

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 5 July 2023 at 7.00 pm in Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

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

### **Present in the meeting room:**

Councillors: Max Thompson (Chair), Val Shaw (Vice-Chair), Cheryl Briggs, Jenny Hannaby, Diana Lugova, Robert Maddison, Mike Pighills and Jill Rayner  
Officers: Emily Hamerton (Planning Manager), Nathaniel Bamsey (Planning Officer) and Emily Barry (Democratic Services Officer)

### **Remote attendance:**

Officers: William Sparling (Planning Officer), Nathalie Power (Planning Officer) and Susie Royce (Broadcasting Officer).

## **18 Chair's announcements**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the meeting procedure to be followed. He also explained the emergency evacuation procedure.

## **19 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ron Batstone.

## **20 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Diana Lugova declared that she was ward member for item 7 on the agenda, P22/V2811/FUL. Councillor Lugova confirmed that she would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

## **21 Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

## **22 Public participation**

The committee noted the list of the members of the public who had registered to speak at the meeting

## **23 P22/V1425/FUL - 2A, 2, 6 and 6A, High Street, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6RS**

The committee considered planning application P22/V1425/FUL for the retention of the single storey barn, demolition of other existing buildings, and mixed use redevelopment comprise erection of a 3-storey building to the rear, a 2.5 storey building fronting the High Street and a single storey extension to the barn to provide no. 13 x residential units (Class C3) and no. 2 x Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) units, ancillary floorspace, car parking, cycle parking, landscaping, refuse and recycling storage and associated works on land at 2A, 2, 6 and 6A High Street, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6RS.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the site was located in the centre of Steventon adjacent to the existing Co-Op. The current use of the site was commercial but the planning officer highlighted that the four buildings on the site were currently vacant. The planning officer noted there were two shop units at the front of the site adjacent to the High Street, at the north of the site there was an existing non-designated heritage barn and a workshop and to the southwest corner of the site there were two 3-storey buildings in commercial use. The planning officer identified that the site incorporated an access from the north of the site from The Causeway and an access from the east of the site from High Street. The planning officer stated it was important to note that the site benefited from a previous consent which was extant. He went on to highlight that the extant permission included changes to the car parking arrangements on High Street, retention of one of the buildings on the front of the site but, most importantly for the application before committee, seven new apartments in two buildings to the rear of the site. The planning officer pointed out these new buildings, granted permission under P21/V0140/FUL, were essentially the same as the new buildings applied for under the application before the committee.

The planning officer informed the committee that the proposal comprised 13 dwellings specifically 12 apartments and one, one bed dwelling within the non-designated heritage barn. The officer went on to confirm that there would be five one-bedroom apartments in the High Street frontage and seven apartments in the new buildings to the rear as granted under the extant permission. In addition two commercial units were proposed. The planning officer advised that there was an error in the officer's report which stated that the development would provide 17 parking spaces. 16 spaces were to be provided, 13 for the apartments and three for the commercial units. The officer went on to confirm the application had been assessed on this basis and that the correct site plan had been considered. In addition to this there were 38 cycles spaces being proposed and four Sheffield stands on the frontage for use by the commercial units.

The planning officer advised that a question had been raised around the flood risk of the site. He noted that whilst the site was in flood zones one, two and three the applicant had submitted a Flood Risk Assessment which identified a flood risk evacuation route allowing residents to escape in the event of an emergency. The planning officer confirmed should planning permission be granted that it would be conditioned to require more detail of the flood risk evacuation route plan.

Councillor Dr Chris Wilding spoke on behalf of Steventon Parish Council, objecting to the application.

Vanessa Clipstone from Laister Planning Limited, the agent representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Sally Povolotsky, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee enquired as to the planning officer's opinion on the car parking provision and understanding of applicable Oxfordshire County Council parking standards. The planning officer confirmed that during the life of the application the Oxfordshire County Council parking standards had changed. The standard stated a maximum number of spaces, not a minimum standard. The relevant standards were up to one space per one bedroom and up to two spaces per bedroom. Applying this standard would give up to 18 car parking spaces for the apartments. The planning officer went on to confirm that the number required for buildings in use Class E was variable but that the requirement would be for three to five spaces. The planning officer was therefore of the opinion that the scheme before the committee was in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council parking standards. The committee went on to enquire whether there was a difference between the standards applied to towns and villages. The planning officer confirmed fewer spaces are required for developments in towns and that the application before committee had been assessed against the rural and villages' standard.

The committee agreed that the site required redevelopment. It reflected that the granting of the extant permission had been an on-balance decision and it felt that the current application was overdevelopment on this small site. The committee had concerns about the requirement for a turntable to make the development work practically and the issues this would come with, such as maintenance. The committee noted that Steventon was overcrowded from a vehicular perspective and there was no parking capacity elsewhere in the village. It felt that the Oxfordshire County Council standards only worked where capacity exists elsewhere.

