

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Planning Committee

HELD AT 6.00 PM ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017

DIDCOT CIVIC HALL, BRITWELL ROAD, DIDCOT, OX11 7JN

Present:

Felix Bloomfield (Chairman)

Joan Bland, Margaret Davies, Anthony Dearlove, Elaine Hornsby, Jeannette Matelot, Toby Newman, David Nimmo-Smith, Richard Pullen, David Turner and Ian White

Apologies:

Margaret Turner tendered apologies.

Officers:

Paul Bowers, Matthew Gaskin, Nicola Meurer, Phil Moule, Cathie Scotting and Tom Wyatt

Also present:

Will Hall

217 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 1 and 13 March 2017 as correct records and agree that the Chairman sign these as such.

218 Declarations of interest

Councillor Anthony Dearlove declared an interest in relation to application P16/S3609/O, land to the south of A4130, Didcot. He stated that he was Chairman of Didcot Town Council (who disagreed with the officer's recommendation to grant planning permission), but that he had not attended either meeting of Didcot Town Council regarding this issue and has not expressed a view on this matter.

Councillor Elaine Hornsby declared an interest in relation to application P16/S3608/O, land to the east of Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, as she was a friend of the applicant.



Listening Learning Leading

219 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

220 Applications deferred or withdrawn

Application P16/S3471/FUL, land at 67 Lower Icknield Way, Chinnor, had been withdrawn from the committee agenda to allow members to attend a site visit.

221 Proposals for site visits

None.

222 Public participation

The list showing 16 members of the public who had registered to speak was tabled at the meeting.

223 P16/S3608/O - Land to the East of Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford

Felix Bloomfield and Richard Pullen, the local ward councillors, stepped down from the committee and took no part in the debate or voting for this item. Toby Newman acted as chairman.

The committee considered outline planning application P16/S3608/O for 150 dwellings together with associated access, public open space, landscaping and amenity areas on land to the East of Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Officer updates:

- Further objections had been received from residents which reiterated issues within the officer's report;
- The South Oxfordshire Local Plan Part 2 is currently out for further consultation. This site is one of the preferred options but at this stage this carries little weight; and
- Referring to paragraph 6.22 of the officer's report, there is an update on the two current Crowmarsh Gifford planning applications; 80 homes to the west of Reading Road has been refused; and the Newnham Manor application is currently being considered.

Nigel Hannigan and John Griffin, representatives of Crowmarsh Gifford Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application. Their concerns included the following:

- The development is premature and opportunistic, as the wider site could take a lot more than 150 homes;
- This site is not a preferred option for the parish council;
- The large increase in housing is not proportionate to the area and will put pressure on local services, especially the primary school which is at capacity; and

- The proposed closure of Wallingford Bridge will lead to traffic build-up and affect air quality.

Lee Upcraft, of Wallingford Town Council, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- This development will adversely affect air quality, with air pollution already a serious problem in the Wallingford area;
- This application only considers its own effect on air quality, contradicting SODC guidance which requires that the cumulative effect of other planned developments is taken into consideration; and
- There are no conditions or mitigations referring to air quality.

Stephen Beatty, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- The development is not sustainable as per paragraph 14 of the NPPF due to the adverse impacts on schools, healthcare and air quality;
- The local primary school cannot accommodate more children, who would need to travel to schools outside the area and Wallingford secondary school can only take children of already approved applications;
- Wallingford medical practice has one of the highest patient ratios and there is no GP capacity in Henley or Didcot;
- Crowmarsh Gifford is classified as a large village and should therefore only need to accept 10% more housing equating to 40 homes;
- Crowmarsh Gifford residents are not anti-development; the alternative site of 100 houses at Newnham Manor are more appropriate;
- The land is classified as grade 2 agricultural and should therefore be protected; and
- The proposal does not meet local affordable housing needs as the majority are 3 or 4 bedroom homes.

Steven Brown, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application. His points included the following:

- The applicants have undertaken lengthy pre-application discussions with officers, met with the parish council and had a public exhibition for local residents to address concerns;
- The site is one of the preferred options in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan part 2;
- The proposal will deliver much needed housing in a sustainable location;
- Education provision is deemed to be acceptable by the county council subject to financial contributions; and
- The applications respects the amenity of neighbours and the character of the village, 40% of the site is proposed as open space and 40% will be affordable.

Felix Bloomfield, one of the local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- The development would be harmful to the local character, landscape and setting of the Chilterns AONB;
- Concern for the loss of Grade 2 agricultural land which needs to be protected; and
- There will be a cumulative impact on highways, schools, infrastructure and services.

In response to questions, officers clarified the following:

- Although a proposed increase of 48 homes was suggested in the Core Strategy, this has been superseded by the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) to which there is no definite allocation for villages;
- It is clear from previous lost appeals (Benson and Chinnor) that there is no cap to growth; and
- Referencing paragraph 6.18 in the report, there are two conditions to encourage more sustainable transport, e.g. electric vehicle charging points and cycle parking.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate. Their discussion included the following points:

- Although the Chilterns Conservation Board have not objected to the application, there are substantial mitigation requests which would indicate the harm of the development;
- Strong concerns about the nearby road junction which is due to be modified;
- There is a lack of education provision in the area to accommodate the development;
- This proposed development would harm the local landscape, adversely affect air quality, local setting and character;
- Concern for the loss of a greenfield site and Grade 2 agricultural land;
- The Local Plan part 2 carries little weight at this stage; and
- If Crowmarsh Gifford had a neighbourhood plan, objections would carry more weight;

Contrary to the officer's recommendation, a motion, moved and seconded, to refuse the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to refuse outline planning permission for application P16/S3608/O for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development will result in harm to the local character and distinctiveness of the area, harmful to the setting of the village of Crowmarsh Gifford and users of the public rights of way within and overlooking the site; accordingly the site is considered to fall within a valued landscape which the development fails to protect and enhance. The development will also will have a significant and demonstrable adverse effect upon the setting of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. As such the development would result in significant and demonstrable harm and is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular but not confined to paragraphs 7, 14, 109 and 115, and is contrary to policy CSEN1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and saved policies G2, G4, D1 (ii and iv) and C4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.
2. The existing school in Crowmarsh does not have adequate capacity to serve the pre-school and primary education needs generated from this development and the site of the school is constrained such that the school is unable to expand. Significant other development has already been permitted in Crowmarsh and Wallingford and Benson which means that the capacities of other schools in the locality are also expected to be exceeded. The development cannot therefore make adequate provision for education infrastructure and is an unsustainable form of development, contrary to Policy CS11 of the adopted South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the NPPF.
3. The proposed development will result in the loss of Grade 2 agricultural land contrary to paragraph 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. In the absence of a completed S106 agreement the proposal fails to i) secure affordable housing to meet the needs of the District and ii) secure other on and off site infrastructure necessary to support the development, and as such is contrary to policies CSH3 and CSI1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

224 P16/S3709/FUL - Shakespeare House, Clapcot Way, Wallingford

The committee considered application P16/S3709/FUL to demolish the existing building and erect ten dwellings, new access, parking and landscaping at Shakespeare House, Clapcot Way, Wallingford.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Lee Upcraft, a representative of Wallingford Town Council, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- The town council fully supports the redevelopment of this site, but the current plans do not comply with the policy requirements of window to window distances;
- Overlooking and an unacceptable loss of amenity to the residents of number 31 Clapcot Way;
- There would be a risk to pedestrians in terms of as traffic flows would increase and parking would become more of an issue; and
- Flipping the application would reduce the impact on everyone.

Ann and Lindon Shepherd, local residents, spoke objecting to the application. Their concerns included the following:

- Overlooking of their garden will cause a significant loss of amenity and privacy;
- Substandard window to window separation will cause overlooking;
- Road safety is a concern, especially for school children;
- Parking is already a problem; and
- The impact of dust during demolition and construction is a major health concern.

Ken Dijksman, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application:

- This application is on previously developed land and is in a sustainable location;
- There is extant permission for seven homes on the site, which expires in April 2018;
- The applicants have chosen to make the development 100% affordable;
- Parking and access is satisfactory. There are two parking spaces per house and two visitor spaces;
- In response to overlooking concerns from neighbours, all new houses have an element of overlooking and this is a common relationship replicated close to the site; and
- This scheme is acceptable so there is no need to flip or mirror the site.

Elaine Hornsby, one of the local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application:

- Communication between the applicant, SOHA, and Oxfordshire County Council has been negligent. Better dialogue may have led to this not being at committee.

In response to points raised, the officer stated that the 25m window to window distances in the Design Guide refer to back to back distance, which is not applicable in this case.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate.

A motion, moved and seconded, to approve the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P16/S3709/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - full planning permission.
2. Approved plans.
3. Schedule of materials.
4. Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class A) - no extensions etc.
5. Withdrawal of permitted development (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings etc.
6. New vehicular access.
7. Close existing access.
8. Vision splay dimensions.
9. Roads and footpaths prior to occupation.
10. Plan of car parking provision (specified number of spaces).
11. Construction traffic management.
12. No surface water drainage to highway.
13. Surface water drainage works (details required).
14. Foul drainage works (details required).
15. Obscure glazing.

225 P16/S3609/O - Land to the south of A4130, Didcot

The committee considered application P16/S3609/O for outline planning permission for up to 166 dwellings, new access, parking and landscaping on land to the south of the A4130, Didcot.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Officer update: one further letter of objection had been received from a member of the public in relation to the proposed access.

Jackie Billington, a representative of Didcot Town Council, spoke objecting to the application. Her concerns included the following:

- Turning right out of the site on to the A4130 would be very dangerous. The A4130 is a fast and busy road and road safety would be compromised;
- There should be a re-positioning of the main access point to and from the site; and

- An extra air quality condition should be included if the committee are minded to approve the application.

Matthew Dawber, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application:

- Pre-application discussions have taken place with Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council;
- Land has been safeguarded for the widening of the A4130 – County Highways have deemed the access safe with or without the road widening;
- There are no technical objections from statutory consultees;
- 40% of the homes will be affordable; and
- They cannot provide another access as they do not own the land it would need to go through.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate. Although some members of the committee were satisfied with the design of the development and that there were no technical reasons to object, there were severe concerns for road safety with the current access; internal and external noise impacts for future residents; air quality concerns; and the application does not accord with development plans.

A motion, moved and seconded, to approve the application was withdrawn before being put to the vote.

A motion, moved and seconded, to defer the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to defer application P16/S3609/O to allow the applicant time to negotiate with landowners to explore potential for a more suitable access.

226 P16/S3778/O - Land to the west of Ridgeways, New Road, Lower Shiplake

The committee considered application P16/S3778/O for outline planning permission to erect four residential units with all matters reserved except for access on land to the west of Ridgeways, New Road, Lower Shiplake.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Tudor Taylor, a representative of Shiplake Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- There have been 71 objections to the application;
- A previous application for one dwelling on this site was refused at appeal as it would constitute urbanisation of the fringes of Shiplake and would be harmful to the character and appearance of an area of great landscape value – these reasons still stand; and
- The application does not constitute infill development and is outside the village curtilage.

Professor Wild, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- The development would result in substantial and demonstrable harm to the rural area;
- New Road is rough and bumpy with substantial pedestrian traffic; and
- It is not in keeping with the surrounding area with regard to density.

William Young, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application:

- To meet concerns raised, the application has reduced in size from seven to four dwellings;
- No protected trees will be damaged on site; and
- The proposal accords with the development plan.

Will Hall, one of the local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application. His main concern was that the gap with Lower Shiplake would be degraded and in the detrimental change of character.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate. They did not agree that the application met policy requirements and that the development would not have a harmful impact on the landscape setting of the village.

Contrary to the officer's recommendation, a motion, moved and seconded, to refuse the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to refuse outline planning permission for application P16/S3778/O for the following reasons:

The application site comprises an area of undeveloped land beyond the built up edge of Lower Shiplake. Due to the location of the site, the proposed development does not represent appropriate infill housing having regard to Policy CSR1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, and the proposal would detract from the undeveloped rural character and appearance of the site and its surroundings, and would fail to conserve the landscape setting of Lower Shiplake. The adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefit, and as such, the proposal would not comprise sustainable development as defined by local and national legislation and the proposal is contrary to policies CSS1, CSR1 and CSEN1 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, policies C4, G2, G4 and D1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and Government Guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Prior to the conclusion of this item, at 20:25, the committee agreed, in accordance with South Oxfordshire District Council constitution, to continue the meeting for a further period not exceeding 30 minutes.

227 P16/S3471/FUL - Land at 67 Lower Icknield Way, Chinnor

The consideration of application P16/S3471/FUL to erect two detached dwellings with access, parking and amenity space at 67 Lower Icknield Way, Chinnor was deferred to allow for members to attend a site visit.

228 P16/S3555/FUL - Leys Stable Cottage, Old Bix Road

David Nimmo-Smith stepped down from the committee and took no part in the debate or voting for this item.

The committee considered application P16/S3555/FUL to vary conditions 2 and 5 of planning permission P14/S4069/FUL to replace approved plans and for the insertion of a clear glazed first floor window in the north and south elevations at Leys Stable Cottage, Old Bix Road.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Annette Belcher and Jamie Findlay, two local residents, spoke objecting to the application.

David Nimmo-Smith, one of the local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application:

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate. They did not agree that the application was of good design and was out of keeping with the local area. The committee requested that enforcement action needed to be more robust.

Contrary to the officer's recommendation, a motion, moved and seconded, to refuse the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to refuse planning permission for application P16/S3555/FUL for the following reasons:

The proposed dormer window on the south elevation of the dwelling, due to its size, and poor design would result in an incongruous addition to the dwelling that would fail to respect the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and Policies G2, D1 and H13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and guidance contained within the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

229 P17/S0201/FUL - Land north of Clayhill Wood, Stoke Row

David Nimmo-Smith stepped down from the committee and took no part in the debate or voting for this item.

The committee considered application P17/S0201/FUL for a change of use from agricultural land to equestrian use and to replace the existing stables and storage building with two permanent buildings on land north of Clayhill Wood, Stoke Row.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Alex Lawrence, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate.

A motion, moved and seconded, to approve the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P17/S0201/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement of development within three years.
2. Development to proceed in accordance with approved plans.
3. Materials to be used as set out on the application forms.
4. Vision splay protection retained free of obstructions above 0.9 metres in height.
5. Parking and manoeuvring areas retained as shown on approved plans.
6. Tree protection measures to be agreed prior to commencement of development.
7. Private use of land, barn and storage building – no commercial use.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Chairman

Date