

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee

held on Wednesday, 20 April 2016 at 6.30 pm
in the The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway,
Wantage, OX12 9BY



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Robert Sharp (Chairman), Sandy Lovatt (Vice-Chairman), Roger Cox, Stuart Davenport, Jenny Hannaby, Bob Johnston, Janet Shelley, Margaret Crick (In place of Catherine Webber), Robert Hall (In place of Chris McCarthy), Chris Palmer (In place of Anthony Hayward) and Ben Mabbett (In place of Eric Batts)

Officers: Brett Leahy, Martin Deans, Sarah Green, Susan Harbour, Laura Hudson and Josh Webley-Smith

Also present: Councillor Reg Waite

Number of members of the public: 40

PI.318 Chairman's announcements

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

PI.319 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence

As above.

PI.320 Declarations of pecuniary interests and other declarations

Councillor Robert Sharp declared an interest in the item: P15/V1948/FUL, Staddlestones, Church Street, Shellingford. He would leave the meeting for this item.

PI.321 Urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

PI.322 Statements and petitions from the public on planning applications

The list of registered speakers was tabled at the meeting.

PI.323 Materials

None.

PI.324 Statements, petitions and questions from the public on other matters

None.

PI.325 P14/V2873/O - Land to the west of Great Western Park, Didcot

This item was also attended by the following officers from Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department:

Jason Sherwood – Locality and Road Agreements Manager
Aron Wisdom – Senior Transport Planner
Lynette Hughes – Senior Planning Officer
Geoff Arnold – Principal Engineer

The officer presented the report and addendum on the application for outline planning application for a residential development of up to 4,254 dwellings, mixed-use local centres, primary schools, sports pitches, community and leisure facilities, special needs school, open space and extensive green infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping, attenuation areas, diversions to public rights of way, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated work at land to the west of Great Western Park, Didcot; also known as “Valley Park”.

The committee was asked to consider the principle of the scheme and the access arrangements.

The scheme had been in continuous negotiation between the developers, planning officers and consultees for 15 months.

Key points of the scheme were:

- The development would be distinct from Harwell village and there would be a buffer zone;
- There would be separate cycle routes and pedestrian routes;
- Integrated landscaping and
- Integrated parking.

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 Anthony Hughes spoke on behalf of Harwell Parish Council, with its full authorisation, his comments included the following:

- The Parish Council does not object to Valley Park as a strategic site but the Chairman is “disappointed, upset and furious” that local concerns have not been heard or have been rejected.
- There will be a 400 percent increase in the number of dwellings in the parish.

- There needs to be a green corridor on either side of the B4493 to prevent coalescence of Didcot and Harwell and to create a true rural gap.
- Condition 18 of the addendum is appreciated, but it is only a 35 metre wide strip of land on either side and is not sufficient. The Parish Council believes that no-build zones should extend further, especially on the north side where it should be 200 metres.

Kevin Williamson from the Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group (HarBUG) spoke, raising concerns about the application.

- The B4493 from Didcot to Harwell is a main cycle route.
- The proposed five arm roundabout takes no account of cyclists : cycling is not safely and conveniently integrated with the roundabout.
- This cycle route would link up three secondary schools, and so needs to be really safe.

The clerk read out a statement from **Didcot Town Council**, the key points are below:

