

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee

held on Wednesday, 3 June 2020 at 5.00 pm



This was a virtual meeting

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Bob Johnston (Chair), Val Shaw (Vice-Chair), Jerry Avery, Ron Batstone, Simon Howell (substituting for Cllr. Eric Batts), Diana Lugova, Robert Maddison, Janet Shelley and Max Thompson

Officers: Paul Bateman, Holly Bates, Steve Culliford, Steven Corrigan, Martin Deans, Adrian Duffield, Emily Hamerton, Susannah Mangion and Stuart Walker

Also present: Councillor Debby Hallett and Councillor Judy Roberts

PI.107 Chairman's announcements

The Chair had no announcements but ran through housekeeping arrangements as applied to virtual meetings.

PI.108 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Eric Batts. Councillor Simon Howell attended as his substitute.

PI.109 Declarations of interest

Councillor David Grant and Councillor Bethia Thomas, the members for Faringdon, declared an interest in item 7 on the agenda, 13 -17 London Street, Faringdon, declining to comment on this application. In a statement to the committee, each declared an interest; Councillor. Thomas had previously worked for, and continued to be friends with, the developer in question, and Councillor Grant lived in close proximity to the proposed development (the full text of their statement is given at Minute 113 below).

PI.110 Urgent business

The Chairman declared that there was no Urgent Business.

PI.111 Public participation

Statements made by the public and duly received within a published deadline had been circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and had also been published on the Council's website.

PI.112 P19/V0023/FUL - Tilbury Fields, off Bushy Close, Botley, Oxford, OX2 9SH

The Committee considered application P19/V0023/FUL, a retrospective application to regularise public realm works in connection with applications P07/V0741/O and P13/V0817/RM, including changes to approved roads and footpaths, parking areas, hard and soft landscaping, boundaries, recycling storage facilities, vehicle access prevention to Tilbury Lane, and surface water drainage. (As amended by plans and information received 19 June 2019 and 5 August 2019) at Tilbury Fields, off Bushy Close, Botley.

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 the meeting.

The planning officer reminded the committee that the application had been considered on 29 January 2020; the committee had resolved to defer the decision for officers to investigate and report back. The committee received a copy of the original report as an appendix to the report under consideration.

The Committee was advised of the requirement for a Deed of Variation to the S106 Legal Agreement. The original S106 agreement required the owner to provide 0.58 hectares of public open space to the council (together with a Public Open Space Commuted Sum). The council's infrastructure team had identified a problem with the initial land offer, as it included drainage elements which the council's property team was not willing to accept. Alternative public open space land had therefore been identified, but due to the estate layout, the alternative offer only amounted to 0.549 hectares, slightly below the 0.58 hectares required in the agreement. The planning considerations of this were dealt with in the report, but the committee was advised that if the shortfall was accepted, the S106 agreement would require a variation under S.106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The planning officer reported that land in Seacourt Road was outside the application's boundary and was owned by a third party. The developer had undertaken not to transfer the site to the residents until planning permission had been obtained. The developer's leading officer would be present at the handover event. The developer cited the hot weather as contributing to the dryness of the site and limiting growth and success in tree survival. There was an intention to have planting in two of the swales; seeding and herbicide spraying and watering would take place, and this whole operation would be monitored by the council's officers. The aim was to complete this remedial action before the handover in September 2020.

In respect of roads subsidence, the planning officer reported that there were four specific problem areas and that a meeting would be held with the contractor on Monday 8 June 2020 to finalise a programme of works, which would be shared with residents. It was reported that updated surface water drainage plans had been submitted for consideration in the application. The drainage scheme complied with CP42 and could be approved, but at present required gritting of porous areas.

The planning officer outlined changes to the spine roads on the development. Bollards were now in place in Tilbury Lane and Hope Way. Changes to parking areas around play areas and footpaths were also described. A plan was displayed, depicting the situation regarding progress in tree planting in Tilbury Lane. There were several trees missing and planting in public open space to the north of the site intended to compensate the deficiency. It was also intended that additional trees would be planted to the north east. At the south of the site (with Tilbury Lane to the east) there were no tree planting proposals, however there would be planting on the east side of Tilbury Lane and in the south of the site, near to Seacourt Road. Additionally, trees would be planted in the play area and at the main central square.

The planning officer concluded by stating that overall, the hard and soft landscaping changes presently being executed and proposed were acceptable to the previous scheme and did not affect the development's appearance. The tree planting was to be particularly welcomed. The remedial work was continuing, and changes could be secured by condition if necessary.

Councillor Judy Roberts, a local ward member, spoke in support of the application. She highlighted the problems encountered historically with respect to roads, landscaping and planting and was gratified that these were being solved through discussion between the parties concerned. However, it would be a challenge to ensure that the developers fully adhered to a planting timetable and it was hoped that the proposed measures would ensure this.

Councillor Debby Hallett, a local ward member, spoke in support of the application. She recalled the promises to residents of a pleasant green neighbourhood and, with the remedial works, it seemed that the development was now coming to a satisfactory conclusion.

The committee asked the planning officer if further conditions were required to ensure a successful completion of the remedial works, with maintenance, over a five-year timeframe. The committee also asked about assurance of the completion of the highways works. The planning officer replied that Recommendation 2, 'Landscaping implementation within the next planting season', would adequately cover the situation.

The Committee requested clarification on the financial implications of any road failure, future maintenance and management and who would be liable. The planning officer replied that road repairs had been monitored by the Oxfordshire County Council as they were re-laid, so officers saw no reason why they should fail. If damage occurred before handover to the management company, the developer would be liable, along with maintaining them. Once they were transferred, it was the responsibility of the management company to maintain and remediate where necessary.

A motion, moved and seconded, to grant planning permission for the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: to grant planning permission for application P19/V0023/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Approved plans
2. Landscaping implementation within next planting season
3. Re-gritting of porous paving areas within 12 months

Vale of White Horse District Council – Planning Committee Minutes

**PI.113 P19/V1340/FUL& P19/V1341/LB - 13-17 London Street,
Faringdon, SN7 7AE**

The Committee considered applications P19/V1340/FUL and P19/V1341/LB for the demolition of existing storage shed and garage to the rear of the property and conversion of existing offices, storage and bakery in the listed building into 2 x 2 bed apartments and 2 x 1 bed apartments. Development on land to the rear consisting of 3 x 1 bed apartments with associated parking and landscaping (bat survey received 18 July 2019) (revised Heritage Statement, Transport Statement, Design and Access Statement and revised drawings: C209.02A, C209.03B, C209.04B, C209.05A, C209.06A, C209.07A, C209.08A, C209.10A, C209.11A and C209.12A and Viability Statement, Contaminated land questionnaire received 6 December 2019 and amended by site plan C209.03revC received 14 Jan 2020) (amended plans showing vehicle tracking and cycle parking received 2 March 2020) at 13-17 London Street, Faringdon.

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 the meeting.

The democratic services officer read to the committee a statement made by the local ward members Councillor David Grant and Councillor Bethia Thomas (referred to above in minute 109 - Declarations of Interest), which gave their reasons for not commenting on the applications. The full text was;

“Dear Chair and members of the Vale of White Horse Planning Committee,

We are writing to you to explain why, despite being ward members for Faringdon, we are unfortunately unable to comment on this application due to conflicts of interests. Cllr. Thomas previously worked for and is friends with the developer in question, whereas Cllr. Grant lives in close proximity to the proposed development.

While we are aware that the Town Council are objecting to the development, we feel it would be improper for either of us to comment on this application in either direction to avoid the appearance of undue bias or impropriety. We understand the Development Manager has used her discretion under the circumstances to call this development into the planning committee and we thank the committee in advance for giving the application its consideration.

Yours faithfully,
Cllr. Bethia Thomas & Cllr David Grant”

The planning officer reported that the proposed scheme had been amended considerably since it was first submitted, notably the reduction in scale of the new-build accommodation. A viability report had been produced in respect of the office accommodation and was attached to the report (Appendix 1).

The Committee noted the relevant planning considerations in the determination of the application namely: the principle of the development – housing/employment/retail policy; visual impact and heritage considerations; impact on residential amenity, traffic, parking and highway safety; environmental considerations - flood risk, drainage, biodiversity and contamination considerations; and Community Infrastructure Levy.

The planning officer reported that the Faringdon Town Council wished to retain the office use, which it considered was supported by neighbourhood plan policies. The viability report, however, had concluded that residential use was the only realistic option; the office space had been unoccupied for four years. Additionally, planning officers did not consider that the proposed use detracted from the existing character of the property.

With respect to residential amenity, the planning officer reported that the original scheme had been significantly revised following officer input, reducing its height and scale and removing balconies to ensure that the impacts of overlooking and loss of light to neighbouring residents were limited. Planning conditions had been included to ensure rooflights were high-level and windows on the front elevation, facing Swan Lane, were obscure glazed.

The planning officer also reported that the existing flats within the listed building did not currently benefit from any allocated parking and this would continue to be the case. It was not reasonable in planning terms to require the current scheme to provide parking for existing residential units. Local residents were concerned that there was insufficient parking provided and that this would worsen existing on-street congestion. The County Highways Officer had carefully assessed the proposal and was aware of on-street parking issues in Faringdon. He was mindful of government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework concerning the need to assess parking in the light of local circumstances, including the proximity and availability of public transport. The site was located within Faringdon town centre, with convenient access to public transport options. Furthermore, there were on-street car parking controls in the vicinity. Considering all of these factors, the County Highways Officer did not object.

In response to a question from the committee regarding the location of cycle parking and bin stores, the planning officer reported that cycle parking would be situated in the north west corner of the site. There would be bin storage on Swan Lane. The new build flats would have storage in the north east area of the car space. The planning officer also reported that a construction management scheme would handle all construction and building works to minimise inconvenience to residents and the general public.

A motion, moved and seconded, to grant planning permission for the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

The committee then went to discuss the application for listed building consent.

The planning officer reported that the council's conservation officer was satisfied that the new-build element was of an appropriate height, scale and design, which respected its location and that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the significance of the listed building, and would preserve the character and appearance of the Faringdon Conservation Area, subject to conditions to ensure the internal and external detail of the proposal were acceptable. The works would not adversely affect the character of the listed building as a building of special architectural or historic interest. The Conservation Officer had confirmed that the proposed development was in keeping with the setting of the listed building. Officers were also of the view that the application complied with the development plan and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

A motion, moved and seconded, to grant listed building consent for the application was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED:

(a) to grant planning permission for application P19/V1340/FUL subject to the following conditions:

Standard

1. Commencement of development
2. Approved plans

Pre-Commencement

3. Pre-commencement landscaping scheme
4. Landscape implementation
5. Pre-commencement surface water drainage
6. Pre-commencement foul drainage
7. Pre-commencement archaeology – submission and implementation of Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
8. Pre-commencement Construction Method Statement (CMS)
9. Pre-commencement submission of a schedule of works and materials for historic fabric
10. Pre-commencement submission of joinery details, internal and external staircases and materials for new-build
11. Pre-commencement schedule of interventions to listed building to meet building regulations

Prior to Occupation

12. Pre-commencement details of bin store and cycle parking
13. Access and parking in accordance with approved plan
14. Bicycle parking in accordance with approved plans
15. Provision of new footway

Continuing Control

16. Obscure glazing
17. Rooflights – cil level
18. Rooflights – flush fitting, conservation type

Informatives

Works within the Highway
Detailed bats informative
Wild bird informative

(b) to grant listed building consent for application P20/V1341/LB subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement of works
2. Approved plans
3. Pre-commencement submission of a schedule of works and materials for historic fabric
4. Pre-commencement submission of joinery details
5. Pre-commencement schedule of interventions to listed building to meet building regulations

PI.1

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm