

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

**Planning Application Number:** 21/03639/F

**Site Name:** Os Parcels 6741 And 5426 West Cricket Field North, Wykham Lane, Bodicote

**Planning Officer:** Linda Griffiths

**Date of Comments:** 06/01/2022

**Comments by:** Ewan Stewart

**Support subject to required standards being met**

**Background**

Planning permission was granted in 2015 (15/01326/OUT) for development of up to 280 dwellings, including 30% affordable housing with a tenure split of 70% rented and 30% low-cost home ownership in compliance with Policy BSC 3 of the Local Plan. A S106 Unilateral Undertaking was signed on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017 securing this provision. 30% affordable housing on 280 dwellings equates to 84 dwellings, with 59 rented and 25 low-cost home ownership dwellings.

Several issues were identified by Housing Officers from the outset regarding dwelling sizes and clustering arrangements. Comments from Strategic Housing in July 2020 confirmed that following conversations with various parties about the clustering and mix, the developer had addressed the issues and the site was showing a much better distribution and a mix that would better meet identified housing needs. It was also acknowledged that although some of the properties were smaller than we would like, the sizes were agreed at the Outline application stage, which was prior to Nationally Described Space Standards being adopted, and therefore the dwelling sizes were accepted.

Aster Housing Group are the Registered Provider for this scheme and have submitted a schedule of delivery for the 84 affordable units, which will be delivered by David Wilson Homes and Barratt Homes by October 2023. Members of the Housing team have recently liaised with DWH and have negotiated some improvements such as level access thresholds and the installation of showers instead of baths to assist customers with limited mobility. Whilst none of the dwellings will meet any of Part M4 (2) requirements for accessibility and adaptability, these improvements will assist customers to some degree.

This proposal is for a re-working of the western edge of the site which includes an increased number of dwellings than in the original planning consent. The Design & Access statement submitted with the application states:

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*“the development comprises 107 dwellings. The previous reserved matters consent for this area contained 84 dwellings, an increase of 23 additional dwellings. 7 dwellings have been provided as affordable for shared ownership and for rental to those on low incomes this is consistent with the previous consent.”*

Whilst the 7 proposed affordable dwellings are additional to S106 requirements and this is welcome provision, in the light of the issues with the other dwellings on this scheme, we would view this as an opportunity for the required standards to be achieved in order to fully meet the needs of households on the Council’s housing register.

**Requirements**

The proposed number of affordable dwellings and tenure split is compliant with policy BSC 3 and with the S106 requirements. The parking arrangements shown on the site plan are acceptable as are the layout/clustering arrangements.

However, we require the following points to be addressed in order to support the proposal:

1. The plans for property type SH52 (plots 17, 18 & 19) state that they are 3-bed 5-person houses with a GIA of 86m<sup>2</sup>. The minimum required by Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) for this property size is 93m<sup>2</sup> with internal storage of 2.5m<sup>2</sup>. We require that this standard is met as a minimum. We will not accept replacement with a smaller size eg 3 bed 4-person as the need is for larger sized dwellings, particularly since the pandemic and the need for increased space at home. We therefore require the provision of 3-bed 5-person dwellings with a minimum GIA of 93m<sup>2</sup> or if possible, 3-bed 6-person dwellings with a minimum GIA of 102m<sup>2</sup> or a mix of both.
2. The plans for property type T50 (plots 95, 96, 97, 98) state that they are 2-bed 4-person houses with a GIA of 69.7m<sup>2</sup>. The minimum required by NDSS for this property size is 79m<sup>2</sup> with internal storage of 2.0m<sup>2</sup>. As with point 1, we require this to be provided as a minimum and will not accept replacement with a smaller property size eg 2-bed 3 person. We require the provision of 2-bed 4-person houses with a minimum GIA of 79m<sup>2</sup>.
3. As set out in the developer contributions SPD, we require 50% of all rented dwellings to meet the requirements of M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings. We would request that plans are submitted showing the dimensions and features which will constitute compliance with these standards.
4. Affordable rent has been agreed on this site, however if possible we would like to see some, if not all, of the rented dwellings delivered as social rented. Cherwell is a high value area and affordable rent at 80% of market rent would be unaffordable for the majority of households on

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the Council's housing register. The most affordable housing option that would meet their needs is social rent and we are now seeking this tenure on new developments where possible. The Housing Strategy & Development team welcome further discussions with the applicant on this point and wish to assist where possible in enabling the provision of social rented housing.

5. All affordable housing units are now required to deliver high standards/rates of energy efficiency to ensure household fuel (and water) bills are also affordable for the tenants. This supports the delivery of sustainable development and contributes to the government objective to reach Net Zero carbon. Registered Providers (RPs) are currently developing their specifications for energy efficient affordable housing units and the applicant is encouraged to discuss this with the RP involved with this scheme.