

Remote meeting

Minutes of a meeting of the West Area Planning Committee on Tuesday 10 November 2020

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Committee members present:

Councillor Cook (Chair)

Councillor Gotch (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Howlett

Councillor Iley-Williamson

Councillor Tarver

Councillor Upton

Councillor Wade

Councillor Tanner (for Councillor Corais)

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Adrian Arnold, Head of Planning Services

Robert Fowler, Planning Team Leader

Jennifer Coppock, Senior Planner

James Paterson, Senior Planning Officer

Sally Fleming, Planning Lawyer

Catherine Phythian, Committee and Member Services Officer

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Corais sent apologies.

Substitutes are shown above.

45. Declarations of interest

Councillor Cook stated that as a Council appointed trustee for the Oxford Preservation Trust and as a member of the Oxford Civic Society he had taken no part in those organisations' discussions or decision making regarding the applications before the Committee. He said that he was approaching all of the applications with an open mind, would listen to all the arguments and weigh up all the relevant facts before coming to a decision.

Councillor Upton stated that as a Council appointed trustee for the Oxford Preservation Trust and as a member of the Oxford Civic Society, she had taken no part in those organisations' discussions or decision making regarding the applications before the Committee. She said that she was approaching all of the applications with an open mind, would listen to all the arguments and weigh up all the relevant facts before coming to a decision.

Councillor Gotch stated that as a member of the Oxford Preservation Trust and as a member of the Oxford Civic Society, he had taken no part in those organisations' discussions or decision making regarding the applications before the Committee. He said that he was approaching all of the applications with an open mind, would listen to all the arguments and weigh up all the relevant facts before coming to a decision.

Councillor Wade stated that as a member of the Oxford Civic Society, she had taken no part in those organisations' discussions or decision making regarding the applications before the Committee and that she was approaching the applications with an open mind, would listen to all the arguments and weigh up all the relevant facts before coming to a decision.

46. 20/01156/FUL: 178-184, Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4RA

The Committee considered an application (20/01156/FUL) for planning permission for the demolition of the existing hotel; erection of a three storey 43no. bedroom hotel (use class C1) and creation of 1no. 2 bedroom dwelling (use class C3); provision of vehicular and cycle parking and bin storage (amended description).

The Planning Officer presented the report and gave the following verbal updates:

- Paragraph 4.1 of the committee report, stated that the CIL amount payable would be £112,669.12 which was incorrect. The correct figure was £27,129.21.
- On 6 November an amended evacuation plan was received from the applicant, however the detail of the amended evacuation plan, which included a proposal that in the absence of a flood warning, guests would seek refuge on upper floors was considered to be unacceptable as it would place an additional burden on the emergency services. So that reason for refusal remained.

Abigail Lloyd, representing the Oxford Architectural & Historical Society and Nikki Spencer, a local resident representing a local group (PALS) spoke against the application.

The Committee acknowledged all of the arguments presented in the report and noted the objections raised by the public speakers.

The Committee supported the principle of a replacement hotel on the application site but concluded that the details of the specific application before them were not acceptable.

The Committee noted the concerns raised by the public speakers regarding the protection of the Victorian buildings on the application site and was mindful of the advice from the planning officers that this might be possible through their inclusion on the local Heritage Asset Register.

After debate and on being proposed, seconded and put to the vote, the Committee agreed with the officer's recommendation to refuse the application.

The West Area Planning Committee resolved to:

1. **refuse the application** for the reasons listed below; and
2. **delegate authority** to the Head of Planning Services to:

- finalise the recommended reasons for refusing the application as set out in the report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Head of Planning Services considers reasonably necessary.

3. Reasons for refusal:

- a) The proposed scale, massing, height and use of inappropriate materials would fail to respond appropriately to the existing character, form, scale and massing of the surrounding area. The large expanse of flat roof would impose a jarring, box-like form against the existing interesting and attractive variety of roof forms and prominent gable ends along Abingdon Road. The proposed development would therefore be detrimental to the character and context of the site, the visual amenity of the area and streetscene. Furthermore, the proposed development would not contribute positively to the existing roofscape and is likely to impact on long distance views from Hinksey Hill view cone, however sufficient analysis has not been provided. As such, the proposal would be in conflict with policies DH1 and DH2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.
- b) The increased height, overall scale of development and distance from neighbouring dwellings, particularly to the west, would create an unacceptable overbearing impact on neighbours to the south and west. Due to the close proximity of the proposed development to neighbouring dwellings, a number of the proposed rear and side bedroom and stairwell windows would lead to unacceptable overlooking or perceived overlooking. The 45 and 25 degree lines would be contravened when applied to the nearest habitable windows of no. 178 Abingdon Road. The proposed development would therefore lead to an unacceptable impact on the daylight/ sunlight to this property. The proposed development would create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity, in conflict with policies RE7 and H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.
- c) Having had regard to the proposals being situated in a high flood risk area and the proposals being for a more vulnerable use, insufficient information has been submitted, in particular the application is deficient in its failure to provide a comprehensive flood warning and evacuation plan in accordance with policy RE3 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and paragraphs 163 of the NPPF.
- d) The proposed increase in vehicular parking provision within this highly sustainable location would not accord with the requirements of policy M3 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036. The cycle parking provision is acceptable in terms of quantity but the proposed location is not considered practical in accordance with policy M5 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036. The proposed development is therefore not acceptable in highways terms.
- e) Insufficient information has been submitted, in particular the application is deficient in its failure to provide an Energy Statement to enable the Local Planning Authority to fully assess whether sustainable design and construction principles have been incorporated into the development. The application therefore does not conform to the requirements of Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

47. 20/01314/FUL: Unit 1 & Unit 2, Botley Road, Oxford, OX2 0HA

The Committee considered an application (20/01314/FUL) for planning permission for external and internal alterations to provide single Class A1 retail use (amalgamation of Units 1 and 2), new shop front, insertion of mezzanine floor, erection of sprinkler tanks and pump house, siting of chiller and cold storage units, limited variation in permitted range of goods to enable sale of food and drink from up to 250 sq.m. net for consumption off the premises, provision of ancillary garden centre and cafe.

The Planning Officer presented the report and made the following verbal updates:

- All references in the report should be to an **on-site** café
- The Council's Flood Officer had spotted an omission of any reference to a sprinkler tank and pump room in the documentation and a new condition to require the flood risk assessment to be updated was recommended
- Proposed removal of Conditions 10 and 11
- The technical information that had been requested by Thames Water would be dealt with at building regulations stage.

The Committee noted the planning officers' advice that although this was classed as a major development it was primarily about changes to the interior of the existing buildings and that there was minimal change to the external landscaping and footprint of the buildings. Therefore it would be unreasonable and disproportionate to seek to impose conditions which required improvements to the existing flood risk mitigation under Local Plan Policy RE3.

The Committee expressed reservations about the removal of Conditions 10 and 11 and noted that the objections raised by the County Council, as the lead Flood Authority statutory consultee, were still in place.

In light of these concerns, and notwithstanding the planning officers' advice that this was a matter of professional judgement on the part of the flood experts, the Committee considered the merits of a deferral of the application to seek further information from the County Council on this matter.

A proposal to defer the application to enable further consultation on matters pertaining to drainage and surface water run-off was moved and seconded.

On being put to the vote, the West Area Planning Committee resolved to defer consideration of application 20/01314/FUL for the following reason:

To enable further consultation on matters pertaining to drainage and surface water run-off between Oxford City Council as the Local Planning Authority and Oxfordshire County Council as the Lead Flood Authority consultee.

48. Minutes

The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020 as a true and accurate record.

49. Forthcoming applications

The Committee noted the list of forthcoming applications.

50. Dates of future meetings

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 3.00 pm and ended at 4.00 pm

Chair

Date: Tuesday 8 December 2020

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.

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