	78.1	61	17.1

72. The above calculations are based on the assumption that 1-bedroom flats would have a maximum of 2 persons occupancy and 2-bedroom flats have maximum of 3-person occupancy. These occupancy rates are justified given the nature of the development; i.e. for occupancy by over 60's only.
73. 24 of the proposed units would benefit from dual aspect with the remaining having single aspect. However, habitable rooms within all units would have an adequate outlook and a natural light source; i.e. external window. Overall, the proposal would achieve good internal amenity for each unit thereby complying with the aims of MDD Policy TB07, the NDSS and guidance with the Borough Design Guide.

Ecology:

74. Policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan requires the incorporation of new biodiversity features, buffers between habitats and species of importance and integration with the wider green infrastructure network. Policy CP7 states that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted.
75. The application site lies within the Council's Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Model and the applicant has therefore submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Bat Activity Surveys report to support this proposal.
76. The Council's Ecologist has reviewed this proposal in light of these supporting documents and concurs that the application site currently provides for poor quality habitats only and that the submitted Bat evidence *"does support the conclusion of a likely absence of a maternity roost in any of the three buildings"*.
77. Paras 170 and 175 of the NPPF highlight that it is appropriate for the local planning authority to seek the inclusion of wildlife habitat enhancements within a development. The submitted PEA has made recommendations for ecological enhancements as part of this proposal and the Council's Ecologist has recommended that a condition be imposed to ensure that these works are carried out in full. In addition, it is also recommended that, as 'Landscaping' is a reserved matter, the extent of ecological enhancements also need to be reflected in the landscaping conditions.
78. The Council's Ecologist has also recommended a condition to ensure that no works shall commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from Natural England and submitted to the local planning authority.
79. Subject to compliance with these conditions, the proposal complies with Policy TB23 of the MDD Local Plan. Core Strategy Policy CP7 and with guidance contained within the NPPF.

Sustainable Design/Construction:

80. Policy CC05 of the MDD Local Plan encourages renewable energy and decentralised energy networks, with encouragement of decentralised energy systems and a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions for developments of more than 10 dwellings.
81. The applicant has submitted a Sustainability Statement to support this application which identifies several potential measures to promote sustainable design such as energy consumption, water usage, surface water drainage, shading and solar gain, recycling, biodiversity, limiting light/noise, construction and NOx pollution, cycle storage, responsibly sourced and recycled materials and site waste. The Sustainability Statement also indicates that *“as part of the proposal, the client plans to have solar photo voltaic systems fitted to provide over 10% of the energy required by the dwellings during an average year from local sources”*.
82. As such, a pre-commencement condition is recommended to ensure that a scheme for generating 10% of the predicted energy requirement of the development from decentralised renewable and/or low carbon sources (e.g. solar panels, electric charging points) is implemented in order to accord with the aims of Core Strategy policy CP1, MDD Local Plan policy CC05 & the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

Archaeology:

83. Policy TB25 of the MDD Local Plan states that in areas of high archaeological potential, applicants will need to provide a detailed assessment of the impact on archaeological remains. Where development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential or an area which is likely to contain archaeological remains, the presumption is that appropriate measures shall be taken to protect remains by preservation in situ. Where this is not practical, applicants shall provide for excavation, recording and archiving of the remains.
84. The application site is located close to areas containing significant archaeological remains, with seven nationally important Scheduled Monuments lying to the north-east of the site, identified by crop marks indicating the presence of prehistoric monuments. The nearest Scheduled Monument is less than 275m from the application site. In addition to this, evidence for Roman and medieval activity was recorded to the south-west of the site at Mustard Lane. Prehistoric settlement activity was also identified during work at Duffield House to the south of the proposed site and at two sites to the south of Charvil at East Park Farm and Land West of Park Lane.
85. Berkshire Archaeology were consulted on this application and have advised that the proposal, if permitted, will impact on buried remains. Therefore, they have advised that *“archaeological investigation of the application area is merited but this can be secured by condition should the scheme be permitted. This is in accordance with Paragraph 199 of the NPPF which states that local planning authorities should ‘require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible’*”.

86. Subject to compliance with this condition, the proposal complies with Policy TB25 of the MDD Local Plan and with guidance contained within the NPPF.

Affordable Housing, Employment Skills Plan (ESP) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Affordable Housing:

87. The threshold for affordable housing is 5 dwellings or more on residential sites of 0.16 hectares or larger. The site exceeds this threshold and therefore there is a requirement for the provision of affordable housing. To meet the requirements of Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy, a minimum of 40% of the total number of units (net) should be provided as affordable housing. This equates to 22.8 units in the proposed development of 57 apartments.
88. The proposals would not meet the Council's Adult Social Care needs and therefore the only practical means of delivery for the provision affordable housing is through a commuted sum secured via a s106 legal agreement. Using the Council's Affordable Housing SPD, the Housing Policy Officer has advised that the commuted sum sought in-lieu of 22.8 units (40%) would be £1,696,706.88 and should be index-linked towards affordable housing in the borough.

