

Planning

Head of Service: Adrian Duffield



Listening Learning Leading

Clifton Hampden & Burcot Parish Council
c/o Giles Baxter
[Via Email]

CONTACT OFFICER: **William Sparling**

registration@southoxon.gov.uk

Tel : 01235 422600

Textphone: 18001 01235 422600

135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park
ABINGDON OX14 4SB

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Ref: P21/S4383/PEJ

Dear Giles,

Location: Two parcels of land north & south of Abingdon Road, Clifton Hampden

Proposal: A Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) for the erection of 20 dwellings and associated open space, together with provision for a new surgery to serve the village and other improved landscape amenities. **SITE MEETING, VIRTUAL MEETING AND LETTER**

Thank you for submitting your pre-app enquiry for the proposal described above. As the proposal is for a new Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO), the preparation of the order will be led by the Parish Council as the qualifying body and then undergo independent examination, with a legally binding recommendation made to the local planning authority. If the recommendation is for the order to be made, responsibility for making it will be for South Oxfordshire District Council.

As such, this pre-app enquiry is different to that normally received. Usually, officers would provide an opinion on the relevant planning policies and an overview of the key material planning considerations if a planning application were to be submitted. However, as this proposal will be independently examined before being made by the council, for this pre-app enquiry I provide below my opinion on the following matters:

- 1) A development management officer perspective on the proposal, having regard to officer advice received from internal SODC consultees and also Oxfordshire County Council. Other external stakeholders have not been consulted as part of this pre-app.
- 2) Throughout the report I have considered the need for the order to meet the basic conditions, including any local and national planning policy and planning practice guidance relevant to the preparation of a neighbourhood development order.

- 3) The advice provided is intended to further guide and support the parish council in preparing the neighbourhood development order, in accordance with the 'duty to support' requirements. The local planning authority is legally required to provide assistance to facilitate the preparation of the order.

Having regard to the proposal, policy and legislative framework and consultee responses, I consider the key material planning considerations will be as follows:

- **Principle of development**
- **Housing Mix**
- **Impact on Heritage**
- **Impact on Landscape**
- **Design, Layout and Appearance**
- **Ecology**
- **Trees**
- **Highways, access and parking**
- **Environmental Sustainability and Low Carbon**
- **Noise and Environmental Health**
- **Drainage and Flood Risk**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Waste Management**
- **Archaeology**

For completeness, it is worth noting the council has a legal duty to support parish councils in working up details of the order, including advising on general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan, when and which consultees to involve, and details of the evidence requirements which will be needed to inform the proposals in the order. The planning policy team lead on this service for neighbourhood planning on behalf of SODC and will be able to provide additional support in this respect.

External technical support, in addition to grant funding, is available for groups preparing a Neighbourhood Development Order. Technical support is available for various matters, including site viability reporting. More information is available here: [Technical Support - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

As discussed in our meetings, subject to workload priorities and availability of officers, we would be available to talk through the possibility of providing further advice from a development management perspective on the proposal. Officers would work closely with the planning policy team in that respect.

Site Context

The proposal is to utilise two parcels of land for development, north and south of Abingdon Road, to the west of the existing settlement. The site context can be summarised as follows:

- Both sites are in the Green Belt, as is all of Clifton Hampden. Both sites are within Clifton Hampden Conservation Area.

- The historic settlement character of Clifton Hampden is of a linear settlement with buildings along main roads, clustered around farms with some detached houses in large plots.
- Site area: Parcel A is approximately 7.3 acres and parcel B is approximately 3.3 acres. The two sites are approximately a total site area of 10.6 acres (4.2 hectares).
- Parcel A is currently used for a small village car park, modest village hall, a few allotments and some public open space, especially to the north.
- Parcel A is bounded to the north and west by hederow and mature trees, to the south by the A415 and to the east by hedgerow and residential gardens.
- Parcel B is a grazing field or paddock. Parcel B was historically a village orchard.
- Parcel B is bounded to the north by the A415, southwest by residential gardens and to the east by residential gardens.
- Both parcels of land are reasonably well contained by their boundaries, especially in the summer months when the hederows are at a significant size. However, there are large openings, field gates and entrances to both sites where views are obtainable.
- A public footpath runs along the west side of Parcel A. A public footpath also runs along the east side of parcel B. These connect the historic parts of the village to the wider countryside. Views from the public footpath across parcel B is much more open than parcel a, which is behind a hedgerow and tree planting.
- The topography of parcel A is mostly flat, whilst parcel B is largely flat with a slope down to other properties in the south east corner of the site.
- Parcel A has the single storey village hall in the south east corner.
- The overall site context is one of an edge of settlement location, with a rural village feel. Views across the sites vary by location, with various visual receptors in the immediate surrounding area. Views from the west are terminated by historic areas of the settlement and by residential gardens. Views from the north and south are more sensitive, as are views west out over the undeveloped open countryside. A full LVIA is recommended to assess these views and shape the proposal, as has been discussed below.

Planning History

The relevant planning history for the site is as follows:

P76/W0029 Enlarge Kitchen and Provide Store Room – Planning Permission on 27-02-1976

P75/W0356 – Roof over Pathway – Planning Permission on 03-10-1975

P69/M0224 – Extension – Planning Permission on 24-04-1969

P67/M0879 – Car Park. Access – Planning Permission on 22-02-1968

P61/M1232 – Village Car Park with Access – Planning Permission on 04-04-1962

The full planning history is available on the council planning applications website.

Relevant Planning Policies

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 provides the relevant planning policies for the area. These can be summarised as follows:

STRAT1 The Overall Strategy
STRAT2 South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements
STRAT5 Residential Densities
STRAT6 Green Belt
STRAT4 Strategic Development
H1 Delivering New Homes
H8 Housing in the Smaller Villages
H9 Affordable Housing
H11 Housing Mix
TRANS4 Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans
TRANS5 Consideration of Development Proposals
INF1 Infrastructure Provision
INF2 Electronic Communications
INF3 Telecommunications Technology
INF4 Water Resources
ENV1 Landscape and Countryside
ENV2 Biodiversity – Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species
ENV3 Biodiversity
ENV4 Watercourses
ENV5 Green Infrastructure in New Developments
ENV6 Historic Environment
ENV7 Listed Buildings
ENV8 Conservation Areas
ENV9 Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
ENV10 Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes
ENV11 Pollution - Impact from Existing and/or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)
ENV12 Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Sources)
EP1 Air Quality
EP3 Waste Collection and Recycling
EP4 Flood Risk
DES1 Delivering High Quality Development
DES2 Enhancing Local Character
DES3 Design and Access Statements
DES5 Outdoor Amenity Space
DES6 Residential Amenity
DES7 Efficient Use of Resources
DES8 Promoting Sustainable Design
DES9 Renewable Energy
DES10 Carbon Reduction
CF5 Open Space, Sport and Recreation in New Residential Development

I would also like to highlight the guidance contained in the following documents:

- South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016
- South Oxfordshire Developer Contributions SPD
- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
- South Oxfordshire Landscape Capacity Assessment

There are also guidance notes available on Policy DES 10 (Low Carbon), which requires a 40% reduction in carbon emissions measured against a code 2013 building regulations baseline, and First Homes on the council planning policy website: [Adopted Local Plan 2035 - South Oxfordshire District Council \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://southoxon.gov.uk)

Principle of development

The proposal is a unique one in South Oxfordshire and I am not aware of a similar proposal in such a context anywhere else nationally. The site is notably within Green Belt, has a sensitive heritage setting, is adjacent to public rights of way and is largely not considered to be previously developed land. A small portion of the parcel A is developed, comprising a car park and village hall.

Policy STRAT1 (Overall Strategy) provides an overall spatial strategy for development in the district, directing development to more sustainable locations.

Policy H1 (Delivering New Homes) permits the development of new homes on sites not allocated in the development plan where they are brought forward through a Community Right to Build Order, or there are other specific exemptions/circumstances defined in a Neighbourhood Development Order.

Clifton Hampden is a smaller village as defined in the settlement hierarchy. Policy H8 (Housing in the Smaller Villages) states the council will support further growth where a parish council wishes to prepare a neighbourhood plan. It is silent on NDOs, but points v and vi are relevant. It would be beneficial for any supporting evidence to the NDO to address this policy.

Policy STRAT6 (Green Belt) seeks to ensure Green Belt serves its key functions by protecting it from harmful development. As such, it is worth noting that Green Belt serves 5 clear purposes as follows:

- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Indeed, within that context, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out how decisions on proposals affecting the Green Belt should be taken. Paragraph 147

states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In my opinion, this includes many aspects of the current proposal, including the proposed new buildings, roads and isolated areas car parking.

In addition, paragraph 148 states that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The making of any order should apply the same tests.

As we discussed during our meeting, having regard to the above purposes, I would advise that any potential harms to the Green Belt and any other harm resulting from the proposal are mitigated or reduced as far as possible. In my opinion, reducing the harms will assist in any harm being demonstrably outweighed by other considerations, constituting very special circumstances. These potential harms may arise from impacts on heritage, landscape, settlement character, and so on.

Whilst the Green Belt should not be an immovable obstacle, it seeks to restrict new buildings where they are considered to be inappropriate and the very special circumstances test sets a high bar. Both sites are in the Green Belt and development as proposed would result in a loss of openness of the Green Belt land in available local views and an apparent encroachment into the countryside.

Substantial weight will need to be given to maintaining the visual and spatial openness – keeping land permanently open – of the Green Belt and the evidence base will need to demonstrate how this has been achieved. For example, it would be beneficial to see evidence on why two parcels of land are required, which may form part of the evidence gathering in response to the comments below.

Very Special Circumstances

Having regard to our discussion, I consider the overall thrust of the proposal would bring benefits to the local community by providing new homes and new community facilities which are unlikely to be otherwise delivered. It is also part of a wider package of measures being brought forward for the benefit of the local community, which in planning terms have not been considered as part of the current pre-application enquiry.

At this stage I consider more evidence is required to demonstrate very special circumstances, and can provide a summary of my advice as follows:

- Housing Need - How would the development proposals ensure that it would meet local need? Would there need to be some form of legal agreement in place to ensure the proposed dwellings will meet a local need in perpetuity? Has a local connection mechanism been considered? Is the strength of the evidence of a need sufficiently robust to demonstrate a significant housing need? I'd recommend the preparation of a housing needs assessment to supplement local knowledge and village questionnaires.

- Medical facilities - How would the proposed new homes secure the otherwise unobtainable delivery of the proposed new doctors surgery? Has the local CCG confirmed a need for a new surgery and are they satisfied a GP business would be in a position to operate it? What assurances can be provided in this respect? Who would go on to own the facility, including buildings and land on behalf of the community? How will it be managed and who by? These matters would need to be secured in an appropriate legal agreement. I would strongly recommend further discussion on this point given the complex nature of this particular matter.
- Viability evidence – having regard to the above, I would advise viability evidence will be needed to demonstrate how the proposed new market dwellings will secure the delivery of the medical facility. How has the required number of market homes been balanced against harm to the Green Belt, delivering a local need, and securing the construction of new buildings? Is the number of proposed dwellings arrived at strictly necessary to meet local needs and deliver the community benefits?
- Absence of alternatives - a robust site assessment will be required to demonstrate an absence of alternatives in the vicinity. In my opinion, this should consider the proposed use of two sites for development, noting the objectives of Green Belt described above. Could the use of one site achieve a better outcome or are two sites still required?
- Community benefits – which community benefits would be secured by the proposal and how would they be managed. For example, you have mentioned a Community Land Trust; how would this be secured and delivered in the long term? Is there sufficient local interest? Demonstrating a settlement arrangement in a suitably robust legal agreement or arrangement would be beneficial – subject to further advice this could be a S106 legal agreement
- Burial ground and other uses – in operational terms, what will these uses necessitate in terms of buildings or structures to make the land suitable for its intended purpose? It is worth noting the key NPPF paragraphs. I also note there are areas of car parking within the current proposal, which would be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

These matters are provided as guidance in response to the legal opinion provided with the submission. You may also wish to seek further advice on the additional ways in which the proposal may demonstrate very special circumstances beyond those I have suggested above.

Moving on to other Green Belt matters, it is worth noting paragraph 149 directs a local planning authority to regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except where a proposal meets certain criteria, including the provision of appropriate facilities in connection with the existing use of the land, including recreation and allotments, which the site is currently used for. If this test was to be relied upon for any new buildings, I have not seen evidence to demonstrate how this test has been met and would advise this is prepared.

Paragraph 150 states that other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This includes material changes of use, such as for outdoor sport, recreation or for cemeteries and burial grounds. As above, if this test is to be relied upon, I have not seen evidence to demonstrate how this test has been met and would advise this is prepared.

In conclusion, it is has not been possible to provide my opinion on whether very special circumstances have been met. As considered above, more evidence will need to be prepared and I note this is a key conclusion in the legal opinion submitted as part of this pre-app enquiry. I would particularly emphasise a need to demonstrate a reduction in any harms and to demonstrate very special circumstances for the proposal with clear constraints identified and material planning considerations addressed. In my opinion the proposal could be in accordance with Policy STRAT1 (Overall Strategy) and Policy H1 (Delivering New Homes). However, the proposal is not currently in accordance with the NPPF or Policy STRAT6 (Green Belt).

Housing Mix

Housing Mix – a bespoke market mix and affordable housing mix may be appropriate for this proposal. However, it would be beneficial to understand more about how the current mix has been determined alongside any robust local evidence. I have provided the affordable mix in the appendices which would ordinarily be required to be in accordance with Policy H9 (Affordable Housing). A market mix in accordance with the Oxfordshire SHMA is usually required. More discussion on this point may be required.

Impact on Heritage

Having regard to our meeting, we also discussed the impact on heritage assets nearby, including Clifton Hampden Conservation Area and Listed buildings. Consideration must also be given to the setting of these assets, including key views and overall settlement character.

Proposals for development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. They should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The more important the heritage asset, the greater weight that will be given to its distinctiveness. Policy DES2 (Enhancing Local Character) requires proposals enhance the local character of the area.

Policy ENV6 (Historic Environment) requires proposals that may affect designated and non-designated heritage assets to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets.

Policy ENV7 (Listed Buildings) requires development proposals to conserve or enhance those elements that contribute to its setting and to demonstrate clear public benefits outweigh any harms. Consideration of key views will be important and any change assessed against the significance of the asset.

Policy ENV8 (Conservation Areas) requires proposals to conserve or enhance the special interest of conservation areas, including its special interest, setting and appearance. The council also has a legislative statutory duty to preserve and enhance the special character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

The SODC conservation team have provided comments on the current proposal, which includes an assessment of the local character and potential for harms arising from the current scheme. As discussed in our meeting, the assessment can be summarised as follows:

- The development pattern through the village historically followed the key roads, with infill development taking place between the older houses, preserving the village character. Very little development has taken place on otherwise open land.
- The village has a high number of C16 and C17 houses and cottages with a consistent vernacular. Their architecture and appearance is distinctive. Later C18 development includes the high status re-frontage of Lower Town Farmhouse and Courtiers in addition to modest labourers cottages.
- Victorian development within the village retained its linear character along the established roads and lanes with C19 and C20 development also within the main built limits of the village.
- Allotments site: the proposed layout has no connection to existing settlement pattern where development characteristically follows the roads through the settlement or forms a group around a former farm. Whilst the set back of some of the built form provides some opportunities to preserve part of the existing hedgerow and a sense of space, there will be a noticeable change to the character of the approach into the village with the introduction of built form here.
- Paddocks site: development here will be entirely in contrast to the existing character. The open space, whilst not containing any historic designed views, forms the open edge of the settlement and is easily discernible as being free of built form from both the A415 and public rights of way that runs to the east of the site.
- Paddocks site: The indicative plans provide only 4 new dwellings on this space. Each in spacious plots with a semi-detached pair and two detached houses shown set back from the A415 and PROW to the east. Whilst the layout optimises open space, it will nevertheless be a contrast to the existing open character of the site and the pattern of development in this part of the village. Taking an access from the A415 where there are none between the two ends of the High Street will emphasise this change in character.

The conservation officer concludes that there will undoubtedly be a change in the character of these sites and the contribution they make to the character and appearance of the conservation area, as a result of development. The SODC conservation team's assessment of the character of the two sites is provided in the appendices to this letter.

Whilst you have submitted information which provides an assessment of the significance of these assets, it is suggested that design changes are made. In my opinion, further evidence of how the proposal has been design to take account of the heritage setting would be beneficial. This should be accompanied by an assessment of the level of harm the proposals will have on this significance – for example, less than substantial harm, and where on that scale of harm the proposal sits (NPPF Chapter 16). What public benefits are there to outweigh any assessed level of harm?

In conclusion, the design of the proposals should be amended to reflect the existing settlement character and setting of the existing heritage assets, as discussed in our meeting. This should be accompanied by the assessment outline above. It is suggested you demonstrate how the siting of built form has been directly informed by the way in which open space is experienced within the village and make clear what opportunities to mitigate impacts and preserve or better reveal the significance of the conservation area have been taken. As such, the proposal is currently contrary to Policy ENV6 (Historic Environment), Policy ENV7 (Listed Buildings), and Policy ENV8 (Conservation Areas).

Impact on Landscape

The landscape setting of the sites is of a rural, historic village, which will need to be factored in to the design of the proposals. The site is in Landscape Character Area 2, Nuneham Courtney Ridge and Character Type 17, Semi-enclosed farmed hills and vales. This has a predominantly rural character with a defined field pattern, and enclosure and reduced visibility due to landform and landscape structure.

Landscape guidelines for the area include conserving surviving areas of permanent pasture, planting new hedgerows and tree belts and sensitive management of existing hedges, also maintaining the nucleated pattern of settlements and promoting the use of building materials of vernacular style and an appropriate scale of development.

Policy STRAT6 (Green Belt) protects the district from inappropriate development. Policy ENV1 (Landscape and Countryside) protects the site from harmful development. Policy ENV5 (Green Infrastructure in New Developments) requires proposals to contribute towards the provision of, or protect and enhance existing Green Infrastructure. Policy ENV12 (Pollution) requires proposals to be located in sustainable locations and design and avoid significant adverse impacts on the natural environment.

A preliminary landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) has been submitted but this does not include photographs from potential viewpoints. Drawings included in the DAS showing views from the surrounding area indicate greater visibility than described in the LVA.

The SODC landscape officer has provided an assessment of the proposals as follows:

Visual Impact

- Allotments site: Development in the northern site would be visible from the main road extending the western edge of Clifton Hampden; this would not appear as infill development but as an extension of the village into the countryside. Existing houses opposite the site south of the A415 are set back from the road and separated by a tree line so not generally apparent on the approach to the village. Views could be limited by reinforcing the existing hedge adjacent to the A415 and the tree line on the western boundary with additional tree and hedge planting as proposed, which would reduce visibility in the longer term, but views of the surgery building and new houses behind would remain through the site access and there would be greater visibility in winter. Views from footpaths within the site would be adversely affected.
- Paddock site: The site south of the A415 extends further to the west. Existing development accessed from the western end of the village High Street is set a long way back from the A415, with a vegetated northern edge and is not generally apparent from the A road with only limited glimpses. Proposed new housing in the southern site would be visible extending the village northwards. Views from the road could be limited in the longer term by reinforcing the hedge with trees but views through the access would remain. Although there are existing buildings to the to the east, south and south-west of this site, they are generally well contained by vegetation and do not enclose the site, therefore it would not appear as infill development as defined in policy H16. No visibility from the High Street to the south is noted in the preliminary LVA, but the proposed development would be set above the existing High Street and listed buildings, with the potential for views particularly in winter. Photographs included in the Heritage Statement illustrate the open rural nature of the site. Views from the footpath adjacent to the site would be adversely affected.

Brief Assessment of the Proposals

Allotment site:

- New houses appear to be two storeys; the height of these should not exceed the general height of existing houses on Watery Lane.
- The layout does not seem to relate to the existing settlement pattern.
- Extensive areas of hard surfacing should be avoided, retaining a rural character as far as possible in keeping with the landscape character area.
- Parking in front of the surgery would be open to views from the road (as shown in the DAS illustrations) and would be better relocated behind the building, also parking on the access road to the north would be better located out of view.
- Consider a less formal layout for the allotments and burial ground which would be more appropriate to the rural setting; these could be combined with the community orchard.
- Use hedges to form boundaries around allotments and gardens, avoid the use of close board fencing.

- Allow sufficient space for additional hedge and full canopied, tall native tree planting to the site boundaries.
- Trees planted in hard areas will need sufficient space to develop both above and below ground.

Paddock site:

- Set back new development in the southern site in line with the existing building line; remove the building at the western end which protrudes in front of this.
- Restrict the height and size of buildings so they do not appear dominant in views from the A415 or from the footpath through the site, and are not visible in views from the High Street to the south.
- Provide a link to the footpath connection to the High Street, avoiding the busy A415, to help prevent the site being isolated from the rest of the village.
- Consider replanting an orchard in the eastern part of the site, linking with the remaining trees, to reinstate the historic character and provide filtering of views between the proposed houses and the footpath.
- The proposed retention of small areas of grazing may not be practical.
- Provide hedges and trees to screen car parking, buildings and roads.

I have attached the response from the SODC landscape officer in the appendices to this letter.

In conclusion, the initial landscape assessment indicates the proposals are currently contrary to Policy ENV1 (Landscape and Countryside, but this could be achieved. The landscape officer has indicated a number of design changes which could be made in seeking to reduce any harmful impacts. The development of both sites as proposed is likely to result in some relatively localised adverse landscape and visual impacts, whilst these could potentially be reduced to an acceptable level in the longer term through landscape mitigation, some minor adverse impacts are likely to remain. However, it is worth noting any changes to the proposal will need to factor in a number of different issues being raised – most notably for example, Green Belt policy and heritage constraints.

Design, Layout and Appearance

Policy DES1 (High Quality Development) requires proposals to be design to a high quality taking account of the site context, including respecting the landscape character.

Policy DES2 (Enhancing Local Character) requires proposals to be design to reflect the positive features that make up the character of the local area and physically and visually enhance and complement the surroundings. Positive design features that make up the character of the local area should be included in the design of development.

It is understood that the current design has been informed by extensive local consultation and assessments of the site's context.

From the discussion during our meeting, I consider detailed design may be more fitting as the subject of future pre-application discussions if considered appropriate when you have had further opportunity to digest the comments above.

Having regard to the points raised above, in my opinion the overall design and layout should better reflect the overall settlement character by seeking to reduce any impact on it as far as possible.

This should be complemented by development of an appropriate scale, massing, layout and external appearance. I'd recommend further consideration of the vernacular to incorporate positive features and materials for the proposed new buildings.

Detailed landscape design can also be considered in more detail at a later date, whilst a high level steer has been provided on potential planting for mitigation.

Ecology

Policy ENV2 (Biodiversity) seeks to protect ecological receptors (designated sites, protected species, priority habitats, etc.). Where adverse impacts are likely on ecological receptors, development must meet the criteria outlined under the policy to be acceptable. Policy ENV3 (Biodiversity) seeks to secure net gains for biodiversity and requires that development proposals are supported by a biodiversity metric assessment.

The comments of the countryside officer can be summarised as follows:

- The supporting ecological appraisal has concluded that, whilst the site contains some habitats of increased ecological value (for example semi-improved grassland, scrub, woodland, hedgerows, scattered trees, etc.), there are significant ecological constraints to the proposed development.
- Access infrastructure would likely result in the loss of hedgerows on site, which will need to be considered under the requirements of ENV2 as hedgerows are priority habitats. Any loss of hedgerow should be as small as possible and compensatory planting provided to lead to a net gain of hedgerow length.
- The site likely support roosting, foraging and commuting bats, but the design of the proposed development (retaining boundary trees, hedgerows and other linear habitats) can likely avoid impacts on this species. External lighting proposals and access road design will need to take this into account.
- The loss of habitat will likely have an adverse impact on the bird assemblage found on site, which will require compensation (providing bird boxes in new dwellings and on mature retained trees).
- Reptiles are considered to be absent from the site. Section 6 of the ecological appraisal report makes recommendations for the proposed development which should be followed and incorporated into the design process. Of importance is the need to undertake a biodiversity metric assessment, to comply with the requirements of Policy ENV3. This assessment should be done regularly to ensure that emerging proposals can likely deliver the net gain for biodiversity required by the local development plan.

- Further information biodiversity metrics can be found here: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshiredistrict-council/planning-and-development/wildlife-trees-andlandscape/wildlife/biodiversity-and-accounting/>
- The ecological appraisal will need to be updated and amended accordingly to reflect the final proposed development. Should there be any delay in the submission of a planning application, updated ecological surveys may be required in accordance with guidance (attached).

In addition, the Environment Act may require a 10% net gain by the point the order is made.

Trees

Policy ENV1 (Landscape and Countryside) protects the trees in the district from harmful development and requires high quality tree planting within new development.

The trees within both sites are protected as they are located within the conservation area. You have submitted an arboricultural report including tree data dated October 2020 that also includes 2 tree constraints plans.

Comments on the proposal with respect to trees can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development of the paddock site would appear to require the removal of 2 trees for the access that are shown as T25 and T26 on the tree constraints plan and a section of hedgerow. Both trees have been categorised as having moderate arboricultural quality.
- Consideration should be given as to whether it is possible to retain these trees and relocate the access. Whilst it is acknowledged that this may not be possible given visibility splay requirements, it should be demonstrated that this has been considered.
- The proposed development of the allotment site would appear to require the removal of a section of hedgerow at the front of the site for the access and possibly trees shown as T11 and T12.
- The proposed Swales on the Preliminary Landscape Plans appear to show conflict with several trees adjacent to the East and North Boundaries.
- Overflow parking is likely to impact on the root protection areas of trees in the South West corner of the site.

It is recommended that aspects of the layout that impact on existing trees should be redesigned to avoid impact, an arboricultural consultant would be able to provide advice and produce an arboricultural impact assessment to help inform the layout.

Planting is shown indicatively on the Preliminary Landscape plan. A detailed landscaping plan should be submitted with any future application providing specific details of the planting.

If an application is submitted it should be accompanied with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment in accordance with BS 5837:2012, an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with BS 5837:2012.

If required, a list of Arboricultural Consultants can be found on the websites of the Arboricultural Association (www.trees.org.uk/Registered-Consultant-Directory) or the Institute of Chartered Foresters (www.charteredforesters.org/aboutus/hire-a-consultant/).

Highways, access and parking

Policy TRANS4 (Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans) requires the submission of a transport assessment. Policy TRANS5 (Consideration of Development Proposals) requires proposals to provide safe and suitable access for all users.

The proposal should demonstrate how safe and secure access for all users can be delivered and adequate connectivity is provided through and within the development. Having regard to the current layout, the proposals seeks to provide good connections to nearby footpaths and public rights of way.

With respect to vehicle access, a separate pre-app discussion with Oxfordshire County Council as highways authority is recommended, with particular attention paid to the necessary visibility splays. These are likely to directly impact the extent to which hedgerow or tree removal is required, which will impact other matters such as settlement character and trees protected by the Conservation Area designation.

Adequate parking will need to be provided in accordance with local standards for each proposed use. However, this should be sympathetically design and incorporate into the proposal having regard to other material planning considerations. Further discussion on this point may be required.

I have attached the response of Oxfordshire County Council, which provides further details.

SODC waste management team have prepared their own guidance for refuse vehicle access requirements, including widths, turning circles and a need to avoid or minimise a vehicle needing to reverse.

Environmental Sustainability and Low Carbon

A number of policies promote environmental sustainability within development proposals, including Policy DES7 (Efficient Use of Resources), Policy DES8 (Promoting Sustainable Design) and Policy DES9 (Renewable Energy).

Policy DES 10 (Low Carbon) requires a 40% reduction in carbon emissions measured against a code 2013 building regulations baseline. This should be achieved through a fabric first approach to the design of the proposed new buildings.

Electric vehicle charging points should be provided for the proposed new dwellings and within areas of car parking. Electric bike charging points for the medical facilities would be welcome.

Noise and Environmental Health

Policy ENV11 and Policy ENV12 (Pollution) seek to protect the district from harmful development and any future occupiers from detrimental noise pollution.

The application site is likely to be adversely affected by traffic noise from the A415 (Abingdon Road) running adjacent to both sites. The applicant will therefore need to demonstrate via an environmental noise assessment and noise mitigation scheme that the site is suitable for the proposed development.

The application site is also close to nearby existing residential properties and the applicant should consider and demonstrate their proposed means of controlling noise and dust adversely affecting these properties. These matters may be acceptably attached as a planning condition on the proposed order.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Policy EP4 (Flood Risk) seeks to direct development proposals to areas with the lowest risk of flooding. Any proposals should seek to demonstrate a suitable method of surface water drainage, including infiltration testing where necessary. All sewers should be designed to a suitable standard and offered for adoption first. As discharge of surface water is proposed to an off-site culverted watercourse (Watery Lane), confirmation would be required from the riparian owner that they agree to access discharge in this location.

I have attached the SODC drainage engineer comments and OCC as Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) comments in Appendix 1.

Infrastructure

The proposal will be liable for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), except where relief applies. Legal agreements will be sought, including for the provision of affordable housing and contributions towards waste and recycling, waste management on site, and street naming and numbering. Additionally assurances on the delivery of the doctor's surgery would be required. There will also be financial contributions requested by Oxfordshire County Council in relation to education (see below) and transport improvements. The Development Contributions SPD provides more detail.

Education

The proposed development would be expected to contribute towards the need for expansion of both early education and secondary capacity serving the local area. A full assessment of what mitigation will be required as a result of this development will need to be made at the time of any future application. Appendix 1 shows the rate per dwelling that would be requested by Oxfordshire County Council.

Waste Management

Policy EP3 (Waste Collection and Recycling) requires development proposals to incorporate provision for the storage and collection of waste. I would advise

considering this for all types of uses within the development and to design adequate waste management and storage facilities for the medical facility.

South Oxfordshire District Council provide guidance for developers with respect to waste management. It includes guidance for refuse vehicle access requirements, including widths, turning circles and a need to avoid or minimise a vehicle needing to reverse. This is available online here: [Planning-Guidance-2015.pdf](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/Planning-Guidance-2015.pdf) ([southoxon.gov.uk](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk))

Oxfordshire County Council will seek contributions for county waste management. I have attached the OCC response in the appendices to this letter.

Archaeology

Policy ENV9 (Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments) requires the consideration of archaeology in development proposals.

The sites are within an area of archaeological interest within an area of possible shrunken medieval settlement. In line with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) an archaeological desk based assessment will need to be submitted along with any planning application for the site.

The outcome of the desk based assessment will allow the County Archaeologist to provide advice on any future intrusive investigations and when these should be carried out.

Community Infrastructure Levy and Obligations

The proposal will be liable for CIL. Any obligations or connected proposals should be secured through an appropriate legal agreement at the point the NDO is adopted.

Document Checklist

As part of the proposals I would recommend providing the following documents.

Depending on a number of factors, some of these documents, or aspects of them, could be subject to a planning condition upon the making of the NDO/CRTBO.

- Draft NDO and Application Forms
- Site Location Plan/Existing Site Plan
- Proposed Site Plan
- Plans and Elevations of all buildings
- Site Sections
- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Energy Statement including SAP Calculations
- Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Highways plans and vehicle tracking

- Topographical Surveys – existing and proposed site levels
- Archaeology DBA and WSI (to be agreed with OCC)
- Noise Survey
- Ecology Assessments and Biodiversity Metric
- Tree Surveys including AIA and Draft Arb Method Statement (BS5837)
- Landscape Masterplan and Detailed Planting Plans
- Existing and Proposed Services Plan
- Waste Management and Bin Storage Plan
- Contaminated Land Questionnaire
- CIL Forms
- Relevant S106/S278 Agreements or Private Street Agreement etc (not required on submission)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal has clearly been formulated through extensive engagement with the local community and has been amended to reflect their comments.

I am mindful that this is a community-led proposal for an NDO and my comments are seeking to shape the proposal in a way which leads to a high quality, sensitive development being brought forward for Clifton Hampden. In my opinion, the proposals should be amended to achieve general conformity with the development plan in the ways considered above.

Pre-application enquiries are confidential until a planning application, or in this case NDO is submitted. These views represent my opinion and are not legally binding on the council in any subsequent determination. My opinion is provided without prejudice to any future decision or representations. The attached consultation responses are subject to the same caveats.

Once again, thank you for submitting this pre-application enquiry and I trust that the advice provided is useful in preparing the proposal.

Yours sincerely,



William Sparling BSc (Hons) MA PhD MRTPI
Senior Planning Officer (Major Applications)

BUILDING OVER GAS MAINS AND SERVICES

Please note before you plan to dig, or carry out building work within the SGN gas network, you must:

1. Check your proposals against the information held at <https://www.lineearchbeforeudig.co.uk/> to assess any risk associated with your development **and**
2. Contact the SGN Plant Protection team to let them know. Plant location enquiries must be made via email, but you can phone SGN with general plant protection queries. See SGN details below: Phone 0800 912 1722 or email plantlocation@sgn.co.uk

For further information please refer to:

<https://www.sgn.co.uk/damage-prevention>
<https://www.sgn.co.uk/help-and-advice/digging-safely>