

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 18 August 2021 at 6.00 pm in  
First Floor Meeting Space, 135 Eastern Avenue,  
Milton Park, OX14 4SB

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

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

Councillors: Max Thompson (Chair), Val Shaw (Vice-Chair), Ron Batstone, Cheryl Briggs, Jenny Hannaby, Diana Lugova, Ben Mabbett and Janet Shelley

Officers: Paul Bateman and Emily Hamerton

Guests: Councillor David Grant and Councillor Bob Johnston

### **Remote attendance:**

Officers: Sally Appleyard, Holly Bates, Michael Flowers, Nathalie Power, Susie Royse and Hanna Zembrzycka-Kisiel

## **19 Chair's announcements**

The chair ran through housekeeping arrangements appropriate to an in-person meeting which was being simultaneously broadcast.

## **20 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Pighills.

## **21 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Diana Lugova declared an interest in application P21/V0484/HH, 16 Selwyn Crescent, Radley, as a local ward councillor.

## **22 Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

## **23 Public participation**

The committee noted the list of members of the public registered to speak at the meeting, virtually and in person. The committee had received, prior to the meeting, copies of statements which had been made.

## **24 P21/V0484/HH - 16 Selwyn Crescent, Radley**

Councillor Diana Lugova declared an interest in the application as a local ward councillor, withdrew from the meeting on this item and took no part in the discussion or voting with respect to the application.

The committee considered application P21/V0484/HH to extend existing ground floor, with new pitched roof to form a 4-bedroom detached property. (As amended by plans received 10 April and 15 June 2021) at 16 Selwyn Crescent Radley.

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 reported that a site visit by members of the committee had taken place at this location on 26 July 2021. With respect to section 2 of the report, regarding the summary of consultations and representations, the planning officer reported that in fact 14 letters of objection had been received from residents, not 10, as stated in the report. All concerns were as summarised in the table under 'local residents'. No letters had been received since the publication of the report.

The planning officer reported that the proposal entailed the existing roof being altered to accommodate the two bedrooms and the bathroom on the first floor and to also incorporate the proposed front/side extension on the ground floor. The ridge of the roof would be increased in height from 4.5 metres to approximately 5.8 metres and the height of the eaves would remain as existing, at approximately 2.2 metres. The Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), the highway authority, had no objection to the parking arrangements. The planning officer also reported that a 1.8 metre fence was proposed to enclose the private amenity space to the south. The fence was to be set back from the highway to enable sufficient space for the planting of a hedge in front to soften the appearance of the fence, in the interests of visual amenity. The planning officer also clarified the intention that the existing conservatory was to be demolished, with the construction of a single storey side extension, infilling the north-west corner of the dwelling, and raising the ridge height by approximately 1.3 metres.

The planning officer reported that the application had been carefully scrutinised in the interests of preserving residential amenity; all rooflights on the east elevation of the property would have a sill height of 1.7 metres from the finished floor level. This was considered to be an acceptable height within the roof slope to prevent harmful overlooking of the neighbouring properties. Overall, planning officers did not consider that the proposed extensions and alterations to the bungalow would result in significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of dominance, overshadowing, overlooking, or loss of privacy.

Mr. Charles Boyd, a local resident, spoke objecting to the application. In response to Mr. Boyd's question, the committee confirmed that it had received Mr. Boyd's written statement.

Councillor Bob Johnston, a local ward councillor, spoke to the application.

In response to a question from the committee in respect of concerns regarding the extension at the rear causing shadowing of the neighbouring garden, the planning officer responded that planning officers did not consider that the proposal would have a significantly harmful impact on the neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing or dominance. Section 5.13 of the report gave full details of this reasoning. Responding to a

question from the committee regarding an alleged 'out of character' development, the planning officer responded that the increased ridge height, at 1.3m, was considered to be modest, particularly as the level of the eaves would remain the same. The development was not considered by planning officers to be harmful to the character of the area.

The committee noted reference to dropped kerbs and asked whether these features would be implemented. The planning officer replied that this would be the case and that this issue would be dealt with through proposed condition 4, 'access and parking in accordance with approved plan'.

The committee concluded that the proposed development was acceptable in design terms and would not harm the character and appearance of the area. There was no material harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties and there was no unacceptable impact on highway safety and therefore planning permission should be granted.

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

**RESOLVED:** to grant planning permission for application P21/V0484/HH, subject to the following conditions;

1. Commencement of development within three years
2. Development in accordance with approved plans
3. Materials in accordance with submitted details
4. Access and parking in accordance with approved plan
5. Rooflights to have a sill height of 1.7 metres from finished floor level
6. First floor windows on south elevation to have a sill height of 1.7 metres from finished floor level
7. Boundary treatments in accordance with plan
8. Unsuspected land contamination

## **25 P20/V0855/O - Rogers Concrete, Sandshill, Faringdon**

The committee considered application P20/V0855/O in respect of outline planning application with all matters reserved (other than access into the site) for the proposed mixed-use development of up to 95 residential dwellings and business space (Use Classes B1 and B8) (totalling up to 1,350 sqm), open space, landscaping, drainage measures and all other associated works at Rogers Concrete, Sandshill, 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 planning officer reported that the proposal submitted was for a housing - led mixed use development which included business space (Use Classes B1 and B8) (totalling up to 1,350 sqm or 14,531 sq.ft), open space and landscaping. The site formed part of a wider residential-led allocation known as 'Land South of Park Road, Faringdon' within the Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies. In respect of the principle of development, the planning officer reported that, in line with local plan policy CP29, which required the applicants to provide relevant evidence that there was no reasonable prospect of land or premises being used for continued employment use, the proposed alternative use of a residential-led development, which still incorporated some element of employment, could be supported on this site in principle. In addition, the applicant had submitted a marketing report and viability assessment to demonstrate that the site had been marketed for at least

12 months up to the date at which the planning application was submitted, and despite attempts to sell or let a site on reasonable terms for employment use, it had failed to sell the site for such use.

The planning officer reported that the site had unique geological constraints of developing within the bounds of a previous quarry. The committee were shown slides depicting access points with an illustrative layout and also the extent of s.278 works, such as cycleways. In response to a request from the committee for a view of a cross section of the site, a slide was displayed, illustrating the current levels of the application site.

The planning officer concluded by stating that the application had been improved as a result of amendments which had been made following objections received. The application was viable from an economic development and housing perspective, providing an element of affordable housing.

Councillor Dr. Mike Wise, a representative of Faringdon Town Council, spoke objecting to the application. A statement from Councillor Dr. Wise had been sent to the committee prior to the meeting by the democratic services officer.

Mr. Sarah Allen-Stevens, a local commercial landlord, spoke objecting to the application. A statement by Ms. Allen-Stevens had been sent to the committee prior to the meeting by the democratic services officer. In response to a question from the committee concerning land availability for business and commercial purposes in the district, Ms. Allen-Stevens stated that in her view there was a dearth of available commercial land in the Faringdon area. Mr. Tim Burden, the agent, spoke in support of the application. In response to a question from the committee regarding advertising efforts which had been undertaken for commercial users of the site, Mr. Burden replied that the national press had been used as an advertising medium and boards had been displayed on the site for two and a half years.

Mr. Philip Scott, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

A statement by the applicants had been sent to committee member Councillor Diana Lugova, who had shared it with the committee prior to the meeting.

Councillor David Grant, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

In response to a question from the committee regarding the viability of the site for employment purposes, the planning officer replied that relevant evidence, coupled with the submitted viability report, indicated that there was no reasonable prospect of the site coming forward in its entirety for employment use. The council's economic development unit had carefully assessed this site and supported the mixed-use approach. Therefore, the proposed alternative use, a residential-led development with some element of employment, could be supported on this site.

The committee noted paragraph 5.19 of the report, which stated that that the scheme could only viably provide 18 affordable units. In response to a question from the committee regarding the precise level of affordable housing which could be required of the developer, as well as leisure provision, the planning officer replied that these matters would be detailed in a s.106 agreement.

The committee discussed, with concern, paragraph 5.52 of the report relating to flood risk and drainage. It was noted that Thames Water had advised the council that there was an inability of the existing foul water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the

development. The planning officer advised the committee that all Thames Water's standards would be included in the proposed conditions and input from the council's drainage engineers and the Environment Agency would also be sought.

The committee noted Faringdon Town Council's concerns regarding connectivity and pedestrianisation and the planning officer advised the committee that the s.278 plans included cycleways along Sands Hill Lane and connectivity with the Bloor housing site, which was already underway.

The committee considered that the proposal as presently formed left a number of issues requiring further information, to allow the committee to obtain the full facts for an informed decision, namely; bus stop connections and highway links, maximising employment use on the site, viability and affordable housing provision, employment land availability in Faringdon, content of s.106 matters and engagement with town council / local councillors

A motion moved and seconded, to defer consideration of the application to allow for further information to be obtained was carried on being put to the vote.

**RESOLVED:** to defer determination of planning application P20/V0855/O, to allow planning officers to obtain further information on the following issues;

1. Clarity on bus stop connections and highway links.
2. Review of maximising employment use on the site.
3. Clarity on viability and affordable housing provision.
4. Clarity on employment land availability in Faringdon.
5. Review of s.106 matters and engagement with town council/local councillors.

## **26 P21/V0454/HH - 50 Francis Little Drive, Abingdon**

The committee considered application P21/V0454/HH for the erection of two-storey side extension. Demolition of one existing garage and lean-to car port. Conversion of remaining garage (as amended by plan submitted on the 30th June 2021, demonstrating parking arrangements) - part retrospective, at 50 Francis Little Drive, 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 the meeting.

The planning officer reported that since the publication of the agenda, two representations had been received, one in respect of parking concerns, the other regarding noise issues. The proposed development was not considered to have an unacceptable impact upon existing residential amenity through overshadowing and overlooking, or to existing levels of privacy experienced by the adjacent neighbour.

Mr. Toby Cowell, the agent, spoke in support of the application. A statement by Mr. Cowell had been sent to the committee by the democratic services officer prior to the meeting. In response to a question from the committee regarding the reasons for the application being retrospective, Mr Cowell replied that this was the result of a miscommunication with the builder. There was no intention to circumvent planning regulation and building works had ceased.

In response to a question regarding the control of houses in multiple occupancy (HMO), the planning officer replied that planning permission was not required to change the use of

dwellings to small HMOs for up to 6 persons. The lack of any substantive evidence that such a use would be significantly harmful at this property had led council officers to determine that it would not be reasonable to refuse the application on this basis.

The democratic services officer had sent to the committee prior to the meeting, statements by the following persons;

Mr. Findlay Sterry, a local resident  
Mr. John Tuson, a local resident  
Councillor Eric de la Harpe, a local ward councillor

The committee considered that the development would not have an unacceptable impact upon the character and visual amenity of the local area, private residential amenity, represent a local flood risk, or compromise highway safety. There was no substantive evidence to demonstrate that any potential future use of this premises as a 6-bedroom dwelling would give rise to inadequate parking provision or have a detrimental impact on neighbouring residential amenity. Therefore, the committee was minded to grant planning permission.

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

**RESOLVED:** to grant planning permission for application P21/V0454/HH, subject to the following conditions;

**Standard**

1. Approved plans

**Pre-occupation**

2. Southern boundary treatment details to be submitted

**Compliance**

3. Materials in accordance with application details
4. Car parking area to be permanently kept free of obstruction to use

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm