

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Planning Committee

held at the Abbey House, Abingdon on  
Wednesday 14 September 2011 at 6.30pm



**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Robert Sharp (Chairman), John Morgan (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Roger Cox, Jenny Hannaby, Anthony Hayward, Bill Jones, Sandy Lovatt, Sue Marchant, Jerry Patterson, Helen Pighills, Kate Precious, and Margaret Turner

Substitute Members: Councillor Richard Webber (in place of Councillor John Woodford) and Councillor Dudley Hoddinott (in place of Councillor Bob Johnston)

Other Member: Councillor Charlotte Dickson

Officers: Steve Culliford, Mike Gilbert, Laura Hudson, David Rothery, and Stuart Walker

Number of members of the public: 25

### PI.59 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

The chairman asked everyone to ensure their mobile telephones were switched off, he reminded everyone of the fire evacuation procedure, and reminded visitors of the committee's procedure.

### PI.60 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence

Councillors Bob Johnston and John Woodford had sent their apologies for absence and had appointed Councillors Dudley Hoddinott and Richard Webber respectively as their substitutes.

### PI.61 Minutes

**RESOLVED:** To adopt the minutes of the committee's meetings held on 25 May and 22 June 2011 and agree that the chairman signs them.

## PI.62 Declarations of interest

Councillors declared the following interests:

Item	Councillor	Nature of interest	Reason
PI.50 – application at Cotswold House, Cotswold Road, Cumnor Hill	Dudley Hoddinott	Personal	He knew the applicant and was a parish councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.50 – application at Cotswold House, Cotswold Road, Cumnor Hill	Robert Sharp	Personal	He knew a neighbour opposite the application site
PI.51 – application at 68 Westminster Way, North Hinksey	Eric Batts	Personal	He was a parish councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.52 – application at land adjoining Coxwell House and Winslow House, Coxwell Road, Faringdon	Roger Cox	Personal	He was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.53 – application for land at The Fitzharris Arms, Thornhill Walk, Abingdon	Sandy Lovatt	Personal	He was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	Roger Cox	Personal	He knew one of the objectors speaking at the meeting
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	Jenny Hannaby	Personal	She was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	Anthony Hayward	Personal	He knew one of the objectors speaking at the meeting

<b>Item</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Nature of interest</b>	<b>Reason</b>
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	John Morgan	Personal	He was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	Jerry Patterson	Personal	He knew one of the objectors speaking at the meeting
PI.54 – application at Broadwater, Manor Road, Wantage	Robert Sharp	Personal	He knew one of the objectors speaking at the meeting
PI.55 – application at Candleshoe, Manor Road, Wantage	Jenny Hannaby	Personal	She knew the applicant's agent and was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.55 – application at Candleshoe, Manor Road, Wantage	Anthony Hayward	Personal and prejudicial	He was the applicant's agent
PI.55 – application at Candleshoe, Manor Road, Wantage	John Morgan	Personal	He knew the applicant's agent and was a town councillor but had not taken part in that council's consideration of the application
PI.55 – application at Candleshoe, Manor Road, Wantage	All other councillors present	Personal	They knew the applicant's agent

### **PI.63 Statements and petitions from the public on planning applications**

Tabled at the meeting was a list identifying nine members of the public that wished to address the committee.

### **PI.64 Statements, petitions and questions from the public on other matters**

None

### **PI.65 MATERIALS**

None

**PI.66 11/00966/OUT - Outline application for demolition of existing detached dwelling. Erection of three detached dwellings. (Resubmission of withdrawn application CUM/6163/1-X). Cotswold House, Cotswold Road, Cumnor Hill, OX2 9JG**

Councillors Dudley Hoddinott and Robert Sharp both declared personal interests in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, they remained in the meeting during its consideration.

The planning officer reported that the committee was considering an outline application for site access only, with all other matters reserved for the detailed application.

Mr Peter Fellow made a statement objecting to the application. He expressed concerns that the proposal was contrary to planning policy, the sewerage system was inadequate for additional dwellings, and the development would over dominate his neighbouring property.

The local member also expressed concerns at the proposal's impact on local surface water drainage. The road was unadopted, and as such had no drainage system. He asked for a proper drainage scheme test before the committee approved the application. The committee noted that the report recommended a drainage condition and for Thames water to approve the proposed scheme.

The committee supported the officer's recommendation to approve the application under delegated authority, as it believed that it would not harm the character of the area, would not harm residential amenity, flood risk, or highway safety. However, the committee asked for an additional condition regarding the approval of slab levels.

**RESOLVED** (by 15 votes to nil)

To authorise the head of planning services to approve application 11/00966/OUT, in consultation with the committee chairman, vice-chairman and opposition spokesman together with local members, subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure financial contributions to offset the impact of the development on social and physical infrastructure and subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Reserved matters
3. Prior to the first use or occupation of the new development, the vehicular access hereby approved and shown on approved drawing number 0828 010 shall be provided.
4. Provision of visibility splays
5. Car parking
6. Surface water and foul water drainage
7. Prior to the occupation or use of the development, surface water drainage works shall be carried out in accordance with a detailed scheme which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before the drainage scheme is submitted, an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system in accordance with the principles set out in Annex F of PPS (planning policy statement) 25 (or any subsequent version), and the results of the assessment shall be submitted to the local planning authority. Where a sustainable drainage system is to be provided, the submitted scheme shall include the following:

- (i) information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site, and measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface watercourses;
  - (ii) a timetable for its implementation;
  - (iii) a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development – i.e. arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of system throughout its lifetime.
8. No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the programmed off site works to the public sewerage network have been completed.
  9. The approval of slab levels.

### **PI.67 11/01146/FUL - Erection of a two storey side extension. 68 Westminster Way, North Hinksey**

Councillor Eric Batts declared a personal interest in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, he remained in the meeting during its consideration.

Dr Pritchard made a statement on behalf of the parish council, objecting to the application. He believed the neighbour's property would suffer a loss of light, the proposal was too close to the boundary, and would be contrary to planning policy.

Tracy Imondi also made a statement objecting to the application, believing the proposal would over dominate her property and block its natural light. She suggested amending the proposal to avoid these problems.

The local member sympathised with the objector but believed that a similar extension further along the road had set a precedent.

The committee considered that the application was acceptable and would not harm the character of the area, and was acceptable in terms of its impact on the amenities of neighbours, parking provision and highway safety.

**RESOLVED** (by 15 votes to nil)

To approve application 11/01146/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. TL1 – time limit
2. RE1 – matching materials

### **PI.68 10/01422/RENWAL - Application to extend the time limit of outline planning permission 06/01928/FUL for residential development with new access road. Land adjoining Coxwell House and Winslow House, Coxwell Road, Faringdon**

Councillor Roger Cox declared a personal interest in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, he remained in the meeting during its consideration.

The planning officer reported that the application was to extend the time limit of the previous permission to complete the development. The new application was for a different mix of affordable housing but still at 40 per cent. The previous application had proved to

be unviable. The new application retained infrastructure contributions and would carry forward the previously approved reserved matters.

The local member supported the application, including its much needed affordable housing.

The officers reassured the committee that the council carried out independent checks where developers claimed their previously approved proposals were no longer viable. The developers paid for these assessments.

There was an established principle of development on this site through its allocation in the local plan and previous outline permission. As there had been no change to any material circumstances, the committee approved the application and agreed to carry forward previously approved reserved matters.

**RESOLVED** (by 15 votes to nil)

To authorise the head of planning, in consultation with the committee's chairman and vice chairman, to approve application 10/01422/RENWAL to extend to the time limit on application ref: 06/01928/FUL, subject to:

- (i) the completion of a revised section 106 agreement with the council and Oxfordshire County Council for financial contributions, and the delivery of affordable housing, and
- (ii) subject to the same conditions previously attached to both the outline permission and the reserved matters approval.

**PI.69 11/01443/FUL - Erection of 3 x 1 bedroom flats (re-submission of withdrawn application 11/00418/FUL). Land at the fitzharris arms, thornhill walk, abingdon, OX14 1JH**

Councillor Sandy Lovatt declared a personal interest in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, he remained in the meeting during its consideration.

The committee considered the proposal acceptable, as it would not harm the character of the area, residential amenity, or highway safety.

**RESOLVED** (by 14 votes to nil, with one councillor absent from the meeting)

To approve application 11/01443/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. External materials specified in application
3. Boundary treatments
4. Car parking provision
5. Bicycle storage provision
6. Vehicular access and visibility splays
7. Scheme of archaeological investigation
8. Surface water drainage scheme

## **PI.70 11/01453/OUT - Outline application for residential development for a maximum of 18 units and associated works including demolition, construction of new access road and landscaping. 'broadwater', Manor Road, Wantage**

Councillors Roger Cox, Jenny Hannaby, Anthony Hayward, John Morgan, Jerry Patterson and Robert Sharp each declared personal interests in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, they remained in the meeting during its consideration.

The planning officer asked the committee to consider the principle of development on this site and the means of access. The detailed application stage would consider all other matters. The officer had received an additional letter of objection raising concerns referred to by other objectors. He recommended an additional condition to require Thames Water to approve a drainage strategy before any connection to the foul or surface water system.

Mr Geoffrey Somerset made a statement on behalf of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. He objected to the application as the site was outside the development boundary and inside the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The council had not identified the site for housing in the local plan. It would represent urban sprawl.

Mr Roger Turnball also objected to the application on similar grounds to Mr Somerset. In addition, he believed that permitting the application would prejudice the interim policy the council had not yet adopted. A planning inspector had previously refused an application on this site and permission would be contrary to local plan policies and national planning guidance.

Mr Peter Stacey, the applicant's agent, made a statement in support of the application, believing that the proposal complied with national planning guidance and the development would not affect the character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Mr Terry Gashe made a statement in support of the application as a near neighbour. He believed that the site would be developed one day and to approve it now, rather than it being approved on appeal, would allow the council to control the development.

The local member believed that the proposal was inappropriate for this location and would add traffic to an already busy road. Some councillors agreed.

The planning officer reminded the committee that it could not refuse an application on traffic grounds without an objection from a technical expert such as the County highways officer or an independent traffic consultant. Refusing an application on these grounds without an expert opinion would result in the council losing a planning appeal and the council would have costs awarded against it also.

The committee noted that the council had to provide a five-year housing land supply. Due to a delay in producing the council's core strategy, and the economic downturn, house building had slowed and the council's main strategic development site at Grove airfield had not commenced. The council only had housing land for 2.8 years. This left the council open to planning by appeal where it would have no control over new development. The intention was that the council would soon adopt an interim housing policy to address this problem. However, in the meantime, the committee was reminded that the lack of a five-year housing land supply was a material consideration when determining this application.

Some councillors considered that the site was inappropriate for housing development as it was a greenfield site in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and outside the development boundary.

Other councillors considered that the committee should delegate authority to approve the application and that the affordable housing should be distributed across the site and its design should be indistinguishable from the private market housing on the site. The chairman proposed this as an amendment to the officer's recommendation. He put this proposal to the meeting but it was lost by three votes to twelve.

The planning officer reminded the committee that it needed substantiated planning grounds to refuse the application. It was proposed by the vice-chairman, Councillor John Morgan, and seconded by Councillor Bill Jones that the application should be refused for a similar reason to that set out in paragraph 4.1 of the officer's report. This referred to the majority of the site being in the open countryside, resulting in a harmful change to the character of this part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A previous proposal for development on this site had been refused for this reason in May 2010. The chairman put the motion to the vote. It was carried.

**RESOLVED** (by twelve votes to three)

To refuse application 11/01453/OUT for the following reason:

The majority of the application site sits outside the Wantage development boundary and the proposal is considered to be unjustified development in the open countryside. Given the resultant change in the character of the landscape and the scale and siting of the buildings, the proposal is considered to be harmful to the rural character and appearance of the area and would not preserve or enhance the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies DC1, GS2, H13 and NE6 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011.

**PI.71 11/01541/FUL - Demolition of existing two storey annex. erection of a two storey extension/annex and alterations. Creation of a roadway over existing pond. Candleshoe, Manor Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8NE**

Councillor Anthony Hayward declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this application and in accordance with standing order 34, he left the meeting during its consideration. All other councillors present declared personal interests in this application as they knew Councillor Hayward and in accordance with standing order 34, they remained in the meeting during its consideration.

Further to the report, the committee noted that the town council had not raised any objections to this application.

The committee considered that the proposal would not harm the character of the area and would conserve the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There were no adverse impacts on residential amenity of neighbours or highway safety, and the proposal complied with local plan policies.



**RESOLVED** (by 14 votes to nil, with one councillor absent from the meeting)

To approve application 11/01541/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit - Full application
2. Materials in accordance with application

**PI.72 10/01907/OUT - Outline application for residential development and associated access (re-submission of withdrawn application SUT/19470/8-X). Amey Roadstone Ltd, Appleford Road**

The committee was asked to consider the principle of development on this site and its detailed means of access. In an update to his report, the planning officer reported that he had received one additional letter of objection on the same grounds as other objections. The officer reported that the County Council supported the application on highways grounds, subject to conditions, but objected on sustainability grounds, believing that the site was too far from village services. The officer also suggested an additional condition to remove permitted development rights.

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council's chairman, Mike Jenkins, addressed the committee raising concerns set out in the parish council's letter of objection appended to the officer's report. He also raised concerns that the sewerage system would be unable to cope with the new development, the application was contrary to council policy and had no history of residential development, and there would be a loss of employment and increased traffic.

Steven Sensecall, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application.

The committee noted that the council had to provide a five-year housing land supply. Due to a delay in producing the council's core strategy, and the economic downturn, house building had slowed and the council's main strategic development site at Grove airfield had not commenced. The council only had housing land for 2.8 years. This left the council open to planning by appeal where it would have no control over new development. The intention was that the council would soon adopt an interim housing policy to address this problem. However, in the meantime, the committee was reminded that the lack of a five-year housing land supply is a material planning consideration when determining this application.

The Committee considered that this application was acceptable as an exception to planning policy. It was a brownfield site, not a greenfield site. Conditions attached to the permission would adequately control the development, would improve access to the site, and would assist the council in providing housing land. The committee urged the officers to achieve as much for the village as possible from the section 106 agreement. Contributions to school provision and other infrastructure were important. Councillors noted that the County Council was considering road improvements at the junction of Appleford Road and Abingdon Road, possibly a roundabout. Councillors noted that the problems with the local sewerage system related to maintenance issues, not capacity. The committee asked the officers to discuss this with Thames Water.

Councillors noted that the detailed application would deal with boundary treatment adjacent to the Millennium Park. Third parties would be consulted on the proposals.

Councillors suggested that for each application where there was a change of use, the report should include an analysis of whether the new development would generate more

traffic. Another suggestion was that where the officers recommended a section 106 agreement, future reports should list the items that were included in the draft agreement.

**RESOLVED:** (by 14 votes to 1)

To authorise the head of planning in consultation with the committee chairman, the opposition spokesman and the local member to approve application 10/01907/OUT subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) and subject to appropriate conditions, including removing permitted development rights. The section 106 agreement to require the provision of 40% affordable housing and secure the payment of sums to mitigate the impact of the development on local services and infrastructure.

### **Exempt information under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972**

None

The meeting rose at 9.02 pm