

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the
LOWLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE
Held in Committee Room I, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon
at 2.00 pm on Monday 15 December 2014

PRESENT

Councillors: W D Robinson (Chairman) Mrs M J Crossland (Vice-Chairman); M A Barrett;
P Emery; D S T Enright; S J Good; J Haine; P J Handley; H J Howard; P D Kelland;
R A Langridge; J F Mills and B J Norton

Officers in attendance: Phil Shaw, Kim Smith and Simon Wright

39. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 17 November 2014, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

The Chief Executive reported the following temporary appointments:

Mr P Emery attended for Mr M R Booty
Mr J F Mills attended for Mrs E H N Fenton

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

42. 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.

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 14/1339/P/OP Linden House, Kilkenny Lane, Brize Norton

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the site and access arrangements and reminded members that the site bordered the development recently approved by the Development Control Committee.

The Principal Planning Officer reported additional representations from the applicant's agent which indicated that a contribution for affordable housing was being offered if the restriction on size of properties was removed and also suggesting revisions to Condition 7 to allow a buffer of different size in certain parts of the development.

The Sub-Committee was addressed by Mrs Jayne Norris, agent for the applicant, in support of the application. A summary of the submission is attached at Appendix A to the original copy of these minutes.

The Principal Planning Officer continued her presentation and confirmation was given that any reserved matters application would be referred to the sub-committee for consideration. The policy considerations were outlined, it was confirmed there were no objections from statutory consultees, the offer of affordable housing was clarified and that a mix of 4/5 bed houses was considered acceptable for the site.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that subject to amended conditions and agreement on the level of affordable housing being agreed the application was acceptable. The recommendation was therefore one of delegation to approve subject to negotiations on affordable housing.

Mr Robinson clarified that the affordable housing offer was for no less than £10k per plot.

Mrs Crossland highlighted the good work that had been undertaken on the application and suggested it was a logical continuation of development. Mrs Crossland expressed support for the provision of larger units which were needed in the area and the proposed buffers were acceptable as was the affordable housing contribution.

Mrs Crossland then proposed the officer recommendation.

In seconding the proposal Mr Howard highlighted the support of the town council and reiterated that the application met the needs of the area and was acceptable.

Mr Enright sought clarification regarding the 'One Voice' consultation. In response it was explained that this was the overarching mechanism for responses from various Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) consultees.

Discussion ensued regarding the removal of requirements for affordable housing on smaller developments and the implications until the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced.

Mr Langridge and Mr Norton expressed support for the application and Mr Norton suggested that it may be beneficial if the delegation was in consultation with the Chairman of the sub-committee.

Mrs Crossland and Mr Howard agreed to the amendment being included in their proposal.

Mr Handley asked whether it was double width driveway and in response it was confirmed that was the case.

On being put to the vote the proposition was carried.

Delegated to Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, in consultation with the Chairman of the sub-committee, to approve the application subject to negotiation in respect of affordable housing contribution of at least £10k per plot and amended Conditions and informatives.

10 14/1538/P/S73 Chimney Farm Barns, Chimney, Bampton

It was noted that the application had been withdrawn.

22 14/1496/FUL Thistle Cottage, Ham Lane, Aston, Bampton

The Area Planning Manager outlined the application and detailed the site location and layout, elevations and changes to the previously approved scheme.

The Sub-Committee was addressed by Mr Ian Taylor in objection to the application, Mr Richard Haines representing Aston, Cote, Chimney & Shifford Parish Council and Mr Jonathan Ede in support of the application. A summary of the submissions is appended to the original copy of these minutes (Appendices B to D).

In response to questions from the sub-committee Mr Ede confirmed that a management plan would be in place during construction and that it had always been intended to make an affordable housing contribution.

The Area Planning Manager continued his presentation. In respect of comments raised during public participation it was confirmed that parking was proposed at an acceptable level and OCC had not objected. Concerns about the suitability of some spaces and better access to properties from parking areas were acknowledged. The Area Planning Manager referred to suggestions about providing a wall on to Ham Lane and indicated that this would not be supported by officers. It was indicated that Ham Lane was not suitable for on road parking and turning areas would be provided in the site.

The Area Planning Manager highlighted that each property had parking and gardens so concerns about overdevelopment could not be supported. Confirmation was given that Thames Water would not comment on sewage capacity on a development of this size.

In conclusion the Area Planning Manager indicated that the principle of development had been previously established and amendments had been made to address the refusal reasons on the previous application.

The Area Planning Manager gave a recommendation of approval subject to amended conditions, negotiation on additional parking provision and details of the affordable housing contribution being clarified.

Mr Robinson advised that if the sub-committee was minded to approve the application it should be delegated to the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing.

Mr Norton suggested that if any additional car parking could be secured that would help the position in respect of visitor parking. Mr Norton also highlighted that a tree on site appeared to be very close to one of the dwellings and asked if it was proposed to remove or lop any of the trees. In response it was confirmed that the tree was near an existing building and would remain.

Mr Norton then proposed the officer recommendation and this was seconded by Mr Langridge.

Mr Langridge emphasised the need to consider any offers of additional contributions in the context of individual applications. Mr Langridge expressed support for additional parking and that the removal of trees if necessary was acceptable.

Mr Mills indicated that concerns about parking had been allayed and expressed concern regarding the cumulative impact of additional development on the sewage system.

Mr Good advised that he had received a lot of representations regarding the scheme and acknowledged the need for the site to be tidied up as it was in the Conservation Area. Mr Good suggested that a suitable development was needed but considered that the proposal was not significantly different to the one previously refused. In particular it was considered that there were still highway issues and the increase in traffic on Ham Lane would be detrimental.

The Area Planning Manager outlined how previous refusal reasons had been addressed by changing the access, changes in house design, improved links within the development and suitable car parking was to be provided. The key change was the provision of two units on the same footprint as one unit in the previous scheme. It was reiterated that OCC had not raised any objection.

Mr Handley suggested that the design and layout meant that some units would be shadowed by trees for a significant part of the day. Mr Handley expressed concern regarding parking and access arrangements.

Mr Haine referred to the impact of trees on the site and that further parking could be provided by removing some trees thus allowing parking nearer to some units. The Area Planning Manager advised that parking was suggested in the heart of the development and improved footpath arrangements were proposed to some of the units from the allocated parking.

Mr Haine then proposed an amendment that the trees be removed from near plots 1 & 2 to provide parking with access from Ham Lane. Mr Kelland seconded the proposal.

Mr Howard supported the removal of trees on site if necessary. The Area Planning Manager suggested that further information may be needed and OCC consulted further.

Mr Norton emphasised that options for additional car parking should be fully explored.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried. On becoming the substantive motion the proposal was also carried.

Delegated to Head of Planning to approve subject to amended conditions, agreement on affordable housing contribution, negotiation on amended parking layout including the removal of trees from near plots 1 & 2 to provide parking with access from Ham Lane.

(Mr Enright, Mr Good, Mr Howard, Mr Mills and Mr Robinson requested that their votes against be recorded and Mr Langridge requested that his abstention from voting be recorded)

43. APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND APPEAL DECISION

The report giving details of applications determined by the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing under delegated powers together with appeal decisions was received.

Members of the sub-committee expressed concern that they had not been aware of some of the applications that were being determined under delegated powers. The Area Planning Manager advised that there was now an alert system where people could sign up to receive details of applications.

Mr Norton, in acknowledging the benefits of the new system, indicated that he had asked for a weekly list of applications to be available as had previously been the case. The Area Planning Manager advised that this was being addressed but there were technical problems in producing the information.

Mr Good suggested it would be beneficial if the file size of documents was clearer as it was sometimes difficult to download large files with slow broadband speeds. Members considered it would also be beneficial if members were made aware of how to access the

new interactive system. It was advised that there would be a publicity campaign in the New Year once the new database had bedded in.

(The Sub-Committee adjourned at 3.45pm and reconvened at 3.55pm)

(Mr Langridge left the meeting at this juncture)

The Area Planning Manager detailed a number of appeal decisions that had been received.

The Sub-Committee was given clarification regarding changes in planning guidance which meant that affordable housing provision was no longer required on developments of ten properties or less or if the overall site area was less than 10,000ft². However it was appropriate for consideration to be given if a developer made such an offer as was the case with the applications considered earlier in the meeting. The Area Planning Manager suggested that medium size developments were less likely to come forward and there was a danger that sites could be underdeveloped.

Mr Norton highlighted that smaller sites had not been coming forward as developers were sitting on them. Mr Enright asked what consultation there had been on the changes to affordable housing. The Area Planning Manager advised that it was actually a change in guidance and there had been no transitional arrangements. It was suggested that a market in development land for less than 10 properties could be created and the loss of contributions could lead to a rise in land values on such sites.

Mr Good asked how contributions would be calculated. The Area Planning Manager advised that it would be on a case by case basis taking in to account financial information that was submitted.

Mr Emery suggested that CIL would help on smaller sites when it was introduced and it was noted that CIL would be considered by members in February 2015 for determination on a charging schedule. The Area Planning Manager advised that Section 106 would also still be available so a balance needed to be struck.

The Area Planning Manager highlighted an appeal decision relating to a solar farm at Westerfield Farm, Carterton and the implications for other such schemes that may come forward.

After further discussion the report was noted.

44. PROGRESS ON ENFORCEMENT CASES

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing informing the Sub-Committee of the current situation and progress in respect of enforcement investigations. The Area Planning Manager highlighted a number of cases and detailed the action that had been taken.

In respect of unauthorised development at Masons Arms, South Leigh the Area Planning Manager advised that the future use of the site was being considered and the gates and fence had been put in place to prevent unlawful access. It was considered that this was acceptable until all matters were resolved and no further action was being recommended.

Mr Howard proposed the recommendations in the report and this was seconded by Mr Enright and on being put to the vote was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, the progress and nature of the outstanding enforcement investigations detailed in Sections A–C be noted; and
- (b) That no further action is taken in respect of the item referred to in Section D.

45. APPLICATION I4/I009/P/OP - LAND TO THE WEST OF FRUITLANDS, EYNSHAM

Mr Kelland advised that there was significant local interest in an application for development on land near to Fruitlands in Eynsham. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to hold a site visit prior to consideration of the application at the next meeting.

The sub-committee agreed that a site visit should be held.

RESOLVED: That a site visit be held on Thursday 15 January 2015 commencing at Noon.

The meeting closed at 4.20pm.

CHAIRMAN