

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(1)	25/02941/FULMAJ Parish Stratfield Mortimer	17/04/26*	Proposal Demolition of existing residential property known as Redwoods; Creation of a new hard and soft play and habitat area for St Johns Infant School; Provision of a new car park providing 17 no. parking spaces for school staff, to be accessed off The Street via the existing access serving Redwoods; Erection of 32no. retirement properties (Use Class C3) age restricted to over 55's with communal amenity space and pavilion, parking and associated infrastructure, and landscaping; and Erection of a dental surgery falling with use class E, with a floor area of 705 sqm with parking and associated infrastructure, and landscaping. Site Land at Redwoods Mortimer plus land to the south. Applicant TA Fisher.
¹ Extension of time agreed with applicant until 5/09/26			

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:
"copy link to documents online"

Recommendation Summary: The Head of Development Management be authorised to grant planning permission. Subject to the first completion of a s106 contribution for the ICB.

Ward Member(s): Councillor Nick Carter.

Reason for Committee Determination: Ward Member called the application to Committee if the officer recommendation is to approve.

Committee Site Visit: 26th August 2026.

Contact Officer Details

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and the relevant material considerations, and to make a decision as to whether to approve or refuse the application.
- 1.2 This application seeks planning permission for the following—the demolition of Redwoods to the south of the infants school and the change of use of that land to a School playing field for the St Johns primary school immediately to the north of the site with an associated staff car parking area and use of the single track access from the road to the north to the site to access the car parking. In addition to the south of this will be the proposed erection of 32 sheltered units for the over 55s with associated parking -as follows; there are to be 16 flats of 1-3 bed in a block of apartments to the south of the site, which will be 2.5 storey in height [12m] and pitched roofed. In addition to the north will be a courtyard of 16 dwellings of 4 number 3 bed, 10 number 2 bed and 2 number 1 bed with an associated pavilion and communal open space, with 32 car parking spaces plus additional visitor spaces, cycle and buggy storage and bin storage.
- 1.3 To the south west of the site will be a new dental surgery over 2 floors with an associated parking area of 33 spaces. This will be of modern design and be pitched roof with the ridge being just under 10m in height. This will be a private/commercial facility.
- 1.4 Members should be aware that whilst the site lies within the now updated defined settlement boundary for Mortimer , and apart from Redwoods the whole area was originally greenfield with no specified permission , other than a commitment via the NDP for the site to be allocated for a minimum period of 5 years post the development start on the main 110 unit site [now almost completed] for a Doctors Surgery and a new infant school -see below. The site is presently being used on a permitted temporary basis as the construction compound for the main site.

2. Planning History

- 2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date
17/03004/OUTMAJ	Proposed erection of 110 dwellings with 40% affordable units, associated landscaping, parking and access, plus provision of public open space, and land for Doctors GP surgery plus 3 form infant school.	Approved 2019.
19/00981/OUTMAJ	S73 application-variation of approved plans of 17/03004/OUTMAJ.	Approved 2019

- 2.2 Since the outline permissions have been granted, there have been a host of applications relating to reserved matters approvals, discharge of conditions and non material applications. These are all registered on the Council system.

2.3 Legal and Procedural Matters

- 2.4 **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA):** Given the nature, scale and location of this development, it is not considered to fall within the description of any development

listed in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required. The case officer confirmed this to the applicant via a letter on file dated the 12th March 2026 ie a negative screen opinion was confirmed.

2.5 **Publicity:** Publicity has been undertaken in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Site notices were displayed on site on the 23/01/26 [original plans] and the 18/03/26 [amended plans] at 2 locations on the site, with a deadline for representations of the 1/04/26 for the final amended plans. A public notice was displayed in the Reading Chronicle on the 22/01/26. Neighbours were informed on the 12/02/26.

2.6 **Local Financial Considerations:** Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. Whether or not a 'local finance consideration' is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision based on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority or other government body. The table below identifies the relevant local financial considerations for this proposal.

Consideration	Applicable to proposal	Material to decision	Refer to paragraph(s)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Yes	No	
New Homes Bonus	Yes	No	
Affordable Housing	Yes	Yes	
Public Open Space or Play Areas	Yes	Yes	
Developer Contributions (S106)	Yes	Yes	
Job Creation	Yes	Yes	

2.7 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development within an authority area. The money is used to pay for new infrastructure, supporting the development of an area by funding the provision, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. CIL will be used to fund roads and other transport facilities, schools and other educational facilities, flood defences, medical facilities, open spaces, and sports and recreational areas. Subject to the application of any applicable exemptions, CIL will be charged on residential (Use Classes C3 and C4) and retail (former Use Classes A1 – A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of gross internal area (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres). CIL liability, and the application of any exemptions, will be formally confirmed by the CIL Charging Authority under separate cover following any grant of planning permission. More information is available at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>

2.8 **New Homes Bonus (NHB):** New Homes Bonus payments recognise the efforts made by authorities to bring residential development forward. NHB money will be material to the planning application when it is reinvested in the local areas in which the

developments generating the money are to be located, or when it is used for specific projects or infrastructure items which are likely to affect the operation or impacts of those developments. NHB is not considered to be a relevant material consideration in this instance, but should be noted for information.

2.9 **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Council must have due regard to the need to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2.10 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2.11 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage, the duty is to have regard to and remove or minimise disadvantage. In considering the merits of this planning application, due regard has been given to these objectives.

2.12 There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

2.13 **Human Rights Act:** The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, including Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of property), Article 6 (Right to a fair trial) and Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life and home) of the Act itself. The consideration of the application in accordance with the Council procedures will ensure that views of all those interested are taken into account. All comments from interested parties have been considered and reported in summary in this report, with full text available via the Council's website.

2.14 Any interference with property rights is in the public interest and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime for controlling the development of land. This recommendation is based on the consideration of the proposal against adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

- 2.15 **Listed building setting:** Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 16(2) has the same requirement for proposals for listed building consent. There are no listed buildings affected by this scheme.
- 2.16 **Conservation areas:** Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. There are no conservation areas around the site that could be affected.

3. Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultation

- 3.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

Mortimer Parish Council:	Object to the application on the basis that this will comprise an overdevelopment of the site, and the proposed height of the 3 storey flats is contrary to policy GD5 in the Mortimer NDP. They do accept however that the local surgery is now not interested in the site and the school has falling pupil roll numbers as well. They consider that proper consultation has occurred with the Parish in relation to the review of the adopted NDP in this respect. Object also to the wording of the call in form to Committee by the Ward Member. Amended plans-now no objection to the 2.5 storey height flats ie rooms in the roof. Other objections remain.
Highways:	Initial plans-originally concerned about parking on site not being in accord with policy DM44 in the WBLPR but note that by conditions the over 55 occupancy, can be conditioned so objection removed. Secondly noted that the proposed traffic generation arising from this scheme will be lower than that anticipated if the new school and surgery had progressed. Detailed analysis of layout plans -all rectified via the amended plans but still has some concerns over the single track width of the access road from the Street into the staff car park as proposed. ie for the School. Dental surgery layout and parking is acceptable. Conditional permission may be granted.
Ward Member	Has submitted two detailed objections to the application. Summary only:-concerned that due process has not been followed in the review of the NDP, such that this land should not be set aside but should be retained for the original purposes. The ICB contribution request is well founded. Concerned with the detail of the viability assessment and the lack of affordable housing.
Environmental Health.	Some concerns regarding future noise impact of pupils on the playing fields as proposed on the elderly occupants to the south. Also, conditions required on contaminated land [if any] and light pollution. Otherwise, no objections but had requested a noise

	impact assessment—officer note: this is not considered necessary given the school opening times and term time use only.
Tree officer.	Initially objected to the application on the basis that some TPO trees to the north on the Redwoods site would be affected by the new access and staff car parking. The amended plans have removed this objection. Conditional permission is now recommended.
ICB [Integrated Care Board]	Strongly object to the application for two principal reasons—firstly, the land should still be reserved for the health surgery as the NDP policies still apply in their opinion. Secondly, if the application is approved a s106 mitigation contribution should be required from the applicant of just under £30,000 to fund additional works for surgeries in the locality. Officer comment -the applicant has agreed the s106 contribution. The ICB have now removed their objection on this thread but still object to the loss of the dedicated site for the local surgery land. Consider it contrary to the advice in policy DM39 in the WBLPR. See below for further comment.
Education service.	Support the application in principle, but need to ensure that the land needs to be transferred to the School Authorities with no encumbrances and Redwoods demolished at no cost to the Council with the land left in a condition ready for the staff car park use and playing field.
Housing	In accord with policy SP16, the applicant is required to provide 40% affordable housing on the site ie 13 units rounded up. should be achieved via a s106 agreement. However it is noted that if this application is approved no affordable housing will be provided so this is clearly contrary to policy in the light of the ongoing high demand for such housing across the District. Accordingly, the housing service object to the application in principle.
Thames Water	No objections raised.
Fire Service	No objections subject to the standard building control; regulations being met on site, if approved. Fire tender access will be required in the case of an emergency.
Nature Space	No objections -conditions recommended.
Thames Valley Police	Some detailed comments made about design and surveillance points. Exit routes need to be carefully managed.
Suds	Objection on drainage grounds -many technical points raised. Additional information submitted –suds reconsulted. No response received: see update sheet.
Waste	Some detailed points made on the original layout, objections removed via the amended layout plans-conditions recommended.

Emergency Planning Officer and the ONR.	No objections -the site is not in any DEPZ so the increase in population [circa 77no] is accepted.
Public Rights of Way	No objections raised.
Adult Social Care	No views to make.

Public representations

- 3.2 Representations have been received from 9 contributors, 2 of which support, and 7 of which object to the proposal.
- 3.2.1 The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:
- 3.2.2 Objectors—worried about proposed 3 storey height of the flats [original plans] worried about impact on amenity [overlooking etc] , overdevelopment of the site-60% more than was originally consulted upon by the applicants, noise and disruption during construction, not enough car parking, impact on drainage and sewerage. Contrary to the Mortimer NDP -what about reserving the land for the surgery and school? Design is too uniform in style. Will cause a harmful precedent. Impact on wildlife and trees as well. Increased noise.
- 3.2.3 Supporters. Like the principle of over 55 housing and the extension of the playing fields.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Development Plan Document	Relevant Policies
<u>West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041</u>	Strategic Policies • Policy SP1 The Spatial Strategy • Policy SP3 Settlement Hierarchy • Policy SP4 AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield • Policy SP5 Responding to Climate Change • Policy SP6 Flood Risk • Policy SP7 Design Quality • Policy SP8 Landscape Character • Policy SP11 Biodiversity & Geodiversity • Policy SP12 Approach to Housing Delivery • Policy SP15 Housing Type & Mix • Policy SP16 Affordable Housing

	• Policy SP20 Infrastructure Requirements & Delivery Development Management Policies • Policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes & Businesses • Policy DM5 Environmental Nuisance & Pollution Control • Policy DM15 Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows • Policy DM30 Residential Amenity • Policy DM39 Local Community Facilities • Policy DM40 Public Open Space • Policy DM44 Parking
<u>Stratfield Mortimer</u> <u>NDP (2017)</u>	A whole range of policies apply, but particularly policies SDB1 bullet point 2 and GD5 -bullet point 4. Former relates to the need to reserve up to 1ha of land for the new surgery and new infant school.

4.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide
- Quality Design SPD (2006)
- Planning Obligations SPD (2014)
- Sustainable Drainage Systems SPD (2018)

5. Appraisal

Principle of development/ Viability Review.

- 5.1 The application site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Mortimer albeit on a greenfield site [apart from Redwoods and its domestic curtilage]. Accordingly, the principle of additional development is accepted and this is supported by the past allocation of the site in the NDP albeit this was not a “formal” commitment per se as no planning permission has been granted and commenced on site. It accords with policy SP1 in the WBLPR as a result.
- 5.2 Given that there now appears to be no demand for the new infant school [or indeed the funding] and there is no demand from the local surgery for a new one on the site, as evidenced in the application process, it is appropriate for the LPA to consider suitable alternative options as presented by this application/project. In this case the site is surrounded by built form and is in a highly sustainable location, so the most efficient use of the site is to be encouraged in the community interest. The introduction of the dental surgery, whilst a private facility, still remains a medical use for the area and its catchment. In addition, whilst the loss of one habitable dwelling conflicts with policy SP12 since there is no net loss on site [ie a gain of 31 dwellings overall] this is not a difficulty. The potential issue arises with the lack of affordable units on site, which being greenfield would be @ 40% ie 13 units under policy SP16. However para 6.78 of the LPR notes that in exceptional circumstances, if a proven viability review identifies why the scheme would not be viable, then a reduced or nil contribution is acceptable if justified fully.

