

Rushy Bank Development
Forest Road, Charlbury.
Frequently asked questions prepared by
The Rushy Bank Partnership
The Beacon Project group, and,
YoungDementia UK Homes

1. Will the development open the door for further development around the station?

No, it will not set a precedent. We believe that the development is responding to identified local housing need and is therefore a viable exception. Any future development would have to demonstrate that it was similarly meeting a particular local housing need. The surrounding land would not be suitable for market housing due to its Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty status.

The proposed development therefore meets an identified need within the region and the local area and is considered to comprise a form of rural development that meets Government criteria for sustainable development.

2. Why can't the proposed development be provided on a brownfield site?

Local Housing Need

Para 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies that the supply of housing should be significantly increased. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) concludes that there is a significant need for new housing within Oxfordshire. In response to the SHMA, West Oxfordshire has increased the proposed housing numbers in the emerging Local Plan 2029 from 5,500 to 9,450. Within the emerging Local Plan 2029, Charlbury falls within the Burford and Charlbury Sub-Area. A focused housing consultation undertaken by the Council during August and September 2014 identified that 650 new homes will be delivered in the Burford and Charlbury Sub-Area during the plan period. West Oxfordshire has acknowledged, as recently as January 2015, that it does not have an identified five year land supply and, as such, Government policy decrees that there should be a presumption, by the local planning authority, in favour of sustainable development.

3. Doesn't the fact that the site falls within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty mean that it is protected from any development?

One third of West Oxfordshire falls within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and there are 51 Conservation Areas. The site's location in the Cotswolds AONB does not prevent development. The statutory test for development within a Cotswolds AONB is whether it will conserve/ enhance the character and

appearance of the area – our architects, Oxford Architects and the Oxford Design Studio have successfully designed a scheme which is sympathetic to the surrounding area and which utilises materials used in buildings around Charlbury.

4. Isn't the site outside Charlbury's settlement boundary?

The adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, or the emerging Local Plan 2029 does not include settlement boundaries.

5. How will the impact of the buildings on the local environment and views be reduced in view of its location?

The two architects involved with the development, Oxford Architects and the Oxford Design Studio, have created plans for a design that will blend into the site as much as possible taking into consideration the contours of the site. This allows us to have single and two storey carefully placed along the new access road. The YDUK Homes facility includes meeting rooms which will be used by our sister charity, YoungDementia uk for coffee mornings and activities as well as by family and friends of the people living in the facility. It will also be available for the wider community to use. The design will use local stone, render and timber walls and a mixture of traditional and sedum roofs to minimise the visual impact.

6. What impact will the development have on traffic levels on Forest Road?

The location of the development will assist in ensuring that traffic movements are dispersed. Its situation next to foot paths, the railway station and bus routes from the station should help to minimise car usage. The highways access solution will assist in slowing traffic as it approaches the Town down Forest Road hill.

We are not anticipating high levels of traffic in and out of the YDUK Homes facility as the 12 people living there are unlikely to have their own cars and the staff supporting them will be encouraged to use public transport to get to work.

7. Flood Risk Assessment

The site is outside the flood risk area. A flood risk assessment report will accompany the planning application and this will be a consideration by the local planning authority and Environment Agency in reviewing the sites suitability for development.

8. Why has the Charlbury Beacon group chosen this site?

The Beacon Project Charlbury has spent 4 years looking for a site in Charlbury suitable for an environmentally sustainable community self-build project. Rushy Bank ticks all the boxes: Cornbury Park has made the land affordable for self-builders; it is close to public transport and no further from the centre of town than houses down Woodstock Road; it has environmental features, such as a very active spring, meaning that the housing there might be an exemplar for sustainable development; and finally we are thrilled with the proposed community mix that is proposed for this

site, including affordable, self-build, market and sheltered housing. We don't think we could hope for a better site from an integrated community point of view.

9. Why have YDUK Homes decided to change sites from the Cricket Club to Rushy Bank?

During YDUK Homes' public consultation last year, some people raised concerns about the previous choice of site adjacent to the Cricket Club, principally about access and flood risk and steps were taken to mitigate these risks and allay people's concerns.

The Rushy Bank site was not available to YDUK Homes at the time they were offered the land behind the cricket club so when YDUK Homes were approached by the Rushy Bank Partnership to be part of their planned development we decided it was worth the additional cost of redesigning our architectural plans to be part of this broader community development. The 'new' site has all the benefits of the 'old' site, notably its proximity to the town with all its amenities whilst also locating our residents in the centre of a potentially lively residential community, in line with our aims.

10. Why has YDUK Homes chosen Charlbury?

Charlbury fits all the criteria for the location of our planned facility: within or on the edge of a town within Oxfordshire, and with access to good transport links making it as easy as possible for family and friends to visit.

Many of the over 30 sites we've considered over the last few years have been too isolated, or we have been in competition with private developers who can afford to pay market values. We have also looked at central sites in large towns, but these have either been too small or too expensive for us.

We have also considered two other sites suggested by Charlbury Town Council, one at Little Lees and the other at Ticknell Piece. After careful consideration we decided that these sites had potential for market housing and as a consequence, it was deemed likely that other social and private housing proposals would come forward which could jeopardise our purchase of the sites and delay us progressing with our plans.

The site in Charlbury meets the requirements for our facility. The involvement of the community will be a vital part in reducing the isolation of people with young onset dementia and Charlbury residents have indicated that the project would be a welcome addition to the town.

11. Will the YDUK Homes scheme also give priority to local people?

Our funders are very clear that the priority will be given to people living in West Oxfordshire. If we are unable to find someone from West Oxfordshire to fill a vacancy we will then look for applicants across the whole of the County and people who live in neighbouring Counties who want to live in Oxfordshire to be nearer to family and friends. At the moment many people who live with young onset dementia in Oxfordshire have to be placed in specialist homes outside of the County, as there are no specialist homes available. This makes it difficult for their families and friends to

visit them so it's important these people are given the chance to move back to be nearer their personal network.

12. Will this location be safe for people with young onset dementia?

The assisted living facility will be securely fenced and have a controlled gate at the entrance. All of our residents will have a risk assessment completed on a regular basis and, with permission, have personal locators to allow them freedom to move around but allowing staff to monitor their whereabouts. Many people with young onset dementia continue to follow routines from their past and this can be reflected in their desire to go to a particular place as they would if they were going to work or walking the dog at the same time every day. We feel that this past should be taken into account and understood in order to help people to feel fulfilled rather than restricted in their lives.

People with young onset dementia often get bored or frustrated if they don't get enough exercise and activity; this will be addressed with lots of opportunity for residents to take part in activities in the home, as well as in the local community with the support of our staff.

13. How will the new assisted living facility be different to a care home?

We will be providing 12 self-contained flats where people can be supported to live as independently as possible rather than just providing a room with an en suite bathroom offered in a care home. We will be working closely with Health and Social Care to develop this support as well as providing our own support team around the clock. We know that many people with young onset dementia who move into care homes quickly lose their independence and deteriorate much more quickly as a result. Our assisted living facility will help them to continue doing the things they enjoy and having a life that fits their routine rather than fitting around the routine of the care home.

Our facility is unique and will be the first in the country to offer people with young onset dementia the chance to live as independently as they can for as long as possible.

14. What is the timetable for commencing the building works?

The Rushy Bank Partnership are planning to submit their joint application in February 2015 and are aiming to start the building works in October 2015.