- **Density:** The proposals include high density along the spine road and would present a cramped, hard and overly urban design. The suggested density of over 50 dwellings per hectare over substantial parts of the site is excessive and in particular the suggestion that 4-storey buildings could be included is inappropriate at this location, which is remote from the urban facilities of Didcot such as shops, cinema, swimming pool and urban parks.
- **Impact on GWP secondary school:** The planned school on Great Western Park was based on just GWP student numbers. As the students cannot go to Harwell there would need to be a considerable expansion of the school on GWP to match the required secondary school places.
- **No evidence of integration with Milton Park for pedestrians or cyclists:** The Transport Assessment and Travel Plan are weak concerning the routes to this nearest large-scale employment site by foot or cycle. The NPPF requires that plans give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements.
- **Noise:** The proposed layout does not properly address the proximity of the A34 and high noise levels for residents.
- **Sewerage Infrastructure:** There are problems with existing and planned sewage networks, sewerage pumping and treatment. Thames Water has overtly stated that they do not have the capacity for GWP water, sewage and surface drainage. The burden of Valley Park's needs and the proposed developments at Chilton and Harwell are considerable and will only increase the pressure on a system, which already cannot cope.
- **Flood Risk and SuDS:** Concern about the references to draining the standing water at the northern edge of the site into the existing watercourses and about the reference to SuDS. Whether the watercourses have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional run off which hard landscaping causes and not convinced that viable SuDS can be achieved given the geology. Permeable rocks underlie the more elevated parts of the site and impermeable clay the lower parts.

Nick Laister, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application. His speech included the following:

- The applicant has consulted extensively with stakeholders.

- As a result of the consultation the up to 100 metre corridor across the B4493 has been implemented.
- Milton Park and Harwell campus will benefit from this development as it would support employment.
- It is a genuinely accessible location.
- The developer will support the extension of Great Western Park secondary school which has extra land allocated as part of the section 106 agreement, to cater for Valley Park.
- The proposed development exceeds the council's land requirements for open space.
- The site would deliver 35 per cent affordable housing.

Councillor Reg Waite, one of the local ward members, spoke objecting to the application. His concerns included the following:

- This development impacts on Blewberry, Clifton and Harwell parishes.
- The Local Plan has not been sanctioned.
- Didcot Garden Town Project has not commenced.
- It is an agricultural area.
- The housing density is too high at approximately 40 dwellings per hectare.
- Four storey dwellings are inappropriate in rural settings.
- Assurances are needed that sufficient ground is allocated to the potential A34 expansion and community facilities.
- The B4993 is insufficient as a green buffer.
- Safety of access routes for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Local plan 2031 villages need to retain their distinctiveness and separateness.
- The section 106 agreement should be drafted so that lessons are learnt from the Great Western Park development.
- He would like a deferment of this application.

Janet Shelley, one of the ward councillors supported the concerns raised by the other speakers.

Stuart Davenport, one of the ward councillors, supported the concerns raised by the other speakers, and asked the developer and planning officers to engage with Milton Parish Council.

Officers responded to the points raised as follows:

- Section 106 requests had to meet the three statutory tests:
 1. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 2. directly related to the development; and
 3. fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
 Other requests did not pass the three tests.
- Local engagement has been critical and has changed the plans considerably.
- Provision for cyclists will be made on the roundabouts: officers are working with the developer
- Density is in accordance with good practice and the council's policy.
- The key to this site is connectivity, including for cyclists and pedestrians.
- The sewer for the site will tap into the Didcot trunk sewer.
- There is no five year housing land supply for this council which means that other policies are considered to be out of date and "not fit for purpose".

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate; the discussion included the following points:

- This was not building on prime agricultural land.
- The site was expected to deliver 1489 affordable housing units.
- The site would deliver community facilities.
- There were mitigation measures for traffic.
- Public transport and cycling had been included.
- Schooling was included.
- The site was near to the Harwell campus and to Science Vale UK.
- The plans had been modified through the development forum system.
- This was an outline application, and committee were considering the principle of the development and access. Other details would come back to this committee as reserved matters.
- The development will be as cycle friendly as possible, as this was critical to the success of the development.
- The committee had concerns about the flow of traffic on the access points, as currently presented and how this would be managed.
- Concerns were raised concerning conditions 33, 34 and 35 and whether they were strong enough to manage traffic flow (together with new condition 35). The County Council highways officers stated that traffic modelling had been undertaken and had shown that the spine road could accommodate the amount of expected traffic. It was also considered that public transport and cycling /walking would take some of the load given the local employment opportunities: they were therefore confident that the conditions, as proposed, were strong enough.
- The phasing of the development would be approximately 250 dwellings per year and there would be a 10 year roll out of the site. This raised concerns about when the facilities would come in the process.
- It is envisaged that the phasing would start in the North West corner and the facilities would come on board as the development stretched down to the southern area. Phasing would form part of the legal agreements.
- Concerns were raised that 10.5 metres would be too high for two-storey buildings.
- The A34 buffer zone does include provision for A34 widening.

