

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the  
**LOWLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**  
Held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon  
at 2.00 pm on Monday 20 October 2014

PRESENT

Councillors: Mrs M J Crossland (Vice-Chairman in the Chair); M A Barrett; M R Booty;  
H B Eaglestone; P Emery; D S T Enright; Mrs E H N Fenton; J Haine; P J Handley; H J Howard;  
R A Langridge; J F Mills and B J Norton

Officers in attendance: Miranda Clark, Phil Shaw, Kim Smith and Lois Stock

27. MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 15 September 2014, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

The Chief Executive reported receipt of the following resignations and temporary appointments:-

Mr P Emery attended for Mr W D Robinson  
Mr J F Mills attended for Mr S J Good  
Mr H B Eaglestone attended for Mr P Kelland.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Booty declared an interest in Application No. 14/0973/P/FP - Weald Manor Farm, Bampton due to a family connection with the site. Mr Booty advised that he intended to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of this item.

30. APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing giving details of applications 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.

(In order to assist members of the public, the Sub-Committee considered the applications in which those present had indicated a particular interest, in the following order:-

14/0973/P/FP; 14/1061/P/FP; 14/1149/P/FP; 14/1171/P/FP; 14/1144/P/FP; 14/1224/P/FP;  
14/1172P/FP; 14/1206/P/POB; 14/1254/P/FP

The results of the Sub-Committee's deliberations follow in the order in which they appeared on the printed agenda)

**RESOLVED:** that the decisions on the following applications be as indicated, the reasons for refusal or conditions related to a permission to be as recommended in the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, subject to any amendments as detailed below:-

3 I4/0973/P/FP Weald Manor Farm, Bampton

The Area Development Manager introduced the application and outlined the site area.

Mr Mark Harrison spoke against the application. A summary of his comments is attached at Appendix A to the original copy of these minutes.

Mr Gilbert and Mr Pelham (Agent and Applicant) spoke in favour of the application. A summary of their comments is attached at Appendix B to the original copy of these minutes.

The Area Development Manager resumed the presentation and outlined the key issues of land designation, provision of sustainable affordable housing, design, flood risk, highways and impact on the Conservation Area. It was noted that the Parish Council and the County Archaeologist had both lodged objections to the proposal.

The Sub-Committee was reminded that the Council was now potentially claiming a five Year Housing Land Supply and clarification was given that part of the proposed land was agricultural/greenfield, and part (the upholstery business) would be classed as a brownfield site. In acknowledging that the Highways authority found the access and highways arrangements to be acceptable, it was the opinion of planning officers that the proposals would have an urbanising effect, and that there was harm to the character of the Conservation Area. As a result the recommendation was for refusal.

The Sub-Committee discussed the application and raised the following:-

- The proposal would cause substantial harm – it was in the Conservation Area, was outside the main part of Bampton village, and would urbanise a rural area.
- The scheme was actually reasonable, was well screened and the area in which it sits was not especially rural. However, better details of the enabling funding would be helpful;
- Although this scheme was not right, it was possible that a smaller scheme might be acceptable in future;
- Not sustainable in the current form, but agree that a smaller scheme might be acceptable;
- The provision of affordable housing units was to be welcomed.

Mr Haine proposed and Mr Barrett seconded that the application be refused for reasons laid out in the Planning Officer's report.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Refused.

(Having declared an interest in this item, Mr Booty withdrew during its consideration and took no part in proceedings)

14 14/1061/P/FP The Orchard, Church Road, North Leigh

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application and outlined the site area.

Mr Roy Wilkinson (on behalf of the Applicant) spoke in favour of the application. A summary of his comments can be found at Appendix C to the original copy of these minutes.

The Senior Planning Officer resumed the presentation and outlined that the main issues were the principle of development, neighbourliness, impact on the street scene, design and highway safety. It was noted that there had been no objection from the Highways Authority. Members of the Sub-Committee had visited the site since the application was first considered in September.

