

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 5 April 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: Val Shaw (Chair), Ron Batstone, Cheryl Briggs, Paul Barrow, Diana Lugova, Robert Maddison, Mike Pighills and Janet Shelley  
Officers: Paula Fox (Planning Manager), Stuart Walker (Planning Officer), Emily Barry (Democratic Services Officer) and Darius Zarazel (Democratic Services Officer).

### **Remote attendance:**

Officers: Bertie Smith (Broadcasting Officer)

### **125 Chair's announcements**

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

### **126 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Max Thompson and Councillor Jenny Hannaby, who was substituted for Councillor Paul Barrow.

### **127 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign these as such.

### **128 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **129 Urgent business**

There was no urgent business.

## **130 Public participation**

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

## **131 P22/V2435/FUL - Land to the north of Frome Road, Harwell Campus, Didcot, OX11 0FD**

The committee considered planning application P22/V2435/FUL for the erection of two employment buildings, with associated car parking and landscaping, on land to the north of Frome Road, Harwell Campus, Didcot.

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 sought planning permission for 2 new buildings to be used for vaccine research and manufacture. He also highlighted that the application was brought to the committee due to the objection of Chilton Parish Council.

The planning officer informed the committee there were two updates since the report had been written. Firstly a further letter of comment on heritage had been received which suggested moving building two northwards to avoid the runway. Secondly a further letter of objection had been received highlighting potential impact on residential amenity and their privacy. The planning officer also detailed that there was updated wording for condition 27 in appendix 3 to which the applicant and Oxfordshire County Council archaeologist had agreed.

The planning officer informed the committee that the site was located to the north of Frome Road and to the east of Synchrotron on Harwell Campus. The layout of the site was influenced by its immediate context and operational factors. Vehicle access to the site was via the perimeter road off Newbury Road with a separate HGV access via Frome Road to the south of the site.

The planning officer highlighted that the proposal would result in the loss of a grass playing field which would be replaced with a new pitch to the north of the development. The proposal also included offsite highway improvement works comprising partial signalisation of the western roundabout of Chilton interchange. These highway improvements had been agreed by both National Highways Agency and Oxfordshire County Council and had been secured in a completed S106 legal agreement.

The planning officer informed the committee that the non-designated catapult structure as referred to in the report is the remains of the catapult system and there were no longer any mechanical elements of the catapult on site.

The planning officer informed the committee that the principle of development was acceptable and the site was allocated for development in the local plan and is within a designated enterprise zone.

With regards to the concerns raised by Chilton Parish Council on highways grounds officers were of the view that suitable mitigation works were included in the application. Furthermore, The National Highways Agency and Oxfordshire County Council as highways authority no longer objected to the application.

The planning officer also noted that the impacts on non-designated heritage assets was also acceptable and were subject to conditions as set out in the report. The planning officer detailed the proposed amended wording for the relevant condition (condition 27).

In summary the planning officer believed there were no technical reasons to withhold permission for the proposal.

Councillor Chris Broad spoke on behalf of Chilton Parish Council, in support of the application.

Debra Dewhurst spoke on behalf of Chilton Residents objecting to the application.

Steven Sensecall and Steve Roberts, representing the developer, and Stuart Carroll from Moderna, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne, a local ward councillor, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee enquired as to the need for another vaccine centre on the site as a vaccine centre was built at Harwell Campus recently. The planning officer reminded the committee that this application should be determined on its own planning merits, there were a variety of businesses on the campus and that had no bearing on the application before the committee.

The committee asked the planning officer to confirm that the traffic impacts and mitigation works had not simply been a desktop-based assessment and that Oxfordshire County Council highways officers were satisfied the measures would mitigate the immediate issues the development posed. The planning officer confirmed there had been extensive discussions and subsequent amendments to the application. As a result of these amendments both the National Highways Agency and Oxfordshire County Council highways had removed their initial objections. The committee asked for confirmation that the traffic mitigation works were a pre-occupation condition. The planning officer confirmed that this was secured in the signed S106 legal agreement.

The committee asked the planning officer if they were satisfied that the lighting which would be required for security was of such a nature that it would not be harmful to the AONB. The planning officer confirmed reduction in lighting was being achieved across the site. He confirmed that condition 12 addresses concerns with regards to lighting at the southern boundary and potential impacts on ecology and biodiversity. The planning officer also highlighted that the security fencing for the site was shown in the application and that permitted development rights would be removed for any further fencing to control the visual amenity of the site.

The committee noted that with the heritage nature of the site public art was going to be an extremely important part of the application moving forward. The planning officer advised that the Arts Officer would lead on this and that public art is to be secured via a planning condition.

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

The committee noted that no development of this scale will have no impact but overall they were satisfied that with no technical objections on highways grounds there was no reason to refuse the application. They also noted it was encouraging to see all sides had been willing

to communicate and resolve issues and that this dialogue with the parish council and local community should continue.

**RESOLVED:** to approve planning application P22/V2435/FUL, subject to the following conditions and the completed legal agreement securing offsite highway works and financial contributions towards public transport and travel plan monitoring:

1. Time Limit
2. Approved plans
3. Biodiversity enhancements
4. Biodiversity offsetting
5. Utility service routing details
6. Sustainable drainage details
7. Replacement sport pitch condition survey
8. Community Employment Plan (CEP)
9. Drainage in accordance with plans
10. Access and parking in accordance with plans
11. Cycle parking in accordance with plans
12. Lighting details to be submitted to meet EZ1 zone requirements
13. Roof light details to be submitted
14. Public Art
15. Completion of landscape scheme
16. Noise testing
17. Provision of replacement sport playing field
18. Sport playing field maintenance and management
19. Sustainable drainage systems compliance report
20. Ecology mitigation
21. Tree protection (implementation as approved)
22. Travel Plan compliance
23. Construction Traffic Environmental Plan
24. Noise mitigation
25. No fencing to be erected without prior grant of planning permission
26. Heritage interpretation scheme to be submitted
27. Archaeological mitigation

Informative:

1. Biodiversity offsetting
2. Sport pitch technical guidance

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm