

NHI/19724 – Bovis Homes Ltd

New residential development, access and open space (site area 3.9 hectares). Land off Lime Road, Botley

1.0 The Proposal

1.1 Following the Local Plan Inquiry, the Inspector decided to allocate the “safeguarded land” off Lime Road in Botley for housing development. The site contains 3 houses and extensive residential curtilages. Bovis Homes Ltd has an option on the land and has submitted this application in outline with all matters reserved apart from access. The application plan is in **Appendix 1**. Access to the site would be achieved by the demolition of the existing house known as Hillhead and the formation of the access onto Lime Road in its place.

1.2 The application comes to Committee because of the number of objection letters received.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 None.

3.0 Planning Policies

3.1 Policy H3 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 allocates the site for residential development. Policy DC5 requires all new development to be acceptable in terms of highway safety. Policy DC8 states that development will only be permitted where the necessary social and physical infrastructure and service requirements are available or can be provided or secured by financial contribution. Policy H17 requires 40% of new housing to be affordable. Policy H23 requires 15% of the residential area of a housing site to be laid out as public open space.

4.0 Consultations

4.1 North Hinksey Parish Council – supports the application subject to caveats – see **Appendix 2**.

4.2 Local Residents – 5 letters of objection and 3 letters of observation have been submitted. The grounds of objection are as follows:

- The additional traffic will add to congestion
- Loss of Green Belt land (the site does not lie in the Green Belt)
- Noise and disturbance from construction and from future residents
- Increased air pollution
- Impact on local schools and other infrastructure
- Loss of wildlife
- Loss of greenfield land
- Loss of a private view (not a material consideration)

4.3 County Engineer – no objections subject to conditions and a financial contribution to the Oxford Transport Strategy.

4.4 Thames Water – Surface Water – no objection subject to details of surface water drainage. Foul Drainage – prior to determination of the application, an impact study is

to be carried out by the developer to ascertain what improvements to local drainage infrastructure are required and appropriate conditions attached.

4.5 Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust – requests financial contribution towards an extension to the local surgery to allow 1 extra GP and support staff.

4.6 Deputy Director (Environmental Health) – no objection subject to conditions.

5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 The principle of housing on the site was accepted some years ago when the site was first earmarked as “safeguarded land” and, more recently, through its allocation in the adopted Local Plan. The main issues to be considered with this application are highway safety and the securing of appropriate financial contributions to ensure adequate provision of social and economic infrastructure via Section 106 Obligations.

5.2 The proposed access has been examined by the County Engineer. He considers the proposed access to be in a position where safe vision can be obtained along Lime Road. He also considers that the local road network can absorb the anticipated extra traffic without causing highway danger. Consequently, he raises no objection subject to conditions.

5.3 A suggestion has been made by Brookes University that a bus-only link be provided between the site and the Harcourt Hill campus to the south to allow the Brookes bus service to provide a more efficient loop route through the area. The applicants are prepared to examine this proposal.

5.4 In terms of financial contributions, the District Council is seeking contributions for the following – maintenance of public open space; improvements to the Louis Memorial Playing Field (in lieu of equipped play space on site); public art; green waste boxes; and towards an extension to the local GP surgery to allow for 1 extra GP and support staff to be employed.

5.5 A financial contribution towards improvements to the play equipment and general quality of the Louis Memorial Playing Field has been requested by North Hinksey Parish Council, who own the playing field. Given the proximity of the playing field to the application site (less than 100 metres) Officers have suggested that the money that otherwise would have gone towards the provision and maintenance of equipped play space on the application site could be used for improvements to the playing field instead. A scheme for the improvement of the Louis Memorial Playing Field has been drawn up, which includes providing a safe pedestrian crossing over Lime Road to the main body of the playing field. In effect, therefore, the Louis Memorial Playing Field will provide play space for the proposed development. The applicants are prepared to accept this proposal in principle, subject to the financial details, but Member’s views on this issue are sought.

5.6 The applicants are in the process of preparing a drainage impact study, in accordance with Thames Water’s requirements. The results of this study will determine the nature of any drainage conditions which will need to be imposed on the permission.

5.7 Oxfordshire County Council are seeking financial contributions towards education, the library, waste management, social and healthcare, improving the local bridleway, fire and rescue, and the Oxford Transport Study.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and local Members, subject to:-*

- i) Section 106 obligations to secure financial contributions and the provision of 40% affordable housing*
- ii) Conditions to include access, provision of 15% public open space, and necessary drainage infrastructure*