

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee
Held in the Council Chamber at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 23 May 2022**

PRESENT

Councillors: Richard Langridge (Chair), Michael Brooker (Vice-Chair), Joy Aitman, Colin Dingwall, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Nick Leverton, Charlie Maynard, Lysette Nicholls, Elizabeth Poskitt, Andrew Prosser and Alaric Smith

Officers: David Ditchett (Senior Planner), Phil Shaw (Business Manager - Development Management), Kim Smith (Principal Planner (Enforcement), Anne Learmonth (Strategic Support Officer) and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officer).

62 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2022 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

63 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

64 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

65 Applications for Development

21/03720/FUL 44 Common Road North Leigh

The planning officer David Ditchett introduced the application to demolition of existing residential property. The erection of 10 detached and semi-detached two storey dwellings and construction of a new access onto Common Road, with associated garaging and parking, landscaping and all enabling work.

Councillor St John stated he was concerned about the trees that had been felled before the application had been submitted. Mr Ditchett clarified that none of the trees had protection orders on them, and were not in a conservation area and a licence was not likely to be required to fell trees. Councillor St John asked if the protection of species apply, Mr Ditchett explained that there were no protected species on site and that the biodiversity officer was satisfied with the scheme, subject to conditions and informative.

The following people addressed the committee:

Sarah Veasey from the Planning Group at North Leigh Parish Council.

Carlo Soave a local resident, spoke as an objector to the application.

Tim Northey the agent for the application.

Mr Ditchett continued with his presentation and summarised that officers were seeking Provisional Approval as per conditions set out in the original report, with drainage matters and section 106 agreement to be agreed at a later date.

The Chair confirmed that due to annual council there had been a change in the committee members, however members had managed to see the site within the past couple of weeks and new members last week.

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Councillors were all concerned about the loss of the trees that were on the site before the application had been submitted. Mr Ditchett reminded councillors that they were there to review the application before them, which did not include reference to the trees.

Councillor Leverton noted the lack of distance between the existing dwellings and the proposed dwellings, Councillor Dingwall agreed and stated that the new driveway were adjacent to existing properties.

Councillors entered into a discussion about the bio diversity net gain, it was felt that new developments should not opt for off-site net gain and it should be much closer to the developed site, so that residents can see the gain locally. Councillor Fenton stated he was familiar with the past applications and he could not see much had changed with this new submission. Councillor Poskitt agreed that little had changed since the last application,

Councillor Prosser raised concerns over sewage capacity, Mr Ditchett confirmed that there were no objections from Thames Water, and that they were the specialist. Councillor Maynard enquired which sewage site was responsible, Mr Ditchett was unable to confirm which local sewage site would serve the site.

Councillor Brooker asked for clarification on the roof pitch design, as immediate neighbours were close. Mr Ditchett explained the technical design measurement to the committee.

Councillor Eaglestone thought the application was the worst case he'd seen, and would not support it.

Councillor Fenton proposed that the application be refused, this was seconded by Councillor Maynard, it was duly put to the vote which was unanimously carried, therefore resolved that the application be

Refused for the following reasons:

The proposal is for housing development on a predominantly greenfield site on the edge of the settlement of North Leigh. The design, scale, form and layout of the proposal would not form a logical complement to the existing scale, pattern and character of development in this location; it would fail to protect or enhance the local landscape and the setting of the village, and would fail to conserve the natural environment. While the development would provide some economic benefits, would add nine homes (net) to West Oxfordshire Housing stock, would meet some of the affordable housing need in North Leigh, and would create off site biodiversity net gain, these benefits are insufficient to outweigh the conflict with the Development Plan as a whole. As such, the proposed development is contrary to policies H2, OS2, OS4 and EH2 of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016, and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

22/00465/FUL North Leigh Methodist Church Chapel Lane

North Leigh

The planning officer David Ditchett introduced the application for the conversion of church to dwelling (part retrospective) (Amended plans). This application is to convert church to a dwelling, no extensions were proposed, however a set of steps and the changing of a window to a door was proposed. The property is not listed although has historical interest.

Sarah Veasey from the Planning Group at North Leigh Parish Council addressed the Committee.

Mr Ditchett continued with the presentation, referring to the original application in 2019 which was to change the use of the building to residential. Once the change of use was

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approved, conditions were placed on the building removing permitted development right, hence the new application which was being considered at the committee today. The first floor side window height industry standard is 1.7m which is what is being considered, a total of eight windows, three of which with obscure glazing, one window in the staircase, one window in the dressing room, officers were satisfied that the changes were modest and recommended approval.

Councillor Fenton proposed that the application be approved as per officers recommendation, this was seconded by Councillor Leverton.

The officers recommendation of approval was put to the vote and was unanimously carried.

Approved

22/00198/FUL - 16 Shergold Road, Bampton

The Principal Planner Kim Smith introduced the application for conversion of part of the existing garage to a hairdressing salon. (Retrospective).

The applicant has a maximum of four clients a day, adequate parking and low activity. County Council Highways have no objections. To ensure low use officers are recommending a temporary condition for two years, hours of use 09:30 to 16:30, maximum of four clients a day and that operator keeps a log of appointments.

Councillor Fenton proposed approval of the application as per officers recommendation, Councillor Alaric Smith seconded the proposal.

The officers recommendation of approval was put to the vote and was unanimously carried.

Approved.

66 Applications Determined under Delegated Powers and Appeal Decisions

The report giving details of applications determined under delegated powers was received and noted, with a few queries:

Councillor Fenton asked why on page 52 number six had SPL annotated and was both approved and refused. David Ditchett was able to confirm that it was a split decision, two conditions were refused and two approved. Page 52 number seven, it was clarified by principal planner Kim Smith that this application had been approved with two conditions. Page 55, number 25, Councillor Maynard queried the change of use, it was confirmed that you still require planning permission for future changes.

There were no appeals.

The Business Manager, Mr Phil Shaw informed the committee that it was the last committee day for Kim Smith the Principal Planner. Kim had been a planner for 30 plus years from planning assistant to senior level, managing enforcement for the appeals team. Kim had dealt with many cases from draft to determination, the whole of planning wanted to wish her all the best for a healthy retirement. The Chair echoed Mr Shaw's wishes for Kim Smith and added that she had been a tremendous help to all the Councillors over the years.

The Meeting closed at 3.45 pm

CHAIR