The committee agreed that the proposal would not have a negative impact on the character of the area and that the design was in line with policy.

A motion, moved and seconded for approval, was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: (For: 11; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0)

To delegate authority to grant planning permission for application P14/V2873/O to the head of planning, subject to:

1: A S106 agreement being entered into with the district council in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing and public open space, and;

2: Headline conditions as follows (wording to be agreed):

1	Approved plans and document list
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2	Approved land uses (as per land use budget plan)
3	Commencement time limit
4	Time limit for submission of first reserved matters
5	Time limit for submission of remaining reserved matters
6	Submission of a site-wide Development Delivery Strategy
7	Submission of a Housing Delivery Document
8	Submission of a site-wide masterplan
9	Submission of reserved matters prior to each phase or sub-phase
10	Maximum number of dwellings on site 4,254
11	All reserved matters applications to contain not less than 50 dwellings
12	Development briefs to be submitted for key areas (local centres, leisure/community building etc.)
13	Details of extra care housing scheme to be submitted
14	Detailed Design Code to be submitted
15	Reserved matters application to include design statement compliant with design code
16	Submission of a site-wide phasing plan
17	Submission of Construction Environment Management Plan
18	No development within the B4493 green buffer shown on submitted plans
19	Hours of construction
20	Hard and soft landscaping scheme
21	Replacement planting if damaged/destroyed in five years
22	Tree protection scheme
23	Landscape management and maintenance plan
24	Noise impact assessment and mitigation measures for non-residential
25	Noise impact assessment and mitigation measures for residential
26	Hours of operation to be submitted for non-residential uses
27	Landscape and ecology management plan to be submitted
28	Written scheme of archaeological investigation to be submitted
29	Staged program of archaeological mitigation in accordance with WSI
30	Intrusive investigation for contamination to be carried out
31	Details of lighting to be submitted
32	Means of enclosure required before occupation
33	Roads/footpaths to each non-residential unit to be completed before use
34	Roads/footpaths to each residential unit to be completed before use
35	Highways England conditions
36	No materials to be deposited on any public right of way (PROW)
37	No construction vehicles to use any PROW
38	No residential or commercial access along any PROW
39	No gates access open across any PROW
40	Broadland strategy to be submitted
41	Submission of a drainage strategy for on and off site works
42	Studies of water supply infrastructure to be carried out
43	Surface water drainage scheme to be submitted
44	No built development in flood zones 2 and 3

45	8m buffer zone either side of watercourses
46	Construction environment management plan: biodiversity to be submitted
47	Details of watercourse crossings to be submitted
48	No infiltration drainage of surface water to ground
49	Air quality assessment and mitigation scheme to be submitted
50	Dust mitigation carried out in accordance with IAQM guidance
51	Submission of an employment and skills plan
52	Details of playing pitches and their delivery/management
53	Submission of a Framework Travel Plan prior to first occupation of any dwelling on site

PI.326 P15/V2863/O - The Potting Shed Nursery, Hinton Road, Longworth, Abingdon

The officer presented the report and addendum on application P15/V2863/O for outline planning permission for the erection of up to 13 dwellings with associated access. All other matters reserved. The Potting Shed Nursery, Hinton Road, Longworth, Abingdon.

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.

Longworth Parish Council chairman, Michael Pearce, spoke on behalf of the parish council. The council objected "vehemently" on the following grounds:

- The proposed application conflicts with policies in its emerging neighbourhood plan.
- The emerging neighbourhood plan may be a material consideration.
- The emerging neighbourhood plan had passed through consultation with overwhelming local support.

Richard Kenyon, a local resident, objected on behalf of a group of local residents:

- The proposed development is not proportionate: it will create a six per cent increase in housing stock.
- The site is not sustainable as there are few facilities.

Natasha Ireland (JPPC), the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application:

- The Vale does not have a five year housing land supply and the neighbourhood plan is not adopted and therefore carries limited weight.
- The development provides a number of smaller properties.
- There are local amenities.

The clerk read out a statement from the ward councillor, Anthony Hayward, the key points are below:

- The illustrative layout cannot be relied upon to assess the impact on the adjacent conservation area and listed buildings which border the site.
- The conservation area and listed properties which border to the east are a very important part of the site context.

- There can be no approval comments from the officer concerned or analysis of the impact upon the listed buildings and conservation area until an actual site layout is to be part of the application.
- This village has an unusual broken up layout with many wide open spaces between houses, and is part of its character.
- The site is in open countryside at the western gateway to the village and just outside the conservation area.
- The harm of such a development is similar to, if not greater, than the appeal site, it is bounded on one side only by housing, it is in effect part of the open countryside that defines the conservation area adjacent.
- If permission were granted it would destroy this open nature and encourage further development nearby. Indeed there is already an application for 9 units across the road in an open field setting.
- The sustainability issues are for a site with an irregular bus service which is about to be axed, over the recommended walking distances to an alternative bus service, as well as to local shop and sports facilities. The contributions suggested to support this bus service are not sufficient as the agency have suggested a contribution of 6 times this would be required to support the service, and for only a limited period. Indeed a previous appeal decision quoted a bus stop with regular daily services as being one of the key components of that sites suitability.
- The feeling in Longworth is strong and indeed they have now gone past the consultation stage in the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plan.
- The grounds for refusal would be harm to the open nature of the village. Policy GS2 development in the open countryside as at the appeal case, together with HE4 development within setting of a listed building, and H12 development in the smaller villages.

The committee considered the application, with advice from officers where appropriate; the discussion included the following points:

- Planning policy guidance updated in February 2016: “positively plan to support strategic development needs”: one of the Vale’s strategic development needs is the five year housing land supply.
- As the Vale does not have a five year housing land supply its housing policies are considered to be out of date and not fit for purpose.
- Education funding: money is now going to Longworth school and not to John Blandy School.
- The site would deliver affordable housing.
- The neighbourhood plan is only emerging and not adopted or “made”.
- The poplar trees will need management and this will form part of the section 106 agreement.

A motion, moved and seconded for approval, was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: (For: 11; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0)

To delegate authority to grant planning permission for application P15/V2863/0 to the head of planning subject to:

1. A S106 agreement being entered into in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing; and

2. Conditions as follows:

- i. Commencement of development – outline permission.
- ii. Reserved matters submission.
- iii. Approved plan.
- iv. Provision of footpath link.
- v. Foul water drainage scheme to be submitted.
- vi. Sustainable surface water scheme to be submitted.
- vii. Method statement for biodiversity enhancements to be submitted.
- viii. Existing access and visibility splays to be retained.
- ix. Tree protection details to be submitted and implemented.

PI.327 P15/V1948/FUL - Staddlestones, Church Street, Shellingford, SN7 7QA

Councillor Robert Sharp left the room as he had an interest in this item.

Councillor Sandy Lovatt took the chair.

The officer presented the report for a change of use to dual use to allow a child minding service between hours of 07:30 to 18:00hrs (retrospective). For Staddlestones, Church Street, Shellingford, SN7 7QA.

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.

A motion, moved and seconded for approval, was declared carried on being put to the vote.

RESOLVED: (For: 10; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0)

To grant planning permission for application P15/V1948/FUL, subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit.
2. Materials in accordance with application.
3. Approved plans.
4. Car parking.
5. The number of children that can occupy the site at any one time in the nursery shall not exceed 24.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm