

Planning Review Committee

29 May 2015

Application Number: 14/02940/OUT

Decision Due by: 22 January 2015

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) seeking permission for up to 270 residential dwellings of 1 to 4 bedrooms on 2 to 5 floors to incorporate a maximum of 104 houses and 166 flats. Provision of car parking, cycle and bin storage, landscaping and ancillary works. (Amended plans and additional information)

Site Address: Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road, Oxford

Ward: Littlemore

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Trust

At the East Area Planning Committee on the 8th April 2015, Members resolved to refuse outline planning permission for the following reason

'The development proposed would lead to the overdevelopment of the site such that the density would lead to a high number of car journeys, increasing traffic generation in the wider area, and to poor quality of life within the site for future occupiers. Furthermore the links from the site are not sufficiently sustainable to reduce reliance on the private car and there was a risk of the isolation of non-car users. This would be contrary to Policy CS13 and CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy, Policies CP1, TR1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and Policy JP9 of the Sites and Housing Plan.'

The application has been called-in to the Planning Review Committee by Councillors Darke, Price, Rowley, Smith, Coulter, Simm, Cook, Kennedy, Hollingsworth, Pressel, Fry, Turner, and Seamons on grounds that the site is already identified for development within the Sites and Housing Plan and that housing is a city-wide priority for the Council.

This cover report will provide further clarification on these matters and should be read in conjunction with the officer's report dated 12th April 2011 attached as **Appendix 1**

Representations Received

A summary of all comments received from statutory and third part consultees are set out within the original committee report (**Appendix 2**).

Since this report was published further letters of comment have been received from the following addresses

- 4, 58 Oxford Road; Mr C Chaundy

The comments can be summarised as follows:

- The proposal has no real understanding of the impact on neighbouring roads, communities and quality of life
- The Transport Assessment has given misinformation about Oxford Road and inadequate information about the possible impact of increasing traffic
- A more thorough assessment of the impact that the increasing traffic will have on Littlemore Village should be carried out.
- The traffic on Oxford Road is getting worse and will not cope with the further traffic generated from these homes
- The traffic on Oxford Road will make this dangerous for pedestrians and drivers because the road is too narrow
- Oxford Road is not an 'A' road but an unnumbered classified distributor road
- The impact upon Oxford Road should be risk assessed and possible modification of the highway considered to relieve the Oxford Road

Officers Assessment:

1. The East Area Planning Committee were primarily concerned about the following points
 - That the site is located in an unsustainable location with an over-reliance on the private car.
 - The impact of the additional traffic would be detrimental to the existing residential suburb
2. Officers consider that the original committee report (**Appendix 1**) dealt with these points, but would provide the following additional comments

Sustainability of the Site

3. The site is allocated for employment or residential use under Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP30. The Sites and Housing Plan 2011 -2016 was adopted in February 2013 and forms part of the Local Development Framework.
4. The foreword to the Sites and Housing Plan recognises that the plan will deliver the aims of the Oxford Core Strategy in helping to shape Oxford into a more sustainable and affordable place to live and work. The site allocation policies allocate specific sites that are suitable for particular uses, with an emphasis placed on delivering new housing sites, in order to make better use of the available land within the city to address the chronic housing need and support the local economy. The respective sites were assessed against 6 key objectives, one of which being to ensure that all site allocations are in accessible locations or that

their accessibility can be improved to minimise overall travel demand.

5. The Sites and Housing Plan was adopted following an examination in public, in which the Inspector considered that with respect to the location of the individual site allocations *'Oxford is a small city that benefits from good public transport links. Therefore all areas within it are relatively accessible. Consequently, all of the allocations are sustainably located'*. Therefore the delivery of allocated sites within the Sites and Housing Plan are a key part of providing the Councils five year supply of housing and the Oxford City Council's Growth Strategy.
6. As stated within the original committee report (**Appendix 1**) the site is located within the existing residential suburb of Littlemore. The site is near to an existing public transport corridor on the Sandford Road / Oxford Road with bus stops within 400m of the site outside the Littlemore Mental Health Centre. The applicant has agreed to provide a financial contribution towards improving the bus service along this corridor through an evening and weekend service along this corridor in order to enhance the existing bus service. It is also noted that since the Sites and Housing Plan was adopted, potential public transport improvements have been proposed for the area through the potential opening of the Cowley Branch Line rail corridor by Chiltern Railways.
7. The site is a convenient distance from local facilities such as employment opportunities in Oxford Science Park; the shops at St.Nicholas Road Neighbourhood Shopping Centre and Sainsburys (Heyford Hill); along with local schools. The proposed layout has sought to enhance pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site where possible, and therein has created appropriate links to Sandford Road and Oxford Road while also setting aside appropriate land to enable wider links to be provided to the Science Park, Minchery Road, or any potential station for the Cowley Branch Line at a later date.
8. Officers consider that the general principle of developing this site for residential use has been established through Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP30 which considered the sustainability and accessibility of the site through the adoption process of this development plan document. As a result officers consider that it would not be reasonable to refuse permission on the basis that the site is in an unsustainable location with an over-reliance on the private car as this would conflict with the general aims of the site allocation policy (SP30).

Highways Impact

9. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been submitted with the application along with a Technical Note that considers the key transport issues with the proposal. The methodology for this assessment was scoped out and agreed with the Local Highways Authority prior to submission of the document.
10. It has been brought to officer's attention that the Transport Assessment and committee report has incorrectly described the Oxford Road as an 'A' Road (A4158). The Local Highways Authority have confirmed that the A4158 (Oxford Road) is located to the north of the Littlemore roundabout leading towards Rose Hill, Henley Avenue and Iffley Road. The Oxford Road leading southwards from

the roundabout is an unnumbered classified road, as is Sandford Road.

11. Notwithstanding this matter, the Local Highways Authority has confirmed that the description of the Oxford Road as an 'A' road within the Transport Assessment would not have a bearing on the findings of the assessment. The Transport Assessment is a robust document whose methodology for assessing the traffic generated by the residential development was scoped out with the Local Highways Authority prior to submission. As stated within paragraph 37 of the committee report (Appendix 2) the proposed development would create no major impact upon the surrounding road network and the Local Highways Authority have raised no objection to the application in this regard.

Conclusion:

12. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026, and Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and therefore officer's recommendation is to approve the development in principle for the reasons set out within **Appendix 2** of this report, but defer the application for the completion of a legal agreement.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Contact Officer: Andrew Murdoch

Extension: 252228

Date: 20 April 2015