- 5.3 In this case, the applicants have submitted a comprehensive viability review, concluding that the scheme could not proceed if affordable units were included. This has been independently assessed by separate consultants who have similarly concluded that with the purchase of Redwoods and the cost of its associated demolition [just over £2 million] this conclusion is accurate and supported. A summary of these two reports is available on the Council public website for the application. And also see below.
- 5.4 It is noted in the Executive summary of the viability assessment, which has been on the website for some months that whilst the applicants submitted scheme notes an overall profit of under 15% on GDV [Gross Development Value] this is significantly understated in the Council independent review. This is important in regard to the now additional s106 contribution of £29000 for the ICB identified below which was not originally identified in either viability assessment.

Housing.

- 5.5 Policy SP16 notes [inter alia] that on greenfield sites of more than 0.5ha and/or in excess of 10 dwellings these schemes will provide 40% affordable housing, which includes this particular proposal. It normally 13 of the dwellings would be for affordable occupation. In this case as noted above the applicants have submitted a viability assessment identifying how in their view, if the scheme proceeds, no affordable units can be provided on site. This has been ratified by external independent consultants appointed by the Council. Accordingly, the Committee will need to balance the needs of the local population in terms of such housing which is high across the District, against the planning gain of the new school playing field to be provided free of charge to the Education Authority. Policy SP16 does allow for such exceptions to be made as noted in para 6.78 in the supporting text which reads as follows—[in part]. “The Council recognises that there may be exceptional cases where affordable housing cannot be secured as part of a policy compliant scheme.” This has to be justified by a viability scheme as already mentioned. The Committee will need to take into account the housing objection to the application, on the grounds that the Council presently has an overall waiting list on the housing register of over 1000 households.

5.6 Education.

- 5.7 Policy DM39 in the WBLPR relates to community facilities. The wording of the first section is as follows—“Development proposals for new and/or expanded provision of local community facilities will be supported where the proposal complies with the following criteria: a. A local need can be demonstrated; b. It is accessible and inclusive to the local community it is intended to serve; c. It is of a high quality design and proportionate in scale to the local area; d. It has been subject to prior meaningful local community engagement; and e. Appropriate consideration has been given to the use of shared spaces, the re-use and/or redevelopment of existing buildings within the local community.
- 5.8 Officers consider that the provision of the new school playing field is an important new facility for the infant’s school, which is presently physically constrained by its site in providing good quality but small open air playing facilities for the pupils. The advantage of this scheme is that the site immediately abuts the school and is well contained and secure and south facing. It will also provide 16 staff car parking spaces which will improve local traffic/parking congestion on site at school peak times on what is a busy road. In terms of the criteria above in the policy, there is a local need as evidenced by the school supporting statement, it is accessible [but not for all the community] it has been consulted upon via this application process, and the shared spaces may be a possibility in the future. It is the officers view that this is a “once in a lifetime” opportunity to enhance the infant’s school for the benefit of both staff and children alike.

5.9 The loss of identified facilities in the NDP

5.10 Policy DM39 [second part] notes the following--Proposals which would result in the loss of an existing local community facility will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that: i. It is no longer viable to retain the facility in its current use; or ii. The facility is no longer needed and any need arising from its loss can be accommodated within easily accessible existing facilities, or iii. To outweigh the loss of the existing facility, the proposal will deliver equivalent or, where possible, greater community benefit which is easily accessible to the community it is intended to serve..

5.11 The ICB, on behalf of the NHS national provider, originally objected to the application on the two fold basis that firstly the applicant had not clearly demonstrated why the proposed new health surgery cannot still be provided on site [or at the very least the site area be retained] and no provision has been made for the circa £29,000 s106 contribution made for the additional health impact of further residents in the site to be mitigated. This was to be directed towards additional space at the existing Mortimer surgery. The ICB have been further questioned on this point since in the current IDP no specific project is identified -but policy SP20 notes that the IDP is by definition an evolving document over time, and the ICB has assured the Council that a project will be forthcoming within 5 years to improve /expand facilities at the local surgery. If not a clause in the proposed s106 [heads of terms] will ensure that the funding, if not spent, will be refunded to the applicant -officers accept this as being entirely reasonable and in accord with the advice in Regulation 122 of the 2010 CIL legislation. In addition, in terms of the s106 contribution, the Council's CIL Regulations do not provide funding towards medical facilities where required, and the Regulation 123 List of the 2010 CIL Regulations has now been rescinded by the Council. That is, this proposal, if approved and implemented, will provide about £460k of funding via CIL, but none of this will be directed towards medical facilities. Accordingly, the £29,000 requested by the ICB would meet the three tests on obligations advised both in the NPPF [policy DM6] and the tests on planning obligations set out in Regulation 122 of the 2010 CIL legislation. These are as follows--

