

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 12 January 2022
at 6.00 pm in First Floor Meeting
Space, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton
Park, OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Councillors: David Bretherton (Chair), Peter Dragonetti (Vice-Chair), Ken Arlett, Tim Bearder, Victoria Haval, Elizabeth Gillespie, Lorraine Hillier, Axel Macdonald, Jo Robb, Ian Snowdon and Alan Thompson

Officers: Paul Bateman and Paula Fox, Tom Wyatt, Kim Gould and Caitlin Phillpotts

Guests: Councillors David Turner and Councillor Ian White

Remote attendance:

Councillors: Kate Gregory, Lynn Lloyd and Caroline Newton

Officers: Nat Bamsey, Paul Bowers, Lilua Ihezor-Ejiofor, Kim Gould and Caitlin Phillpotts, Susie Royse, Emily Tucker and Tom Wyatt

49 Chair's announcements

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedure to be followed in an in-person meeting which was simultaneously broadcast and advised on emergency evacuation arrangements.

50 Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings of the committee held on Wednesday 27 October 2021 and Wednesday 3 November 2021 were agreed to be the correct record of the meetings. It was agreed that the chair sign them as such.

51 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

52 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

53 Proposals for site visits

There were no proposals for site visits.

54 Public participation

The list showing members of the public who had registered to speak was tabled at the meeting. Statements which had been received had been sent to the committee prior to the meeting.

55 P21/S1638/FUL - Land to the rear of 60-66 High Street, Chalgrove

The committee considered planning application P21/S1638/FUL for the demolition of garage block, erection of a pair of single storey 2-bed dwellings, as amplified by SAP information received on 14 June 2021, as amplified by drainage strategy and flood risk assessment received 10 August 2021 on land to the rear of 60-66 High Street, Chalgrove.

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 The planning officer reported that since the publication of the agenda, Chalgrove Parish Council had withdrawn its objection to the application. A letter from the parish council dated Friday 7 January 2022 had been sent to the committee on Monday 10 January 2022 by the democratic services officer.

The planning officer reported that this application related to the demolition of eight garages behind the parade of shops and the construction of two single storey dwellings. The planning officer summarised the objections which had been made to the application, which included issues of overdevelopment, inappropriate access and lack of parking, proximity to existing gardens, loss of gardens to the flats, and residential amenity, including garden sizes.

The planning officer also reported that the applicant was advised at pre application stage that a single storey development would assist in avoiding any direct overlooking to neighbours. The applicant had acknowledged this and had submitted a scheme which was single storey in design.

Both properties had garden sizes which exceeded the council's standard of 50 square metres for a 2-bed dwelling. House 1 had a rear garden of 51 square metres, whilst house 2 had a garden of 77 square metres. As such, the proposal provided adequate private amenity space to accord with the South Oxfordshire design guide's standards and policy DES5 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP).

The planning officer advised the committee that the access arrangements to the proposed development had been carefully examined and that the Oxfordshire County Council, the highways authority, had no objection. The pre-existing bin collection arrangements would continue.

The design guide stated that a 10 metre gap should exist between the rear of a property and the rear boundary. For this proposal, the distance was 4.5 metres. The proposed dwellings, however, would be limited to a single storey, with a maximum

modest ridge height of 4 metres. As such, the proposed dwellings would not appear to be visually intrusive or overbearing. The planning officer also reported that in the interests of good neighbourliness, the boundaries of the proposal prior to first occupation would be carefully considered; a scheme for the provision of boundary treatment would be included as an additional proposed planning condition.

The planning officer reported on possible flood risk to the development. The site was situated in flood zones 1, 2 and 3. The council's drainage engineer had initially lodged a holding objection to this proposal on the grounds that a flood risk assessment (FRA) was required, due to the site's location within flood zones 2 and 3. An FRA was subsequently submitted, and the council's drainage engineer had raised no objection to the proposal on drainage grounds. He had confirmed that the information submitted demonstrated that an emergency vehicle could access the site into flood zone 1 and that a feasible surface water drainage strategy had been demonstrated. The drainage engineer no longer raised an objection to the proposal on flooding grounds.

The planning officer reported on biodiversity aspects of the proposed development. The agent had submitted a biodiversity statement which demonstrated that there would be a net gain of 14 square metres of green space as a result of the proposal. The council's countryside officer had considered the applicant's biodiversity statement. That officer had advised that compliance with council policy ENV3 (biodiversity) could be secured with the delivery of the two bird boxes, two bat boxes and insect bricks.

Mr. Richard Thomas, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor David Turner, the local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

Planning officers considered that the redevelopment of this site by the removal of the garages and the incorporation of the neglected garden area into functioning rear gardens would enhance the character and visual amenity of the area and would not detract from the established character of the area.

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

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P21/S1638/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans
3. Materials as on plan
4. Withdrawal of Permitted Development rights (Part 1 Class A) - no extensions etc.
5. Withdrawal of Permitted Development rights (Part 1 Class E) - no buildings etc.
6. Energy Statement Verification
7. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained
8. Cycle Parking (approved plans)
9. Surface Water Drainage
10. Electrical vehicles charging point
11. Compliance condition ecology

Additional condition on boundary treatment;

‘Prior to the construction of any development above slab level a scheme for the provision of boundary treatment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation or use of development and thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.’

56 P21/S2860/FUL - Land between The Plough House and Frogmore, Stadhampton Road, Little Milton

The committee considered planning application P21/S2860/FUL for a replacement access (as amended by updated description on the 20th of October 2021 and amended plans on the 25th of November 2021) on land between The Plough House and Frogmore, Stadhampton Road, Little Milton.

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 the proposal required no additional works apart from cutting back vegetation by the roadside, including some orchids. The committee was concerned at the potential loss of the orchids and the planning officer informed members that the council’s ecology officer had been consulted, who advised that the landowner was empowered to remove these flowers at any time and that it was not reasonable of the council to impose a planning condition about this issue. Also, the loss of the section of hedgerow would result in a loss of biodiversity, as hedgerows provided a habitat and food that supported a number of species. However, this loss would be mitigated through requiring a hedge to be planted across the existing access, which would ensure there was no net loss of biodiversity from the development.

The committee was informed that the development was considered to cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of nearby Plough House, and the character and appearance of the conservation area. In accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and council policies ENV7 and ENV8, for the development to accord with these policies, this harm should be outweighed by public benefits of the development.

The committee noted the extensive planning history to the site, dating back to 1982. The previous decisions relating to the site were material to the assessment of this application by officers, but the planning officer advised that these decisions, or the applicant’s apparent intentions, could not be a factor in the committee’s determination on this application. An application for a dwelling would have to be the subject of a separate application.

Councillor Caroline Newton, the local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee concluded that there were no planning grounds for a refusal of planning permission, but that steps should be taken to protect the orchids via an informative.

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

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P21/S2860/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans.
3. New vehicular access.
4. New hedge required.
5. Close existing access.
6. Access and Vision Splays.
7. Vision splay protection.

Informative regarding works within the highway.

Additional informative regarding preservation of orchids.

57 P20/S3379/FUL and P21/S2504/LB - Three Horseshoes, Chinnor Road, Towersey

The committee considered planning applications P20/S3379/FUL and P21/S2504/LB in respect of Three Horseshoes, Chinnor Road, Towersey, namely;

Application P20/S3379/FUL; conversion of outbuilding to a dwelling utilising existing access, with associated landscaping and parking (as per amended plans and supporting information submitted 3 November 2020) (as per additional and amended drainage details submitted 8 December 2020)

Application P21/S2504/LB; change of use of existing outbuilding (Sui Generis) to provide one dwelling (Use Class C3) utilising existing access, with associated landscaping and parking (as per amended plans showing the removal all rooflights and the relocation of the internal doorway which connects the main barn to the smaller outbuilding, submitted 9 August 2021), (as per amended plans to include the provision of two times small domestic outbuildings and patio area, submitted 6 September 2021), (as per flood resilience strategy and updated heritage statement submitted 23 November 2021).

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 brought before the committee at the development manager's discretion owing the level of public interest that it had attracted and in consultation with Councillor Ian White, a local ward member.

The planning officer reported that the application site was located within the built-up limits of Towersey and inside the Towersey conservation area. The committee noted that the site did not lie inside any flood zones, but due to the flat topography across the site and the presence of an existing watercourse, it was at significant risk of flooding from surface water (fluvial flooding). The committee noted slide photographs

of the site under recent flood conditions. The planning officer reported that the risk of flooding remained low.

The planning officer reported that the application was in keeping with the local plan and acceptable in principle. The barn had existing and historic uses but in council planning officers' considerations this evidence did not justify a listing as a community asset. The public house was protected under policy CF 1 (safeguarding community facilities) of the local plan. The development would not affect the ongoing operation of the public house and planning officers considered that the development would not result in loss of community facilities, particularly because of the existence of the nearby well-equipped Towersey Memorial Hall. Two thirds of the existing garden area would be retained in the development and the green open space to the front of the plot would be largely retained. Also, the employment use of the site would be retained. The planning officer also reported that a housing unit would be welcome in this area of high demand. The vitality and viability of the area would not be affected by the proposal. The conservation officer considered that all mitigation possible to convert this barn to residential use had been undertaken and that this scheme represented the least harmful means of converting the barn to residential use. Additionally, the officer considered that the removal of the modern non-hydroscopic building materials across the building and their replacement with appropriate heritage materials, the addition of appropriate flood resilience measures, which would ensure the protection of the listed building, were all satisfactory. On balance, the conservation mitigation outweighed the low level of less than substantial harm to the listed building.

