

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Planning Committee

HELD AT 6.00 PM ON WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2017

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

Present:

Felix Bloomfield (Chairman)

Anthony Dearlove, Lorraine Hillier, Elaine Hornsby, Toby Newman, David Nimmo-Smith, Richard Pullen, David Turner and Ian White

Apologies:

Joan Bland, Margaret Davies, Jeannette Matelot and Margaret Turner tendered apologies.

Officers:

Paula Fox, Simon Kitson, Nicola Meurer, Phil Moule and Tom Wyatt

Also present:

Nigel Champken-Woods and David Dodds

230 Declarations of interest

None.

231 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

232 Applications deferred or withdrawn

Item 7 on the agenda – P16/S4062/O – land east of Chalgrove had been deferred to allow for a site visit.

233 Proposals for site visits

None.



Listening Learning Leading

234 Public participation

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

235 P16/S4062/O - Land east of Chalgrove

Outline planning application P16/S4062/O to erect up to 120 residential dwellings and space for a community facility with associated highways, landscaping and open space with all matters reserved except access on land east of Chalgrove, was deferred from consideration at committee to allow for a site visit.

236 P16/S3525/FUL - Thames Valley Police Station, Greyhound Lane, Thame

Lorraine Hillier arrived part way through the officer's presentation and was therefore unable to debate or vote on this item.

The committee considered application P16/S3525/FUL to redevelop Thames Valley Police Station to form 41 sheltered apartments for the elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping on Greyhound Lane, Thame.

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: 30 further letters of support had been received regarding the health and welfare benefits of the development.

Graeme Markland and Bob Austin, representatives of Thame town council, spoke objecting to the application. Their concerns included the following:

- The focus of the officer's report puts too much emphasis on comparing this application with the appeal scheme;
- Highway safety concerns due to Greyhound Lane being narrow with a steep gradient and lack of pavement;
- The site access is insufficiently wide for delivery vehicles, ambulances or refuse lorries;
- Parking is inadequate and would cause displacement in the town;
- Air quality has not been sufficiently addressed;
- Shading concerns; and
- Querying the legality of land ownership.

Simon Cater, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application:

- The site is a safe, secure, self-contained development with communal facilities and landscaped gardens;
- According to the inspector's assessment of the appeal scheme, the parking was deemed sufficient – this proposal has fewer apartments and therefore a higher parking allocation;
- The conservation officer is satisfied with the scheme;
- The communal amenity spaces are sufficient;
- The developers can be on site quickly, potentially starting in May this year; and

- Contributions will be put towards public transport.

Bridget Trueman and Angela Wilson, two local residents, spoke objecting to the application. Their concerns included the following:

- Happy with the site being redeveloped into retirement flats, but have major concerns with parking and access;
- A second access would be desirable; and
- The Thame neighbourhood plan requests 40% affordable housing for all new developments, which this does not comply with.

Nigel Champken-Woods, one of the local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- This site is a gateway into Thame and the design should reflect this with frontages on the front of the premises;
- The design is poor with confusing elevations;
- Greyhound Lane is too steep and has no pavement, which will be dangerous for the elderly; and
- There is not enough parking.

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

- This is a tight development with insufficient amenity space and parking;
- Access concerns;
- Traffic backs up on Greyhound Lane especially on weekends, market days and Christmas; and
- The scheme does not pay regard to the neighbourhood plan.

In response to objections and questions raised by committee members, the case officer reported that:

- The recent inspector's report deemed the refuse lorry stopping time would be sufficiently short to not cause issues;
- Ambulances will not require a dedicated parking space as the proposal is for retirement living as opposed to a care home;
- The layout meets BRE standards for light/shade;
- The onus of the declaration of ownership is on the applicant, who had served notice on the landowner upon application;
- The applicants have undertaken a viability assessment, which determined the amount that could be paid as a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing;
- Oxfordshire County Council highways have recognised the limited parking provision but deemed it acceptable due to the sustainable location;
- The committee were advised to have regard to the inspector's report as the application has followed soon after the appeal;
- Policies have been carefully assessed and there are no technical objections.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate. Whilst some members were minded to approve the scheme due to the lack of material planning reasons and technical objections to warrant refusing it, other members did not agree that the access was sufficient to allow emergency vehicles into the site; that parking was sufficient for the proposed number of apartments; that the design is in keeping with the conservation area of Thame; and that there is sufficient amenity space.

The development manager advised the committee on the following:

- As the application followed on from an appeal members were advised to concentrate on issues raised by the inspector as to go outside these issues would put the council at risk;
- The level of car parking had been endorsed by the county council and inspector;
- In response to questions raised by committee, the development manager asked if increasing the lower age limit of prospective residents might aid support of the scheme; and
- It is in the applicant's interests to make the scheme work for future residents – Churchill Living are very experienced in making similar sites with limited parking provision work.

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

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/S3525/FUL for the following reasons:

Insufficient Car parking provision

The proposal fails to provide an adequate level of off-street parking for the proposed use, which would lead to the displacement of parking associated with the proposed development onto nearby roads and public car parking facilities. This would have a detrimental impact on the vibrancy of Thame town centre. This is contrary to Policy T2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, Policy GA6 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and paragraphs 39 and 40 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Overdevelopment of the site – lack of amenity space

The proposal would result in an overdevelopment of the site which is demonstrated by the inadequacy of car parking provision and the lack of high quality and usable amenity space being provided for future occupiers. This is contrary to Policy CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, Policies D3 and T2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and Policies GA6 and EDSQ28 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Harm to the character of the Conservation Area

Having regard to the bulk, height, massing and design of the proposal in this prominent location, the scheme would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Thame Conservation Area. Furthermore, the loss of the existing building itself would constitute an unattractive gap in the Conservation Area and without an approved replacement building, demolition would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This is contrary to Policies CON6 and CON7 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, Policies CSTHA1 and CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and Policies ESDQ16, ESDQ17, ESDQ18 and ESDQ20 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraphs 17 and 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Affordable Housing

In the absence of a completed S106 planning obligation, the proposal fails to provide affordable housing on-site or an appropriate commuted sum in accordance with Policy CSH3 of the adopted Core Strategy 2012. The proposal also fails to provide adequate on and off site infrastructure and services in accordance with Policy CSI1 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2012 and paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

237 P17/S0080/O - 69 Park Street, Thame

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 CS11 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

238 P17/S0129/FUL - 67 Park Street, Thame

The committee considered application P17/S0129/FUL to convert one residential property into two apartments at 67 Park Street, Thame.

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.

Graeme Markland and Bob Austin, representatives of Thame council, spoke objecting to the application.

Giles Brockbank, 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/S0129/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
2. That the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans
3. Prior to first occupation of the first floor flat, privacy screening to the roof terrace shall be provided in accordance with the approved plan. The screening shall be glazed in obscure glass with a minimum of level 3 obscurity and it shall be retained at a minimum height of 1.5m from floor level.
4. That the development hereby approved shall not commence until a detailed specification of the type, design and external finish of all windows and external doors has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
5. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, the parking and turning areas shall be provided in accordance with drawing no. MDL-1251-PL120 and shall be constructed, laid out, surfaced, drained and completed to be compliant with sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles, and shall be retained unobstructed except for the parking of vehicles associated with the development at all times.

239 P17/S0168/FUL - 24 Panters Road, Cholsey

The committee considered application P17/S0168/FUL to erect an attached two-storey two-bedroom dwelling including new vehicular access at 24 Panters Road, Cholsey.

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.

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/S0168/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - full planning permission.
2. Approved plans.
3. New vehicular access.
4. Parking and manoeuvring areas retained.

240 P17/S0171/HH - 7 Croft Terrace, Wallingford

The committee considered application P17/S0171/HH to replace windows on the rear of the property and to replace the front door at 7 Croft Terrace, 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.

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, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three - full planning permission.
2. Approved plans.
3. Materials as on plan.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Chairman

Date

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