Employment Skills Plan (ESP):

89. Policy TB12 of the Wokingham Borough Council MDD, requires planning applications for all major development (both commercial and residential) in Wokingham Borough to submit an employment skills plan (ESP) with a supporting method statement.
90. The applicant has provided their agreement to the principle of making a financial contribution in lieu of an ESP. WBC Economic Prosperity & Place raises no objection and the obligation would be secured via a s106 legal agreement if Planning Committee are minded to grant planning permission to this scheme.
91. The s106 for the above contributions is presently being drafted by the Council's Legal team in discussion with the applicant.

Community Infrastructure Levy:

92. The application is liable for CIL payments because it involves a net increase of 54 new dwellings, payable at a rate of £365/m², index linked.

Other issues:

93. Comments from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue (RBFR) regarding the extra pressures that the development may place on the service are noted. However, the extent of these impacts would not be a material consideration that would warrant refusal of the application or planning obligation.

CONCLUSION

94. The proposal is policy compliant and is therefore recommended for approval as outlined at the start of this report.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
<i>In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age,</i>

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disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. This act is engaged because older persons would occupy the development but there would be no significant adverse impacts upon this protected group as a result of the development.

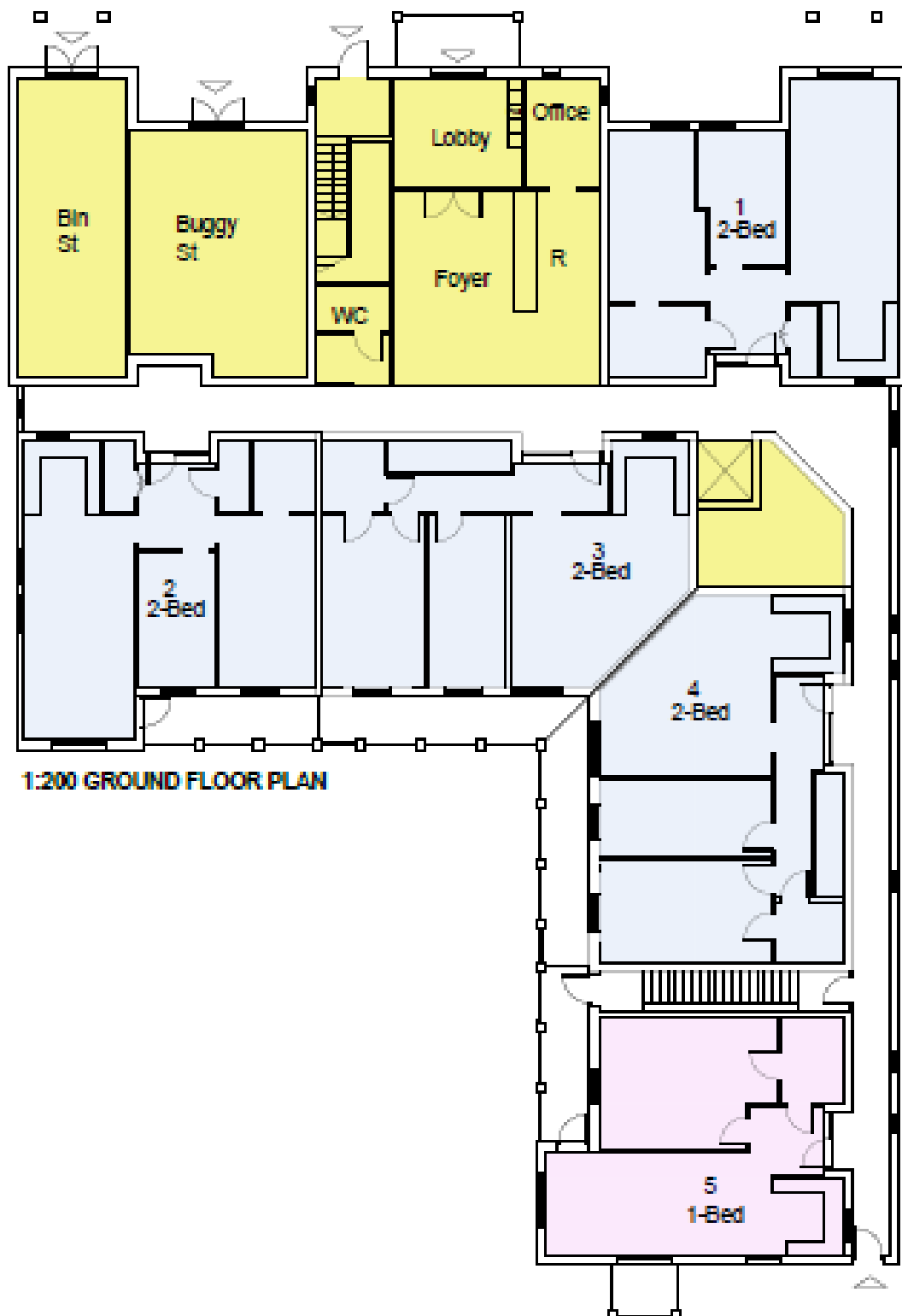
APPENDIX 1: LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



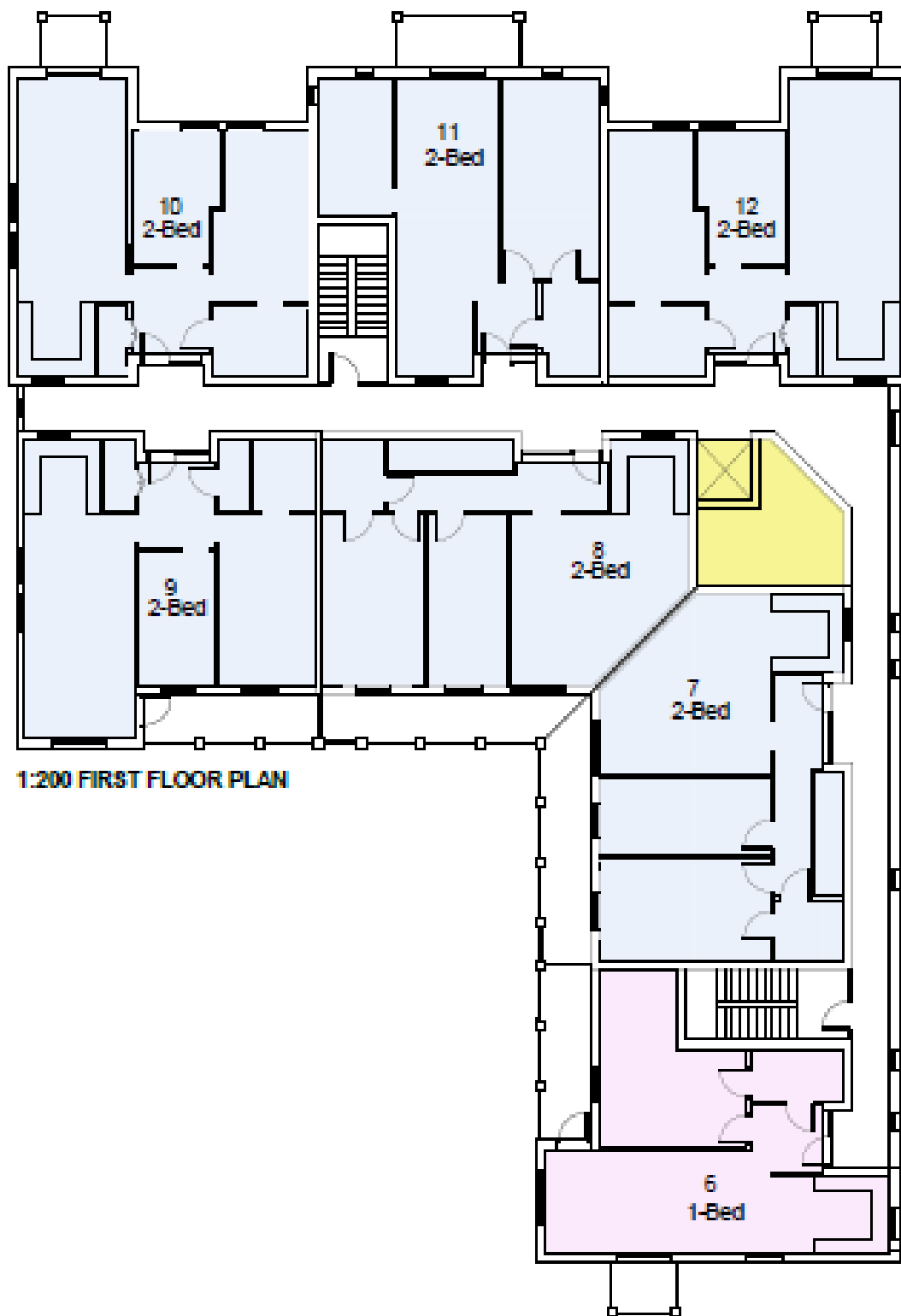
APPENDIX 2: BLOCK A – FRONT VISUAL (n.b. this image is indicative as Appearance is a reserved matter)



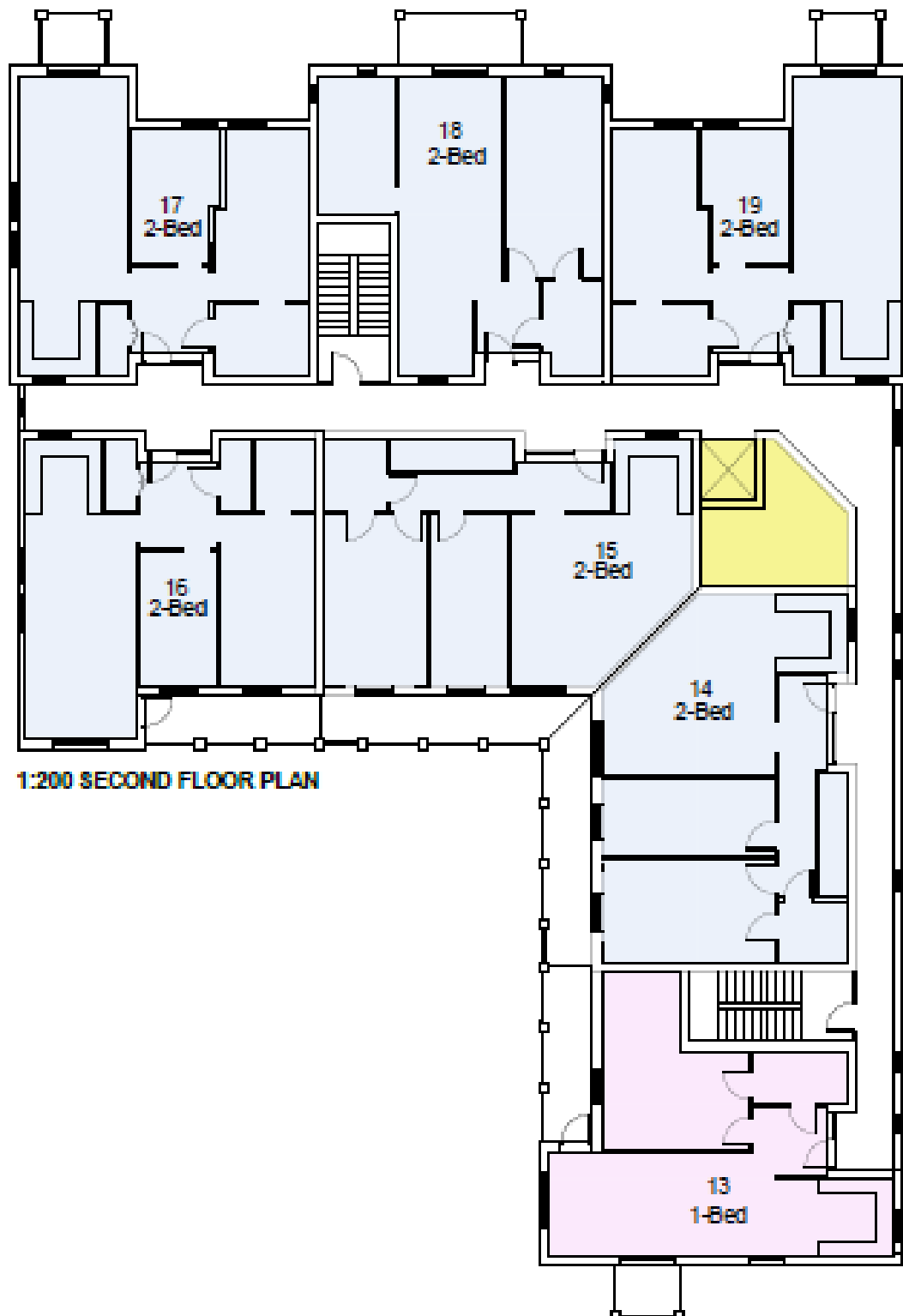
APPENDIX 3: BLOCK A – GROUND FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX 4: BLOCK A – FIRST FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX 5: BLOCK A – SECOND FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX 6: SITE PHOTOS

i) Application site frontage view from Old Bath Road



ii) Sunrise Care Home viewed from 'The Lawns'



- iii) 'The Lawns' (or Block A) looking south-west towards 'Redgrave'.



- iv) Google Earth image of application site in context with neighbours.



SONNING PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Sonning Parish Council has carefully considered this application and strongly object for the following reasons.

IMPACT ON THE AREA

The proposed site is situated in Sonning, which is a Limited Development Location, and in an area typified by low density, detached dwellings set in similar sized plots surrounded by mature trees and high hedges and screened from the main road. This is very much in keeping with the leafy, rural aspect of the parish of Sonning. Properties immediately surrounding the site are predominantly low, 2 storey, individually designed dwellings, which contribute to the rural character of the area. The proposed development is on the edge of the settlement and adjoins designated countryside. The low-density dwellings surrounding the site denotes the gradual reduction of development as it adjoins the countryside. Together with dense tree cover the area exhibits an edge of settlement character with properties well-spaced and set on spacious plots. The proposed development is the complete opposite due to its urban nature of height and density.

As a Limited Development Area Sonning has no local shops, no Doctors Surgery, and no Post Office. Residents therefor rely heavily on the use of the car to access these facilities which can be found in other areas such as Woodley or Twyford. More extensive facilities can be found in Reading. Currently Sonning has two pub hotels, and the one independent Indian Restaurant, mentioned in the application, closed earlier in the year. Sonning is not a transitional site as suggested in the application.

The site is not in a sustainable location and the introduction of so many dwellings in this area would result in greater use of the private car which would be contrary to policy CP6 of the Core Strategy.

The development of 57 new dwellings would have a substantial and significant detrimental impact on the character of the area and would not reflect the wider character. The dwellings would create additional built mass adjoining the countryside and would provide a permanent solid feature in the landscape. Additionally, there would be other impacts such as vehicle movement both in and out of the site, parking of vehicles and associated hard standing required.

The proposal is therefore contrary to policy CP3 as it would have a detrimental impact on the area.

The Parish Council question the need for such homes as it is understood that similar, 2 bedroom, flats in Twyford remain unsold some months after marketing. If they remain unsold could they be sold to a different age group.

IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

The Transport Statement seeks to persuade that residents over 60, or is it 55, would no longer be working and bizarrely claim that there would be just 3 extra car movements from the development, at peak times, as opposed to the current projected number of vehicles movement from the recently approved development of 7 dwellings on the site. It is also stated that the average age on a mature development is around 80 years.

The Transport Statement refers to data on CrashMap in that it indicates that no accidents have been recorded in the latest available five year period between 1st January 2015 and

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31st December 2019 on the A4 past the site, on Old Bath Road or at the junction of Old Bath Road with the A4 Bath Road. Whilst this is not contested the data ignores the onsite dangers to pedestrians and the speed of vehicles in the area, even as they approach the roundabout. The sheer volume of traffic is difficult to imagine and the Parish Council would suggest that the officer and or the applicant visit the site at peak times to experience it themselves.

Until recently the data for Thames Street (B478) probably indicated similar data to that on A4 Bath Road i.e. no recorded accidents. Unfortunately, that changed recently when a cyclist was killed on the B478. Data ignores the fact that a great deal of care and attention is required when crossing any road in Sonning due to the huge numbers of vehicles on its roads. This will be even more important if, as suggested, the residents of this proposed development, make use of the local transport, particularly as the average age would appear to be 80. It would be sheer folly to ask elderly residents to cross the A4 to access public transport and Bus services often cancelled without notice.

Even if using the cycle paths, Cyclists would need to cross several very busy roads such as Pound Lane South, (where 7,000 vehicles travel in both directions each day and speeds of up to 60 mph have been recorded) to reach the nearest shop and facilities. Doubtless, even with the best intentions, residents would resort to using their cars given the unreliability of public transport, where busses are often cancelled without notice.

If Parish Council are to believe that that the average age of residents will be 80 years, then it can also be assumed that these residents are more likely to rely heavily on Doctors services. The applicants themselves agree that the nearest Doctors surgeries are some distance away and would not be within acceptable walking distance for more fragile residents. Even if it is assumed that each flat will be occupied by two elderly people that will increase the pressure on existing surgeries by flooding the area with an additional 114 people, possibly more as 49 of the proposed flats are 2 bedroomed and only 8 are 1 bedroomed. The additional burden this will place on the limited Medical services in the area cannot be ignored.

LOSS OF PRIVACY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposal includes removal of mature hedges and a number of trees, which currently offer a great deal of screening to adjoining properties. Without the screening the uncharacteristic 3storey blocks will present a more urban aspect and the proposed balconies provide further opportunities for overlooking. This will be to the detriment of the privacy of adjoining residents, it will impact on their existing amenity and is likely to result in planning blight.

For the above reasons Sonning Parish Council urges refusal of this application.

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