

**Housing Strategy and Development Team  
Housing Services  
Planning Application Comments**

**Planning Application Number: 21/02180/REM**

**Site Name: OS Parcel 9507 South Of 26 And Adjoining Fewcott Road,  
Fritwell**

**Planning Officer: James Kirkham**

**Date of Comments: 17/09/2021**

**Comments by: Frances Evans (Housing Strategy & Development Team  
Leader)**

**Objection to the proposals currently set out in the planning application documents.**

The affordable housing proposals meet most of the requirements however the following issues are of concern and therefore make the affordable housing scheme unacceptable as currently proposed:

**Construction materials** - The affordable housing will be identifiable by the materials used to construct the units. i.e. 8 out of 10 (80%) of the affordable housing units will be constructed with red brick. Whereas only 3 out of 18 (16%) of the market dwellings will be constructed of red brick. 84% of the market housing will be constructed of reconstituted stone compared to just 20% of the affordable housing. Subject to Planning Officer comments, in order to make the scheme more tenure blind, mixed and inclusive (Policy BSC3), more market homes could be constructed in red brick or more affordable homes could be constructed in reconstituted stone.

**Tenure** – it is not clear which of the affordable homes are proposed as rented and which will be intermediate housing – this needs to be clarified for the purposes of providing a complete affordable housing scheme in line with the S.106 Agreement.

On page 8 of the Planning Statement prepared by Savills, the rented affordable housing units are proposed as Affordable Rent. Whilst the S.106 Agreement allows for social rent or affordable rent, Fritwell is a high value rural area where market rents will be high. Therefore, the most affordable housing option that would meet the housing needs of the majority of households on the council's housing register is social rent. This was set out by the Strategic Housing Officer in comments on the Outline planning application for this site (19/00616/OUT). If the scheme is not viable with social rent dwellings, then the applicant will need to provide evidence of this so that further consideration can be given.

**Size Standards** - Whilst the mix of affordable housing property types meet with identified needs, it is not clear if any of the units will meet the Nationally Described Space Standards GIA measurements for 3-bedroom 5-person houses; 2-bedroom 4-person houses and 1-bedroom 2-person houses constructed over 2-storeys. The floor plan/elevation drawings provided for plots 3&4; 8&9; 10&11; 13&14; 19&20 do not show the measurements. The planning applicant will need to confirm by providing floor plans with clear dimensions and GIA calculations to show how the affordable homes meet with the required NDSS GIA size standards (NDSS is a requirement set out in the S.106).

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**Accessibility** – in accordance with the S.106 Agreement, 50% of the rented dwellings should be constructed to Building Regulations Part M4 (2). Whilst the legend to the floor plan drawings for the 2-bedroom houses state Part M4(2), these will need to be checked further to establish and confirm if all requirements are being met for these properties. As an observation, the return on the staircase (top and bottom) would make it difficult or more expensive to retrofit a stairlift to make the properties more accessible. Provision of rented affordable housing bungalows would have been a preferred option to meet accessible ground floor accommodation needs. The 2no. bungalows to be constructed to M4(2) standards on the site are proposed as market housing.

**General Comments**

**Affordable housing dwelling mix and sizes.**

The development scheme proposes a total of 28 dwellings of which 10 (i.e. not less than 35%) will be affordable housing split 70% rent and 30% intermediate. Therefore, the affordable housing proportion and overall tenure split is compliant with Policy BSC3 and the S.106 Agreement. However, as mentioned earlier, the rented tenure should be social rent rather than the proposed affordable rent. In addition, the tenure of each plot will also need to be identified. There is no objection to the proposed affordable housing property mix of:

2 x 1-bed (2-person) house  
6 x 2-bed (4 person) house  
2 x 3 bed (5-person) house

This dwelling mix will contribute towards meeting local affordable housing need. However, as mentioned earlier the GIA sizes for each of the units will have to be clarified by the applicant and must meet the NDSS standards for the property type and required number of persons.

**Parking**

The site layout plan shows the correct number of parking spaces per unit i.e.1 space for 1-bedroom dwellings and 2 spaces for each dwelling of 2 or more bedrooms.

Arrangements with the Registered Provider taking on the affordable housing units would need to be agreed with the council.

**Market dwellings**

The proposed mix of market housing is:

- 2 No. 2-bedroom Bungalow
- 3 No. 2-bedroom House
- 8 No. 3-bedroom House
- 3 No. 4-bedroom House
- 2 No. 5-bedroom House

The provision of 2-bedroom houses and bungalows and 3-bedroom houses along with a small number of 4 and 5-bedroom homes for market sale accords, in the main, with the aims of the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2030 and the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 i.e. the provision of smaller and accessible market properties to meet a range of housing needs.