

# **Minutes**

## **OF A MEETING OF THE**



Listening Learning Leading

## **Planning Committee**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2021 AT 6.00 PM  
FIRST FLOOR MEETING SPACE, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK,  
OX14 4SB**

**An 'In Person' meeting which was also broadcast**

### **Present in the meeting room:**

Councillors: David Bretherton (Chair), Peter Dragonetti (Vice Chair), Ken Arlett, Tim Bearder, Elizabeth Gillespie, Lorraine Hillier, Alexandrine Kantor (substituting for Victoria Havel), Axel Macdonald, Ian Snowden and Alan Thompson

Officers: Paul Bateman and Paula Fox

### **Remote attendance:**

Councillors: Sam Casey-Rerhaye and Sue Roberts

Officers: Sharon Crawford, Kim Gould and Susie Royse

### **11 Chair's announcements**

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

### **12 Apologies for absence**

Councillor Jo Robb gave apologies for absence and was substituted by Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

The democratic services officer reported that the leader of the council had appointed Councillor Victoria Havel to the vacant position on the committee. Councillor Havel was substituted by Councillor Alexandrine Kantor.

### **13 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **14 Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

## **15 Proposals for site visits**

There were no proposals for site visits.

## **16 Public participation**

The list showing members of the public who had registered to speak had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

## **17 P21/S2637/FUL - Land at 4 Ernest Road, Didcot**

The committee considered application P21/S2637/FUL for a proposed new dwelling (as amplified by energy statement received 31 August 2021) on land at 4 Ernest Road, 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 the meeting.

The planning officer reported that a site visit by members of the committee had taken place at the location on Monday 25 October 2021. The proposal entailed a single storey dwelling of modern design, in part of the rear garden of an existing semi-detached house, with an integral garage and car port, pitched roofs and timber cladding. The committee was advised that permitted development rights at this site could allow for a dwelling of a similar size. It was considered that the impacts of the proposed development would be mainly at the rear boundary, bordering Edmond Court, where the development would be visible, but with no direct overlooking from it. Council officers contended that there would not be a material level of harm to neighbouring properties.

Councillor Eleanor Hards, a representative of Didcot Town Council, spoke objecting to the application.

Mr. James Adams, a local resident, at 2A Ernest Road, spoke objecting to the application.

A statement from Nina Phillips, a local resident, had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting.

The committee sought clarification regarding whether the proposal represented a one or two-bedroom property. The planning officer replied that the plans with the application indicated one bedroom. However, the depicted 'study room' could be used as a bedroom, if the occupier so chose. The report to the committee acknowledged possible use as a two-bedroom dwelling. The planning officer advised the committee that the South Oxfordshire Design Guide set out the minimum amount of private amenity space (i.e., rear garden) based on the number bedrooms the property had; 1 bedroom units should provide for 35m<sup>2</sup>, and 50m<sup>2</sup> for two bedroom units. The rear garden of the proposed dwelling allowed for 55m<sup>2</sup>, which exceeded provision for a two bedroom dwelling.

The planning officer drew the committee's attention to paragraph 6.22 of the report. In respect of this application, Didcot Town Council has raised the concern that by creating a dwelling and access onto Edmond Court, it would reduce the ability to park on the highway. The planning officer made an analogous reference to a similar matter being raised previously for another dwelling in Didcot, which had been the subject of an appeal. Here the planning inspector had allowed the development and awarded costs against the council to the applicant on the grounds of 'unreasonableness'. In the view of council

officers, this was not a reason to resist this development. Additionally, the area affected at Edmond Court by the proposed access was used for manoeuvring rather than for parking.

The committee was concerned about ecological aspects of the proposal. With reference to paragraph 6.17 of the report, it noted that policy ENV3 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) stated that development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should result in a net gain. The proposal would in fact result in the loss of some garden land. The report stated that in ecological terms, the impact was not likely to be significant. However, a condition was proposed to ensure the provision of a bird box on the new dwelling, providing a net gain required by Policy ENV3. The committee took the view that the provision of a bird box was inadequate compensation for the loss of garden tree cover. In response to a question, the planning officer confirmed that a landscaping condition could be added to ensure a suitable replacement tree.

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

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

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission for application P21/S2637/FUL is refused for the following reasons;

1. Out of keeping with local character, owing to size and proximity to neighbours' boundaries.
2. Oppressive and unneighbourly, especially to Edmond Court residents.
3. Reduction in quality of neighbours' amenity space.

## **18 P21/S3669/FUL - Land opposite Whitecross House, Winterbrook**

The committee considered application P21/3669/FUL for the erection of a dwelling (amended scheme pursuant to extant consent P20/S0912/FUL), as clarified by site survey submitted on 15 September 2021, on land opposite Whitecross House, Winterbrook

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 planning permission had been granted for a single dwelling on this site earlier in 2021. This permission remained extant and therefore the principle of erecting a single dwelling on this site had been established. The application had not attracted any neighbour objections.

An arboricultural report had been submitted with the application, which demonstrated that the proposed development did not require the pruning or removal of any trees which were protected by a tree preservation order. The council's forestry officer had no objection to the proposal and had commented that the current layout was an improvement when compared to the extant scheme from an arboricultural perspective, as the proposed dwelling was located further from the protected trees. Tree protection and landscape conditions were recommended to the committee. Since the grant of planning permission, some trees had been removed from the site. The forestry officer had visited the site and the countryside officer had no objection to the removal, which had not involved protected trees. The removal had followed correct procedure. Proposals for replacement trees would be included in the landscaping plan.

The planning officer also reported that the development was designed not to have a significant adverse impact on neighbour amenity. There was existing vegetation along the boundary with the care home and all first-floor windows in the proposed new dwelling which would face the care home would be either obscure glazed, serving bathrooms or set at high level, to avoid any direct overlooking.

Ms. Louise Harris, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. Ms. Harris made particular reference to policy DES10, relating to carbon reduction, and advised the committee that the dwelling would incorporate solar power sources and wool insulation, with energy recycling measures and utilisation of heat pumps. The planning officer reported that policy DES8 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) sought to ensure that all new development minimised the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction. Proposals should demonstrate that they were seeking to limit greenhouse emissions through location, building orientation and design. Policy DES9 encouraged schemes for renewable and low energy generation and associated infrastructure. Policy DES10 required new dwellings to achieve at least a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. Council officers considered this development proposal to be sustainable.

Councillor Sue Roberts, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

In response to a question regarding further information in respect of measures relating to the term 'ecology', the planning officer responded that proposed condition 10 would deal with this issue in detail. The committee noted that the site had been subject to ecological surveys in 2019 and update surveys in 2021. These surveys had been considered by the council's ecologist, who did not consider that the ecological status of the site had changed since permission was originally granted. That officer had raised no objection to the proposal on ecology grounds, subject to a condition which required a biodiversity mitigation and enhancement strategy to be submitted prior to the commencement of development.

In response to a question regarding mitigation and the installation of bird and bat boxes, the planning officer confirmed that the proposed planning conditions would be altered to include these items.

The planning officer concluded by stating that planning permission was recommended, as the principle of a dwelling on this site was acceptable. The contemporary design of the proposal was considered to represent a high quality and sustainable development, which would maintain the character of the site and would not appear prominent or out of keeping with the surrounding area. The scheme was not unneighbourly and was acceptable in terms of the highway impact, ecology issues and impact on protected trees.

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

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission is granted for application P21/3669/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement three years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans
3. Sample materials required (walls and roof)
4. New vehicular access

5. Vision splay protection
6. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained
7. No Garage conversion into accommodation
8. Landscaping Scheme (trees and shrubs only)
9. Tree Protection (Detailed)
10. Ecology
11. Surface Water Drainage scheme
12. Foul Water Drainage scheme

## **19 P21/S2102/FUL - 153 Thame Road, Warborough**

The committee considered application P21/S2102/FUL for the demolition of the existing single storey dwelling and replace with one detached dwelling and associated parking (as amended by drawings received 16 June 2021) at 153 Thame Road, Warborough.

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 proposal was for the replacement of a bungalow with a single dwelling. Planning permission to demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with an oak-framed two-storey detached dwelling had been granted in 2014, but had not been implemented, and had consequently lapsed. Planning permission to demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with a development comprising a one 3-bedroom dwelling and a 4-bedroom dwelling, had recently been refused. In the view of the planning officer, this present proposal for a single dwelling would benefit from a garden and a relationship where it would not be dominated by protected trees, which was the case with the previous application. Also, the plans in respect of this proposal had been amended to alter part of the driveway to protect trees, which the forestry officer had supported. The county council, as highways authority, had confirmed that access and parking arrangements were satisfactory. Council officers considered that the proposed development was acceptable in the context of the green belt and conservation area.

In response to a question regarding the weight of previous local plans, compared with new ones, the planning officer reported that policies in respect of Warborough had not changed, and that planning permission previously being given at this site was a material consideration. In this case, a new dwelling would replace an existing dwelling.

In response to a question regarding ecology on the site, the planning officer reported that policy ENV3 of SOLP related to biodiversity. The policy stated that planning permission would only be granted if impacts on biodiversity could be avoided, mitigated or compensated fully. The planning officer reported that the application was supported by a preliminary ecological appraisal for bats. This had detailed that the existing dwelling had very low potential for roosting bats and that no further surveys were required. Subject to a planning condition being imposed requiring the provision of bird boxes, the development would accord with policy ENV3.

In response to a question of the possible impact of the development upon neighbours' light levels, the senior planning officer reported that she had discussed this issue at an early stage with the case officer, when the Warborough Parish Council had objected, and had concluded that the impact of the revised scheme was acceptable, resulting in a slightly better relationship with neighbours. The lack of neighbour objections was possibly an indication of the application's acceptability.

The planning officer concluded by stating that the proposal involved the replacement of a dwelling within the built confines of the village. It was acceptable in the context of both housing and green belt policy. The application was recommended for the grant of planning permission as the proposal was considered not to cause harm to the conservation area, highway safety or materially harm the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties. The impact on protected trees was acceptable when considered in the context of the required tree protection condition.

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

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission is granted for application P21/S2102/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

Standard conditions

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

Pre-commencement conditions

3. Tree protection
  4. Surface water drainage works (details required)
- Conditions which require approval once development is above slab level
5. Boundary walls & fences
  6. Schedule of Materials

Pre-occupation conditions

7. Energy Statement Verification
8. New vehicular access
9. Vision splay dimensions
10. Reduce Gravel Spread onto Highway
11. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained

Compliance conditions

12. Electric charging point details
13. Bird Box

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm

Chair

Date

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