A motion, moved and seconded, to refuse the application was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to refuse planning application P22/V1425/FUL, for the following reason(s):

1. That having regard to the extant permission this current proposal is an overdevelopment of the site, incorporating an overbearing quantum, form and layout of development which is cramped and contrived and unsuitably designed (demonstrated by the inclusion of two turntables for vehicles for example). The overdevelopment would be harmful to the overall character and legibility and appearance of the site and surrounding area, contrary to Vale of White Horse LPP1 policies Core Policy 37 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) and Core Policy 38 (Design Strategies for Major Development Sites).
2. That the access to the proposed development would be highly restricted with improper access and parking arrangements for all vehicles placing undue pressure on the surrounding road network. The access for all vehicles will be highly constrained, it lacks sufficient suitable parking (including residential, commercial and visitor parking) leading to an unsuitable over reliance on the nearby streets for vehicle parking for the new development. This would be harmful to the character and legibility and appearance of the site and surrounding area, have a discouraging and detrimental impact on active modes of travel and would lead to a detrimental impact on highway safety. This is contrary to Vale of White Horse LPP1 policies Core Policy 33 (Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility), Core Policy 35 (Promoting

Public Transport, Cycling and Walking) and Vale of White Horse LPP2 Development Policy 16 (Access).

3. In the absence of a signed Section 106 agreement the proposal fails to secure the necessary infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of the proposed development. The infrastructure required the proposal fails to secure includes adequate affordable housing provision at 20%, suitable provision of street naming and numbering, adequate waste management, waste collection and recycling, highways agreements and highways mitigation, contrary to Vale of White Horse LPP1 policies Core Policy 4 (Meeting our Housing Needs) and Core Policy 7 (Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **24 P22/V2811/FUL - 3 Sandford Lane Kennington Oxford Oxfordshire, OX1 5RW**

Councillor Diana Lugova declared a non-registerable interest in this item as she was local ward member. She stood down from the committee during the consideration of this application and did not participate in the debate or vote.

The committee considered planning application P22/V2811/FUL for the construction of 4no. one bed flats and associated parking and external landscaping, following demolition of the existing dwelling at 3 Sandford Lane (as amended by plan received 12 December 2022 and plans received 2 March 2023 and updated description agreed 28 February 2023 and amended plans received 13 April 2023 and as amended by plans 26 May 2023), on land at 3 Sandford Lane, Kennington Oxford Oxfordshire, OX1 5RW.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the application was referred to the committee at the discretion of the planning manager. He went on to advise that the application followed a previous refusal for five flats on the site which had been dismissed at appeal. He informed the committee that the application before them comprised two ground floor and two first floor flats. Five parking spaces would be provided to the front of the property and the new building would be set down from the existing ground level. The planning officer went on to compare the current application with that which was dismissed at appeal and highlighted that the main area of concern for the inspector had been the harm to visual amenity due to the over engineering of the proposal, notably through the provision of level parking which would have required the use of retaining walls. The planning officer noted that under the current proposal, much of the existing gradient was to be retained, the parking would be set off from the highway and no retaining walls would be required. As such he was of the view that the proposed changes were sufficient to overcome the inspector's previous findings of over engineering. The planning officer went on to note that the overall scale of the proposal was similar to that of the previous application on the site and that this had been acceptable to the inspector.

The planning officer informed the committee that properties in the road were set above the highway and that there was a staggered building line. He identified that there were a number of other properties along Sandford Lane with significant areas of hardstanding but in general there was a mixture of hardstanding and garden, as found by the inspector.

The planning officer concluded that the main considerations when determining the application were impacts on design and character, highways safety and neighbour impact

and that the previous appeal decision was also an important consideration. The officer advised that for the reasons set out in the officer's report and subject to the recommended conditions officers were of the view that the application was not harmful to visual amenity, highway safety nor to neighbours and that the previous findings of the inspector had been overcome and therefore the application was recommended for approval.

Councillor Martin Feather spoke on behalf of Kennington Parish Council, objecting to the application.

Nick Humphreys spoke, objecting to the application.

Terry Winter, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

The committee had conducted a site visit prior to the meeting. The committee asked why it was acceptable for the proposed roof line to stand two metres taller than the buildings either side of the property. The planning officer confirmed this was consistent with the previous appeal decision which stated that although the roof height would be greater than neighbouring properties, its eaves height would be similar and the form, scale and appearance of the building would complement the variety of buildings in the area. The planning officer agreed with this conclusion and noted that increased height did not always result in harm. The committee asked a follow up question as to the impact moving the building further back on the site had. The planning officer pointed out that moving the building further back on the site resulted in less impact on the street scene although agreed it could have more impact on the neighbouring properties. He confirmed that the proposal was compliant with the 45 degree rule, as set out in the adopted Design Guide.

The committee asked for confirmation that there would not be an over engineered appearance to the scheme, similar to that which the inspector had been concerned about in the previously refused application. The planning officer confirmed that an approved plans condition was recommended and therefore the proposal would need to be built in accordance with the section plans submitted, which did not contain a retaining wall. If a retaining wall was needed this would require separate planning permission.

The committee asked for confirmation that the Highways Authority was content there was sufficient sweep for a van to turnaround on the drive. The planning officer confirmed that the Highways Authority had been consulted and raised no objections in terms of turning space. It was delegated to officers to word a suitable condition to secure the double yellow lines/offsite highway works and to gain the agreement of the applicant.

The committee reflected that the concerns raised by the Planning Inspector in the appeal decision had been addressed and that whilst the overbearing nature of the dwelling had been raised by neighbours this was not raised as an issue by the Planning Inspector.

The committee had concerns about highways safety, specifically as the property was situated on a corner. It requested a pre-occupation condition was added for double yellow lines and offsite highways works to be secured.

A motion was moved to approve the application. This was not seconded and therefore the motion failed.

An alternative motion was requested. As no motion was put forward the chair put forward the officer's recommendation to approve the application, which was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to approve planning application P22/V2811/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

#### Standard

1. Commencement of development within three years
2. Approved plans list Prior to commencement
3. Off-site highway works scheme to be submitted prior to commencement
4. Surface water drainage scheme to be submitted
5. Phased contaminated land risk assessment to be submitted Prior to development above slab level
6. Landscaping scheme to be submitted Prior to first use
7. Contaminated land validation report in line with condition 4 to be submitted
8. Access, parking and turning in accordance with submitted details
9. Bicycle parking details to be submitted
10. Landscaping scheme implementation in line with condition 5
11. Boundary details in accordance with submitted details
12. Refuse storage in accordance with submitted details Compliance
13. Slab levels in accordance with submitted details
14. Materials in accordance with submitted details
15. Obscured glazing for first floor side facing windows

#### Informatives

16. Works within the Highway
17. CIL- Planning permission or reserved matters approval (Vale)

## **25 P22/V2607/FUL - Colt Corner Horn Lane East Hendred Wantage, OX12 8LD**

The committee considered planning application P22/V2607/FUL for the demolition of existing bungalow. Construction of a new 4 bedroom dwelling. Conversion of the existing garage into an ancillary residential annexe (as amended by plans and additional supporting information received 03 March 2023) on land at Colt Corner, Horn Lane, East Hendred Wantage, OX12 8LD.

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 introduced the report and highlighted that the site was located in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and was bounded to the north by the East Hendred Conservation Area. The officer highlighted that along Horn Lane there was a mixture of single and two storey buildings fronting the road, but westwards the properties were set further back from the road in larger plots.

The planning officer informed the committee that, subject to proposed conditions, there were no outstanding technical matters on the application but the impact of the proposals design upon the appearance of the site and the character of the area were key considerations. Whilst the officer noted that design could be subjective having taken into account the scale, bulk and massing of the proposed dwelling, the size of the plot and the proposed positioning of the dwelling on the plot and the differences in land level between the site and Horn Lane, the officer recommendation was to refuse the application.

Councillor Roger Turnbull spoke on behalf of East Hendred Parish Council, objecting to the application.

Steve Gardner and Steve Badcock spoke objecting to the application.

Hannah Wiseman from Bluestone Planning, the agent representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

The committee asked why the reason for refusal only made reference to core policy 37 and why the officer had not included core policy 39 and DP 36 and 37 and CP 44. The planning officer confirmed that whilst the conservation officer's comments referred to impact upon the conservation area, when it had been weighed in the planning balance that impact was limited. She confirmed that the proposal had a limited but not unacceptable heritage impact.

The committee asked the planning officer to describe the nature of the elevated plot in relation to the other surrounding buildings. The planning officer confirmed that the height difference from Horn Lane to the level ground of the site was approximately 1.4 metres. She advised that the topography of the site was variable depending on which angle you were approaching it from.

The committee asked if there were any specific design features which the officer felt were unacceptable or if it was an accumulation of factors. The planning officer confirmed it was a combination of factors, notably the design of the dormers and eaves height taken in combination with the massing of the building and how it was set forward in the plot.

The committee appreciated that the site was not located within the conservation area but had concerns about the impact the development would have on the conservation area due to its proximity. The planning officer confirmed that the entrance to the proposed access fell within the conservation area.

A motion, moved and seconded to refuse the application was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to refuse planning application P22/V2607/FUL, for the following reason(s):

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development by way of its cumulative size, scale, bulk, massing, design and elevated positioning relative to adjacent public highway and the Conservation Area, does not present as an innovative, visually attractive, well-designed scheme, nor a scheme that responds positively to existing site topography and the transitional character of the immediate area. The proposal is considered contrary to Core Policies 37 and 39 of the Local Plan 2031 Part 1, design principles on built form held within the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide 2022 and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, in respect of achieving and maintaining well-designed places.

The meeting closed at 9.09 pm