- ☐ Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- ☐ Directly related to the development
- ☐ Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.12 This is because the additional occupants in the housing over and above that already permitted in the allocated site will undoubtedly have an impact on local medical facilities, so will be necessary and directly related. The amount is considered to be proportionate in addition, notwithstanding the viability assessment submitted. The ICB have costed the amount in some detail.

5.13 As to the second thread, the actual loss of the land originally allocated for the surgery is now no longer protected in the Mortimer NDP since a period of 5 years has been exceeded, since the NDP adoption date. In addition, the objection of the ICB in relation to the application being contrary to the second part of policy DM39 cannot be right, since no facility per se is being lost via this application-it does not affect in any way the Mortimer surgery site physically at all. Accordingly, officers consider that the application complies with DM39, particularly as land is being set aside for a new dental surgery - albeit commercial. This in itself is of course a new community facility.

5.14 In terms of the loss of the site for the originally proposed infant school, the Education Authority has confirmed that in the light of continuing falling school roles, there is now no need for a new infant's school at the site, nor indeed the necessary funding, irrespective of the free land on offer. Indeed, the corollary of this is that the additional school playing field is being offered in lieu as it were of this land parcel loss. As such

the application is considered to comply with the criteria as set out in the second part of policy DM39.

Design and Appearance.

- 5.15 The case officer has visited the site on a number of occasions and so is very familiar with the area in general. The Committee site visit will show that the site lies on a plateau with the land falling to the south axis. On the west lies existing housing, to the north is the school, to the south is the new 110 housing units. To the east lies housing.
- 5.16 The application layout is considered to be satisfactory as it allows for a variation in dwelling types with 50% being houses and 50% flats, the former arranged around a courtyard with the central pavilion for community use around the communal area of open space. All the required minimum space standards for housing are laid out on the site appropriate distances to adjoining housing such that local amenity will be respected. The design of the dwellings is traditional in keeping with the new development to the south, but there has been much concern about the proposed [original] 3 storey height of the flats to the southeast portion of the site. This was reduced to 2.5 storeys via the amended plans, but still with three floors -if one floor had been deleted then the viability of the scheme would have reduced even further with the reduction in flat numbers. This is considered to comply with the advice in policy GD5 in the Mortimer NDP which states the following—" All dwellings shall be no more than two storeys in height, or three storeys where roof space is utilized; any apartment buildings should respect the scale of the surrounding houses ".Rooms in the roof space are utilised in this application.
- 5.17 As regards the proposed dental surgery, this is a fairly substantial 2 storey building with pitched roof, but of modern design which is considered to be a beneficial visual contrast to the residential aspect of the site. Being a commercial building. Members will naturally make their own judgements which are necessarily subjective to a degree, but there are no listed building settings or conservation areas to take into account. Overall it is considered that the scheme complies with the advice in policy SP7 in the WBLPR.
- 5.18 Highways issues**
- 5.19 The highways officer has examined the amended plans submitted and is satisfied that all the relevant standards can be met on site. For clarity it is only the proposed staff car parking for the school where it is proposed to have direct access off the Street to the north and this will only be during term times. Some concern has been raised about the single access width [which cannot be physically widened], for the traffic generated, but as this will be for low flows only, travelling slowly, this is on balance accepted, given the advantage of reducing on street parking pressures around the site.
- 5.20 In terms of car parking, only 1 space per dwelling is proposed [plus visitor spaces]. This is acceptable under policy DM44 in the LPR as where older persons accommodation is built, car ownership is lower. The over 55 units will be conditioned as such. The officer is also content with the level of parking spaces proposed for the new dental surgery -which is 30 spaces for both patients and staff. Next the officer is content that the overall traffic generation arising from the site will actually be lower than that projected from the original new school and surgery allocation. So, there are no concerns here -all the site will be accessed of the principal access onto the Street serving the present allocated site.

- 5.21 In terms of layout and positioning of bin stores, the officer via the amended plans is now content that the scheme can be adequately serviced by the waste lorries without moving onto non adopted highway land.

Cycle storage is also provided on site via secure sheds in rear gardens, plus a cycle unit next to the surgery. A buggy store is also laid out in the pavilion area, for those with accessibility limitations.

5.22 Drainage

- 5.23 The Council suds officer has raised a holding objection to the application on drainage grounds. Consequently, the applicant was requested to submit detailed further information about how the new site will be drained if approved and built out, in accord with policy SP6 in the as adopted WBLPR. This technical Note was submitted in early July and the suds officer reconsulted. To date no response has been received. In order to progress this matter, in accord with the advice in the very recently published NPPF of August 2026 which states the following [DM3 [d]]—"Decisions on development proposals should not be delayed in order to secure advice from a statutory or internal consultee beyond their statutory deadlines unless there is insufficient information to make the decision, there are public safety risks from proceeding without advice, or more detailed advice may enable an approval rather than a refusal;" In this case public safety is not considered to be at any risk , given that a condition can be applied on any permission which will ensure a build out in accord with the advice in the submitted Technical Note subject to the discharge of conditions procedure.

- 5.24 In the round, as the Committee site visit will show, the applicant has already undertaken very considerable on and off site works to the south of the allocated housing site to ensure appropriate and safe onsite drainage, and foul sewer works.

6. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 6.1 On the one hand the application would initially appear contrary to policy, in that firstly the original legitimate aspirations of the local community via the NPD for the site to be used as land for a new Doctors Surgery and new infant school are not being achieved - but for the reasons outlined in the report above, this is considered to be acceptable. In addition, the application, if approved, will not supply an additional 13 affordable units, which are much in demand particularly in this highly sustainable location. Again, the justification for this is identified in the report above. Next, even if permission is granted there is no means by which the LPA can require the dental surgery to be actually implemented on site, via condition of s106 obligation as this would not meet the 3 tests on obligations set out in para 58 in the NPPF of 2024.
- 6.2 However, the balancing benefits are significant if the application is permitted which are as follows: Firstly, best and efficient use of a very sustainable greenfield site in settlement will be built out. Secondly the infant school will obtain a permanent new school playing field and new staff car parking. Thirdly, 32 older persons units will be added to the Council housing stock [net gain of 31 units] with the loss of Redwoods. Fourthly, assuming it is built out, the local area will obtain a new dental surgery. Fifthly, the Council will be in receipt of a significant CIL charge; and sixthly the economic benefits during the construction phase and the ongoing additional resident expenditure in the District will be considerable. Finally, the application will obtain additional monies for local medical facilities via the s106 identified.
- 6.3 Officers have thus concluded that the application should be approved. With the conditions as below.

7. Full Recommendation

7.1 To delegate to the Development Manager to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the first completion of a s106 planning obligation to obtain funding for the ICB [NHS] for local health care facilities of £28,998.

Conditions

1	Commencement of development The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2	Approved plans The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below: Drawing no. 51221-EG-P2-01 v3 Entrance Gates • Drawing no. 51221-AP1-P2-01 v15 Apartment Floor Plans • Drawing no. 51221-AP1-P2-02 v15 Apartment Floor Plans • Drawing no. 51221-AP1-P3-01 v15 Apartment Floor Plans • Drawing no. 51221-XX-P1-04 v14 Proposed Layout Plan • Drawing no. 51221-XX-P1-05 v5 Proposed Layout Plan Location plan—PL-0-1-V5 -Location plan DEN-P2-01-V8 , DEN-P3-01-V5, FOG-P2-01-V3. CP-P2-01-V. SB-P2-01-V4, PV-P2-01-V6, P5-01-V6, MT3-P2-02-V3, MT3-P2-01-V4, MT1-P2-01-V3, and MT2-P2-01-V4. [Dentist elevations and floor plans, the dwellings plus the Pavilion plus the car ports]. Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.
3	Demolition of Redwoods No development shall continue above slab level on the application scheme hereby permitted, until the property known as Redwoods is demolished in full and the site left in a neat and tidy condition, with the proposed car parking laid out for staff as approved and the site fenced in accord with a scheme to be first approved in writing by the local planning authority, with a completion date of 3 months after the written approval of the LPA. Reason. To ensure that the planning "gain" of the new school playing fields and staff car parking is achieved in accord with the advice in policy DM39 in the WBLPR of 2023 to 2041.
4	Building Recording. Prior to the Redwoods property being demolished the applicant must undertake a full building and photographic recording condition of the house internally and externally and submit the report for approval to the LPA.

	Reason. To record the building in accord with the advice in policy SP9 in the WBLPR as adopted.
5	Age restriction The dwellings hereby permitted on the site shall only be occupied at any time by those of 55 years and older. Reason. To ensure that the parking provision on the site is acceptable having regard to the advice in policy DM44 in the WBLPR of 2021 to 2043.
6	CMS No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the demolition and construction works shall incorporate and be undertaken in accordance with the approved CMS. The CMS shall include measures for: A site set-up plan during the works; Parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors; Loading and unloading of plant and materials; Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development; Erection and maintenance of security hoarding including any decorative displays and/or facilities for public viewing; Temporary access arrangements to the site, and any temporary hard-standing; Wheel washing facilities; Measures to control dust, dirt, noise, vibrations, odours, surface water run-off, and pests/vermin during construction; A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works; Hours of construction and demolition work; Hours of deliveries and preferred haulage routes; Reason: To safeguard the amenity of adjoining land uses and occupiers, and in the interests of highway safety. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies SP19, DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041. A pre-commencement condition is required because the CMS must be adhered to during all demolition and construction operations.
7	Finished floor levels No development shall take place until full details of the finished levels, above ordnance datum, of the ground floor(s) of the proposed building(s), in relation to existing ground levels have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.

	Reason. To ensure that the potential visual impact of the new buildings is controlled in the light of policy SP7 in the WBLPR and the Mortimer NDP as adopted.
8	Materials No development above slab level of any phase of the scheme shall take place until a schedule of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Samples of materials shall be made available upon request. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure the appropriate use of external materials. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy SP7 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006). A post slab condition is required because the approved materials will be used throughout construction.
9	Removal of pd rights. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order with or without modification), no extensions, alterations, buildings or other development which would otherwise be permitted by Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C and/or E of that Order shall be carried out, without planning permission being granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for that purpose. Reason: To prevent the overdevelopment of the housing element of the site and in the interests of respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP8 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, the Quality Design SPD and the Town/Village Design Statement for Mortimer.
10	CEMP No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include the following: (a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities. (b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones". (c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements). (d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features. (e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works. (f) Responsible persons and lines of communication. (g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person. (h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

	The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: To avoid harm to protected species during demolition/construction and preparatory operations. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041. A pre-commencement condition is required because the CEMP will need to be adhered to throughout construction.
11	Lighting Prior to occupation, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for the site and associated infrastructure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall: a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate Isolux lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority. Reason: Bats and badgers are sensitive to light pollution. The introduction of artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.
12	EPS The following works "Demolition of existing residential property known as Redwoods" shall not in any circumstances commence unless the Local Planning Authority has been provided with either: (a) A licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead; or (b) A statement in writing from a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist to the effect that they do not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence. Reason: To ensure the adequate safeguarding of protected species in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041. This "strict protection" condition helps to ensure that a developer will apply for an EPS licence and, if they do not, can be prevented in advance from undertaking the activities that might jeopardize the protected species,

	before the species is harmed. The use of planning conditions for this purpose has been established through case law and is also recommended in government.
13	Ecology The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until 20 swift boxes and 9 bat boxes have been installed/constructed in accordance with the details shown on the submitted plan; Appendix G of the Ecological appraisal (Pro Vision, November 2025). Reason -to accord with the advice in policy SP11 in the WBLPR of 2023 to 2041.
14	BNG No development, demolition, earth moving shall take place until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Metric dated 9th December 2025, prepared by Pro Vision and technical note: Biodiversity net gain assessment (Pro Vision, December 2025), and shall include: i. information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat; ii. the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat; iii. the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat; iv. any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development; v. any biodiversity credits purchased for the development. The approved Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A pre-commencement condition is required because the habitat and management arrangements need to be determined before existing habitats are affected
15	HMMP Prior to the commencement of the development the HMMP shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The HMMP shall include: i. Summary of Habitat Proposal and Plans providing the biodiversity baseline assessment against which BNG outcomes are assessed and monitored; ii. Site Context Photos iii. Retention and Protection Measures Map iv. Management plan aims and objectives;

