

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning - Oxford City Planning Committee on Tuesday 16 July 2024



Committee members present:

Councillor Clarkson (Chair)	Councillor Fouweather (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Altaf-Khan	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Coyne	Councillor Henwood
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Ottino (for Councillor Hunt)
Councillor Rawle	Councillor Regisford
Councillor Upton	

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Ross Chambers, Planning Lawyer
Natalie Dobraszczyk, Development Management Team Leader
Mike Kemp, Principal Planning Officer
Emma Lund, Committee and Member Services Officer
Andrew Murdoch, Development Management Service Manager

Apologies:

Councillor Hunt sent apologies.
The substitute is shown above.

15. Declarations of interest

General

Councillor Upton declared that as a member and trustee of the Oxford Preservation Trust she had taken no part in that organisation's discussions regarding any of the applications before the Committee. Councillor Upton stated that she was approaching the application with an open mind, would listen to all the arguments and weigh up all the relevant facts before coming to a decision.

23/02411/FUL

Councillors Henwood, Upton and Clarkson each declared that they were a member of Cyclox, which had commented on the application. These Councillors each declared that they had had no discussion with Cyclox relating to the application or the comments submitted.

16. 23/02411/FUL: Land North of Charlbury Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire

The Committee considered an application (23/02411/FUL) for the erection of accommodation for boarding pupils to include access, landscaping, associated bin/recycling stage, cycle storage and associated development at land north of Charlbury Road, Oxford.

The Planning Officer gave a presentation and highlighted the following:

- A further representation had been received following the publication of the officer's report which had been circulated to committee members. This had covered matters relating to the statutory consultation period carried out on amended plans; the drainage strategy; flood risk assessment; and consultation with the Environment Agency.
- The Planning Officer clarified that amendment had been made to the red line site location plan and the site plan and this had been re-advertised for a period of 21 days starting on 10 June. The consultation period had therefore now expired. Amendments were made to other statutory reports on 28 June; however, these changes were only to correct the red line plan on technical reports such as the drainage strategy. They were therefore considered to be immaterial when considering the merits of the application. Officers were satisfied that no development was proposed outside of the red line area and that all parties had been given appropriate notice.
- The drainage strategy did not rely on drainage into the western ditch, which was not within the red line area of the site. Fencing could be provided within the application site to provide separation between the development site and the adjoining Cherwell School. Officers were satisfied that the development would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, and this view was shared by the County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The Environment Agency had also been consulted on the application but had chosen not to issue formal comments, referring instead to its standing guidance.
- The application proposed removal of the existing tennis courts and development of three buildings to provide pupil boarding accommodation for 120 pupils within 81 rooms for use by Wychwood School. The accommodation would include a mix of shared and single rooms. Three staff flats (one two-bedroomed flat in each building) were also proposed. Parking would be provided for 7 vehicles, with access from Charlbury Road to the south. The applicant had agreed to a financial contribution of £150,000, to be secured by a Section 106 agreement, to mitigate the loss of the tennis courts: this would be directed to existing publicly accessible tennis provision in north Oxford at either Cutteslowe Park or Alexandra Park. This was considered to be an enhancement in terms of wider sports provision relative to the existing tennis courts at the site which were under the private ownership of the school and was therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy G5 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy HCS3 of the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan.

- A site management plan would be secured by legal agreement. This would be a key document in managing the potential impact on residential amenity, including management of the use of outside spaces and use of the accommodation in the interest of managing noise, pupil behaviour and other associated issues.
- During the application process the access strategy had been revised to exclude pick up and drop off taking place at the boarding accommodation. Instead, this would take place at the main school premises at Banbury Road with luggage being transported via an on-site minibus. Parking provision at the application site would consist of a space for the minibus, three spaces for staff and spaces for servicing and deliveries. Pupils would be expected to walk between the site and the school's main premises each day. Vehicle movements associated with the development were therefore expected to be low, and vehicle speeds on approach to the site were also low at the current time. Off-site vehicular access improvements to increase the awareness by road users of cyclists when entering and exiting the site were proposed: this was important given the spatial proximity of the access to the National Cycle Network. The County Council as Local Highway Authority had raised no objection to the application on highway safety grounds, and officers considered that the application would not have a severe impact on the safety of road users and would therefore not be contrary either to the NPPF or Policies M1 or M2 of the Oxford Local Plan. Management of vehicle movements would be included in the site management plan to be secured by legal agreement.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan would be secured by condition: the movement of construction vehicles would require careful management and supervision, and the movement of construction vehicles would need to avoid peak commuting and school drop-off times.
- Officers considered that the proposal was acceptable and in compliance with the relevant policy provisions of the NPPF, the Oxford Local Plan and the Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan. It was therefore recommended for approval for the reasons given in the report and subject to the conditions set out in the report and a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as set out in the report.

Jonathan Bard of the Linton Road Neighbourhood Association spoke against the application.

Jane Evans, Headteacher of Wychwood School, spoke in favour of the application.

The Committee asked questions about the details of the application which were responded to by officers, the applicant and their representatives. The Committee's discussions included, but were not limited to:

- The new buildings were required to be DDA compliant and would be fully accessible for all pupils;
- Catering would not be provided on the site, and so deliveries associated with food were expected to be minimal. However, deliveries of cleaning and laundry supplies would be needed on a regular basis. This was not expected to involve large vehicles. Management of deliveries would be included in the site management plan.

- The operation of the school for summer school students would be the same as for term time, for example summer school students would also be required to pick up and drop off at the main site in Banbury Road. The pupil management plan would restrict the use of cars by pupils, with no pupil cars to be permitted at the site during either holiday periods or term time.
- Paragraph 10.84 of the report set out the County Council's advice that 1 cycle parking space per 2 pupils could be secured by planning condition; however, no condition to require this level of cycle parking had been included. The applicant clarified that pupils would be required to walk between the two school sites and the Wolfson playing fields. Cycling between sites would require pupils to be supervised and it was therefore not permitted. It was considered that there would be no merit in requiring the applicant to provide the additional cycle parking spaces as suggested by the County Council if they would not be used. Officers responded that given that the Oxford Local Plan did not specifically list cycle parking standards for school boarding accommodation, a level of cycle parking based on operation requirements could be justified, i.e. the 20 spaces which were included in the application.
- The applicant had sought within the application to address concerns raised by the neighbouring Cherwell School, for example by reducing the number of, or changing, the windows on the western side; covering the fire stairwell; providing assurance that pupils would not be in the boarding accommodation during the school day; and undertaking to improve the boundary treatment between the two schools.
- The condition relating to the Construction Traffic Management Plan would need to be very carefully worded given the potential risks associated with the proximity of cyclists and large numbers of children to construction traffic at a difficult junction.

On being proposed, seconded and put to the vote the Committee agreed with the officers' recommendation to approve the application for the reasons set out in the report and subject to the conditions set out in the report, the addition of a condition relating to cycle parking to specify that this should be based on operational requirements, and a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations set out in the report.

The Oxford City Planning Committee resolved to:

1. **approve the application** for the reasons given in the report subject to the required planning conditions set out in section 12 of the report and grant planning permission subject to:
 - the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other enabling powers to secure the planning obligations set out in the recommended heads of terms which are set out in the report; and
2. **delegate authority** to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services to:
 - finalise the recommended conditions as set out in the report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services considers reasonably necessary; and

- finalise the recommended legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other enabling powers as set out in the report, including refining, adding to, amending and/or deleting the obligations detailed in the heads of terms set out in the report (including to dovetail with and where appropriate, reinforce the final conditions and informatives to be attached to the planning permission) as the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services considers reasonably necessary; and
- complete the section 106 legal agreement referred to above and issue the planning permission.

17. 24/00732/FUL: U Y S Ltd, Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2BW

The Committee considered an application (24/00732/FUL) for the development of up to 22,375sqm open storage (Use Class B8) together with associated highways works, site-wide hard and soft landscaping works, and boundary treatment at UYS Ltd, Garsington Road, Oxford.

The Planning Officer gave a presentation and highlighted the following:

- The application site was located in the north of the Unipart site, with access only through the Unipart site via Transport Way and Garsington Road.
- The surrounding development consisted of large industrial warehousing and buildings associated with use by Unipart; the nearest residential dwellings were to the northeast at Horspath, over 200m from the site. The surrounding land to the east consisted of open agricultural land. The Northfields residential site allocation, within south Oxfordshire District, lay to the south of the Unipart buildings. Visibility of the site from the surrounding landscape was limited.
- The building had been unused since 2021 when UYS had vacated the premises. Planning permission had previously been granted for a temporary Class B8 storage use: the existing building fell under a Class B2 light industrial use but marketing had indicated a level of interest in use of the building for storage purposes. Permission had also been granted for urgent repair and refurbishment works to the building. Despite this, firm interest in use of the building had not materialised.
- The application before the committee sought temporary planning permission (7 years) for open air storage on the site, to be located on both the existing hardstanding below the former UYS building and on the car parking. The application site fell within the former Unipart employment allocation in the Oxford Local Plan which allowed for Class B8 storage uses on the site, although as noted in the report there was a contradiction with Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan which was not permissive of storage and distribution uses on allocated employment sites, apart from where such use was necessary to support existing uses.
- The applicant's intention was to redevelop the site in the longer term, subject to delivering improvements to the existing access arrangements. This application would therefore allow for a 'meanwhile' storage use whilst still retaining potential for long term, more permanent, redevelopment in order to generate employment opportunities. Officers considered that this was preferable to the site remaining vacant for an extended period; the departure in technical terms from Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan was therefore considered to be justified, particularly as the

proposal was compliant with the wider provisions of the Oxford Local Plan and the NPPF.

- A total of six car parking and two cycle parking spaces were proposed on the site. The proposal would involve a substantial reduction in forecast vehicle movements and so was considered to be acceptable in terms of access, highway safety and highway amenity terms. It was also likely to have a reduced impact on adjoining properties in terms of noise than the former UYS building.
- Provision had been made in the plans to secure biodiversity net gain of 15.89% and replacement tree planting for the loss of nine small trees in the car park area which would need to be removed.
- For the reasons set out in the report, the application was recommended for approval subject to the required planning conditions set out in the report.

The Committee asked questions about the details of the application which were responded to by officers.

On being proposed, seconded and put to the vote the Committee agreed with the officer's recommendation to approve the application subject to the required planning conditions set out in the report.

The Oxford City Planning Committee resolved to:

1. **approve the application** for the reasons given in the report and subject to the required planning conditions set out in section 12 of the report and grant planning permission; and
2. **delegate authority** to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services to:
 - finalise the recommended conditions as set out in the report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services considers reasonably necessary.

18. Minutes

The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

19. Forthcoming applications

The Committee noted the list of forthcoming applications.

20. Dates of future meetings

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.44 pm

Chair

Date: Tuesday 20 August 2024

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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