

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee



held on Wednesday, 26 February 2025 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: Max Thompson (Chair), Val Shaw (Vice-Chair), Ron Batstone, Jenny Hannaby, Scott Houghton, Robert Maddison, Mike Pighills and Jill Rayner.

Officers: Luci Ashbourne (Democratic Services Officer), Nathaniel Bamsey (Planning and Development Officer), Katherine Canavan (Senior Planning Officer), Emily Hamerton (Development Manager), Hanna Zembrzycka-Kisiel (Principal Major Applications Officer).

Remote attendance:

Officers: Susie Royse (Broadcasting Officer)

178 Chair's announcements

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

179 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cheryl Briggs.

180 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2025 as a correct record and agree that the chair sign these as such.

181 Declarations of interest

Councillor Mike Pighills declared that he was ward member for item 7 on the agenda, P24/V0358/RM. Councillor Pighills confirmed that he would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

Councillor Max Thompson declared that he was ward member for item 7 on the agenda, P24/V0358/RM. Councillor Thompson confirmed that he would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

Councillor Scott Houghton declared that he was ward member for item 8 on the agenda, P24/V2426/FUL. Councillor Houghton confirmed that he would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

182 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

183 Public participation

The committee noted the list of members of the public who had registered to speak at the meeting and noted the statements that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

184 P24/V0358/RM - North Abingdon, Land North of Twelve Acre Drive, Abingdon

Councillor Mike Pighills declared a non-registerable interest in this item as he was the local ward member. Councillor Pighills stood down from the committee during the consideration of this application and did not participate in the debate or vote.

Councillor Max Thompson declared a non-registerable interest in this item as he was the local ward member. Councillor Thompson stood down from the committee during the consideration of this application and did not participate in the debate or vote.

Councillor Val Shaw chaired the meeting for this item.

The committee considered planning application P24/V0358/RM:

Reserved Matters Application (Appearance, Landscaping and Layout)-Re-routing of an existing ditch, provision of a culvert beneath the access road, adjustment of an attenuation pond, provision of an additional attenuation tank, repositioning of trees and shrubs, and re-routing of a footpath alongside Twelve Acre Drive relating to land at North Abingdon-on-Thames Eastern Parcel Areas A and B as required by conditions attached to the outline planning permission (Ref: P17/V0050/O) (As per amended plans received 24 April 2024)

The outline planning permission (LPA Ref. P17/V0050/O) to which this application relates was an environmental impact assessment application. An Environmental Statement was submitted to the local planning authority at that time.

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 presented the report to members.

The reserved matters for 371 dwellings, including aspects such as drainage, highways, landscaping, appearance, and scale, were approved in 2023. The alteration to the approved drainage came to the committee last year, focusing on rerouting the ditch between the two vehicular accesses.

The officer explained that most features and drainage elements remained in the same location, except for the slight relocation of the ditch.

The officer confirmed that the flooding in Abingdon was not related to the development but due to the lack of maintenance of existing ditches and watercourses to the south of the site. Since dealing with the applicants and progressing the site, no further complaints or queries on drainage matters had been received.

The site's capacity would not be impacted by the proposed changes. The alignment of the ditch, swales, and basins would not materially affect the approved capacity.

A management company would be responsible for maintenance on a yearly, six-monthly, and monthly basis. They would monitor the site and take necessary actions if required.

The officer confirmed that 53 units had been occupied to date. This did not impact the current drainage scheme, and the sewage system had sufficient capacity for the allocation, as confirmed by Thames Water.

Photographs from the site illustrated the relocation and main position of the drainage ditch, the newly constructed footpath, and other elements of the sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The system was functioning correctly, collecting water without causing flooding, and there were no blockages.

The proposed changes did not alter what was previously deemed acceptable. Therefore, the recommendation for this proposal was approval, subject to the conditions listed in the committee report

Members noted that a statement from Abingdon Town Council had been previously circulated.

Ward members Councillor Max Thompson and Councillor Mike Pighills spoke on the application.

Members expressed appreciation for the work undertaken and praised the report. Members enquired about the monitoring of the maintenance plan. The officer confirmed that the maintenance company would be responsible for tracking and monitoring the site. The company would also be the first point of contact for residents with any concerns.

Members noted that while there had been many objections from residents and statutory bodies throughout the process, the recent updates and amendments had addressed these concerns.

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

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P24/V0358/RM subject to the following conditions:

1. Approved plans
2. Tree Protection (General)
3. Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
4. Construction Environmental Management Plan
5. Drainage Strategy
6. SUDS Compliance Report
7. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
8. Landscape Implementation

9. Watercourse Buffer Scheme
10. Woodland Management Plan
11. Footpaths and Drainage
12. Landscaping (S38 and S278 works)

Councillor Pighills re-joined the committee.

Councillor Max Thompson re-joined the meeting as committee chair.

185 P24/V2426/FUL - 11 Long Close, Botley, Oxford, OX2 9SG

Councillor Scott Houghton declared a non-registerable interest in this item as he was the local ward member. Councillor Houghton stood down from the committee during the consideration of this application and did not participate in the debate or vote.

The committee considered planning application P24/V2426/FUL:

Change of use from existing dwelling (C3) to children's residential home (C2) (as amplified by noise management policy and details of staff schedule and vehicle movements received 29 November 2024, and as amplified by corrected plan showing parking provision and boundary treatment, and by supporting statement received 11 February 2025).

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 presented the report to members.

The proposal was to change the use of the dwelling to a children's home for a maximum of four young people. The property was located at the end of Long Place and accessed off Fogwell Road. A stream ran along the bottom of the garden, and a footpath ran along the side of the driveway. The rear garden backed onto dwellings along Eynsham Road.

Care would be provided by a management company 24 hours a day. Support workers would care for young people with learning disabilities and/or on the autism spectrum. The dwelling had six bedrooms, including accommodation in the annex. The children's home would have a staff office, a staff room, and bedrooms for four young people. The number of young people able to live on site would be limited to four and secured by condition.

Concerns were raised during the consultation process over parking provision, noise disturbance, and safety measures on site. The officer confirmed that three on-site parking spaces was provided at the front. Any shift changes would happen in a staggered approach, requiring staff to park on surrounding streets for a short period only. This arrangement was reviewed by the highways officer following a site visit, who deemed it satisfactory.

The care approach was to provide a family setting for the young people, with appointments taking place using existing services and facilities away from the property, ensuring specialist care providers would not generate additional vehicle movements to and from the property.

In terms of noise disturbance, the application included general noise management procedures. Although the environmental health officer was satisfied with the information provided, it was recommended that additional detail, management contacts, and an escalation protocol be secured under condition 5.

It was recognised that the dwelling could currently accommodate a large family. The change of use to accommodate four children with three support workers on site would not represent an intensification of use over a single household that could currently take place at the property.

Concerns had been raised over a stream at the bottom of the garden. Suitable measures and supervision would be determined by the regulatory body. This issue did not have a bearing in planning terms. If planning permission was approved, the children's home would still need to meet the requirements of the relevant regulatory bodies.

A further condition was recommended requiring a waste collection and storage statement, proportionate to the scale of the proposal. This would clarify the required domestic or commercial collection and storage of wheelie bins. There was space on site to accommodate either option, and the condition was sufficient to secure the final detail.

The officer addressed a question raised during the site visit regarding permitted development rights. The building could, for the purposes of permitted development, still be classed as a dwelling house, even in C2 use. Therefore, extensions, outbuildings, and changes to the roof could still be carried out. If members felt it was necessary to remove permitted development rights under Part 1, they would need to be clear about the reason for that. The condition restricting the number of young people on site was highlighted and was deemed a sufficient measure to manage the scale and intensity of the use.

In conclusion, while concerns had been raised by residents, the location was sustainable and within easy access of play spaces, services, and facilities, which was the policy standard for all residential developments. The location within the neighbourhood also provided the opportunity for young people to develop connections with peers within the community, promoting well-being and community cohesion. There were no technical objections to the proposed use, and the officer recommended approving the proposal, subject to the conditions outlined.

Councillor Judy Roberts spoke on behalf of Cumnor Parish Council, in objection to the application.

James Major spoke in objection to the application.

Isabel James spoke in objection to the application.

Jesse James Harmon, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Ward member Councillor Scott Houghton spoke on the application.

Members asked if the planning permission was granted on the basis that no more than four children reside at the property at any one time. The officer confirmed that any variation to the condition to accommodate additional children would require a new planning application, which would involve reassessment.

Members enquired about the traffic modelling performed at the site to determine that three parking spaces were adequate. The officer explained that initially four spaces were shown on the plans, but it was advised that three spaces were more practical. The arrangement was deemed safe due to the low speeds and appropriate visibility in the residential street.

Short-term on-street parking for staff shift changes was considered acceptable and would not present harm or pressure on parking.

Members sought clarification on the additional conditions related to waste management and noise management. The officer explained that the noise protocol would capture details in a short statement tied to the application. The waste management condition would confirm whether domestic or commercial collection was required, ensuring space on site for storage. Members asked about the implications of permitted development rights if not removed. The officer explained that the building could still be classed as a dwelling house, allowing for extensions, outbuildings, and changes to the roof, but that any significant changes would need to be assessed for their impact.

Concerns were raised about the potential change in character of the area due to the children's home. The officer confirmed that the area was residential, and the proposed use was comparable to a large family living in the property. The supporting statement in the application emphasised the importance of providing a family setting for the young people, which aligned with the character of the area.

Members noted that the aim was to create a community environment for the children, which was seen as a positive move away from traditional institutions. Members agreed that the intensity of use would not be excessive compared to a typical family home and emphasised the benefits of such facilities in residential areas for the well-being of the children.

Members and officers clarified the conditions being added to the recommendations within the written report, including noise management and waste storage, but agreed not to add a restriction on permitted development rights.

A debate ensued regarding concerns about the change in the residential area's character and the potential impact on the neighbourhood. Members noted the public sentiment and a petition from local residents opposing the application. There were worries about noise, traffic, and the suitability of the location for a children's home.

Members discussed the intention the home would provide a necessary and beneficial environment for the children, comparable to a large family living in the property. They highlighted the importance of community engagement and communication from the care provider to address any concerns.

The debate acknowledged the difficulty of the decision, with valid representations on both sides.

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

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P24/V2426/FUL subject to the following conditions:/for the following reasons:

1. Commencement within 3 years
2. Development in accordance with approved plans
3. Reduction of front boundary treatment.
4. Provision of cycle storage, prior to occupation
5. Noise management protocol – condition amended by committee:

Notwithstanding the details that have been submitted in the 'Noise Pollution Policy for Heartview Children Homes Ltd' and 'Supporting Statement - Heartview Feb 2025', a detailed noise management protocol shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA before the first occupation of the children's home.

Details shall include:

- *Noise reduction measures (day-to-day)*
- *Care management strategies – specific care needs*
- *Community engagement methodology*
- *Care provider contact details in the event of neighbour concerns*
- *Escalation procedure and resolution strategy to respond to neighbour complaints*

These measures must be implemented in perpetuity and any variance to the approved measures must first be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of adjacent dwellings (Policy DP23 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 2, and Policy RES1 of the Cumnor Neighbourhood Development Plan).

6.Retention of parking spaces

7.Maximum number of residents – 4

8.Restriction of use – C2 Children's home

9. Waste management statement – additional condition agreed by committee:

Prior to the first occupation of the children's home hereby approved, a waste management statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Details shall include:

- *Waste / recycling collection arrangements, in terms of domestic and commercial waste relating to the use*
- *Details of bin stores for all refuse and recycling containers stored on site*

The arrangements for waste storage and collection shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the children's home, and thereafter shall remain permanently in place.

Reason: To ensure arrangements for refuse and recycling storage and collection are available for use, in the interest of public health and amenity (Policy DP28 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 2 and Policy RES1 of the Cumnor Neighbourhood Development Plan).

Councillor Houghton re-joined the committee.

186 P24/V1983/FUL - 1 School Close, Steventon, Abingdon, OX13 6AZ

The committee considered planning application P24/V1983/FUL:

Proposed extension to accommodate a self and custom build 2 bedroom dwelling on corner plot.(as per Additional Information received 14 November 2024 and amended plans received 19 December 2024).

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 presented the report to members.

This application was referred to the planning committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation, as the Council owns the land within the red line area and objections on planning grounds have been received.

The site location plan showed the position of the site on the corner of School Close to the west, with Stone Bridge Road to the north, adjoining properties to the south, and other residential properties on all sides. Vehicular access was gained via School Close to the west via a dropped kerb.

The site plan showed the new dwelling to the side of the existing house, built over an existing single-storey garage. The subdivision of the plot was to the rear, with a widened parking area to the front of the dwellings. The existing house would have two car parking spaces, while the new dwelling would have one.

The proposed plans showed the side extension set down and back from the existing house, with front and rear projections, seeking to give the appearance of an ancillary extension to the house.

Members were advised that the main issues when assessing this application were its impacts on highway safety and the character of the area. The new dwelling would be provided with a single car parking space, which was considered sufficient for a dwelling of this size in this location, in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's adopted standards, as confirmed by their lack of objection to the application.

Officers also considered that there would be no harm to visual amenities. Therefore, in the absence of objections from technical consultees and subject to the recommended conditions, officers recommended that permission be granted.

It was noted that Steventon Parish Council had submitted a statement, but no one was present to speak on the application. Members asked questions about the application, particularly regarding highway safety. It was clarified that initial objections from the highways department were resolved after further information was submitted, and a new access to the side was deleted from the proposals for design and character reasons.

Members discussed the application, noting that the highways department initially had objections but later withdrew them after further information was submitted. The proposed new access to the side was deleted from the proposals for design and character reasons.

Members sought clarification on the ownership of the land within the red line area. It was explained that the Council retained ownership of the verge, which included the pavement.

Members noted there were no material planning considerations to object to and that the proposal was in keeping with the area. Some concerns were raised about parking and the potential creation of a terrace, but it was felt that these did not detract from the character of the area.

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

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P24/V1983/FUL subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement within 3 yrs
2. Development in accordance with approved plans
3. Surface water drainage details to be submitted
4. Improve existing vehicular access
5. Boundary in accordance with submitted plan
6. Car parking in accordance with submitted plan
7. Bicycle parking details to be submitted
8. Materials in accordance with submitted details
9. PD restriction on fences/walls
10. Works within the highway informative
11. CIL - Planning permission
12. Surface water drainage informative

187 Appeals Information

The committee received the appeals information report from the head of planning. The committee agreed to note the report.

The meeting closed at 20.31pm

Chair

Date