

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 5 June 2024 at
6.00 pm in Meeting Room 1, Abbey
House, Abbey Close, Abingdon,
OX14 3JE

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Councillors: David Bretherton (Chair), Ken Arlett, James Barlow, Ali Gordon-Creed, Katharine Keats-Rohan, Janes Norman, and Ed Sadler
Officers: Victoria Clarke (Planning Officer), Paula Fox (Development Manager), Andy Heron (Planning Officer), Marc Pullen (Planning Officer) and Darius Zarazel (Democratic Services Officer)

Remote attendance:

Councillors: Jo Robb
Officers: Bertram Smith (Broadcasting Officer), Tom Wyatt (Planning Team Leader)

1 Chair's announcements

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedure to be followed and advised on emergency evacuation arrangements.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Axel Macdonald, Jo Robb, substituted for Councillor James Norman, Peter Dragonetti, substituted for James Barlow, and Tim Bearder.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign these as such.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

6 Public participation

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

7 P23/S0582/FUL - Satwell House, Satwell, RG9 4RB

The committee considered planning application P23/S0582/FUL for landscaping works including the creation of a new access, the creation of a lake and tree planting (amended plans and additional information received 27 September 2023 and 07 November 2023 and 02 January 2024), on land at Satwell House, Satwell.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the application sat within the Chilterns National Landscape and was for the formation of a new access of Witheridge Hill Road and a driveway linking that access to Satwell House. A lake was also proposed at the centre of the site for the driveway to pass over. He informed the committee that key issues of concern from the parish council and objectors related to the applications visual and ecological impacts. The planning officer confirmed that the application would have some visual impact, although he did not believe it to be detrimental.

The planning officer indicated that the loss of the hedgerow on the road would have an impact on the street scene. He also suggested that there would be ecological implications for the removal of the hedgerow and as it was a priority habitat, its removal would contradict local plan policy. However, on balance, the planning officer believed that the suggested replacement planting and biodiversity net gain that would be achieved on the site would be sufficient compensation.

On the proposed conditions, the planning officer indicated that an additional condition around the control of external lighting could be imposed as it would allow the council to control the amount of external lighting used.

On balance, the planning officer believed that the application would result in some harm through the removal of a large stretch of important hedgerows. However, as the proposed application compensated this loss on site with the provision of a new hedgerow and additional trees for the ones that also would have to be removed, the planning officer believed that these points would outweigh the applications harmful impacts.

As the planning officer also believed that the application would ensure appropriate drainage, and that there were no objections on flood risk or highways grounds, he recommended that the application be approved.

Councillor Richard de Vere Stacpoole spoke on behalf of Highmoor Parish Council, objecting to the application.

Melinda Swann spoke objecting to the application.

Ken Casey, the agent representing the applicant, and Marcus Barnett and Joseph Martin, the landscape architects, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Jo Robb, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee had conducted a site visit prior to the discussion of the application. On a question about the timescale that the applicant would be responsible for maintaining the new hedge for, the planning officer indicated that part of proposed condition 7 would require any soft landscaping that was damaged or destroyed within five years to be replaced.

In response to a question about the water supply for the lake, the planning officer confirmed that this would be achieved via bore holes, and that Thames Water had been consulted and had no objections.

The committee discussed the potential to pick up the existing hedge and move it to a different point in the site, indicating that this would be preferable to the loss of the hedge entirely. In response, the planning officer emphasised that officers had assessed the application based off the loss of the hedge, and that if the hedge were to be moved, they would advise deferring determination of the application in order to reassess it. Although they believed that the moving of the hedge would be a preferable scheme to the one proposed, they agreed to determine the current application without this feature.

On the maturity of the replacement hedges, the planning officer confirmed that conditions covered the size and number of these and that he was satisfied with species submitted.

The committee noted the council's responsibility to conserve or enhance the National landscape and agreed that, from undertaking the site visit, the character and appearance of the area was generally rural and unspoilt.

As the application would result in the removal of a significant stretch of priority habitat, the committee raised serious concerns about the proposal. In addition, they agreed that the proposed driveway across the field would be a significant change to the current character of the area. Based on this, members did not believe that the development met the requirements to conserve or enhance the National Landscape.

On the hedgerow, the committee were also not satisfied that the need for removal of the hedgerow was demonstrated by the application. Also, as they were not satisfied that the replacement planting was sufficient compensation, they agreed that the applications benefits did not outweigh the ecological harm.

Some members believed that the lack of objections from technical consultees could be a reason to approve the application. Overall, however, the committee believed that the application had significant material reasons for it to be refused, such as the impact it would have on the character and appearance Chilterns National Landscape, and that the proposed benefits from the replacement planting did not outweigh the harms of removing that priority habitat.

Overall, as the committee agreed that the application would fundamentally change the character and appearance of the area through the removal of the hedgerow and

creation of a driveway through the field, they believed that it did not conserve or enhance the Chilterns National Landscape. For these reasons, the committee agreed to refuse the application.

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

RESOLVED: to refuse planning application P23/S0582/FUL for the following reasons:

1. Having regard to its scale and form the proposed development would erode the open, rural, and unspoilt character and appearance of this part of the Chilterns National Landscape. As such the development would fail to conserve or enhance the local landscape, and would be contrary to Policies ENV1, DES1 and DES2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed development would result in the loss of a significant stretch of established hedgerow that comprises a priority habitat. The scheme fails to demonstrate a need/benefit to outweigh the harm arising from its loss or that there are no reasonable alternatives. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy ENV2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 and paragraph 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

8 P23/S4003/S73 - 10a Wayside Green, Woodcote, RG8 0QJ

The committee considered planning application P23/S4003/S73 for the variation of condition 2 (plans), variation of condition 7 (Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained), variation of condition 9 (landscaping) and variation of condition 10 (Surface Water Drainage) on planning permission P19/S4288/FUL (Erection of a two-storey four-bed dwelling house) to allow for the relocation of proposed parking area, on land at 10a Wayside Green, Woodcote.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the application was brought to the committee due to the objection of Woodcote Parish Council.

The planning officer informed the committee that the site sat at the end of a cul-de-sac, within the Chilterns National Landscape. She outlined the history of the site, informing members that permission had been granted in 2020 for the dwelling adjacent to wayside green, and that the current application was for the varying of the access and parking arrangements for that dwelling.

The variation itself involved moving the parking spaces closer to the house. The planning officer highlighted that the parking spaces met the standards of the highway's authority and that they had no objection to the application.

On the parish council's objection about the static caravan which was proposed to sit within the location of previously approved parking spaces, the planning officer

indicated that the caravan was sited lawfully and that it should not be a consideration in the determination of the application.

The planning officer indicated to the committee that the moving of the parking spaces allowed for boundary planting, so the application could actually improve neighbouring amenity. For this reason, and as there was no objection from the highway's authority, she recommended that the application be approved.

Sarah McGurk spoke objecting to the application.

The committee asked for clarification about the mobile home on the site and the planning officer responded that it was dealt with under different legislation and so was not a material planning consideration in determining the application.

On the proposed withdrawal of permitted development rights if the application was approved, the planning officer confirmed that these related to outbuildings and extensions to house which would then need planning permission before they could be built.

In response to a question about the practicality of the scheme, the planning officer highlighted to the committee that there was no objection from the highway's authority, and so she was satisfied that it could be implemented.

Overall, as the committee could see no material planning reasons to refuse the application, they agreed that it should be approved, subject to conditions.

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

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P23/S4003/S73, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approved plans
2. Materials
3. Withdrawal of permitted development rights
4. Details of development (alteration to existing dwelling at 10 Wayside Green)
5. New vehicular access
6. Parking and manoeuvring areas to be retained
7. Tree protection
8. Landscaping
9. Surface water drainage scheme implementation
10. Foul drainage scheme implementation

9 P23/S4299/FUL - Cedar Wood House, Elvendon Road, Goring, RG8 0LP

The committee considered planning application P23/S4299/FUL for the replacement dwelling (as amended by plan received 2 February 2024 to remove proposed new access and garage/carport), amended plans received to remove proposed new access and garage/carport, on land at Cedar Wood House, Elvendon Road, Goring.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the application was brought to the committee due to the objection of Goring Parish Council. The concerns of the parish related to the impact the development would have on the National Landscape and on highways safety.

The planning officer informed the committee that large plot sat within the Chilterns National Landscape, on a ridge to the northeast of Goring with neighbours to the east, south, and west, and open countryside to North.

The application involved the demolition and replacement of the existing dwelling on the site with a four-bed dwelling. The existing vehicle access would remain and have with four onsite spaces. The dwelling would be built of brick and include a slate roof, and the planning officer believed that this would make the dwelling fit into the local character of the area.

The current application was noted as following a previously refused application under delegated authority due to its mass, bulk, and impact on National Landscape. As the current application had a reduced bulk and massing, as well used materials in keeping with the area, the planning officer considered the application acceptable.

The planning officer noted the comments of the landscape officer, who had no objection to the application as the existing building was more prominent, and the proposed dwelling would take a more muted appearance and be in keeping with the adjacent properties. For these reasons, the landscape officer believed that the application would have a neutral impact on landscape.

As the amended plans had no changes to the road access and was more in keeping with its surroundings than the existing dwelling, the planning officer recommended that the application be approved.

Kyle Seeley, the agent representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

The committee asked about the highway's objection from parish and the planning officer indicated that the original application had an amended access. However, as the application before the committee had no changes to its access, members did not see any highways grounds to refuse the application.

On the application's impact on the National Landscape, the committee noted the planning officers' point about the sympathetic design and materials of the proposed dwelling. As the committee agreed that the dwelling would be more in keeping with its surroundings than the existing dwelling, they also agreed there were no landscape reasons to refuse the application.

As the committee could see no material planning reasons to refuse the application, they agreed that it should be approved, subject to conditions.

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

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P23/S4299/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement 3 years - Full Planning Permission
2. Approved plans
3. Sample materials
4. Lighting strategy for bats
5. Tree protection (implementation as approved)
6. Landscaping (including access drive and hard standings)
7. Glazing
8. Energy Statement Verification
9. Parking & Manoeuvring Areas Retained
10. Electric Vehicle Charging Points
11. Withdrawal of Permitted Development (Part 1 Class B and C)

The meeting closed at 7.47 pm

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