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## 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, 13 September 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Ted Fenton (Chairman), Councillor Joy Aitman (Vice-Chair), Councillor Rosa Bolger, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Duncan Enright, Councillor Steve Good, Councillor Andy Goodwin, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Dan Levy, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Alex Postan and Councillor Ben Woodruff

Officers: Miranda Clark (Senior Planner (Development Management)), Abby Fettes (Interim Development Manager), Adrienne Frazer, Kelly Murray (Senior Planning Officer) and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officers)

#### **21 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 August 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **22 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Langridge.

Councillor Goodwin substituted for Councillor Rylett and Councillor Postan substituted for Councillor St John.

#### **23 Declarations of Interest**

##### Agenda Item 4 – Applications for Development

Application 21/01861/FUL - Merton Cottage, Aston

Councillor Fenton declared an interest because the applicants were previously his neighbours. He left the meeting and handed over the Chair's role for the duration of this item.

Councillor Levy declared an interest because he was the County Councillor for Aston.

Application 21/01992/FUL - 6 The Paddocks, Bampton

Councillor Fenton declared an interest because he was the County Councillor for Bampton.

Application 21/02099/FUL - Land South of Ferndale, Aston

Councillor Levy declared an interest because he was the County Councillor for Aston.

Councillor Woodruff declared an interest because of his friendship with the applicant and left the room for the duration of this item.

#### **24 Applications for Development**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Business Manager – Development Management, giving details of applications for development, copies of which had been circulated.

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**RESOLVED:** That the decisions on the following applications be as indicated, the reasons for refusal to be as recommended in the report of the Business Manager – Development Management, subject to any amendments as detailed below:-

21/02099/FUL Land South Of Ferndale, Back Lane, Aston

The Senior Planner (Development Management), Miranda Clark, introduced the application for the erection of a detached dwelling and carport/garage and workshop with home office above.

A public submission was heard in support of the application from Linda Wain.

Information contained in the follow on report from West Oxfordshire's Senior Conservation and Design Officer advised that the proposal failed to respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, including the historic landscape and settlement character, and the setting and views. The officer had therefore raised an objection to the proposal and recommended refusal because the proposal neither conserved nor enhanced the character and appearance of the heritage assets. It conflicted with policies EH9, EH10, EH13 and OS4, NPPF Section 16 and the Design Guidance.

The Senior Planner (Development Management) then presented her report containing a recommendation of refusal. She advised that by reason of its siting, the development as proposed would fail to complement the existing pattern of development and the character of the area, including the settlement character. The siting of the proposed development would have an adverse urbanising impact on the rural character of the area, which would fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and would result in less than substantial harm, which would fail to be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would fail to comply with the provisions of the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies OS2, OS4, H2, EH2, EH3, EH10, EH15, EH13 and T4.

Councillor Good commented that it had been unhelpful, with respect to his conversations at the Parish Council about the application, to have received the objection from the Senior Conservation and Design Officer as a follow on report. However, he did understand that staff were under pressure at this time. He noted that the Sub-Committee had regularly received applications for this land and had noted with interest the submission from the applicant which stated that there was only one six bedroom house currently for sale within a three mile radius of the village.

Councillor Good advised the Sub-Committee that the land adjacent to the plot was owned by Oxfordshire County Council which proposed to build a four or six bedroom home for children with disabilities on it. Councillor Good concluded saying that he wished to support the officer recommendation.

The Interim Development Manager informed the meeting that the Planning Department had received a pre-application for the land from Oxfordshire County Council last week.

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Councillor Levy, as County Councillor for the Ward offered to speak to the County Council's officer on the matter for clarification and further information. Councillor Levy said that although he did not wish to see infill of green agricultural land, the plot did adjoin buildings that were built on agricultural land.

Councillor Levy proposed that the application be deferred to allow a site visit to take place and this was seconded by Councillor Postan.

The proposal to undertake a site visit was then put to the vote and was carried.

### **Deferred**

Councillor Woodruff returned to the room.

#### 21/01992/FUL 6 The Paddocks Weald Street, Weald, Bampton

The Senior Planning Officer, Kelly Murray, presented her report containing a recommendation of approval for the erection of an ancillary dayroom.

Councillor Fenton proposed that consideration of the application be deferred to allow a site visit to take place since it was known that the site was already overcrowded.

This was seconded by Councillor Leverton.

The proposal to undertake a site visit was then put to the vote and was carried.

### **Deferred**

(Having declared an interest, Councillor Fenton passed the chairing of the meeting to Councillor Aitman and withdrew from the meeting.)

#### 21/01861/FUL Merton Cottage, Bampton Road, Aston

The Senior Planner (Development Management), Miranda Clark, presented her report on the application for the erection of a detached dwelling with associated parking, which contained a recommendation of refusal.

Following a question from Councillor Leverton, prompted by an objection from the Parish Council about the sewerage system, the Senior Planner (Development Management) advised that Thames Water tended to comment on larger developments and had not objected to this application.

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Councillor Enright noted that the Sub-Committee had discussed the sycamore tree (section 5.7 of the report) on this site before and had agreed that the tree and its visual value were important. He noted that the cottage was being built underneath the sycamore tree.

Councillor Enright agreed with the officer and felt that the application should be refused due to the proposed siting of the dwelling in close proximity to the existing sycamore tree.

Councillor Enright proposed that the application be refused as per officer's recommendations and this was seconded by Councillor Leverton.

Following a discussion about the sycamore tree, the Senior Planner (Development Management) informed the meeting that the Landscape and Forestry Officer reported on this tree in 2008 when an application to fell the tree was refused and she signposted Members to paragraphs 5.7 and 5.12 of the report.

Councillor Levy noted that there was a flooding issue in the village and Thames Water had spoken to the Parish Council about it. He also noted that the Highways Department had not commented on the application.

The officers' recommendation of refusal was then put to the vote and was carried.

## **Refused**

**25**

## **Applications Determined under Delegated Powers and Appeal Decisions**

(Councillor Fenton returned to the room and resumed the chairing of the meeting.)

The report giving details of applications determined under delegated powers was received and noted.

The Chairman noted that items 43, 45 and 77 were the responsibility of the Uplands Planning Sub-Committee and should appear on their agenda.

The Interim Development Manager outlined the Appeal Decisions report and provided an update on the position with the application.

The Meeting closed at 2.46 pm

CHAIRMAN