

Planning Application Comments

Planning Application Number: 22/01611/OUT and 22/01756/F

Site Name: Land at Stratfield Farm, Kidlington

Planning Officer: Andrew Thompson

Date of Comments: 25/04/2023

Comments by: Ewan Stewart, incorporating comments from Oxford City Council Strategic Housing team

Proposal supported subject to affordable housing mix being revised

Proposal and policy requirements

This proposal is for the development of site PR7b, one of the sites allocated in CDC Local Plan Partial Review – Oxford’s Unmet Housing Need.

Policy requirements for the Oxford unmet need sites, set out in the Local Plan Partial Review, are separate from those in CDC Local Plan and largely reflect Oxford City Council’s policies. Policy PR2: Housing Mix, Tenure and Size sets out the minimum and maximum percentage requirements for each property size. These are:

- 25 – 30% 1-beds
- 30 - 35% 2-beds
- 30 – 35% 3-beds
- 5 – 10% 4+beds

On all of these sites, 50% affordable housing is required with an 80:20 tenure split between rented and affordable home ownership. The Local Plan Partial Review requires that the affordable housing mix is agreed with Cherwell DC in consultation with Oxford City Council, who have up-to-date housing needs data and the knowledge of what mix will best meet identified needs of applicants with a connection to the city.

Policy PR7b requires the provision of 120 dwellings on Land at Stratfield Farm, Kidlington. The outline application is for 118 dwellings which covers most of the site. The full application is for the farmhouse and proposes 2no new-build and 2no refurbished dwellings. The Design & Access Statement refers to these as market dwellings, therefore the affordable housing is proposed within the main site in the outline application.

The Design & Access Statement shows the following proposed affordable mix:

Social rent (48)

- 15 x 1b2p maisonettes
- 1 x 1b2p bungalow (larger if wheelchair accessible)
- 3 x 2b3p bungalows (larger if wheelchair accessible)
- 12 x 2b4p houses

Housing Strategy & Development Team Housing Service

- 14 x 3b5p houses
- 2 x 4b7p houses
- 1 x 5b8p house

First Homes (0)

- None specified

Intermediate (12)

- 6 x 2b4p houses
- 4 x 3b5p houses
- 2 x 4b7p houses

Based on a total of 60 dwellings, this equates to approximately:

- 27% 1-beds
- 35% 2-beds
- 30% 3-beds
- 8% 4+-beds

The following are comments on the above proposal relevant to meeting identified housing needs and compliance with housing policies:

Number, size and type

The numbers proposed for each size correspond with the percentage guide, however we require the 4+bed properties to be all in the rented mix. This is because there is a high level of need for larger rented dwellings, due to the current under-supply there are particularly long waiting times.

This size of property is also not generally sold as shared ownership or any other intermediate tenure, they are usually 2 or 3-beds as they are generally purchased by smaller households as a first entry into the market.

This would bring the number of larger rented dwellings to a level which would reflect identified housing need and is reflected in the suggested mix below.

The dimensions shown in the D&A statement are acceptable as they meet Nationally Described Space Standards for each size. We expect the dimensions to be clearly shown on any plans submitted with future applications to confirm that they comply with NDSS.

Tenure

Both Cherwell DC and Oxford City Council welcome the proposal for social rent as this is the most affordable tenure for prospective applicants in this high-value location.

National guidance requires that 25% of the affordable provision consists of First Homes This means that on this scheme, 15 dwellings are required, which is greater than the 20% intermediate required by Oxford's policy.

This is reflected in the suggested revised affordable mix set out below in the summary.

Layout

The affordable housing is proposed within the main site proposed in the outline application, with the dwellings on the farmhouse site as market dwellings. This is acceptable as long as the affordable dwellings on the main site are distributed amongst and externally indistinguishable from the market dwellings.

Accessible & adaptable properties

In accordance with Oxford City Council housing policies, all of the proposed affordable dwellings are required to meet M4(2) Category 2 requirements and 5% are required as M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings. These are best provided as bungalows and this is reflected in the revised mix suggested below.

Summary

Taking the above points into consideration, the following is a suggested revised affordable housing mix which will meet identified needs:

Social rent (45)

- 14 x 1b2p maisonettes
- 2 x 1b2p bungalows (wheelchair adapted)
- 1 x 2b4p bungalows (wheelchair adapted)
- 12 x 2b4p houses
- 10 x 3b5p houses
- 4 x 4b7p houses
- 2 x 5b8p houses

First Homes (15)

- 8 x 2b4p houses
- 7 x 3b5p houses

Strategic Housing officers from both CDC and Oxford City Council would welcome discussions with the applicant regarding this suggested mix and to provide detailed evidence of housing need on which it is based.