

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Development Control Committee**
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon on
Monday 25 March 2019 at 2:00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: Jeff Haine (Chairman); Ted Fenton (Vice Chairman); Andrew Beaney, Richard Bishop, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Charles Cottrell-Dormer, Derek Cotterill, Merylyn Davies, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Steve Good, Peter Handley, David Jackson, Nick Leverton, Martin McBride, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett, Geoff Saul and Ben Woodruff.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Kelland and Richard Langridge and the following resignation and temporary appointment was reported:

Councillor Martin McBride for Councillor Maxine Crossland

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

20. APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT- THE DRIVING CENTRE ENSTONE AIRFIELD (APPLICATION NO. 18/03319/OUT)

The Committee received the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing giving details of an application for development, copies of which had been circulated. A schedule outlining additional observations received following the production of the agenda was circulated at the meeting, a copy of which is included within the Minute Book and published on the website.

The Development Manager introduced the application and made reference to the observations set out in the report of additional representations. He reported receipt of a further seven letters of objection which raised similar concerns to those expressed by others as set out in the report and made reference to a letter sent to Members by Framptons Solicitors suggesting that the applicant had submitted financial information to support this application, but that the public was being denied access to these submissions by the Council. The Development Manager confirmed that, as indicated in the report of additional representations, no such information had been submitted in support of the current application.

The Development Manager also reported receipt of representations from Law and Fiennes and the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Forum.

In concluding his introduction, the Development Manager emphasised that the application was in outline only and that the accompanying plans were illustrative only.

Mr Anthony Crean QC, addressed the meeting on behalf of the objectors in opposition to the application. A summary of his submission is attached as Appendix A to the original copy of these minutes.

Mr John Mitchinson, the Chairman of Great Tew Parish Meeting, then addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of his submission is attached as Appendix B to the original copy of these minutes.

Councillor Colston questioned why the proposed legal agreement was considered controversial and Mr Mitchinson indicated that, whilst some funding had been set aside for more general community benefits, the use of funds for the restoration of Tew Park had been questioned by some residents.

Mr Clive Hill then addressed the meeting on behalf of the Sandford St Martin and Ledwell Parish Council in opposition to the application. A summary of his submission is attached as Appendix C to the original copy of these minutes. In response to a question from Mr Cotterill regarding the policies quoted, Mr Hill advised that he was unable to respond in detail as the submission had been prepared by a third party.

Mr Steve Ferrelly, the Chairman of Westcote Barton Parish Meeting then addressed the meeting in opposition to the application. A summary of his submission is attached as Appendix D to the original copy of these minutes.

The Applicant, Mr Kieren Hedigan and Mr Gerrard Evenden of Foster and Partners then addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of their submissions is attached as Appendix E to the original copy of these minutes.

Councillor McBride questioned whether, in addition to timed arrivals, there would be timed departures. In response, Mr Hedigan advised that departure times would be self-governing given that there was a natural duration for visits. He indicated that, whilst there would be timed tickets, visitors would not arrive and leave at the same time. He went on to suggest that the concerns over traffic generation expressed were unlikely to be as great in 10 years' time as the automotive industry was changing and he believed that private car ownership was now at its zenith. People would make far greater use of public transport in the future and this would be a national attraction.

Councillor Poskitt questioned the extent to which the proposed lodges would be used. In response, Mr Hedigan advised that the proposed development was analogous to a golf club where a community of like-minded individuals could come together and display their own collections as part of the museum. It would be a community in which car connoisseurs would wish to live.

Prior to presenting his report, the Development Manager responded to various points raised during the public submissions.

In response to Mr Crean's suggestion that the application should be refused to give the opportunity for it to be tested on appeal, the Development Manager advised that refusal on this basis would be inappropriate as it was not a land use based reason for refusal. The question of compliance or otherwise with the Local Plan was a matter for Members to consider and determine and the Council's affordable housing policy was based upon the number of properties, not the development value.

With regard to concerns expressed that the homes were not required to support the museum project, the Development Manager advised that the recommendation of approval was not reliant upon the landowner's expressed intention to utilise funding secured from

the sale to restore Tew Park. Whilst this was a matter that could be taken into account, no regard had been given to the offer in determining the Officer recommendation.

The Development Manager advised that what Mr Hill had quoted as Policies CO10 and CO11 were, in fact core objectives of the Local Plan. In terms of concerns regarding highway safety, he suggested that not all those within a specific timed slot would arrive together and the use of timed tickets, used successfully at other visitor attractions, had been specified in order to smooth traffic flow.

Even if the concerns expressed with regard to traffic management were true, the County Council as highway authority was fully aware of the objections raised and had not objected to the development on highways grounds. Without technical support from the relevant responsible authority, the Council would be unable to defend a traffic based reason for refusal at appeal.

The Development Manager then presented his report containing a recommendation of conditional approval. He recommended the inclusion of an additional condition to regulate the proposed concourse events and sought delegated authority to revise the wording of the proposed conditions in order to ensure clarity and enforceability. In addition, given that the applicant had offered to establish a Community Travel Forum, the Development Manager recommended the inclusion of a further additional condition to secure this.

Councillor Haine noted that he had received a significant volume of email correspondence objecting to the application but none in support.

Councillor Beaney stated that he saw this application in three distinct parts; the proposed museum, the restoration of Great Tew House and the provision of affordable housing. He expressed concern that the grant of outline planning consent at this juncture would tie the Council's hands, making it difficult for the Council to resist applications for additional development on the site resulting in incremental growth such as had been seen at the nearby Soho Farmhouse. He considered that it was incorrect to refer to the proposed lodges as holiday cottages as they would become second or third homes and expressed concern that affordable housing would not be provided in Enstone but in Great Tew.

Councillor Beaney questioned whether general affordable housing was appropriate in this instance, expressing a preference for development of a rural exception site which would enable the homes provided to be reserved for local applicants.

Councillor Beaney recognised the relevance of Policy E4 and accepted that the 16 lodges surrounding the museum were acceptable in that context but questioned the provision of the additional 12 units located further from the museum site. He noted that two of these additional units were located on greenfield land under the flightpath of the airfield and stressed that not all of the application site was brownfield land. Councillor Beaney also questioned the contention that the airfield site was run down, indicating that a motorsport attraction had been operating there in recent times.

Councillor Beaney expressed doubt that the proposed shuttle bus arrangements would operate successfully and, if it did, how visitors to the museum would have the opportunity to contribute to the local economy. Accordingly, he suggested that there was a need to look more closely at the proposed transport arrangements. Mr Beaney noted that the applicants had indicated that the museum would create some 300 new jobs but had also suggested that employees would only generate some 40 traffic movements a day.

Councillor Beaney acknowledged that the museum would provide some tourism benefit but was unsure of the extent. He suggested that, if the museum was to be an international destination attracting a global clientele, it would be more appropriate for it to be located at the Bicester Heritage site. He also expressed concern regarding the impact on the operation of the airfield and suggested that the general aviation use should be protected by condition.

With regard to the proposed legal agreement, Councillor Beaney sought clarification as to how car parking and contributions to public transport provision would be defined and expressed concern that little funding appeared to be directed towards Enstone. He questioned how the affordable housing contribution compared to that secured from 'ordinary' development and suggested that the school at Great Tew would require an additional classroom which should be funded by the development. He also expressed concern that the proposed timed ticket entry system was not referenced in the proposed conditions.

Turning to the proposed conditions, based upon the maximum number of traffic movements specified in condition 6, Councillor Beaney calculated that the museum could generate some 30,600 a year, excluding those related to deliveries or residents of the lodges. In view of this, he questioned whether the proposed car parking provision would be adequate. He expressed doubt that the proposed cycle routes would be used and questioned which two organisations were referred to in condition 7.

Councillor Beaney expressed concern over which authority would have responsibility for enforcing the construction traffic management plan required under condition 9 and questioned why, when it would take 15 years for planting to reach maturity, condition 13 only required replacement of failed planting within the first five years. He noted that the wording of condition 29 required revision and suggested that, instead of the limitations imposed by condition 31, permitted development rights should be withdrawn, requiring any further development to be subject to planning control.

Councillor Beaney cautioned that no conditions were proposed to regulate the use of the 'exercise track', noise levels or lighting. He also suggested that a condition should be applied limiting the annual number of visitors to 200,000.

Councillor Beaney considered that there was currently insufficient information before Members to enable him to support the Officer recommendation of approval and he proposed that the application be refused as being contrary to Policies E4, OS2 and H2 of the Local Plan and Core Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

Councillor Beaney also questioned whether the application was contrary to Policies T1, T3 and T4 of the Local Plan but reserved including these in his proposition pending further discussion. Whilst supporting the concept of the museum, he considered the proposed car parking provision was inadequate and was concerned at the level of ancillary development. In conclusion, he suggested that the development could be a car free site served by park and ride facilities.

In response to the concerns raised, the Development Manager advised that the financial contribution provided for off-site affordable housing in Great Tew could be utilised to bring forward a rural exception site. If a suitable site could not be identified then the contribution could be spread to Enstone or further afield.

The concerns expressed over the two properties at the top of the site could be addressed by condition precluding development in that location and the Development Manager

agreed that it was important to protect the continuation of general aviation on the adjoining airfield. The current operators had expressed their support for the application but it was not possible to protect the airfield use by condition as it fell outside the application site. However, the informative note could be strengthened to emphasise this point.

Funding for education was a County Council matter and it fell to the Oxfordshire County Council to request a developer contribution for this purpose. As they had not done so, the Committee was not in a position to impose such a requirement.

In calculating the potential number of vehicle movements, Councillor Beaney had assumed that the museum would constantly be operating at full capacity and the Development Manager suggested that, as this was unlikely, it was inappropriate to extrapolate figures in this way.

With regard to replacement planting, the Development Manager advised that the five year requirement was a standard condition as, once a tree was that age it could be made the subject of a tree preservation order. However, the time period could be extended to ensure that the planting was delivered in full.

The Development Manager advised that consideration had been given to imposing an hours of use condition on the track but, as the vehicles to be used were required to have road legal exhausts, it had been concluded that such a condition was unnecessary.

Finally, in the absence of objections from the County Council, the Development Manager cautioned against including highway related reasons for refusal without the support of the technical consultee.

Councillor Beaney expressed concern that the contribution towards off-site affordable housing could be lost and returned to the applicant if it were not utilised within the relevant timeframe. Accordingly, he wished to see a site specific proposal before the application was determined.

Councillor Colston indicated that there were three key aspects to this application; the impact of development in the open countryside, tourism related benefits and concerns over transport issues. He found the correlation between the museum and the lodges difficult as houses should be built to meet need. Whilst he found the idea of the museum acceptable, Councillor Colston considered that it was in the wrong location and questioned the need for 28 luxury homes. He felt that the development failed to comply with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework as it should be located closer to a town.

Councillor Colston was concerned that the lodges were required to underpin the museum and expressed his disquiet over the loss of the rural, agricultural nature of parts of the Cotswolds as a result of this and other recent developments which were redefining the area as a high-end leisure destination.

Housing was a huge issue in the District and the proposed lodges would fail to address local need as they would not be occupied as principal residences. Councillor Colston went on to express concern over the proximity of the development to existing uses, its effect upon the safe operation of the airfield and its impact upon the landscape. Whilst tourism was an important source of revenue, Councillor Colston preferred to see the agrarian nature of the District retained.

Councillor Colston acknowledged that the museum would contribute to the local economy but considered that this was outweighed by the detrimental impact it would have upon the local area. He suggested that the proposed bus shelter would not be used and expressed grave concern over the impact of increased traffic flows on the local highway network resulting from visitors leaving the M40 at junctions 10 and 11.

Councillor Colston agreed with Councillor Beaney's suggestion that the museum would be better located at the Bicester Heritage site and urged Members to take account of the concerns expressed by local residents. He considered the application to be contrary to Policies OS2 H2 and core objective 2 of the Local Plan and believed that it failed to represent sustainable tourism. In addition, he believed that car parking provision was inadequate rendering the application contrary to policy T4 and felt that the location compared poorly to similar attractions at Gaydon and Bicester Heritage in terms of transport implications and hence was contrary to policy T1.

In conclusion, and in seconding the proposition of refusal, Councillor Colston indicated that he failed to see the social or environmental benefits of the proposal and urged Members to refuse the application to protect local residents.

Councillor Kelland considered that there were three issues to consider; the museum, the lodges and concerns over access. He suggested that the development would be better located at Abingdon and that the proposed car parking provision was inadequate when compared with similar attractions. Councillor Kelland also suggested that there would be a need for a coach park and felt that the local highway network was inadequate and could not provide satisfactory access. He failed to see the relevance of the lodges to the museum and questioned whether there would be sufficient space for residents to display their vehicles within the museum.

In response to Councillor Kelland, the Development Manager advised that it was for the County Council, not the applicant, to ensure that the local highway network was maintained to an appropriate standard. If that authority had considered the current condition was inadequate they should have requested a financial contribution from the applicants. The Development Manager also reiterated that the link between the lodges and the museum was that residents would be required by the terms of their tenure to display their own vehicles as part of the museum's collection.

In response to Councillor Colston the Development Manager suggested that, if the lodges were only occupied on an occasional basis, the benefits they provided would have been secured without the consequent impact. The question of the retention of the area's rural character was a matter of judgement but the Development Manager suggested that the airfield buildings and adjacent structures blighted the landscape. In response to a further question from Councillor Colston he advised that he had seen nothing to suggest that existing uses in the area were to be discontinued.

Councillor Woodruff indicated that, perhaps as he had no immediate local attachment, he was more open to the scheme. Whilst the project had the ability to generate a maximum of 1,000 daily traffic movements, Blenheim dealt with 15,000 visitors daily during the Christmas Lights display and some 150,000 during the course of the 'Countryfile Live' event. He suggested that the impact in terms of traffic generation would not be as significant as local residents feared. He urged Members to support the project as it was a one-off scheme of national importance and West Oxfordshire would not have the opportunity to secure such a prestigious venture again.

Councillor Handley questioned how Section 106 funding could be applied to the restoration of Tew Park as it was his understanding that developer funding could only be employed to address matters arising as a result of the development. He made reference to a previous application in which permission had been given for the construction of a new dwelling in the car park of a public house on condition that the uplift in value was applied to the refurbishment of the pub. Councillor Handley also cautioned that, should the Committee grant consent, there would be a public perception that the Council had been influenced to allow development that would benefit 'rich boys and their toys' to the detriment of local residents.

Councillor Handley questioned the design of the scheme and, in particular, the absence of links between the museum and lodges. He considered parking arrangements for disabled persons to be unsatisfactory and suggested that the project would be better located on the disused airfield at Broadwell which had better transport links.

The Development Manager acknowledged concerns expressed with regard to the proposed legal agreement but questioned how it could be criticised when it offered greater benefits than those of comparable schemes elsewhere in the District. He stressed that the landowner's unilateral offer to apply funds arising from the sale of the site to the restoration of Tew Park should be disregarded in assessing the acceptability of the application. Generally, the Council would have no part in the land transaction and would be unaware as to how the vendor intended to utilise the proceeds. It was important that Members did not confuse the applicant with the landowner.

The Development Manager drew attention to paragraphs 5.62 to 5.67 of the report and stressed that Officers had concluded that the scheme was essentially policy compliant and that any harms occasioned could be mitigated by the £1.7 million mitigation package. In consequence, whilst it would be sensible to capture the unconditional offer of the restoration of Tew Park in the legal agreement, it should be given no weight in the planning balance as it was beyond the scope of the application.

However, if Members were of the opinion that there were further residual harms, then it would become legal to weigh the positive benefit of the restoration in the planning balance as being necessary to make the development acceptable. The Development Manager emphasised that this was not the advice that Officers were offering.

With regard to car parking arrangements, the Development Manager reminded Members that the application was in outline and the plans provided were illustrative only. These matters could be addressed as part of a detailed application.

Councillor Cottrell-Dormer indicated that he considered the application to be contrary to Policies OS2, E4, TLC1, T1, E2, CO1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, CO11, H2 and OS3 of the Local Plan. He failed to see how the development would provide benefits to the local area or create employment for local persons; access arrangements were poor and the local highway network inadequate to absorb the increased traffic generated. Further, Councillor Cottrell-Dormer did not consider that Tew Park was worthy of restoration or retention.

Councillor Jackson then addressed the meeting and indicated that he considered that the greatest impact of the development would be felt in The Bartons. He acknowledged that the application was positive in terms of job creation, affordable housing provision, tourism and its location on a brownfield site. Councillor Jackson also considered the layout and design of the museum to be acceptable and the proposed landscaping scheme beneficial.

However, Councillor Jackson considered that these benefits would be outweighed by the impact of increased traffic generation. He expressed doubt that the proposed shuttlebus service would be used and questioned whether the timed ticketing arrangements would be successful as he believed that they would result in arrival times being compressed. The museum would be at its busiest over the weekends and this would have a detrimental impact upon the quality of life of those living in The Bartons.

Councillor Jackson questioned whether the funding provided for traffic calming measures would be sufficient and went on to describe in great detail those areas and locations where he considered the local highway network to be inadequate to provide safe access to the site. He also expressed concern over the cumulative impact of this proposal and the increased traffic already generated by visitors to Soho Farmhouse.

In response, the Development Manager reminded Members that no objections had been raised by the Council's Environmental Health Service regarding noise, nor were there any technical objections regarding pollution. Further, the County Council had no objection on highway safety grounds. If the Committee was minded to refuse the application it had to demonstrate sound planning grounds. Members should not be influenced by public opinion to refuse permission for reasons not supported by the technical consultees.

Councillor Jackson advised that the concerns he had expressed over highway safety were based upon his own observation and that he was not suggesting refusal other than on the policy grounds.

Councillor Davies indicated that she had yet to hear any planning reasons to justify refusal and, whilst she shared the disquiet over the elitist financial aspects of the development, these were not matters relevant to determination of the application. Councillor Davies also considered that it would have been preferable if the contribution to the restoration of Tew Park had been excluded from the agenda.

In the absence of planning grounds, Councillor Davies questioned how the Committee could refuse the application and suggested that it would be preferable if the application was deferred to enable the concerns expressed to be addressed. She went on to express her support for the development as the museum represented an amazing one-off opportunity that would provide a significant benefit to the local economy.

Councillor Poskitt noted that the vast majority of letters of support for the application came from individuals living outside the District who would not be directly affected by the development. She acknowledged that the application could not be refused on highway safety grounds but expressed concern over the nature of the vehicles that were likely to be used by those visiting the museum, suggesting that these were more likely to be enthusiasts driving high performance cars. Councillor Poskitt sought confirmation that the lodges were to be sold and questioned how the requirement to be put upon residents to display their own vehicles would be enforced when properties changed hands. Development should provide homes and communities and Councillor Poskitt expressed her support for the recommendation of refusal for the reasons proposed.

Councillor Cotterill indicated that certain elements had been omitted from the application. He believed that it was intended to construct a Bentley sales and showroom as part of the complex and that corporate events were also planned. He questioned whether those attending such events would use the shuttlebus service and sought further information regarding the stipulations surrounding occupation of the lodges and arrangements for residents parking.

Councillor Cotterill expressed a preference for deferral of the application to enable further work to be carried out.

The Development Manager reiterated that this was an outline application and, whilst there was potential for part of one wing of the museum building to be used as a showroom, this was speculative at this stage. He cautioned Members to determine the application on what was known, not on speculation.

Councillor Enright stressed the importance of confining consideration to planning issues. He noted that there was an extant consent for motor sport use on the site and other existing uses on land adjacent. In favour of the application was the way in which the museum building had been designed and planned which appeared attractive, the economic benefit it would bring to the District and the associated job opportunities that would result and the tourism and leisure opportunities that it would bring. Less attractive was the increased traffic that would result and the consequent impact upon local communities.

Councillor Enright suggested that the applicant could work to promote local businesses and contribute to the provision of affordable housing in nearby settlements. He expressed some concern that the proposed legal agreement did not secure adequate support for affordable housing at £65,000 per unit and suggested that other benefits could be secured such as the free access for local residents offered by Blenheim Palace.

Councillor Enright could see no grounds upon which to refuse the application but questioned the suggestion made by some objectors that the Council had a liability for the state of Tew Park. In response, the Development Manager advised that the Council had no liability for the restoration of Tew Park (although it had a statutory duty to protect and enhance listed buildings - and had in the past done so through a grant aid scheme no longer in operation). Tew Park was in an advanced state of dilapidation and it was thought that the extent and cost of the restoration work required was so great that the net worth of the property would be negative. He stressed that the restoration of the building was not part of the current application but advised that the only way in which the Council could assume responsibility would be by serving a Repairs Notice resulting in the landowner passing title to the Council.

He explained that the question of affordable housing presented something of a dilemma; most affordable housing required an element of local need connection and therefore had less impact than general market housing as those eligible were already resident in the District. If affordable housing was provided on a rural exception site with a more restrictive requirement to demonstrate a local connection the impact would be reduced further.

Councillor Enright noted that the objectors were seeking assurances regarding the traffic impact and asked the Development Manager to confirm that the County Council had raised no objection. The Development manager replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Saul indicated that when the application had come before the Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee the previous year he had not been impressed by the proposed location of the lodges on a greenfield site. However, the current scheme was bold and stylish and deserved careful consideration. Whilst the project could bring significant benefits to Chipping Norton in terms of the economy and employment, Councillor Saul had some difficulty with the lodges as, if the museum failed, the Council would be left with residential properties in the open countryside.

However, he felt he could support the project provided that he could be satisfied that the affordable housing contribution was adequate.

Councillor Beaney questioned whether the comparison between this development and more traditional residential schemes recently approved in Enstone and Charlbury was appropriate. As these were properties of extreme value he questioned whether there was scope for an enhanced contribution towards affordable housing.

The Development Manager advised that the question of apprenticeships could be addressed through the legal agreement and, whilst acknowledging Members' concerns regarding affordable housing provision, questioned whether on-site provision would be appropriate in this instance. He advised that the Council's policy did not differentiate on the basis of property values and suggested that off-site provision would be more appropriate in this case. He agreed that it was essential to ensure that the lodges were not built before the museum to avoid any possibility of partial implementation and to secure the planning benefits. With regard to concerns over the future of the museum, he advised that it was to be established as a non-profit making, self-sustaining trust which required the exhibits to be retained in perpetuity.

In terms of contributions towards affordable housing, the putative CIL arrangements provided for a contribution of approx. £20,000 per unit; £10,000 for infrastructure improvements and £10,000 for affordable housing. The current scheme would provide £62,000.

21. DURATION OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That, the meeting having lasted for three hours, in accordance with Paragraph 9 of the Council's Procedure Rules (Duration of Meetings) the meeting be not adjourned but continue to dispose of the remaining business.

Councillor Cooper stressed that this was a difficult application and considered that the Committee did not have sufficient detailed information to enable it to reach a decision. It was important to have details of the materials to be used as, whilst not within the AONB and located amongst buildings in a state of disrepair, it was still important to be able to gauge the total effect of the development upon the surrounding area. If inappropriate materials were to be employed, Members would find themselves under question.

If the application was to be permitted now then there would only be hope that appropriate materials would be utilised; it was essential to have this detail as the area was too beautiful to leave this to chance. If there were to be more local job losses in the car industry it would be important to find ways in which to replace them.

Recognising the need for further information, Councillor Cooper indicated that he would wish to propose an amendment that consideration of the application be deferred. The Council's Principal Democratic Services Officer advised that such an 'amendment' would be inadmissible given that it would negate the effect of the substantive motion and the Chairman advised Members that a deferral could be proposed should the tabled motion for refusal be lost.

The Development Manager advised that it would be unreasonable to require the applicants to incur the cost of submitting a full application without the comfort of obtaining outline consent and, if Members were minded to seek a deferral, requested that they clarify the nature of the additional information required. Councillor Cooper stressed that the materials to be used were of the utmost importance.

Councillor Good indicated that this had been an interesting debate in which Members had expressed their views at length. He stressed that it was highly unusual for an application to be brought before the full Committee and this reflected the significance of this application and the seriousness with which it had been addressed. Whilst having sympathy for local residents in view of the impact the development would undoubtedly have, the Council was obliged to determine the application on planning grounds alone. He indicated that he had come to the application with an open mind and listened to all the arguments put forward. Whilst he acknowledged the concerns expressed regarding highway issues, Councillor Good saw this as being speculative; the only evidence being put before Members being that of the County Council as Highway Authority that it had no objection to the application.

The Council's Officers considered that there were no grounds upon which the application could be refused that could be successfully defended at appeal and had stressed that a refusal on highway grounds, unsupported by the technical consultees, would place the Authority at great risk of an order for costs.

Given his interest in the provision of affordable housing, Councillor Good indicated that he wished to see the best possible outcome from the development in this respect. He could see no grounds on which to refuse the application but wanted to ensure that the Council secured the best for the local community through the Section 106 agreement. Whilst he respected the Officer's opinion, Councillor Good believed that further information was required and advised that, if the proposition of refusal was lost, he would support a deferral to enable this to be obtained. However, in doing so, it would be important for Members to be clear as to the information required. Councillor Good expressed his support for the project in principle and expressed the hope that Members would support a deferral and take the opportunity this application offered.

Councillor Haine advised that he considered the application to be contrary to the Local Plan policies as cited by Councillor Beaney

Councillor Bishop reflected on the objections raised and acknowledged that they had been well made. However, they related primarily to transport issues and the County Council had not objected to the application. Whilst he expressed sympathy towards those who would be affected by the project, Councillor Bishop felt that it offered West Oxfordshire a tremendous opportunity. If the application was refused and the applicant chose to relocate the museum elsewhere, Councillor Bishop believed that West Oxfordshire would regret the loss of this enhancement to the District's tourism offer and employment opportunities. Whilst he understood the concerns that had been raised, Councillor Bishop considered that the best course of action would be to defer consideration of the application for further information and stated that he could not support a refusal.

Councillor Rylett considered the proposed museum project to be attractive but was not as content with the lodges. However, the project would bring benefits to the local community although there were still concerns over transport and the impact on quality of life.

Councillor Postan considered that a refusal would be premature. He advised that he had enjoyed a career in motor sport and as an art dealer in respect of which his judgement had been acknowledged by others as being sound. The vehicles to be displayed at the museum were fantastically significant cultural works of art some of which, such as the Teardrop Delage and the Bugatti Type 57SC Atlantic, were the equivalent of old masters. This great collection was being offered to West Oxfordshire and, whilst acknowledging the concerns raised, Councillor Postan indicated that what was proposed was a landmark building designed by the finest architect of the last century.

Councillor Postan suggested that detailed concerns could be addressed through the establishment of a Community Travel Forum comprised of representatives of the applicants, County Council and Parish representatives. This approach had been employed successfully in relation to an application for sand and gravel extraction at Burford Quarry and Councillor Postan stressed that the Council had the capability to work through the details. He urged Members not to 'throw the baby out with the bathwater'.

Councillor Kelland felt there was a need to look at the proposed car parking arrangements in greater depth, the nature and frequency of corporate events and prospective floor plans.

Councillor Postan advised that he had assembled a car collection for Richard Barnes which was currently not on display but which had been used to generate funds for charitable purposes. He suggested that the concerns expressed by objectors could best be addressed through discussion in a forum as he had suggested which could be established if Members rejected the proposition of refusal.

The Development Manager noted that there had been no suggestion that this collection would be used to raise funds for charitable purposes. He then summarised the various areas in respect of which Members had requested additional information, these being:-

Materials, the extent of the car park and location of parking for disabled persons, floorplan, hours of operation, number, size and nature of events, travel plan details, routing plan, the establishment of a community travel forum and omission of 2 units at the 'top of the site'. In addition, Members had expressed a desire to explore the possibility of securing additional community benefits.

The Development Manager suggested that all these matters could be addressed through conditions/negotiation but, should consideration of the application be deferred, he invited Members to raise any other matters which they wished to have clarified.

Councillor Cottrell-Dormer questioned whether deferral at this stage would be tantamount to an indication of an intention to grant consent. The Development Manager confirmed that this was not the case.

Councillor Poskitt suggested that there was a need for further information regarding the security of the lodges if they were to be unoccupied for most of the time.

Councillor Handley suggested that the proposed apprenticeship scheme was not viable but the Development Manager explained that this was to be operated by the museum, not the individual lodge owners. Councillor Handley also expressed concern over parking provision for disabled persons.

Councillor Beaney explained that he had proposed refusal as the information provided in the application was insufficient, He suggested that access to the museum would be best served by the creation of two park and ride sites at Bicester and Eynsham. Whilst the project had certain advantages, they had not been shown to be sufficient to outweigh the harms.

The recommendation of refusal was then put to the vote and **was lost**.

Councillor Cotterill then proposed that consideration of the application be deferred pending receipt of the additional information requested by Members as set out above.

Having been duly seconded the proposition of deferral was then put to the vote and **was carried**.

Councillor Cotterill also suggested that further information regarding the heads of terms of the legal agreement would be helpful.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the application be deferred pending the submission of further information regarding materials, the extent of the car park and location of parking for disabled persons, floorplan, hours of operation, number, size and nature of events, travel plan details, routing plan, the establishment of a community travel forum and omission of 2 units at the 'top of the site' and the possibility of securing additional community benefits.

Councillors Alex Postan and Duncan Enright requested that their votes against the foregoing resolution be so recorded and Councillor Peter Handley requested that his abstention from voting be noted.

The meeting closed at 5:30 pm

CHAIRMAN