

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE

# Planning Committee

HELD ON THURSDAY 1 APRIL 2021 AT 6.00 PM

## A VIRTUAL MEETING

### Present:

Ian Snowdon (Chair)

Peter Dragonetti (Vice Chair), David Bretherton, Elizabeth Gillespie, Lorraine Hillier, Alexandrine Kantor (substituting for Kate Gregory), George Levy, Axel Macdonald (substituting for Celia Wilson), Jo Robb and Ian White

### Apologies:

Ken Arlett, Kate Gregory and Celia Wilson tendered apologies.

### Officers:

Paul Bateman, Sharon Crawford, Will Darlison, Neil Davies, Paula Fox, Susie Royse and Tom Wyatt

### Also present:

Councillors Sue Cooper and Andrea Powell

## 129 Chair's announcements

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and outlined the procedure to be followed in a virtual meeting.

## 130 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 131 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

## 132 Proposals for site visits



Listening Learning Leading

There were no proposals for site visits.

### **133 Public participation**

The list showing members of the public who had registered to speak had been sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Statements received from the public were circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

### **134 P20/S2712/FUL - Old Telephone Exchange, Church Road, Benson**

The committee considered application P20/S2712/FUL for replacing 2 existing brick former telephone exchange buildings with a new, one-bedroom residential dwelling, with live work studio above, re-using the existing access and parking area (as amplified by Transport and Agricultural Information received 8 October and 19 October 2020 respectively. Energy Statement received on 13 January 2021 and amended by drawing no 20 TECB PPB02 rev D received on 1 February 2021 to revise garden layout and external wall material) at the Old Telephone Exchange, Church Road, Benson.

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 the meeting.

The planning officer reported that this application had been referred to the committee as a result of highways safety concerns expressed by one of the local councillors. The application sought planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a detached one-bedroom dwelling with a live-work studio above. The existing access from Church Road would be retained and a driveway created to accommodate one car parking space. It was also reported that the initial comments from the highway officer at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) recommended that the proposed development be refused on safety grounds. At that time it was OCC's view that the previous telephone exchange use would have generated a low level and infrequent number of vehicular movements, but the proposed development would increase the regularity of movements and their number. A transport statement had been submitted to address those concerns and in the light of this the highway officer at present had no objection to the proposal.

Councillor Bill Pattison, a representative of Benson Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application. A statement by Councillor Pattison on behalf of Benson PC, had been sent to committee by democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

Mr. Geoffrey Harcourt, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application.

A statement by Dr. Karen Edwards, a local resident, objecting to the application, had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

Ms. Amanda Walker, the agent, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Andrea Powell, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

Councillor Sue Cooper, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application. A statement by Councillor Cooper had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer some days prior to the meeting.

The committee expressed concern at the cramped nature of the site, which would not be in keeping with the character of this part of Benson and which would be unneighbourly. It

also had concerns regarding highway safety in connection with access and egress to the site. Also, the committee contended that the parking arrangements were unsatisfactory, as they were likely to lead to vehicles reversing into the highway.

A motion moved and seconded, to refuse planning permission was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to refuse planning permission for application P20/S2712/FUL, for the following reasons;

1. As a result of the limited size of the site and proximity of the development to its boundaries, the proposal would comprise a cramped overdevelopment of the site, which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the immediate area.
2. In view of the restricted size of the site, the proximity of windows to the site boundaries and the inability of future owners to ensure that the boundaries would remain open in the long term, the proposal failed to provide a satisfactory quality of outlook and living environment for future residents.
3. The proposal would lead to an increased use of the existing access, which was close to a busy junction and with limited visibility onto Church Road. The parking arrangements would lead to vehicles reversing out onto the highway, which would be harmful to pedestrian and vehicular safety.

### **135 P20/S4298/FUL - 62 Ludsdon Grove, Thame**

Councillor Ian Snowdon, Chair, declared that he had no interest in this application.

The committee considered application P20/S4298/FUL for the construction of a garden building for part personal use and part business use as a hairdressing salon at 62 Ludsdon Grove, 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 the meeting.

The planning officer reported that this was an application for a single storey detached garden building for part personal use and part business use, the latter use being as a hairdressing salon. The garden building would be situated towards the rear of the site and set away from neighbouring boundaries. It was intended that only one chair would be used within the proposed salon and that the premises would be visited by only one customer at a time. The hours of operation would be restricted by a proposed planning condition. The Oxfordshire County Council, the highways authority, had no objection to the proposal. Similarly, the council's environmental health unit had no objection to the proposal. In conclusion, planning officers did not consider that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site, to the surrounding area, or to the amenity of neighbours.

Councillor Tom Wyse, a representative of Thame Town Council, spoke objecting to the application. A statement by Councillor Wyse, on behalf of Thame Town Council, had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

Amy Burchell, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. A statement by Ms. Burchell had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

Councillor David Bretherton, a local ward councillor, spoke to the application.

In response to a question regarding subsequent occupiers continuing the business operation, the planning officer confirmed that business use could continue without a change of use requirement.

The committee had noted all the statements made in respect of this application and considered that objections relating to unneighbourliness, or problems with parking, were not justified, and that this limited business use, which would have carefully controlled hours of operation, should be permitted.

A motion moved and seconded, to grant planning permission was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to grant planning permission for application P20/S4298/FUL, for the following reasons;

1. Commencement of development within three years
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans
3. Materials to match existing
4. Restricted hours of operation

### **136 P21/S0290/FUL - Fifield House, Ferry Road, South Stoke**

Cllr. George Levy left the meeting prior to the consideration of this application and therefore did not participate in the debate or decision of this item.

The committee considered application P21/S0290/FUL for a variation of condition 5 (removal of the words "...but to the east and south of the garage on the boundary to The Old Forge House...") on application ref. P19/S1072/FUL. The original description of P19/S1072/FUL was

"Alterations to design of rear elevation of house and provision of building in garden following approval of replacement dwelling under permission P16/S3861/FUL", at Fifield House, Ferry Road, South Stoke.

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 the meeting.

The planning officer reported that this application involved a variation to an approved landscaping scheme to remove the requirement to provide new yew trees on the east and south of the garage. The property was not listed, but was situated within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Flood Zone 2, an area of known archaeological constraints, and an area inhabited by protected species, such as bats. Council officers did not consider that the proposal would cause any material harm to neighbours' amenity. In addition, the forestry officer had no objection. Officers recommended that planning permission should be granted to vary condition 5, as the amendment to the wording of the condition would remove the maintenance requirements set out in the previous condition, which were considered by planning officers to be unenforceable. The requirement to plant

and maintain trees in the locations would not have a material impact on the Chilterns AONB or impact neighbours.

Councillor Andrew Scrivener, a representative of South Stoke Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application.

Statement by Mr. Wyndham-Smith, the agent, spoke in support of the application.

A motion moved and seconded, to grant planning permission was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to grant planning permission for application P21/S0290/FUL, for the following reason;

1. Landscaping implementation.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Chairman

Date

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