

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOWLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

MONDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

APPLICATION NUMBER 17/01859/OUT

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 126 DWELLINGS TOGETHER WITH A
NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS ONTO BURFORD ROAD, MINSTER LOVELL (B4047),
FOOTPATH LINKS, AREAS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
AND LANDSCAPING.**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

(Contact: Phil Shaw, Tel: (01993) 861687)

(The decisions on this matter will be a resolution.)

1. PURPOSE

To consider whether it would be expedient to undertake a formal site visit prior to the likely consideration of this application at the November meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Sub-Committee decide that it would be expedient to visit the site.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. The application seeks planning permission for a scheme comprising the following:

Residential development of up to 126 dwellings together with a new vehicular access onto Burford Road (B4047), footpath links, areas of public open space, children's play area and landscaping.

3.2. Members will recall that they have resolved to approve a scheme for 85 units on the site which is subject to a 106 agreement that is currently being completed. Subsequent to that resolution it is understood the Parish Council queried with the owner whether the scheme could potentially fund a new village hall. The applicant re-ran their viability and determined that a new hall could be provided were the numbers increased to 126. The applicants considered that the 126 units could be sited entirely within the application area for 85, that the increase in density is in line with Government advice and as such that the increase in numbers makes better use of the site whilst in their view not compromising the character/layout. The consequence of the increased numbers would be that there will be a benefit to community infrastructure via increased S106 contributions and they therefore submitted this application accordingly. Separately the agent in seeking to facilitate the new arrangements appeared before the local plan inquiry and promoted the 126 unit scheme (which was supported by officers) and which is now before the Inspector for assessment. However in the interim it appears that the villagers at large are not in agreement with the suggested increase in numbers to facilitate a new village hall and as such the Parish Council is objecting.

- 3.3. The above situation makes a formal recommendation at this stage very difficult. A recommendation either way could very quickly be rendered redundant by the LPI Inspector reaching a different conclusion. If a refusal is to be sustained it will need to be demonstrated what material differences there are in terms of the planning harms and benefits that mean that the 85 unit scheme was acceptable but the 126 unit scheme is now unacceptable. If the PC no longer wants a village hall then thought needs to be given as to what alternative benefit might be required/secured. If the local plan inspector were in due course to determine that the 126 unit scheme was acceptable then that would give a much reduced locus to refuse the application and the PC might wish to re-open the discussions regarding the village hall. Whatever the case as may arise following the Inspectors comments, Officers consider that a site visit to consider the proposed development in context would be of benefit to Members prior to the formal consideration and determination of the application given that the differences between the impacts on the area of the 'as approved' and 'as proposed' elements will be a key issue in assessing the merits of the scheme.
- 3.4. It is anticipated that the application will be presented to the Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee in November assuming that the Inspectors report will be received in late October.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

None.

6. REASONS

See section 3.

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Background Papers:
Application ref 17/01859/OUT and associated documents