

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT WESSEX ROOM, CORN EXCHANGE, MARKET PLACE, DEVIZES SN10 1HS.

Present:

Cllr Mark Connolly (Chairman), Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Sue Evans

42. Apologies

Apologies were received from, Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Nick Fogg MBE and Cllr Paul Oatway.

Cllr Oatway was substituted by Cllr Jerry Kunkler.

43. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2018 were presented for consideration, and it was:

Resolved:

To approve and sign as a true and correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2018.

44. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Richard Gamble declared a non-pecuniary interest in application 18/04942/FUL as in his previous role as Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills he had met and worked with the Diocesan Board of Education and the applicant. He declared he would consider the application on its merits with an open mind as he debated and voted on the item.

Councillor Richard Gamble also declared a non-pecuniary interest in application 18/04151/FUL due to his current role as Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Arts and Tourism, as there were heritage considerations regarding the application. He declared he would consider the application on its merits with an open mind as he debated and voted on the item.

45. **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

46. **Public Participation**

The rules on public participation were noted.

47. **Planning Appeals and Updates**

The report on completed and pending appeals was presented for consideration.

Resolved:

To note the updates.

48. **Planning Applications**

The following planning applications were considered.

49. **18/04942/FUL - Community Centre, Southbroom School House, Estcourt Street, Devizes, SN10 1LW**

Public Participation:

Mrs Elizabeth Denbury, resident, spoke in objection to the application.

Mr Darren Saunders, resident, spoke in objection to the application. Mr Darren Saunders had also submitted formal questions to the Committee. These were answered by the Chairman. The questions and responses can be seen in supplement 2. There were no supplementary questions asked.

Mr Lawrence Nash, resident, spoke in objection to the application.

Mr Peter Kent, Agent, spoke in support of the application.

The majority of objections raised concerned the number of parking spaces proposed as part of the application. It was stated that there were serious parking pressures in the local area and that if approved the application would seriously exacerbate this situation, due to the under-provision of parking in connection with the scheme.

Jonathan James, Senior Conservation/Planning Officer presented a report which recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions, for the proposed redevelopment of the existing Old Southbroom School Buildings to provide 6 new residential dwellings comprising 1 Studio; 4 two bedroom flats; and 1 two bedroom town house, with associated external works, to include conversion of the existing redundant WC block into bike and bin storage (Resubmission of 17/09283/FUL).

Key details were stated to include the following:

The existing buildings on the site are Grade II listed, therefore a counterpart listed building application was submitted, which was undetermined. The application was a resubmission of 17/09283/FUL, which was withdrawn due to concerns about the number of units proposed. The number of units had been reduced from 7 to 6 in the revised application. It was proposed that each unit would have 1 parking space, so there would be 6 parking spaces in total.

The key details regarding the application were stated to include the impact on highway safety, car parking provision and heritage impacts. The total number of parking spaces to be provided did not meet with parking standards, however as the site was not a new build, but rather a change of use of a listed building, a relaxation in parking standards was deemed acceptable. In the proposed scheme, some of the parked cars would need to reverse out of the site which was not considered ideal. However it was stated that cars currently using the site were doing this already, so there would be no change in that regard. The public benefits of the proposal, in securing the future of the historic buildings, were deemed to outweigh the less than substantial harm caused to the heritage asset as a consequence of the change of use to residential. The re-development of the site would also provide an important contribution to housing stock in the local area.

Attention was drawn to a new plan which had been submitted by the applicant, which was summarised by the officer. The new plan illustrated how an extra parking space could be provided, taking the overall number of spaces to 7. However, as the agent did not wish it to form part of the application, it could not be considered.

Members of the public then had the opportunity to present their views, as detailed above.

The unitary division member, Cllr Sue Evans, spoke in objection to the application.

In response to public statements the officer stated that this was a conversion, rather than a new build, as such, statements that parking requirements were half those required were not correct.

A debate followed, whereby the key issues raised included; the reversing of cars onto the road causing safety issues. Some members felt this could not be considered as a major issue as it was already happening on the site. It was felt that the principle of the proposal was sound, as it would increase housing stock and ensure survival of the listed building. However parking was of great concern to all members of the Committee as there were already parking problems locally and there were not many spaces being provided in the proposed scheme. It was felt that there was room within the site to provide more parking. There was also concerned raised regarding drainage as there did not appear to be a storm sewer.

In response to the debate the planning officer stated that there was existing storm water drainage on the site.

Councillor Mark Connolly proposed a motion to refuse planning permission, against officer recommendation, as the provision of parking was not deemed to be sufficient in a location where there were already parking pressures. The application was therefore felt to be contrary to Core Policy 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and to Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This motion was seconded by Councillor Peter Evans.

Further debate followed, where some members reiterated their concerns regarding the parking issues and felt that there was definitely room within the site to increase parking provision. It was hoped that if the motion to refuse was passed then the applicant would reapply with revised plans showing a higher level of parking provision on the site.

At the conclusion of the debate it was;

Resolved:

To REFUSE planning permission for the following reason:

The proposed development of six residential units with only six parking spaces makes inadequate provision for residents parking to enable the development to be accepted at this location where there is already parking pressure on nearby public roads. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Core Policy 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and to Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

50. **18/04151/FUL - Lowerhouse Farm, Lower Chute, Wiltshire, SP11 9DX**

Public Participation:

Ms Ann Rudland spoke in objection to the application.

Mr Chris Hewlett spoke in objection to the application.

Ms Annie Griffiths spoke in objection to the application.

Mr Aaron Smith, Agent, spoke in support of the application.

Cllr Dominic Hughes of Chute Parish Council spoke in objection to the application.

Cllr David Pike of Chute Forest Parish Council spoke in objection to the application.

Objections included concerns regarding the increased number of car journeys the development would cause, car parking issues, lack of requirement for this type of housing, whether the proposal would comprise infill development, effect on heritage assets (including the adjacent grade II listed Lowerhouse Farm, the curtilage listed stable block and the Conservation Area); and impact on the AONB.

Karen Guest, Development Management Team Leader, presented a report which recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions,

for the proposed conversion and extension of the outbuildings on the site to create three new dwellings, including off road parking.

Photos and plans of the site and proposal were shown, including elevation drawings. Windows and doors would largely be inserted in existing openings, apart from some new roof lights. The elevations fronting the road would look the same apart from the new roof lights.

Key issues were stated to include the following; that the site was in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and was in a Conservation Area; there was a grade II listed building adjacent and the stable block was considered to be curtilage listed. The principle of development was considered to be acceptable as the proposal was small scale, involving conversion and extension; and there were residential properties on either side. The property was Grade II listed, however the proposal was felt to be sensitive to the character of the buildings and not deemed to cause harm to the designated heritage assets. Two parking spaces were to be provided per dwelling which reflected the adopted parking standards.

Attention was drawn to late correspondence, consisting of 12 objections to the proposal. These were summarised by the officer and included: overdevelopment of the site; visual impact; inappropriate ecology report; impact on the AONB; drainage; it not being infill development; and parking.

Members of the Committee then had the opportunity to ask technical questions of the officer. Details were sought on whether all the bedrooms in the proposal were double bedrooms. The officer confirmed that they were.

Members of the public then had the opportunity to present their views, as detailed above.

The unitary division member, councillor Ian Blair-Pilling then spoke in objection to the application.

In response to public statements the officer confirmed that the stable block was considered to be a curtilage listed building.

A debate followed, whereby the key issues raised included; the lack of need for housing of this type in the area, affordable housing was needed which the proposed properties were not. Heritage concerns were also raised, including the size of the extension for Plot 2, which was felt to encroach upon the nearby listed farmhouse which would cause harm to its setting. There were concerns raised regarding parking, although it was acknowledged that the scheme met parking standards. It was stated that there may be increased vehicle journeys through the village. Due to a lack of services and public transport in the location, new residents would need to rely on cars. However it was also acknowledged that when the building was used as stables, there would have been traffic going to and from the location. Although most members were not opposed to the principle of residential development on the site, it was felt that the proposed scheme constituted overdevelopment and would harm the setting

of the listed and curtilage listed buildings and the conservation area. Concerns were also raised that the outbuildings associated with Lowerhouse Farm would be lost. It was not felt that the public benefit would outweigh the harm that would be caused to the heritage assets.

Councillor Ian Blair-Pilling proposed a motion to refuse planning permission, against the officer recommendation, due to harm that would be caused to heritage assets. This was seconded by Councillor Richard Gamble.

At the conclusion of the debate it was;

Resolved:

To REFUSE planning permission, for the following reasons:

Plot 2, comprising the conversion and extension of the existing outbuilding, would be in close proximity to the adjacent grade II listed Lowerhouse Farm; would result in an overdevelopment of the site; and would result in the loss of dedicated outbuildings for use in association with Lowerhouse Farm. This would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the adjacent grade II listed property and the curtilage listed stable block by compromising their settings; and to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are no public benefits which would outweigh that harm. The proposal would therefore conflict with Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2018.

51. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 4.45 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Tara Shannon of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718352, e-mail tara.shannon@wiltshire.gov.uk

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