

Planning Committee
Monday 15 February 2016

Addendum Report

Item 8 – Planning Application P15/V2545/O – Land at Challow Park (including former Council Depot), Challow Road, East Challow

The following additional consultation responses have been received subsequent to publication of the committee report:

East Challow Parish Council

Comments on amendment – *“East Challow Parish Council acknowledges receipt of the amendments to this application, however its objection still stands as detailed in the report submitted in response to the original application.”*

The Parish Council have also responded to the schedule of Section 106 contributions listed in the committee report covering sports and recreation and play. They have identified local projects that they consider would be better related to the development and so funds identified in the committee report should be re-directed to them. These can be summarised as follows:

- Football Pitches – There is a project for new flood-lighting and a semi-artificial pitch at East Challow Recreation Ground that the £5,580 identified for Stanford in the Vale should be re-directed towards.
- Rugby Pitches – There are plans for a new rugby pitch at East Challow recreation ground that the £1,394 identified for Grove Rugby club should be re-directed towards
- Cricket Pitches – This contribution of £2,729 should cover extensions/improvements to the club room and the provision of a new scoreboard
- MUGA – This contribution of £1,957 should also cover the provision of new tennis nets at the new MUGA which will be at East Challow Recreation Ground
- Children’s Play – This contribution of £1,848 should specifically cover the provision of equipment for older children at East Challow Recreation Ground

The Parish Council have also identified a number of additional community projects that they have requested Section 106 contributions to:

- Vicarage Hill Cemetery – Creation of new terraced area for ashes interment - £6,500
- Village Hall – Provision of new heating system and toilets - £22,000
- Challow Bridge Car Park extension - £20,000

- Provision of wooden fence around allotments at East Challow recreation ground - £10,000

Officer Response

Noted – the Parish Council report is attached as Appendix 3 to the committee report

The additional clarification of where the sport and leisure and play contributions should be spent is supported by officers – all contributions will go towards a costed project with alternative sources of funding identified by the Parish Council.

The additional community facility contributions will require further justification to demonstrate they meet the tests required within the NPPF. Should the committee support the recommendation of approval, officers will negotiate, where possible, with the Parish Council and the applicant to secure appropriately justified and proportionate contributions to these facilities.

Environment Agency

No objections subject to a condition requiring a preliminary risk assessment for land contamination to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of work on site. This is due to the proximity of the site to a Principal Aquifer.

Officer Response

Agreed – the recommendation within the report is altered to include this additional condition.

Landscape Architect:

“Landscape Character

...The introduction of housing on this site would change the local landscape character of the site, by intensifying the built form in this area including upgrading the sites access road. However the impact would be localised in nature with a moderate to minor landscape impact with a similar impact on the Important Open Land between East Challow and Wantage.

Visual Impact

The majority of the site is visually contained by existing mature vegetation on the sites boundaries. Therefore views of the site are predominately related to properties being visible through and above existing boundary vegetation.

- *The main visual impact of the proposed scheme would be related to the existing footpath which runs through the middle of the site. Views of the wider countryside from this footpath as it passes through the site are not currently possible due to the high vegetation on either side of the footpath. The proposed development would mean the existing footpath was less enclosed*

but views of the proposed housing would be clearly visible. From this footpath to the north of the site, there would be some slight adverse visual effects due to a small number of the proposed properties being visible through the existing trees.

- From the wider footpath network, views are restricted, by the effects of topography and vegetation. With some glimpsed views available. There will also be views from the A417 in the vicinity of the site.*
- Longer distance views of the site are restricted by the effects of topography, vegetation and the existing built form of East Challow and Wantage. Whilst some very long distance views are potentially possible from land to the south from the AONB, any new development would be seen through the southern boundary trees and would be a very small element in the view.*
- From residential properties the site would be visible from the properties either side on the site. The site is also visible also visible from a number of properties in East Challow and potentially visible from some properties on the edge of Wantage. However views would be restricted by the existing mature vegetation on sites boundaries.*
- The visual impact of the scheme will be greatest in the locality of the site, however the existing vegetation restricts the amount of built form available in these views. Existing landform, vegetation and built form restricts the amount of medium distance views to the site.*

The current enclosure of the site by mature vegetation means that although the proposed development of the site would be seen through and above the existing vegetation it would not have a significant impact on currently available open views across the Vale.

Additional planting is proposed on site to increase the existing boundary vegetation and the visual impact of the scheme is proposed to be moderate to minor in the vicinity of the site reducing with distance.

Layout

I note that this is an Outline application however I note the following items.

- The planting principles and species shown on the Landscape Proposals Plan are acceptable. I notes that the revised layout is an improvement with regard to the location of the POS and relationship of the site to the PRow through the site.*
- However if this application receives permission the treatment of the sites boundaries is critical, to allow for the maintenance of the existing site boundary vegetation. Close board fencing to the open countryside will not be acceptable, visually recessive boundaries will be required.*

Recommendations

No Landscape objection.

The proposed development would not cause unacceptable landscape and visual harm on the Lowland Vale NE9 and Important Open Land (NE10). While views of

the proposed development will be seen through and above the existing boundary vegetation, the development would not result in the loss of views but would introduce an additional built form in the views. These views are predominantly localised and the site is viewed in the context of Greenacre to the west and Challow Park House and Recording Studios to the east, which forms a tree bounded parcel of land within wider open countryside.

The proposal indicates that it has sought to mitigate the landscape and visual effects, with retaining the existing planting on the site boundaries and proposing additional planting.

Full details of soft and hard landscape proposals including boundary treatments will be required along with a Maintenance and Management Plan covering the POS and boundary planting areas to ensure the existing boundary planting and the proposed planting is implemented and maintained.”

Officer Response

The Landscape Officer comments are noted and officers agree with the overall recommendation of no objection. The limited opportunity to view the site from outside its boundaries due to strong boundary planting is discussed in the report and any reserved matters application will be expected to retain and supplement this planting. This strong planting limits the harm this development causes to the important open gap between Wantage and East Challow protected by Policy NE10 of the Local Plan

Boundary treatments will also be a detailed matter, and it is expected that any boundaries alongside the public realm will be brick walls rather than close-boarded fencing in the interests of visual amenity.

Forestry

“The application site, comprising areas to the east and west of the public footpath, has a significant number of mature trees, predominantly adjacent to the boundaries, which are visible from outside the site. There has been substantial felling of trees within the area to the east of the footpath since April last year. A cursory inspection revealed that 19 trees have been removed from the central area which is very disappointing, given that the maturity of the treescape is lauded throughout the design and access statement and the planning statement. Nevertheless, none of the trees had statutory protection and the question of their contribution to the visual amenity of the site is academic.

The layout has taken account of the most prominent remaining trees and the applicant has submitted an arboricultural report that assesses the impact of the proposals on the trees. The layout has been altered in response to concerns presented by my urban design colleague and the tree protection plan included within the arboricultural information will need updating accordingly. There are a number of Apple trees, established as a recent orchard, that are intended to be removed as a consequence of the layout. I have no particular issues with their loss, given that it is

not a feature that offers any real contribution to the area beyond the site and the amenity it affords could readily be recreated within a site specific landscape scheme.

The other factor that will need addressing is the management of the off-site mature Beech (T62). It has been assessed by the arboricultural consultant as being in poor condition with a limited safe useful life expectancy. I am in agreement with the assessment and advise that it should be removed and replaced prior to any development occurring in the vicinity. Its owners have a chequered history of tree management, many of the trees on and adjacent to their site have been severely affected by large-scale stacking of soil within what should be regarded as root protection areas. I spoke to the owners in 2014 in connection with tree protection during the course of implementing permitted works but my recent site visit revealed that they had paid no heed to any sort of good arboricultural practice since then.

If permission is forthcoming, consideration will need to be given to the submission of a tree protection plan, an arboricultural method statement and a detailed landscape scheme. It would be better if they were submitted with the reserved matters application but the arboricultural element could be conditioned at that time if necessary.”

Officer Response

The Forestry officer comments are noted. The trees that have been removed and those to be removed within the orchard will need to be replaced as part of a detailed application for the landscaping of the site. As noted by the Forestry officer, the treescape of the site is regularly quoted by the applicant as part of the justification for permitting the scheme, particularly in relation to the limited landscape harm discussed above.

Item 9 – Planning Application P15/V1110/O – 18 Cumnor Hill, Cumnor

Additional response from local resident

- The proposed development would generate additional traffic within the area;

Officer response:

The potential impact upon the highway safety has been assessed in detail by the Oxfordshire County Council Highway Officer and has been summarised at sections 6.19 – 6.21 of the committee report.

Item 10 – Planning application P15/V2670/HH – 237 Whitecross, Wootton

No updates

Item 11 – Planning Application P15/V2693/FUL – Carswell Golf Course, Buckland, Faringdon

No updates