During consideration of the application, the following issues were raised:-

- This was a very rural road and the proposal would be incongruous in the street scene;
- Whilst acknowledging the views of the highway authority the access was on a bend in the road and was not safe;
- The proposal was “shoehorned” in, there was a lack of amenity space, the layout was cramped, and it was an unreasonable development for the size of plot;
- There were similar developments all along this road, and there was sufficient room for a car turn round. The amenity space was sufficient;
- Previous reasons for refusal still apply.

Mr Norton proposed and Mr Haine seconded that the application be refused for reasons of lack of amenity space, cramped and overbearing development, and unsafe access to the plot.

On being put to the vote, there was an equality of votes. Mrs Crossland used her casting vote in favour of the proposal.

Refused for the following reason:

By reason of its limited plot, lack of amenity, scale and close relationship with surrounding residential properties, the proposal will appear as a cramped and contrived overdevelopment of the site, and will appear as an incongruous addition detrimental to the appearance of the rural street scene. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to policies BE2 and H2 (a, d and e) of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF

22 14/1144/P/FP Church Hall, Thames Street, Eynsham

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application to the Sub Committee and outlined the site location. It was reported that further submissions had been received from the Applicant's agent that provided technical details of window construction.

Having received the details of the window, the Sub Committee was satisfied with the proposal. Mr Langridge proposed and Mr Handley seconded, that the application be approved with conditions as laid out in the Planning Officer's report.

On being put to the vote the proposal was carried.

Permitted.

24 14/1149/P/FP Land between 2 Elms Road and The Elms Yarnton Road Cassington

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application to the Sub Committee and outlined the site location.

Mr Oliver Taylor (on behalf of Mr and Mrs Thomson) spoke against the application. A summary of the main points is attached at Appendix D to the original copy of these minutes.

The Senior Planning Officer resumed the presentation. Members were reminded that the area was in the Green Belt, and that the trees currently on the site contributed to this. Therefore substantial weight should be given to the fact that this application was in the Green Belt.

During discussion by the Committee, the following points were raised:-

- The site was in the Green Belt and near the Conservation Area. The officers were correct in recommending refusal;
- It should be noted that the Parish Council did not object to the application;
- The agents had given an undertaking to preserve the trees on the site, and if they were preserved, there should be no problem with the application;

- There was a need to find an acceptable balance between the needs of people and the needs of nature. The Council was under pressure to provide more housing, and in this case it could be done without harming trees;
- The plot was surrounded by houses and it could be questioned as to whether it could be considered as Green Belt;
- The NPPF was very clear, it impacted on the Green Belt and there were no reasons for approval.

Mr Haine proposed, and Mr Booty seconded, that the application be refused for reasons laid out in the Planning Officer's report.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Refused.

(Mr Howard and Mr Langridge asked that their votes against the above decision be recorded)

29 14/1171/P/FP

24 Common Road, North Leigh

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application and outlined the key areas for consideration.

Mr Skipwith spoke against the application. A summary of the submission is attached at Appendix E to the original copy of these minutes.

Ms Hyatt (on behalf of the Applicant) spoke in favour of the application. A summary of her comments is attached at Appendix F to the original copy of these minutes.

During discussion, the members of the Sub-Committee raised the following points:-

- The application would provide unacceptable living conditions for residents, it was undesirable and would erode the character of the area;
- The site was cramped, and the size and scale of the proposed building would affect other properties;
- The proposal was overbearing and was neither "rounding off" nor the conversion of an existing building, therefore it should be refused;
- This was an overdevelopment and also back land development;
- There would be a loss of trees both during the building process and in order to create an access to the site;
- The proposal was actually acceptable and the recommendations from officers should be accepted;

Mr Norton proposed and Mr Langridge seconded that the application be refused for reasons of unacceptable living conditions, adverse impact on neighbouring properties, erosion of character of the area and unsustainability, contrary to policies H2, DF and H6,

On being put to the vote, this proposal was lost.

Mr Howard proposed, and Mr Enright seconded that the application be approved, subject to conditions laid out in the Planning Officer's report.

On being put to the vote, this proposal was carried.

Permitted.

(Mr Langridge, Mr Emery, Mr Norton and Mr Haine asked that their votes against the foregoing decision be recorded)

40 14/1172/P/FP Land at Abbey Street, Eynsham

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the application and outlined the key issues. Two additional letters of representation from Mrs Sigurdsson and Mr Hall were reported.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the application was before the Sub Committee because, although permission had been granted, and work had commenced on site, it was not being done in accordance with the approved drawings. The current application was recommended for approval.

The Committee expressed concern at the reason for the application and requested that the progress of this application carefully monitored to ensure future compliance with the approved scheme. The concern was noted and officers undertook to provide appropriate monitoring of the development.

Mr Booty proposed and Mr Langridge seconded, that the application be granted with conditions as outlined in the Planning Officer's report.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Permitted.

48 14/1206/P/POB Coral Springs, Curbridge Road, Curbridge

The Area Development Manager outlined the application and explained the key issues. He explained that the application was for a modification to an agreed planning obligation. It was suggested that this was acceptable but that there should be a "backstop" of three years to ensure that the development was fully implemented.

Mr Booty proposed, and Mr Howard seconded, that the application be granted, subject to the “backstop” outlined by Officers.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Granted.

50 14/1224/P/FP Robin Hood Public House, 81 Hailey Road, Witney

The Senior Planning Officer outlined the application and the key issues of protection of community assets and services and impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Policy TLC12 (Protection of Existing Community Services and Facilities) was of particular relevance to this application.

The Committee considered the application and the following points were raised:-

- Disappointment at the loss of a community asset. It was felt that, with the right landlord, this facility could be made to work, and work well;
- There was little evidence of attempts to make this into a flourishing business;
- This was a community facility that the area could not afford to lose;
- Further evidence of marketing efforts, finances and alternative community benefits should be presented in order for the Committee to determine the application.

Mr Enright proposed, and Mr Langridge seconded, that the application be deferred to allow the following information to be gathered and presented to the Committee:-

- Greater clarity around the offers made during the marketing of this public house, and why they were considered unsuitable;
- Financial information;
- Exploration of the issue of adequate community provision and alternative community benefits, including possible mitigation measures that might be available.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Deferred.

54 14/1254/P/FP 11 Wadards Meadow, Witney

The Senior Planning Officer outlined the application and explained that the application was before the Committee because West Oxfordshire District Council was the agent for the application.

Mr Mills proposed, and Mr Enright seconded, that the application be approved and on being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

Permitted.

(Mr Howard asked that his abstention from voting be recorded.)

31. APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND AN APPEAL DECISION

The report giving details of applications determined by the Strategic Director with responsibility for development under delegated powers together with appeal decisions was received and noted.

In presenting this report, the Area Development Manager indicated that he was keen to arrange a housing seminar for Members in November, at which various issues related to the granting or refusal of planning consent could be discussed. He felt this would be helpful for members when making decisions. The Committee expressed an interest in this.

32. ERECTION OF 270 DWELLINGS INCLUDING ACCESS, OPEN SPACES AND ASSOCIATED WORKS.(OUTLINE)APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND AN APPEAL DECISION

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing as to whether it would be expedient to undertake a formal site visit prior to the likely consideration of the planning application at the next sub-committee meeting.

Mr Enright proposed, and Mr Langridge seconded, that a site visit be arranged as outlined in the officer's report. In proposing this, Mr Enright asked that the visit should include a visit to Riverside Gardens and a view of the line of the river, if possible.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

**RESOLVED:** That a site visit be held on Thursday 13 November 2014 at Midday.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm.

CHAIRMAN