

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOWLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

Date: 15th May 2017

Report of Additional Representations



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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Report of Additional Representations

Application Number	I7/00417/OUT
Site Address	Land North West Of 1 Foxwood Lane Bradwell Village Burford Oxfordshire
Date	29th March 2017
Officer	Miranda Clark
Officer Recommendations	Refuse
Parish	Shilton Parish Council
Grid Reference	424333 E 208934 N
Committee Date	10th April 2017

Application Details:

Erection of up to five staff cottages.

Applicant Details:

Cotswold Wildlife Park
Bradwell Grove
Burford
Oxfordshire
OX18 4JP

Additional Representations

Letter from agent;

1.2 The headings below will refer to matters that were raised at the April Committee Meeting.

2.0 TRAFFIC GENERATION

2.1 I was asked by one member of the Committee if a Traffic Impact Assessment was carried out and I gave the answer that it had not as the scale of development proposed did not generate a need for one. I also referred to the Cotswold Wildlife Park operating a walk or cycle to work policy for staff and due to this policy, vehicular movements from the proposed five staff units would be significantly less than if these were open market houses.

2.2 One member of the Committee suggested there should be an embargo on any further development at the Park until a roundabout had been constructed at the junction with the A361. The Councillor visited the Park on a day when the weather was exceptional and it attracted 4,500 visitors. This was the busiest day in what was an all-time record Easter holiday period for the Park in terms of attendances. Despite this, the queues from the entrance never reached the bottom of the lane and the flow of traffic on the A361 was not held up. However, the scale of development proposed in this application could not justify such provision, especially as the number of vehicle movements from the proposed accommodation onto that road will be minimal. Concerns were raised regarding construction traffic and a suggestion was made by one Councillor that this could access the application site via the Caravan Park. The applicants consider that this would be achievable as construction could take place outside the main holiday periods and then not lead to potential conflict with visitors.

2.2 Concern has also been raised regarding the lack of passing spaces on Foxwood Lane and as the applicants are owners of this, passing spaces could be provided if considered necessary.

3.0 ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS

3.1 I was also asked if I had looked at other possible locations for the proposed development within the grounds of the Park. I said that I, the operators of the Park and their other professional advisors had all considered whether there were any other suitable sites but none could be identified. This is because much of that area is devoted to animals and their well-being; trees; important open areas; parking for visitors or would adversely impact on the setting of the Listed Building and the Park as a whole. The applicants have also informed me that when trying to identify a suitable location for the machinery building with accommodation over (subsequently permitted in 2011), the officers experienced great difficulty in finding an appropriate location for the same reasons.

3.2 I would also add that it is very difficult to demonstrate why other sites are unsuitable but the applicants would not be proposing this application here if there were other, more appropriate locations for the accommodation.

4.0 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The application site is immediately adjacent to existing housing in Foxwood Lane and close to Bradwell Village with the Burford Caravan Club site to the south. In terms of its general location, it is well related to existing development and to the Wildlife Park and would not be located in open countryside.

4.2 A google aerial photograph is attached indicating the general location of the site in relation to its surroundings, which I trust will be of assistance.

5.0 REASON FOR THE APPLICATION

5.1 The Planning Officer stated at the Committee Meeting that it needs to be explained why there is a need for staff housing now and why there was not in the past. The reason for this is due to a combination of factors but first, it is not a matter that is just arisen.

5.2 In 2011, planning permission was granted for one unit and, in 2013, three staff dwellings to the west of the Park were built. It is an ongoing process due to the increase in staff, which have more than doubled since 1990 to nearly 140 full-time equivalent positions.

5.3 The cost and availability of housing in the local area is now out of reach of the staff employed at CWP both in renting and purchasing terms. Staff need to be resident nearby in case of emergency, for good animal husbandry practices and because the Park has increased the numbers of animals as it wishes to consolidate its position as a major tourist attraction within the District. The only way of attracting staff within this area is to provide housing to meet their needs and if this is close at hand, it is better for the Park and the members of staff and will result in a more sustainable form of development.

Houses sold

5.4 In the late 1980s the houses No 1-5 Foxwood Lane were sold by a third party in order to provide funds to offset the significant borrowing costs necessary to run the Park. Had this not been done, it is likely that the Park would have closed and not become the successful tourist attraction and business that it is today. There were, therefore, sound economic reasons why the accommodation was sold then but no further accommodation has been sold in the subsequent 25-30 years.

6.0 LEGAL AGREEMENT

6.1 The Planning Officer mentioned at the Committee Meeting that if planning permission was granted for this development, it would be necessary for the applicants to enter into a legal agreement with the Council preventing the future sale of any of the properties occupied by staff and owned by the Cotswold Wildlife Park. I can confirm that the applicants are willing to enter into such an Undertaking with the Council as the business needs to have plenty of accommodation available for its staff if it is to maintain its current position as a leading tourist attraction and business that benefits the local area.

7.0 LAND OWNERSHIP

7.1 The Planning Officer also stated that the land ownership situation needs to be investigated due to the comments raised by the owner of a neighbouring property. Investigations of HM Land Registry Records are being undertaken by the applicant's Solicitors but from the initial searches, the applicants own the access road that the neighbours were saying was needed to provide access to the application site. Evidence in this respect has been submitted to the Planning Officer but some of the Land Registry plans are large, paper copies that the Solicitors are still waiting to receive from the Land Registry. However, it is clear from the documentation received to date, that the applicants are the owners of the access into the application site.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE ACCESS

8.1 A Councillor mentioned at the meeting that a logical route for access at the construction phase could be through the Caravan Park. This has been discussed with the applicants who will ensure that such a route is utilised by construction traffic with the work then having to take place during the winter period in order to ensure that there will be no conflict with users of the caravan park.

9.0 LAYOUT OF THE PROPOSED ACCOMMODATION

9.1 This was of concern to the officers and so the agent has now written to the officers to revise the application, thereby making the layout a matter for approval at the reserved matters stage.

10.0 PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

10.1 An objector to the proposed development stated that he did not know why the applicants had been referring to the site being previously developed. However, it is a material consideration as it is a Core Planning Principle, contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, that the effective use of land should be encouraged by re-using land that has been previously developed (Brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. This application seeks to utilise the land that previously accommodated housing, which has now been removed but the bases and hardstandings are still evident.

11.0 PLANNING POLICIES

11.1 The policies of the adopted local plan are permissive of new dwellings in locations such as the one now proposed where there is an essential operational or specific local need that cannot be met in any other way. There are no other buildings that could be utilised and the applicants are not aware of any other suitable sites within their ownership or control.

11.2 The emerging local plan is also permissive of such a form of housing provided it forms a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development in the locality. This is provided that it would not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing residents, which the officer's report agrees that it would not have (paragraph 5.13 of the Committee Report). The policy also requires that there will be no harmful impact on the local landscape, which it will not, and will make use of previously developed land which is not of a high environmental value, a requirement that is also met. As safe access can be provided for vehicles and pedestrians and there are no flooding issues, which reflect those in the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposal is policy compliant.

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

12.1 In view of the information submitted as part of the planning application, the proposal represents a sustainable form of development that complies with the policies of the adopted Local Plan, with the emerging Local Plan and also accords with National Planning Guidance. In such circumstances, the applicants hope that you will support this much needed additional accommodation for members of staff employed at Cotswold Wildlife Park and that you will grant planning permission, subject to conditions, one of which will be to ensure that the accommodation is occupied by persons working at Cotswold Wildlife Park.

12.2 I trust that inspection of the site will also reveal how well located it is when compared to nearby development.

A plan has been submitted to show passing laybys on the access which is owned by the applicant. OCC Highways has no objection.

The layout part of the application has been withdrawn, only access and scale is to be considered at the meeting. In addition the description has changed to read, Erection of up to 5 dwellings.

Application Number	I7/00808/FUL
Site Address	160 Brize Norton Road Minster Lovell Witney Oxfordshire OX29 0SH
Date	3rd May 2017
Officer	Miranda Clark
Officer Recommendations	Approve
Parish	Minster Lovell Parish Council
Grid Reference	431033 E 209725 N
Committee Date	15th May 2017

Application Details:

Demolish existing bungalow and garage. Construction of two new dwellings, including formation of additional vehicular access.

Applicant Details:

Mr Jim Shirley
160, Brize Norton Road
Minster Lovell
Oxon
OX29 0SH

Additional Representations

OCC HIGHWAYS - NO OBJECTION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Application Number	I6/04253/OUT
Site Address	Sunset View Upavon Way Carterton Oxfordshire OX18 1BU
Date	3rd May 2017
Officer	Catherine Tetlow
Officer Recommendations	Refuse
Parish	Carterton Parish Council
Grid Reference	427223 E 207088 N
Committee Date	15th May 2017

Application Details:

Erection of 41 dwellings (means of access only)

Applicant Details:

Mr O'Brien
Oxford Road
Chipping Norton
Oxon
OX7 5QL

Additional Representations

The Shilton Parish Council strongly objects to this development. It is an unnecessary intrusion into the green space between the conservation area of Shilton and Carterton. The site is part of the dedicated green space in the Carterton Master Plan.

Due to its proximity to the Shill there will inevitably be an increased risk of flooding further upstream that could affect Shilton. There will also be implications for the wildlife in the Shill Valley corridor.