

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee

held on Wednesday, 1 August 2018 at 6:30 pm
in The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Sandy Lovatt (Chairman), Janet Shelley (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Davenport, Robert Hall, Jenny Hannaby, Bob Johnston, Ben Mabbett and Catherine Webber.

Officers: Nathaniel Bamsey, Holly Bates, Adrian Butler, Kathy Champion, Steve Culliford, Matt Gaskin, Emil Hamerton, Josh Sharp and Sally Stradling.

Also present: Richard Peets of Historic England, Richard Warren of Oxfordshire County Council, Councillors Matthew Barber, Roger Cox, St John Dickson and Julia Reynolds.

Number of members of the public: 30

PI.32 Chairman's announcements

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedure to be followed and advised on emergency evacuation arrangements.

The officer updated the committee that a revised National Planning Policy Framework had been published on 24 July 2018. The officers were satisfied that no agenda items needed to be deferred as a result of the revised framework as this was published since the publication of the committee's agenda. Officers would update the committee of any changes to reports upon presenting their item.

PI.33 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anthony Hayward.

PI.34 Declarations of interest

Councillor Johnston declared that he knew various public speakers due to speak in relation to items on the agenda. He would not stand down on any items for this reason but would stand down, as ward member for Kennington and Radley, when item 8 was discussed.

Councillor Mabbett, as a member of Wantage Town Council, made a statement that in relation to items 10 and 11 on the agenda he was not present when the applications were discussed at the Town Council's Planning Committee so would partake in the debate and voting.

Councillor Hall made a statement that he knew Dr Chris Wilding, of Steventon Parish Council, but would partake in the debate and voting for item 6.

Councillor Hannaby, as a member of Wantage Town Council, made a statement that in relation to items 10 and 11 on the agenda she was not present when the applications were discussed at the Town Council's Planning Committee so would partake in the debate and voting.

PI.35 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

PI.36 Public participation

The list showing members of the public who had registered to speak was tabled at the meeting.

PI.37 P17/V1154/LB - Steventon Overbridge, High Street, Steventon

The committee considered application P17/V1154/LB for the demolition of the Grade II listed Steventon Overbridge, High Street, Steventon and the provision of a replacement bridge.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance, and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report, which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Dr Chris Wilding, a representative of Steventon Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application.

Robert Green, a local resident spoke objecting to the application. Julie Maberley, on behalf of Francis G Sketch, was available for questions.

Ian Wheaton of Network Rail Town Planning, Nick Preston of Network Rail Sponsorship and Al Byers, Network Rail Consents Manager, spoke in support of the application.

Matthew Barber, ward member for Steventon and The Hanneys, spoke objecting to the application.

In response to questions raised by the committee, the officers reported that:

- Oxfordshire County Council have considered traffic diversions since Network Rail made this application if approval was given to demolish the bridge. There was an informal agreement with Highways England to use the A34 as an alternative route. If the application was approved, the County Council would work closely with Highways England to ensure sufficient signposting of the diversion route and National Rail would be requested to host a public event to inform local residents and businesses.
- No economic study had been carried out to consider the impact of the road closure if the bridge were to be demolished but this was not a material planning consideration.
- The demolition would be in keeping with the Local Plan.

- A car park could be discussed as a condition on this application to mitigate the impact of the road diversion. A car park was not originally a condition on this application as it was not material to listed building consent considerations; this would be an agreement between National Rail and Oxfordshire County Council Highways in discussion with local residents. The local planning authority cannot enforce this.
- Richard Peets, from Historic England confirmed that the organisation did not object because it accepted the justification given by Network Rail to demolish the bridge.

The officer advised the committee that if it were to refuse this application, it must be satisfied and provide material reasons that demolition of the bridge is not outweighed by the public benefit at a national level.

The committee agreed that the bridge should be preserved and that its loss would not significantly improve infrastructure at a national level. National Rail had not demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances which justified the demolition, so paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework would be contradicted. Local residents and businesses would suffer due to road diversions and there was some concern that there had been a lack of public consultation. The committee did not believe that the inconvenience of lowering the track outweighed the listed building nature of the bridge. Further, train delays at present had not drastically affected the current timetable, despite some members of the committee arguing that the bridge constrains the railway network.

A motion, moved and seconded, to refuse listed building consent for the demolition of the Grade II listed overbridge at Steventon, was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to refuse application P17/V1154/LB for listed building consent for the demolition of the Grade II listed overbridge at Steventon for the following reasons:

- The proposed demolition of the Grade II listed Steventon Overbridge is not outweighed by the needs of the national infrastructure project and the wider public and national benefit.
- The proposal is contrary to paragraphs 193, 194 and 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant policies in the Local Plan.

PI.38 P18/V0692/RM - Steventon Road Nurseries, Steventon Road, East Hanney, Wantage

The committee considered a reserved matters application P18/V0692/RM for the erection of 40 dwellings including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale at Steventon Road Nurseries, Steventon Road, East Hanney.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance, and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report, which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Judy Long, a representative of East Hanney Parish Council, spoke objecting to the application.

Nick Francis, the applicant's architect, spoke in support of the application.

In response to questions raised by the committee, the officers reported that:

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- As a general rule, electric charging points could be added as a condition to reserved matters applications but only if it was justified to do so. The officers advised against adding this as a condition to this particular application as this site is not in an Air Quality Management Area and technology was advancing so charging points might not be the way forward. Further, the government had not yet confirmed whether this would be a planning or building control issue, so such a condition would be difficult to enforce.

Officers confirmed that a condition would be added relating to slab levels and a note to the applicant expecting winter/spring groundwater monitoring to be undertaken prior to any details being submitted seeking approval of a surface water drainage scheme. The ground water monitoring needs to be used to inform the drainage scheme

The committee agreed that this application was acceptable but that more consultation from developers with local residents was desirable at reserved matters stage.

A motion, moved and seconded, that reserved matters be approved, was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: that the reserved matters application P18/V0692/RM be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. **Approved plans.**
2. **Materials to be agreed before work above slab level.**
3. **Landscaping implementation.**
4. **Road surfacing prior to completion.**
5. **Parking spaces to be provided before occupation.**
6. **Boundary details to be submitted and approved - details implemented prior to occupation.**
7. **Play area details to be approved and implemented.**
8. **Bin collection points to be agreed.**
9. **No street lighting.**
10. **Garages to be retained.**
11. **Working hours to be Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00 and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturday. No works on Sundays or public holidays.**
12. **Slab levels to be agreed prior to commencement of development. Note to the applicant: winter/spring ground water monitoring required and needs to be used to inform the surface water drainage scheme.**

The planning conditions and Section 106 agreement for the outline permission remain applicable.

PI.39 P18/V1179/CM - North of the A420 Botley Road to south of the A423 ring road

The committee considered application P18/V1179/CM regarding an Environment Agency flood alleviation scheme to the north of the A420 Botley Road to the south of the A423 ring road to reduce flood risk in Oxford. This application had been submitted to Oxfordshire County Council whereas this council was a consultee and its comments were being sought.

Councillor Johnston, as ward member for Kennington and Radley, stood down from the committee and took no part in the debate or voting for this item.

Consultations, representations, policy and guidance, and the site's planning history were detailed in the officer's report, which formed part of the agenda pack for this meeting.

Officer updates since the publication of the agenda:

- The revised National Planning Policy Framework published in July 2018 had resulted in an amendment to paragraph 5.9 of the report for this item. The Green Belt paragraph should now read "paragraph 146" rather than "90". The purposes of Green Belt itself have not changed.

Debbie Dance, Director of Oxford Preservation Trust, spoke in relation to the application. She did not object in principle but urged the committee to champion the rural nature of the area.

Councillor Roger Cox, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Bob Johnston, ward member for Kennington and Radley, spoke in relation to this application.

In response to questions raised by the committee, the officers reported that:

- Suggestions raised by Councillor Johnston relating to the nature of the trees planted, such as the inclusion of Alder and Hazel Willow and small-leaved Lime trees and not Ash or Sycamore trees, would be considered when drafting the formal response.
- The council could request to be notified and be a consultee when the developer notified Oxfordshire County Council of any unsuspected contamination encountered during the development.
- The design of the Willow Walk and Devils Backbone bridges should be revisited to reduce their engineered appearance and be more in keeping with the rural nature of the area.

The committee had no objection in principle and raised minor suggestions to the officer's recommended response as outlined in responses from officers.

The officer confirmed that draft comments as set out in the report would be redrafted based on the suggestions from the committee. This would then be sent to Councillor Roger Cox as Leader of the Council, Councillor Sandy Lovatt as Chairman of the Planning Committee and the relevant ward members for comment before being formally submitted to Oxfordshire County Council.

RESOLVED: The committee agreed to formally submit the following comments to Oxfordshire County Council in response to the Environment Agency's flood alleviation scheme (application P18/V1179/CM) following officer amendments in consultation with Councillor Roger Cox as Leader of the Council, Councillor Sandy Lovatt as Chairman of the Planning Committee and the relevant ward members. This response had been re-drafted based on suggestions made by the committee:

1. This council has no objection in principle to a flood alleviation scheme to reduce flood risk in Oxford.

2. This council is concerned the proposals may have a negative impact on biodiversity and could have an adverse impact on Egrove Park Meadow Local Wildlife Site (LWS). The County Council should seek additional information to:
 - Clearly demonstrate that the overall result of the proposals can deliver a net gain for biodiversity. To do this the Environment Agency should use a Biodiversity Impact Calculator following the methodology developed by Defra as part of the Biodiversity Offsetting pilot scheme.
 - information should be provided for the area around Egrove Park Meadow LWS so that the conclusions in the Environmental Statement (ES) can be checked and verified
 - The landscaping scheme should not include:
 - i. ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*). This is not a species recommended for planting due to ash die-back disease
 - ii. Sycamore trees (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), as it does not support much biodiversity compared to native trees and it is an invasive species
 - This council encourages the greater use of willow (*Salix*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) in the landscaping scheme. These trees are flood tolerant and beneficial to wildlife. Willow (*Salix*) will need to be well managed.
3. A revised Heritage Impact Assessment should be submitted to assess:
 - The age and time layering of views. The heritage value of trees in the views needs to be clearly ascertained and a deeper understanding of views provided such that a reasoned assessment and proposal methodology can be followed. This would best be provided in a sequence of historic map overlays with views clearly marked and which should cover the JMW Turner views and those once perceived by John Ruskin and his followers in North Hinksey
 - Explain how the case for tree removal and re-planting and the position of new planting is arrived at with regard to the proposed planting of 9.7ha of new woodland to replace up to 398 individual trees or groups of trees
 - Research on the network of routes criss-crossing the proposal site should be carried out such that their significance nationally, regionally and locally can be better understood and more effective proposals made for their retention, enhancement and appreciation
4. The Landscape and Visual Assessment reassesses the impact of the proposed scheme in views of North Hinksey Village and the area of land between Botley Road and Willow walk and also the proposed mitigation planting. This council is seeking to understand the impact of the scheme in views. Will tree removal impact in views by exposing existing buildings which may then detract from existing views to the village or Oxford's spires? Will new planting once mature restrict current views of the village or Oxford's spires?
5. The proposed planting is revisited so it better reflects the local landscape character and screens existing development particularly that on Botley Road. This council would support the planting of willow (*Salix*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*). This council does not support the planting of ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) or sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

6. The design of the Willow Walk and Devils Backbone are revisited to reduce their engineered appearance by reducing their width, use of materials in keeping with the rural character of the area. If this is not possible the Environment Agency needs to provide full justification for the width and use of materials.
7. Should the County Council be minded to approve the application the following planning conditions should be imposed to require:
 - A detailed landscaping scheme, its implementation, and maintenance
 - Alternative bridge designs and materials to be submitted and agreed for Willow Walk and the Devil's Backbone crossings
 - Restrict working to 07:30-18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00-13:00 on a Saturday; and no work to take place on Sundays or Public Holidays
 - Require a Construction Environmental Management Plan to be agreed
 - Require a Construction Traffic Management Plan to be agreed
 - The developer to notify the County Council of the presence of any unsuspected contamination encountered during the development. In the event of any contamination to the land and/or water being encountered, no development shall continue until a programme of investigation and/or remedial works to include methods of monitoring and certification of such works undertaken has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (in consultation with the Vale of White Horse District Council).

PI.40 P18/V0113/FUL - Land to the East of Portway Cottages, Reading Road, East Hendred, Wantage

This application was deferred due to the meeting's time limit having been reached prior to its consideration. It will be considered at a later date, to be confirmed.

PI.41 P18/V0847/HH - 36 Aldworth Avenue, Wantage

This application was deferred due to the meeting's time limit having been reached prior to its consideration. It will be considered at a later date, to be confirmed.

PI.42 P18/V1049/HH - Corbiere, Springfield Road, Wantage

This application was deferred due to the meeting's time limit having been reached prior to its consideration. It will be considered at a later date, to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.57 pm