

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

### Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB  
at 2.00 pm on **Monday, 22 April 2024**

#### PRESENT

Councillors: Michael Brooker (Chair), Andy Goodwin (Vice-Chair), Julian Cooper, Rachel Crouch, Phil Godfrey, Nick Leverton, Andrew Lyon, Andrew Prosser, Harry St John, Adrian Walsh, Alistair Wray, Martin McBride, Michele Mead and David Melvin

Officers: Abby Fettes (Development Manager), Elloise Street (Planning Officer), Anne Learmonth (Strategic Support Officer) Max Thompson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Christine Elsasser (Interim Democratic Services Officer)

#### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dan Levy, Colin Dingwall and Lysette Nicholls.

Councillor David Melvin substituted for Councillor Dan Levy.

Councillor Martin McBride substituted for Councillor Lysette Nicholls.

Councillor Michele Mead substituted for Councillor Colin Dingwall.

#### **2 Declarations of Interest**

The following Councillors declared interests in the following items:

Councillor Nick Leverton declared an interest in item 24/00574/HHD, 4 Rose Close, Carterton due to his ownership of the property. Councillor Leverton would leave the room for this item and would not take part in the vote.

Councillor Michele Mead declared an interest in item 24/00574/HHD, 4 Rose Close, Carterton due to her being a close friend of the owner of the property.

#### **3 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to:

Page 7; Olde Well Cottage wording in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph- the wording on the house proposal that explained there was an addition of 2 more bedrooms was changed to the house having 4 or 5 bedrooms.

Councillor Martin McBride was to be added to the attendance list.

The Sub-Committee resolved to:

- I. Agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 22 April 2024 as a true and accurate record.

#### **4 Applications for Development**

The Chair advised the Sub-Committee that the applications would be heard in a revised order as follows:

24/00175/HHD Olde Well Cottage, 23/00285/LBC Olde Well Cottage, 23/03347/FUL Barn Adj to 11 Farmhouse Close, Stanton Harcourt and 23/03349/LBC Barn Adj to 11 Farmhouse Close, Stanton Harcourt. 24/00574/HHD 4 Rose Close, Carterton.

#### **5 23/03347/FUL Barn Adj to 11 Farmhouse Close, Stanton Harcourt.**

Elloise Street, Planning Officer, introduced the application for a conversion of agricultural barn to a single dwelling and the addition of a single storey extension and associated works (amended description and plans).

The Planning Officer drew the Sub-Committees' attention to the Additional Representation Report and raised the following points:

- There was an additional comment from ERS on contaminated land in the supplementary pack and a contamination condition was requested to be added should any contamination be found.
- Stanton Harcourt Parish Council raised an objection to the Listed Building application and as per the scheme of delegation, the Listed Building Consent was required to be determined by the Committee should Officers views be contrary to the Parish Council.
- The location plan of the site was shown in red and the application site related to an existing curtilage listed barn and was locally listed. The addition of a single storey extension was to allow the addition of a bedroom to facilitate the conversion to a single dwellinghouse.
- The existing barn was currently split into 3 equal sections which was to transfer through to the dwellinghouse. The proposed dwellinghouse was to retain the form of the existing barn in relation to the eaves line and roofline. The barn conversion was also to have a small extension to the south which would be 3m in width and 4m in length and would provide space for a bedroom. The proposed extension was to be of a pitched roof nature and was to be 2.6m to the eaves with an overall ridge height of 4m.
- The existing barn was to be converted to consist of a living space, kitchen, bathroom and storage area. There would be two conservation rooflights on the south-eastern elevation and one conservation rooflight on the north-western elevation. The south-eastern elevation would consist of a new window and a double set of doors.
- The existing field gate was to be removed to facilitate the new parking for the dwellinghouse. The proposed dwellinghouse was to have 2 parking spaces in accordance with OCC highways. The existing concrete block wall was to be removed to facilitate the parking and a turning circle and to be replaced with a 1.2m close boarded fence. The full outside space for the dwellinghouse was to be gravelled to provide a courtyard garden for a 1-bedroom dwelling.
- The modern 20th century separating walls were to be removed to facilitate the internal works to the barn. The existing saddlestones and posts were to be retained and were

to be inside the new external wall of the dwellinghouse. In addition, the existing foundations were to be underpinned along the roadside.

- Officers considered the scale and design complied with Policy OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 which stated that new development should respect the historic, architectural and landscape character of the locality, contribute to local distinctiveness and where possible, enhance the character and quality of the soundings.
- Officers also took into account that the proposal was considered to be acceptable on its merits and complied with Policies OS2, OS4, H6, T4, EH9, EH10, EH11, EH16, EH3, E3, EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016.
- The site fell within the Stanton Harcourt and Sutton Conservation Area and officers found that the proposed works would respect the special qualities and historic context of the Conservation Area and would maintain the appearance of the heritage asset given the nature of what is proposed and its location.
- The WODC Biodiversity Officer was consulted on the application to ascertain the impact of the proposed conversion on any species in the vicinity. Results from the bat emergence surveys confirmed that there was one feeding roost of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle as well as one day roost of one brown long eared bat within the barn. As a result of the development these roosts would be permanently lost. It was considered that that the conservation significance of the roosts was low. As a result, a licence from Natural England would be required in order for works to proceed lawfully.
- There were no other constraints to consider as part of this application and planning officers were satisfied with the appropriate measures.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to ask any questions of clarification which raised the following points:

- It was to be noted that this development was considered on its own merit. However, given that there were similar barn conversions in the area, namely Blackditch Farmhouse (under different ownership) and another similar barn conversion in the area.
- Regarding Policy T1 and cross ground with neighbouring parking, access and clarification of parking was provided. Highways were consulted and there were no issues with highway safety.
- One Councillor agreed with the Parish Council and suggested that the wood burner would affect the air quality and felt that the plans could have been improved. However, this he felt was not a strong enough reason to refuse the application.
- Another Councillor suggested that the extension would encroach on the neighbouring property. The Officer confirmed that the law stated that you could build up to the property line and that the applicant had agreed to work out any possible maintenance issues with the neighbouring property.

Councillor Harry St. John proposed the application be approved in line with officer recommendations and this was seconded by Councillor Adrian Walsh. It was put to a vote and

the outcome was as follows: 12 voted in favour, 0 voted against and there was 1 abstention; therefore, the vote was carried.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application on the grounds that the application was considered acceptable on its merits and complied with Policies OS2, OS4, H6, T4, EH9, EH10, EH11, EH16, EH3, E3, EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design. However, subject to the conditions in Section 6 of the report and in the supplementary pack.

## **6** 23/03349/LBC Barn Adj to 11 Farmhouse Close, Stanton Harcourt.

The application was discussed under the previous application 23/03347/FUL Barn Adj to 11 Farmhouse Close Stanton Harcourt.

Councillor Harry St. John proposed the application be approved in line with officer recommendations and this was seconded by Councillor Adrian Walsh. It was put to a vote and the outcome was as follows: 12 voted in favour, 0 voted against and there was 1 abstention; therefore, the vote was carried.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the application on the grounds that the application based on the that the proposal was considered acceptable on its merits and complied with Policies OS2, OS4, H6, T4, EH9, EH10, EH11, EH16, EH3, E3, EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design. However, subject to the conditions in Section 6 of the report and in the supplementary.

## **7** 24/00175/HHD Olde Well Cottage, 109 Station Road, Brize Norton.

Elloise Street, Planning Officer, introduced the application for the erection of a single storey extension with attached garage and wood store.

The Planning Officer drew the Sub-Committees' attention to the following points:

- The location plan was presented with the developed site outlined in red.
- The proposed site of the extension with attached garage and wood store was located to the south.
- An aerial view was shown with Station Road situated to the west of the site.
- There were constraints as it was a listed building.
- The site was located in flood zone 2 and not within a conservation area.
- There was a stepping down of the property with a bedsit approved in the early 2000's.
- The proposed single storey extension was to be adjoined to the existing bedsit on the ground floor and provided an additional 2 bedrooms to the property overall. The extension was to be 12m in length and 5m in width. With an eaves height of 2.4m and an overall ridge height of 4m.

- In addition to the extension was a single storey oak framed garage which was to be 5.77m in length and 5m in width and 3.5m in overall height.
- There was also to be a small wood store at 1.5m in width and 2.2m in height.

Fiona Gove spoke as the applicant for the application.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to ask any questions of clarification, which raised no points.

The Planning Officer continued with the presentation, which clarified the points contained in section 5.8-5.15 of the report and Officers recommended refusal on the basis of those points.

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to ask any questions of clarification which were as follows:

- If approval was sought a water drainage scheme would be required due to site falling in flood zone 2.
- Approval would be reconsidered if various elements were removed and the overall scale of harm was reduced or removed.
- Various Councillors expressed that they felt the front view from the road of the existing structure with the material used would be improved by the extension with attached garage and wood store. Other Councillors suggested they felt torn and were concerned about the overall carbon footprint of the site and also that it was in flood zone 2.
- Another Councillor commented that as it currently stood it was an over-development, however; with modifications and pre-application advice the recommendations could be different and therefore accepted should it come back to Committee.

Councillor Nick Leverton proposed the application be refused in line with officer recommendations and was seconded by Councillor Andy Goodwin. It was put to a vote and the outcome was as follows: 9 voted in favour, 2 voted against and there were 2 abstentions; therefore, the vote was carried.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

- I. Refuse the application on the grounds that the application by reason of its siting and scale, the development would be transformative to the dwelling house and would detract from the character of the original property and would have a negative appearance on the street scene. The proposed development would result in an incongruous overdevelopment which would have an adverse impact on the historic nature of this Grade 2 Listed Building. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to this heritage asset, which would fail to be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development as per paragraph 208 of the NPPF. Consequently, the proposal would fail to comply with Policies OS2, OS4, H6, EH9 and EH11 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and advice in the NPPF.

## **8** 23/00285/LBC Olde Well Cottage, 109 Station Road, Brize Norton.

The application was discussed under the previous application 24/00175/HHD Old Well Cottage, 109 Station Road, Brize Norton.

Councillor Nick Leverton proposed the application be refused in line with officer recommendations and was seconded by Councillor Andy Goodwin. It was put to a vote and the outcome was as follows: 9 voted in favour, 2 voted against and there were 2 abstentions; therefore, the vote was carried.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

Refuse the application on the grounds that the application by reason of its siting and scale, the development would be transformative to the dwelling house and would detract from the character of the original property and would have a negative appearance on the street scene. The proposed development would result in an incongruous overdevelopment which would have an adverse impact on the historic nature of this Grade 2 Listed Building. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to this heritage asset, which would fail to be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development as per paragraph 208 of the NPPF. Consequently, the proposal would fail to comply with Policies OS2, OS4, H6, EH9 and EH11 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the West Oxfordshire Design Guide and advice in the NPPF.

## **9** 24/00574/HHD 4 Rose Close, Carterton

Councillor Nick Leverton left the room.

Elloise Street, Planning Officer, introduced the application for the installation of dormer windows in east and west elevations to increase usable head height within the master bedroom.

The Planning Officer drew the Sub-Committees' attention to the Additional Representation Report and raised the following points:

- The application was brought before Members of the Lowlands Area Sub Planning Committee because the applicant was a District Councillor.
- The application site related to a detached bungalow within the residential area of Carterton and the site did not fall within any areas of special designated control and therefore the main considerations of this application were the impact of the proposed development on the visual amenity and residential amenity.
- The proposal included two dormer windows on the eastern and western elevation to the rear of the property to allow more usable head height within the dwellinghouse. The proposed dormers on the western and eastern elevation were to be 3.1m in width and 1.8m in height and would protrude from the existing roofline by 2.2m. There was to be one window on both the eastern and western elevation which was to be obscurely glazed. The proposed dormers were to be clad with composite cladding system with an EPDM roofing system and white casement uPVC windows.
- There would be no additional bedrooms added as part of the proposal and the ground floor would remain unchanged.
- The proposed dormers were to face eastwards and westwards into neighbouring properties and due to their close proximity and lack of screening it was appropriate that the obscurely glazed windows were to be conditioned to be retained indefinitely. As a result, Officers were of the opinion that the proposed works would not give rise to any adverse impacts in regard to neighbouring amenity.

- Taking into account the above matters the proposal was considered acceptable on its merits and complied with Policies OS2, OS4 and H6 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016

The Chair then invited the Sub-Committee to ask any questions of clarification which raised the following points:

- It was confirmed that this application would have been given the same recommendation if the property wasn't owned by a District Councillor.

Councillor Andy Goodwin proposed the application be approved in line with officer recommendations and was seconded by Councillor Rachel Crouch. It was put to a vote and the outcome was as follows: 12 voted in favour, 0 voted against and there were 0 abstentions; therefore, the vote was carried.

The Sub-Committee **Resolved** to:

Approve the application on the grounds that the proposal was considered acceptable on its merits and complied with Policies OS2, OS4 and H6 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016. However, subject to the conditions in Section 6 of the report.

## **10 Applications Determined under Delegated Powers**

The report giving details of applications determined under delegated powers was received and noted by the Sub-Committee.

## **11 Appeal Decisions**

The report giving details of appeals decisions under delegated powers was received and noted by the Sub-Committee.

The Meeting closed at 2.49 pm

CHAIRMAN