Councillor Mark Davis, a representative of Towersey Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application.

Mr. Jeremy Clark, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application.

Councillor Ian White, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

Mr. Jake Russell, the agent, spoke in support of the application.

A statement by Mr Chris Neale was sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

A statement by Mr. Hugh Riley was sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

A statement by Mr. Tim Shreeve was sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

The committee considered that the local interest in this application was a persuasive signifier of its importance to residents. In the committee's view, the proposal would represent the loss of a valued community asset and would be inappropriate to the local area. Also, the setting of a residential unit at the centre of public house facilities was unsuitable. For these reasons the committee was not minded to grant planning permission or permit listed building consent.

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

RESOLVED: to refuse planning permission for application P20/S3379/FUL for the following reasons:

1. Loss of a valued community facility.
2. Affect upon the viability and vitality of the public house.
3. Harm upon a local heritage asset is not outweighed by the perceived public benefit.
4. The development would be detrimental to future residents.

A motion moved and seconded, to refuse listed building consent was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to refuse listed building consent for application P21/S2504/LB for the following reasons:

1. The proposed works would represent harm to a local heritage asset.

58 P21/S4226/HH - 3 King's Road, Thame

The committee considered application P21/S4226/HH for a single storey extension to rear of property and new wall to part of boundary at 3 King's Road, 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 in council officers' views the proposals was in keeping with the local character of the site. The application had received comments from neighbours, but no objections. The planning officer also reported that Thame Town Council had objected to the application on the basis that the proposed wall on the south-eastern elevation would represent overdevelopment and would be contrary to Thame Neighbourhood Plan policies. The committee noted the planning officer's advice in paragraph 6.10 of the report, that in taking into account the length of the wall proposed being approximately one third of the existing boundary fence, officers did not consider that this wall amounted to overdevelopment. The use of bricks to match the existing dwelling would further integrate the development into the existing dwelling and the site and would improve the visual appearance of the dwelling and the wider area.

The planning officer reported that permitted development rights had not been removed from the site, which could permit the enlargement, improvement or alteration of the property. It would be possible for the applicant to erect a rear extension of up to 3 metres high and deep along the concerned boundary, without the need for planning permission. This would be considerably shorter in length than proposed wall, however, it could be higher than the 2.75 metres proposed.

Councillor Kate Gregory, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee considered that the planning application complied with national guidance and local policy and that the proposed development would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the site, the surrounding area, or the amenity of neighbours. Therefore, planning permission should be granted.

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

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P21/S4226/HH subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement of development within three years.
2. Development in accordance with the approved plans.
3. Materials as on plan.

59 P21/S4280/HH - Yew Tree House, The Street, Ewelme

The committee considered planning application P21/S4280/HH for an extension and remodelling works at Yew Tree House, the Street, Ewelme.

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 the property was in the ownership of a district councillor. Since the publication of the agenda, the Ewelme Parish Council had confirmed that it had no objection to the application. The planning officer also reported the site was located in the Ewelme Conservation area and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The proposal involved the building of a single storey extension, a recladding of the dwelling in vertical natural timber, the installation of a balcony and the erection of a new replacement, detached garage. Planning officers considered that the proposed balcony was modest and not overlooking neighbouring properties. The proposed garage would replace an existing structure and would be larger than the current building, but in the planning officer's view a number of factors would ensure that the application would not result in a materially harmful overbearing or oppressive impact to any nearby property, namely its distance from adjoining properties, the extension being limited to single storey height and the fact that the garage would be located in the same position.

The council's tree officer had considered the impact of the development, and in particular the replacement garage structure upon adjacent trees. Given the garage building would be located in the same position as the existing structure and the extension of the house would be at a greater distance from the trees, it was confirmed that there would be no objection to the proposals, subject to a condition that required the protection of the trees during the construction period.

The committee were of the view that the proposed extension and alterations to the house were in keeping with the character of the area and would improve the appearance of the building in the context of the conservation area and the AONB. The proposed garage was limited in overall height and did not give rise to a significantly greater impact on the wider area or on nearby trees than the existing garage.

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

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application 21/S4280/HH subject to the following conditions:

Standard conditions

1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans

Pre-commencement conditions

3. Watercourse protection strategy
4. Tree protection

Prior to occupation conditions

5. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained
6. External lighting

Compliance conditions

7. Cladding to be natural in colour
8. Materials as on plan
9. No garage conversion into accommodation

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm