

Mark Doodes,
Planning Department,
Vale of White Horse District Council,
Abbey House,
Abbey Close,
Abingdon,
OX14 3JE

22nd November 2013,

Dear Mr Doodes,

Re: P13/V2359/RM Application for the approval of Reserved Matters following Outline permission P12/V2283/O, for details of layout, appearance, scale, landscaping and access. Cowan's Camp, High Street, Watchfield SN6 8TE

Watchfield Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons.

Objections are based on the following:-

1. Design Statement – Nursing Home

At **3.2** the statement and plans illustrate 59 bedrooms whereas the Outline permission was granted for 50 beds. This is a major departure from the Outline permission parameters and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. **Material Planning Consideration: Design and Previous Planning Decisions**

At **3.4** the design of the home is not in keeping with Old Watchfield and the properties highlighted in their own design statements. As the self-proclaimed “landmark statement” the design is not appropriate and should contain some or all of the key design features of stonework with brick detailing and casement windows. **Material Planning Consideration: Design, Materials and Amenity (Character of the area)**

At **3.7** the parking area is to be constructed on non-porous material. Watchfield is an area prone to severe surface water flooding and so every provision should be taken to ensure all surfaces are permeable. **Material Planning Consideration: Design and Materials**

At **3.13** the provision of 19 car parking spaces does not appear adequate for staff, residents and visitors to a facility of this size given the infrequency of convenient public transport. Parking off-site is inappropriate due to development road design and the potential for obstructing traffic flow through the village, with concomitant safety implications. Only providing 2 disabled bays seems incongruous for this type of facility. Watchfield Parish Council feel 19 car parking spaces are totally inadequate and need to be increased.

Material Planning Consideration: Design, Traffic generation, parking and safety

At **4.7** the floodlights on sensors should be directed away from other habitation and public areas due to the high frequency of triggering such ‘safety’ lighting in a rural area by foxes, etc. **Material Planning Consideration: Design**

At **4.12** the statement that “we are reviewing the orientation of rooms and windows to reduce overheating issues” implies that the design may be changed. How can permission be granted for a design that is not fixed? **Material Planning Consideration: Design**

At **4.23** the statement that “we will consider using harvested rainwater” is not a binding commitment to green technology and reducing waste. Unless the statement is formalised it is meaningless. **Material Planning Consideration: Design and Materials**

At **4.24** the statement that “the opportunity to incorporate renewable energy sources could also be investigated” again is not a binding commitment to green technology and energy efficiency. Unless the commitment is formalised it is meaningless. **Material Planning Consideration: Design and Materials**

2. Design & Access Statement – Learning Disability Care Home (13/1937/DAS)

At **2.4** the specified plan is not shown and so no meaningful inference can be drawn.

At **3.9** the parking area is to be constructed on non-porous material. Watchfield is an area prone to severe surface water flooding and so every provision should be taken to ensure all possible surfaces are permeable. **Material Planning Consideration: Design and Materials**

At **4.5/4.7** the opportunity has not been taken for active green technology to be utilised only specifying that it should be investigated. Watchfield has strong links with sustainable technology with the neighbouring Westmill Community Wind Farm and Solar Park and all refurbished MOD housing is fitted with solar technology. There is an emerging plan to integrate green technology on the major buildings in Watchfield and so it is a disappointment that a new development will not make maximum use of green alternatives.

Material Planning Consideration: Design and Materials

At **4.6** Watchfield Parish Council disputes the reference to good public transport links at the 65 service through the village (and in the vicinity of the development) is a twice daily service and not at times conducive to commuting for staff. The more frequent 66 service is beyond the distance manageable by elderly residents and visitors. This does not tally with the sustainability criteria set out for this development and will inevitably lead to excessive traffic generation through lack of public transport. This also has implications for parking provision on site. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Traffic generation, parking and safety**

3. Design & Access Compliance Statement

Layout **page 6** states Shrivenham Parish Council has been consulted. This is strange as the development lies within the province of Watchfield Parish Council.

Layout **page 8** – the structure of the self-binding gravel surface of the paths needs clarification to ensure it constitutes porous paving given the severe surface water flooding issues in Watchfield. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Materials**

Layout **page 9** – the number of parking spaces seems inadequate for the number of bedrooms per house given the lack of on-street parking within the development. Parking off-site is inappropriate due to the potential for obstructing traffic flow through the village, with concomitant safety implications. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and generation, parking and safety**

There is no mention of bollarding or gating at the public open space/footpath entrances to enable use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders but prevent vehicular access and exclude any potential illegal occupation of open space land. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Materials**

4. Arboriculture Method Statement

At 3.4 pre-contact meetings between the arboriculturalist and various contractors should be obligatory, not “desirable” given the rural location and the importance of preserving vegetation in this significant location. **Material Planning Considerations: Amenity – Trees and Character of the area**

5. Local Highway Network Plan

The plan is incorrect as the section of Star Lane between Oxford Square and Oak Road is not a village vehicular highway but a bridleway. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Traffic generation, parking and safety**

Watchfield Parish Council can find no stipulation in the plans for construction traffic (condition 10 of outline planning) not to pass down the High Street between the Major’s Road and Faringdon Road. Provision should be made for remedial works on the Major’s link road culvert reconstruction and road resurfacing following the construction traffic. The weight limit on the Major’s Road link road will also need to be removed temporarily. There should be an absolute commitment that no construction or employment traffic uses Star Lane or village roads. It should be noted that Watchfield Recreation Ground is on the route for construction traffic to the development and there is already heavy use of the adjacent area during weekend due to football matches and practice. For safety and amenity reasons the restrictions on construction timetable should reflect this. **Material Planning Considerations: Design, Previous Planning decisions and Traffic generation, parking and safety**

6. Formal pedestrian & Cycle Routes Plan

This plan is incorrect as it illustrates a pedestrian footpath alongside the Watchfield Primary School playing field inside the allotments. This is not a formal right of way and should not be marked as such.

7. Outline Planning Conditions

Although plans for satisfying some planning conditions have been included with the reserved matters several vital issues remain unresolved and of great importance to local residents.

Condition 9 – detailed strategy and scheme for surface water and foul water drainage. Given the history of severe surface water flooding in Watchfield this is an issue that needs resolving as a matter of urgency. Given the unwillingness of the District Council to enforce planning conditions we are concerned that a repetition of the problems of the present large development in Watchfield will be repeated. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Previous Planning decisions**

Condition 18 and 20 – a detailed report examining and responding to the impact and scale of works approved on the existing water supply and local sewerage capacity/infrastructure, identifying any new capacity required in the system. Also, storm water flows into public sewers. Given the sewerage problems in Watchfield and Shrivenham, who share a treatment plant, this matter needs to be rectified **PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT** not prior to occupation. The current major development has run into problems with sewerage provision due to the delay in imposing and enforcing a similar condition. The scale of development in both Watchfield and Shrivenham can only result in overloading the system which is already at capacity. Watchfield Parish Council requests updates on the status of changes to the sewerage and water systems in order to inform

concerned residents. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Previous Planning decisions**

Condition 19 – no development shall commence until phased soil remediation scheme for the whole site is produced and approved. Given the history of the site and land survey results of arsenic and phytotoxic metal contamination Watchfield Parish Council is anxious this condition is vigorously enforced. **Material Planning Considerations: Design and Previous Planning decisions**

In conclusion, Watchfield Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds outlined above under the considerations of: previous planning decisions; character of the area; trees; traffic generation, parking and safety; design; and materials.

Yours sincerely

Sally Mckendrick
Watchfield Parish Council- Clerk