

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Planning Committee



held on Wednesday 25 September 2024 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, Cheryl Briggs, Jenny Hannaby, Scott Houghton, Robert Maddison, Mike Pighills and Jill Rayner
Officers: Emily Hamerton (Development Manager), Emily Barry (Democratic Services Officer), Nathaniel Bamsey (Planning Officer) and Natasha Ireland (Planning Business Manager)

Remote attendance:

Officers: Susie Royce (Broadcasting Officer)

142 Chair's announcements

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

143 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

144 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 21 August 2024 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign these as such.

145 Declarations of interest

Councillor Scott Houghton declared that he was ward member for item 7 on the agenda, P23/V0571/FUL. Councillor Houghton confirmed that he would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

Councillor Val Shaw declared that she was ward member for item 8 on the agenda, P23/V0255/FUL. Councillor Shaw confirmed that she would stand down from the committee and not participate in the debate or vote for this item.

146 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.

147 Public participation

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

148 P24/V0571/FUL - 16 Cumnor Hill, Oxford, OX2 9HA

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/V0571/FUL for the demolition of existing dwellinghouse. Erection of 2 no. detached dwellinghouses with associated works including landscaping. (As amplified by additional information received 19 March 2024 and amended plans and additional information received 2 May 2024 and as amended by plans received 22 July 2024) on land at 16 Cumnor Hill, Oxford, OX2 9HA.

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 had been deferred from an earlier committee to allow a site visit to be carried out. He went on to inform the committee that the application came before them at the request of a local ward member.

The planning officer went on to address concerns which had been raised about the presentation made at an earlier committee in relation to this application. He confirmed that the application site sat within the parish of Cumnor and that on this basis the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan policies held full weight. The planning officer went on to inform the committee that for the purposes of assessment against policies CP3 and CP4 of the adopted Local Plan, which contain a presumption in favour of sustainable development in local service centres and larger villages, the site fell within the local service centre of Botley.

The planning officer informed the committee that policy DBC1 applied to all of Cumnor and that under this policy backland development should be avoided where it undermines the character of the area and that this should be assessed against the criteria set out in the policy. He went on to inform the committee that concerns had been raised about the risk of ground water flooding at the site. The planning officer showed the committee extracts from Map 15 Zone of Potential Groundwater flooding contained within the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan which illustrated that the site sat outside of these areas.

The planning officer advised the committee that the application site fell within allocated areas of low density and special local character within the Cumnor Neighbourhood plan. He went on to describe the surroundings of the site and the committee were shown a topographical plan demonstrating the slope down from Cumnor Hill to the proposed site. The planning officer highlighted that each proposed dwelling had a garage with the rear dwelling constituting backland development. He informed the committee that both proposed dwellings were two storey in height with rooms in the roof. Whilst the location of the proposed bin store was set out on the plans, the location of the proposed bike store was not and therefore a condition was proposed to require the submission of these details.

The planning officer highlighted to the committee that the basis of the objections from Cumnor Parish Council and residents were on the grounds of impact on character of the

area and therefore compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan, neighbour amenity and flood risk. The planning officer advised officers were of the view there was no harm to the character of the area by the proposal as there was existing backland development in the area, the proposal was set down in the site and the proposed distance from neighbouring properties was sufficient to prevent this. In addition to this the proposed distances from neighbouring properties were sufficient to prevent harm to neighbouring amenity. The planning officer outlined the drainage proposals and confirmed that there were no objections from the drainage officer based on the proposals.

The planning officer concluded that in the absence of objections from technical consultees alongside officers' conclusion the proposal was not harmful to the character of the area or to neighbour amenity, the application was recommended for approval.

Councillor Laurence Waters spoke on behalf of Cumnor Parish Council, objecting to the application.

Professor Nicholas Perkins spoke objecting to the application.

David Burson (JPPC), the agent representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Councillors Judy Roberts and Scott Houghton, local ward councillors, spoke objecting to the application.

The committee raised concerns about finished floor levels of the proposed dwellings and asked the planning officer to confirm if it would be possible to add a condition requiring the submission of finished floor level details. The planning officer confirmed this would be possible with details of finished floor levels against a reference point to allow enforcement to determine what level the floor should be built at.

The committee asked the planning officer to confirm there were no objections from technical consultees. The planning officer confirmed this.

The committee had concerns about the height of the proposed rear dwelling and ask the planning officer to explain why they felt it was in keeping with the character of the area. The planning officer said the proposal had been considered in the immediate context of the dwellings in Martin Close and 18a and 18b Cumnor Hill and the flats located to the east of the site all of which was established backland development. The planning officer noted that the proposed dwellings to the rear is only slightly further back than existing buildings.

The committee asked if it was possible to add a condition in relation to the maintenance of the proposed pump and tank. The planning officer advised that the proposed condition in relation to the pump and tank was a compliance condition but that it would be possible to extend this to require the submission of a maintenance schedule prior to commencement.

The committee highlighted the concerns which had been raised in relation to the boundary issues which had been raised by speakers. The planning officer confirmed that the laurel hedge on the boundary is approximately three metres in height and due to the extreme height and the fact it was not a native species its retention would not be required by condition. He went on to confirm that the when assessing dominance and overlooking the existence of the hedge had not been taken into account and officers found no harm even if the hedge were to be removed. The officer also confirmed that under permitted development rights a two metre fence could be erected.

A motion, moved and seconded, to refuse the application on the basis of the harm the proposal would do to the character of the area, was carried on being put to the vote.

The committee reflected that it was clear from the Neighbourhood Plan that backland development was something it sought to prevent in the area. Whilst the relevant policy contained a qualifier for backland development this should be a high bar to meet. The committee were also troubled by the application due to the slope of the site and the height of the proposed dwellings.

Some members of the committee were in agreement with the officer recommendation that the proposal was set in a well-developed environment and reflected that there were no objections from technical consultees to the proposal.

RESOLVED: to refuse planning application P24/V0571/FUL for the following reasons:

That, having regard to the designated low-density character of the area, the varied topography across the site and relative to the surrounding land, the development in this location, within an Area of Special Local Character, which involves backland development for one of the new houses would appear cramped and be harmful to the established character of the area. This is contrary to policies CP37 of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and policies DBC1, DBC3 and DBC5 of the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan.

149 P24/V0255/FUL - Little Orchard, Lamborough Hill, Wootton, Abingdon, OX13 6DA

Councillor Val Shaw declared a non-registerable interest in this item as she was the local ward member. Councillor Shaw 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/V0255/FUL for the removal of existing dwelling and construction of 1no. detached 4-bed dwelling and 1no. 3-bed dwelling (as amended by plans received 28 June 2024 and amended description agreed 28 May 2024) on land at Little Orchard, Lamborough Hill, Wootton, Abingdon, OX13 6DA.

Consultations, representations, policy 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 a superseded plan had made it into the agenda pack and should be disregarded. He also clarified that the planning history within the officer report related solely to the neighbouring site and not the site itself.

The planning officer informed the committee that the application came before the committee at the request of the local ward member. He went on to confirm that the application was for the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of two new dwellings. The site was located close to The Bystander pub junction with the proposed dwellings being sited closer and more parallel to the road than the existing.

The planning officer highlighted that the 3-bed dwelling would be located in the south of the site with the 4-bed dwelling in the northern part of the site. The planning officer showed

street scene images which illustrated that the proposed dwellings would be of a similar scale and appearance to those nearby.

The planning officer advised that the important considerations for this application related to the character of the area, neighbour amenity and highway safety. The planning officer concluded that the application was unharmful and in accordance with the Local Development Plan and therefore the application was recommended for approval.

Huw Mellor (Carter Jonas), the agent representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Val Shaw, the local ward member, spoke on the application.

The committee asked if it was possible to include a condition which limited the working hours on site. The planning officer confirmed this was possible.

The committee noted the condition which sought the retention of a beech hedge on the site. The planning officer advised this was as it contributed to the strong character of the area.

The committee noted that policy DG1 required development to respect the local character and heritage and local distinctiveness of the area but that the proposals were very similar to the new dwellings nearby. The planning officer confirmed that following appeals on the site to the north the Planning Inspector had concluded there was a very mixed character to the area.

The committee asked if it was possible to apply a condition which required workers to park on the site. The planning officer confirmed that there was no ability to require workers to park on site but that a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) could be required which would include plans of the site layout and therefore highlight onsite parking.

A motion, moved and seconded, to approve the application subject to additional conditions in relation to a CTMP covering parking during construction, mud on the road and deliveries outside of peak hours and restrictions on working hours was carried on being put to the vote:

RESOLVED: to approve planning application P24/V0255/FUL subject to the following conditions:

- 1 : Commencement Date
- 2 : Approved plans *
- 3 : Construction Traffic Management (details required)
- 4 : Drainage Details (Surface Water)
- 5 : Drainage Details (Foul Water)
- 6 : Integrated Biodiversity Enhancements (prior to slab level)
- 7 : Material samples
- 8 : Landscaping (incl hardsurfacing and boundary treatment)
- 9 : Access details
- 10 : Details of bicycle parking
- 11 : Electric Vehicle Charging Points (details required)
- 12 : Car parking in accordance with submitted details
- 13 : Turning space in accordance with submitted details
- 14 : Retain Existing Hedgerow

15 : Hours of operation - construction/demolition sites

Informatives

1: INF17 - Works within the Highway

2 : CIL- Planning permission or reserved matters approval (Vale)

3 : Surface water drainage informative

4 : Foul water drainage informative

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm