

PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday 28 September 2012

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Bance (Chair), Fooks (Vice-Chair), Armitage, Rowley, Turner, Wolff, Cook, Coulter and Tanner.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), Michael Crofton-Briggs (Head of City Development), Murray Hancock (City Development), Michael Morgan (Law and Governance) and Nick Worlledge (City Development)

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following apologies were given:-

Councillor Baxter – Councillor Tanner substituted;
Councillor Lygo – Councillor Cook substituted;
Councillor McManners – Councillor Coulter substituted.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cook declared that that he was a former member of Queen's College who were objecting to the scheme for St Clement's Car Park (minute 15 refers); and also that he is a member of Oxford University.

15. PLANNING APPLICATION - ST CLEMENT'S CAR PARK, 12/01369/FUL AND 12/01370/CAC

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) detailing the following planning application at St Clement's Car Park:-

- (1) 12/01370/CAC – Demolition of public toilets;
- (2) 12/01369/FUL – Redevelopment of St. Clement's car park to provide 140 student study rooms and ancillary accommodation in two blocks on 3, 4 and 5 floors. Replacement car park with 80 spaces, public toilets, landscaping and ancillary works.

The Chair, Councillor Bance, indicated that she was extending the time available for public speaking on this application from 5 minutes to 10 minutes per "side" (those speaking for the application and those speaking against).

Murray Hancock presented the report to the Committee and pointed out that two new points had arisen:-

- (1) The Council's Sites and Housing Plan was currently being examined by a Planning Inspector – Michael Crofton Briggs (Head of City Development) would briefly update the Committee;
- (2) A letter had been received from Public Law Solicitors acting on behalf of residents of Anchor Court – Michael Morgan (Legal Advisor) would briefly update the Committee on this.

Michael Crofton Briggs explained that the Inspector had looked at the Council's draft policy on St Clement's car park and had asked if the Council was willing to amend the policy slightly. As a result some slight amendments had been made to include the words "safeguard the vitality of" and "not be significantly reduced but be retained". The Committee might find it helpful to assess the current application in the light of these amendments. It should be noted that this is a draft policy, which the Council, as a body, has not yet considered. The policy that went before Council in December 2011 was the un-amended one.

Michael Morgan then gave legal advice on the letter received from Public Law Solicitors. He advised that the claims made in the letter could be dismissed and that there was nothing within the letter that should alter the way in which the Committee should proceed.

Objectors to the Application

The following people then spoke against the application:-

Bev Clack
Craig Simmons
Clinton Pugh
Leatrice Beeson
Tony Joyce

The objectors collectively made the following points:-

- Current proposal does not make any significant improvement in car parking provision;
- Potential harm to local businesses outweighs any benefits;
- The original decision by West Area Planning Committee should be respected – the issues were examined thoroughly there;
- Design too large and overlooks neighbours;
- Unsure which students will occupy these premises (from Oxford University, Oxford Brookes, or elsewhere?);
- Development is unwelcome to residents, risks overdevelopment of the site and will affect businesses;
- This development is not wanted;
- Car parking was the reason for refusal before and nothing has changed since;
- Protection of the vitality of the local area is important;
- The suggestion for temporary car parking is ridiculous,
- Business will suffer and cannot bear the loss – if this continues, many will "go bust";
- The proposed temporary car park is too far away, and the parking on site now proposed is too little;

- A lot of hard work has gone into building up this part of town, but this proposal won't help businesses;
- Anchor Court residents will suffer immense disruption to their lives, they will also lose light to their flats;
- There will be a loss of trees and meadow areas, and a loss of views of both for Anchor Court residents;
- Residents fear that petty criminals will hide under the proposed buildings;
- The suggested number of parking places is too few for local businesses and visitors to Anchor Court;
- Work on the site won't enhance the vitality of the area;
- Will make life difficult for the people who live and work here;

In favour of the Application:

The following people spoke in favour of the application:-

Paul Gillespie – on behalf of the Applicant

Steven Hodder – architect on behalf of the Applicant.

The supporters collectively made the following points:-

- Temporary car parking will be provided on site during the construction period with a minimum of 25 spaces guaranteed for the first and third phases - this number will vary as the scheme progresses and will increase to 40 for the second and last stages;
- There will be 76 spaces in Marston Road with a free bus service on scheduled services. There will be 1 hour's free parking (plus an extra 30 minutes to cover bus travel) for those wishing to make a short journey; otherwise charges will be the same as at the St Clement's Car Park;
- Students will be full time students studying at one of the two universities or other institutions in the City;
- It is felt unlikely that students living in the accommodation will use the car parking on site as it will cost £17.50 per day;
- The development has been designed to be close to facilities and major public transport links. A travel plan will be submitted;
- The height, scale and massing have all been reduced from the previous scheme;
- There is no impact on the designated view codes;
- The building is subservient to the Florey Building in terms of height;
- There will be sensitive landscaping and the site is intended to make a positive contribution to the conservation area;
- Buildings are now sited further away from the backs of buildings on St Clements;
- There is no overlooking from the scheme and no reduction in light to Anchor Court.

Questions

The following information was then provided by the planning officers and applicants in response to questions from Councillors:-

- It is usual to impose a condition requiring a plan to be submitted from the applicant detailing how students will be managed. The application must

comply with the policy of the Council regarding the students who will occupy these sorts of buildings;

- To restrict students occupying the accommodation to the two universities only would need a valid reason to depart from the Council's policy – there is no reason here for a more restrictive condition;
- There is some flexibility around the free one hour period of parking at the temporary car park to help with short visits to the area;
- The development is 30-40 metres away from Anchor Court so it is not thought there will be a problem with loss of light;
- There will be CCTV on the site and lighting beneath the buildings, but the Applicant had not yet formally responded to other suggested crime prevention measures suggested by Thames Valley Police;
- There was a transport assessment plan submitted with the application – it seems that the car park is busiest on Friday and Saturday but not at capacity at other times;
- There will be a condition covering the issue of a biodiversity action plan;
- West Area Planning Committee did not comment on the suggested crime prevention measures;
- When the accommodation is empty out of term time, it could be used by summer schools or conferences (as is normal practice with student accommodation);
- The transport assessment was carried out recently for this application.

Following discussion by the Committee and taking into consideration all submissions made, both written and oral, the Committee resolved:-

- (1) To SUPPORT the applications in principle, but to defer them in order to secure an accompanying legal agreement as itemised in the officer's report; plus a contribution of £3,000 to the Highways Authority for amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders, and to delegate to officers the issuing of notices of conservation area consent and planning permission (subject to conditions) on its completion;
- (2) To draw attention to the following conditions which it wished to see added:-
 - Provision of as much cycle parking space as possible;
 - Maintenance of a minimum number of parking spaces at every stage of development - 25 for stage 1, 40 (preferably 50) at stage 2 and 25 (preferably more) at stage 3;
 - Submission of a student management plan for the facility, including use of the roof terrace;
 - Police advice to be sought on seating appropriate for the site;
 - Inclusion of CCTV.

16. PLANNING APPLICATION - 26 - 28 QUARRY HIGH STREET, 12/01340/FUL & 12/01341/CAC

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the following application:-

- (1) 12/01340/FUL – Erection of reconstructed stone wall to create new access and construction of 2 detached houses (2x3 beds). Erection of

garage for 32 Quarry High Street. Erection of 2 storey rear extension for 28 Quarry High Street.

(2) 12/01341/CAC – Demolition of outbuildings and part stone wall.

Nick Worlledge presented the report to the Committee.

Objectors

Laurence Kelly (on behalf of Friends of Quarry and local residents) spoke against the application and made the following points:-

- The houses are the last remaining pair of Victorian cottages in Quarry;
- The last application was rejected at appeal for reason of large scale loss of garden land – and this still applied here;
- Over 32m of stone wall will have to be demolished and rebuilt, but the exact position is unclear;
- The proposed houses are close to neighbourhood boundaries;
- There is local pressure on parking, access and highway safety;
- Would prefer to see these properties repaired, with thriving gardens.

In favour

Malcolm Griffiths (Applicant) spoke in favour of the application and made the following points:-

- This is brown field, previously developed land;
- There has been consultation with the planners and conservation officer;
- The old wall will be retained and form part of the garage wall;
- The site will be landscaped, with existing trees kept and more planted;
- The parking area has been moved and will be behind the garage;
- Each house will have its own bin store;
- County highways have approved the access;
- The design is for high quality sustainable family homes;
- It complies with the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Questions

The following information was provided by planning officers and the applicant in answer to questions from Councillors:-

- There will be a visibility splay at the entrance to the site, but it won't be a bell-shaped junction;
- The old existing concrete garage will be demolished;
- The bin store will be behind the garage or on the individual sites – the bins will be the responsibility of the home owners;
- The property at number 34 is on higher land, so that although the boundary wall is 2.2m tall on the site, it is not as tall for the neighbour;

Following discussion by the Committee and taking into consideration all submissions made, both written and oral, the Committee resolved to APPROVE the application, subject to conditions laid out in the planning officers report, and

that the Head of City Dvelopment be authorised to issue the notice of permission.

17. MINUTES

Resolved to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2012.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved to note the following dates:-

Wednesday 31st October
Wednesday 28th November
Wednesday 19th December
Wednesday 30th January 2013
Wednesday 27th February
Wednesday 27th March
Wednesday 24th April
Wednesday 29th May

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.00 pm