	v. Design Principles Informed by Baseline Information vi. a programme detailing the long-term phases of the management the number of years to achieve and then maintain the BNG targets; vii. Habitat targets. Habitat creation, enhancement condition management targets and prescriptions. viii. Habitat Creation, Enhancement and Management - Risk Register and Remedial Measures ix. A monitoring strategy and schedule to inform decisions about management, whether assessing progress towards the BNG targets is on track and whether changes to management are required to achieve the targets to include methods and intervals of reporting and adaptive management. x. If management is not delivering the biodiversity outcomes or is deemed unlikely to (on the basis of trajectory of change in condition and known time to target condition), changes in the management regime shall be agreed in writing and implemented to deliver a successful outcome. xi. Evidence of legal, financial, governance and practical arrangements for the long-term delivery and management of BNG measures. The approved HCMMP will be implemented in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A pre-commencement condition is required because the habitat and management arrangements need to be determined before existing habitats are affected.
16	Tree protection scheme (Demolition) No development (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) shall commence on site until a scheme for the protection of trees to be retained is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include: ☐ a plan showing the location and type of the protective fencing. ☐ All such fencing shall be erected prior to any development works. ☐ At least 2 working days notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority that it has been erected. ☐ It shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. ☐ No activities or storage of materials whatsoever shall take place within the protected areas without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority. Note 1: The protective fencing should be as specified in the BS5837:2012 at Chapter 6 and detailed in figure 2. Note 2: Ground Protection shall be as paragraph 6.2.3.3. of the same British Standard. A pre-commencement condition is necessary because insufficient detailed information accompanies the application; tree protection installation measures may be required to be undertaken throughout the construction phase and so it is necessary to approve these details before any development takes place. Reason: Required to safeguard and to enhance its setting within the immediate locality to ensure the protection and retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the NPPF and Policies SP10, SP11 and DM15 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

17	AMS The Arboricultural Method Statement and tree protection measures within SJ Stephens report ref: 2182 dated 26 March 2026 submitted in support of the application shall be adhered to in full, subject to the pre-arranged tree protection monitoring and site supervision, detailed in part 5 of the report, by a suitably qualified tree specialist. Reason: Required prior to the commencement of development in order that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during development works and to ensure that, as far as is possible, the work is carried out in accordance with the approved details pursuant to section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies SP10, SP11 and DM15 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.
18	Landscape (Soft and Hard) – (Major applications) Prior to completion or first occupation of the development hereby approved, whichever is the sooner; details of treatment of all parts on the site not covered by buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site shall be landscaped strictly in accordance with the approved details in the first planting season after completion or first occupation of the development, whichever is the sooner. Details shall include: 1) a scaled plan showing all existing vegetation and landscape features to be retained and trees and plants to be planted; 2) location, type and materials to be used for hard landscaping including specifications, where applicable for: a) permeable paving b) tree pit design c) underground modular systems d) Sustainable urban drainage integration e) use within tree Root Protection Areas (RPAs); 3) a schedule detailing sizes and numbers/densities of all proposed trees/plants; 4) specifications for operations associated with plant establishment and maintenance that are compliant with best practise; and 5) types and dimensions of all boundary treatments There shall be no excavation or raising or lowering of levels within the prescribed root protection area of retained trees unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Unless required by a separate landscape management condition, all soft landscaping shall have a written five year maintenance programme following planting. Any new tree(s) that die(s), are/is removed or become(s) severely damaged or diseased shall be replaced and any new planting (other than trees) which dies, is removed, becomes severely damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced. Unless further specific permission has been given by the Local Planning Authority, replacement planting shall be in accordance with the approved details. Reason: Required to safeguard and enhance the character and amenity of the area, to provide ecological, environmental and bio-diversity benefits and to maximise the quality and usability of open spaces within the development, and to enhance its setting within the immediate locality in accordance with the NPPF and Policies SP10, SP11 and DM15 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

19	SUDS No development shall commence until the applicant has satisfied the LPA that all required drainage works as identified in the submitted Technical Note dated the 9th July 2026, by SMA ref 7189-TN02, are capable of being resolved on site satisfactorily with all appropriate technical evidence. Once approved, the drainage on site will be carried out in strict accord with this evidence/detail/report as noted. Reason. To ensure adequate on and offsite drainage in accord with policy SP6 in the WBLPR of 2023 to 2041.
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