

Northern Area Planning Committee

MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2023 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Tony Trotman (Chairman), Cllr Howard Greenman (Vice-Chairman), Cllr David Bowler, Cllr Steve Bucknell, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Dr Brian Mathew, Cllr Nic Puntis, Cllr Martin Smith and Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall

37 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor Chuck Berry.

38 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 as a true and correct record.

39 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

40 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman noted the fire alarm procedure.

41 **Public Participation**

The Chairman noted the rules on public participation.

42 **Planning Appeals and Updates**

The Committee considered the Planning Appeals and Updates report from 21 June 2023. Councillor Steve Bucknell congratulated planning officers for the dismissal of the appeal for Application 20/11655/FUL at Brynards Hill in Royal Wootton Bassett.

Resolved:

To note the planning appeals and updates report from 21 June 2023.

PL/2022/05273: Land at Marsh Farm, North of Malmesbury Road, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 8ER

Planning Officer Olivia Tresise took the Committee through the planning application from Lidl as detailed in the report in the agenda pack. The application was for the proposed erection of a Class E food store, with car parking, works to create community open space, new access, landscaping, and other associated works. The Planning Officer highlighted details including the location of Marsh Farm Hotel, a grade II listed building adjacent to the site, the three-story care home recently built to the east of it, the two-story residential property opposite and the sports grounds to the northwest. She also drew the Committee's attention to the recently agreed conditions that were not outlined in the report relating to electric vehicle parking and weekend opening hours.

Members sought clarity on the situation surrounding foul water sewage, citing similar problems in the care home adjacent to the site. The Committee discussed the likely effectiveness of imposing Grampian conditions to ensure sufficient measures were taken regarding foul water sewage prior to commencement, referencing a tendency for developers to ignore such conditions.

The Chairman then invited members of the public to speak to the application:

- Daniel Preece spoke in support of the application on behalf of Lidl.
- Councillor Steve Walls spoke on behalf of Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council.

The Local Unitary Member, Councillor Bucknell, spoke to the application, expressing dissatisfaction with the proposed location of the site and sharing his concerns regarding the proposed country park behind the food store. He referenced recent problems with similar proposals, and pointed out that furthermore, the applicant did not own the land in question. He also expressed scepticism as to the future of the development, pointing out the potential for further residential development. He suggested that the possibility for proper consultation with local councils and organisations on how best to use the land behind the food store had been passed up, and concluded by acknowledging that the Committee could only consider what was in front of them today but recommending that harsh conditions are imposed to restrict future development as best they could.

The Planning Officer pointed out Conditions 14 and 15 in the Officer Report could be used in relation to the parkland area, but Councillor Bucknell reiterated his concerns that since the applicant did not own the land in question, they could potentially evade any repercussions for not complying with the conditions.

Councillor Gavin Grant warned of the dangers involved in improvising conditions, and after consulting with the Chairman, moved to defer the item for three cycles until clarity on such issues as foul water sewage and the parkland could be provided. Councillor Howard Greenman seconded the motion.

Councillor Brian Mathew suggested the Committee consider imposing a condition ensuring safe and adequate pedestrian access from across the road, and the Committee discussed the speed limit of the road in front of the site. Councillor Jacqui Lay pointed out that the road was part of the official diversion route from the A419 and was a lorry route when that road was out of action. Councillor Grant added that with proper consideration and consultation, the application could suit several parties, and stressed that he was satisfied to see that the objections raised at appeal had been met. The Committee also discussed the potential problem of parking, noting that the parkland had no parking arrangements outside the parking for the food store. Councillor Greenman stated his dislike for deferrals as Chairman of Strategic Planning Committee but considered it the only viable solution in this instance. The Chairman agreed with Councillor Mathew's insistence that if conditions relating to Section 106 funding for a pedestrian crossing were not included, they likely would not happen at all.

Resolved:

To defer the item for three cycles until clarity on such issues as foul water sewage and the parkland could be provided.

The meeting was then adjourned from 2:59 pm until 3:03 pm.

The Chairman moved to consider Item 9 before Item 8 and was seconded by Councillor Grant.

Resolved:

To consider Item 9 before Item 8.

44 **PL/2022/08432: Corner House, The Common, Heddington, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0NZ**

PL/2022/08432: Corner House, The Common, Heddington, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0NZ (Pages 73 - 84)

Development Manager Team Leader Simon Smith presented a report on the next item, explaining the proposal for an extension and outbuildings to Corner House on The Common, as well as a change of use of land for residential purposes. He detailed that the land that's use was to be changed was situated to the rear of the property, which was itself in open countryside close to Heddington. The Team Leader also pointed out two inaccuracies in the report, stating that the height increase referenced on page 77 was actually 0.6 metres rather than 0.9 metres, and that contrary to page 79, only one Juliet balcony was proposed rather than two. He concluded by stating that the officer recommendation was to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

The Committee sought clarity about the dimensions of the proposed extension and land, and Councillor Threlfall pointed out that contrary to page 78 in the report, the site was not in a conservation area, which the Team Leader confirmed was an error. In response to the Chairman's enquiry about how the agricultural land being converted had been used recently, the Team Leader also stated that there was no definitive answer about the use of the land, but that it was nothing other than agricultural in planning terms, also emphasising that the applicant owned all the land in question.

The Chairman then invited members of the public to speak to the application.

- Councillor Adrian Foster spoke in objection to the application as a member of the public.
- Jonathan Llewellyn spoke in support of the application.
- Steven Leard spoke in support of the application.
- Councillor Geoff Dickerson spoke on behalf of Heddington Parish Council.

The Local Unitary Member, Councillor Sam Pearce-Kearney, spoke to the application, emphasising the view that residents on both sides of the debate had the right to be heard. He pointed out that local residents had highlighted a range of planning reasons for refusing planning permission, also noting that the report had identified a potential departure from Core Policy 57. He stated that a three-story building would likely be an unduly imposing presence on The Common, referencing the report's verdict that the property would stand out if subject to such a substantial extension. Councillor Pearce-Kearney also noted that other proposals of a similar nature had been refused planning permission. He cited Core Policies 48 and 51 as other reasons for refusal, pointing out Heddington's cultural identity and asserting that the loss of agricultural land would negatively impact the community and its heritage as well as local amenity.

Councillor Bucknell moved to grant planning permission subject to conditions and was seconded by the Chairman. In proposing the motion, Councillor Bucknell stated that as an antiques collector, he appreciated that old things can be ugly too, stating that Corner House was one such instance. He expressed his approval for the steps that the architect, Mr Llewellyn, had taken to improve and update the property, comparing the design favourably to the other permissible options that were submitted. He noted that the proposed building's potential imposition was not necessarily to its detriment, explaining that it had the potential to be a striking statement in the corner of The Common making efficient use of the plot. He explained that he saw no planning reasons to refuse planning permission on balance, explaining that the merit of the design was too subjective a basis upon which to refuse permission and would potentially be overturned at an appeal.

The Chairman stated that as a Calne resident, he was familiar with Corner House, deeming it an isolated, austere property. He noted that there had been objections to many similar conversions around Heddington but considered this application to be a good opportunity to tidy up the property and make better use

of the land. He concluded by asserting that the application seemed like an effective means of ensuring a modern family could live properly in an attractive area of Wiltshire.

Councillor Mathew noted that the proposed building was similar to a property at the end of the lane, although that building had two dormers rather than three, suggesting that such a reduction could prove an effective compromise. Councillor Threlfall pointed out that the austere nature of the current dwelling was emphasised by the lack of any nearby features like trees or shrubbery. Councillor Puntis echoed Councillor Bucknell's thoughts that he had heard no concrete planning reasons to refuse permission, and Councillor Grant noted that while Core Policy 57 could provide grounds for objection, it was too open-ended in its interpretations to be deemed solid. Instead, Councillor Grant said that he considered the plot to be enhanced by the proposed building and on that basis was minded to support the proposal to grant planning permission.

Resolved:

To grant planning permission subject to conditions.

45 **PL/2022/08804: Avondale, Brook End, Luckington, Chippenham, SN14 6PJ**

Planning Officer Olivia Tresise took the Committee through the next item: the proposed demolition of the existing bungalow on site and the erection of a four-bedroom dwelling with a detached double garage. The Planning Officer pointed out that a listed building was situated nearby and that the site was in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). She stated that the main point of contention was the proposed height of the property, but as the proposed height was lower than that of a previously approved application, the officer recommendation was to approve planning permission subject to conditions.

Councillor Bucknell sought clarity on the effect of the site being in Flood Zone 3, to which the Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed dwelling had no impact on the flood risk to either it or neighbouring properties. Councillor Martin Smith sought assurances as to whether the proposed ceiling heights were still satisfactory after the reduction to the proposed height of the building overall. Councillor Lay enquired as to the condition about the glazed window which distantly overlooked a neighbouring property, and suggested tightening the condition to ensure the window was not one which could simply be opened, thereby mitigating the condition entirely.

The Chairman then invited members of the public to speak to the application.

- Amy Hallett spoke in support of the application.
- Charlotte Reeves spoke in support of the application.

The Local Unitary Member, Councillor Martin Smith, explained that he had called in the application on behalf of Luckington Parish Council over concerns about the scale of the proposed dwelling, particularly its height. He explained

that the Conservation Officer objected to the proportions, the construction materials, and the loss of trees. He stated that many of those concerns had now been mitigated by conditions and that he was now far more comfortable with the proposal in its present form.

Councillor Smith then moved to grant planning permission subject to conditions. Councillor Elizabeth Threlfall seconded the motion.

Councillor Bucknell stated that he would support the motion but added that he was not in favour of the building's aesthetic. Councillor Threlfall suggested that the conditions pertaining to construction materials ensure that both windows and exterior doors make use of timber rather than more modern materials.

Resolved:

To grant planning permission subject to conditions.

46 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 2:00 pm - 4:05 pm)

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