

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
UPLANDS AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE
held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon
at 2.00pm on Monday 6 January 2020

PRESENT

Councillors: Jeff Haine (Chairman), Geoff Saul (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Beaney, Richard Bishop, Mike Cahill, Nathalie Chapple, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Merilyn Davies, Dave Jackson, Neil Owen and Alex Postan.

(# Ex-officio, Non-voting)

Officers in attendance: Chloe Jacobs, Stephanie Eldridge, Tara Hayek, Phil Shaw and Amy Barnes.

43. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 2 December 2019, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ted Fenton.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to matters to be considered at the meeting.

46. APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Business Manager – Development Management, giving details of an application for development, copies of which had been circulated.

RESOLVED: That the decision on the following application be as indicated, the reasons for refusal to be as recommended in the report of the Business Manager – Development Management, subject to any amendments as detailed below:-

14 19/02780/FUL No Oven Cottage, Chipping Norton Road, Little Tew

The Planning Officer, Miss Chloe Jacobs introduced the application.

Mr Charles Luxton, the applicant's agent, addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of his submission is attached as Appendix A to the original copy of these minutes.

Following a question from Councillor Davies, Mr Luxton confirmed that the existing building had been built before the 1970's.

The Planning Officer then presented her report containing a recommendation of refusal. She advised that pre-application advice had been sought in 2018 and officers had felt that the proposal was contrary to Policies OS2 and H2. The location was described as a small village and it had not been demonstrated that an exceptional need existed to warrant diverting from policy. Officers also felt there was a heritage concern.

Councillor Colston advised that he had driven past the property and agreed that the existing building was an eyesore and to open up the view would be beneficial. However, he was undecided with regard to the policy aspects.

Councillor Beaney expressed difficulty with the application as he felt that it was innovative to use the wall as screening.

Councillor Jackson highlighted the discrepancies between the construction consultant's comments and the officer's opinion relating to the view of the church. He requested clarification on the wall to be demolished and the height up to the eaves. He queried the need for a new entrance to the site but agreed that the existing annex stood out.

The Planning Officer reminded Members that Historic England guidance stated that the site needed to be looked at as though the trees were not there. Officers felt there was a need to protect the listed building and its setting and no public benefit had been demonstrated which outweighed this harm.

Councillor Davies did not feel that there was enough information in the presentation to understand what the proposed building would look like.

The Conservation Officer advised that officers had to have regard to the listed building and its curtilage. This proposal sought to split the land and would have an impact on the setting, historic landscape and character of the surrounding area which had been in existence since 1875.

Councillor Cotterill did not feel there was enough information for the Committee to reach a decision and therefore proposed that the application be deferred to allow a site visit to take place. He stated that Members had no understanding of scale from the presentation and this need confirming.

This was seconded by Councillor Bishop who had listened to the statements in opposition and was uncertain as to whether these outweighed losing a 'blot on the landscape'.

A recommendation of deferral, to allow a site visit to take place, was put to the vote and was carried.

Defer

10 18/01474/FUL 2 Hurst Lane, Freeland

The Planning Officer introduced the retrospective application, requesting permission for two additional windows which had not been included on the original permission.

Mrs Rogers, the applicant, addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of her submission is attached as Appendix B to the original copy of these minutes.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Mrs Rogers confirmed that the fence they were proposing to add trellis to, was theirs.

The Planning Officer then presented her report containing a recommendation of approval. The report noted that the addition of the windows to the side elevation did impact on neighbours, however, it was felt that this could be overcome by increasing the fence height, which would be conditioned.

Councillor Davies agreed with the officers that the addition of trellis to the top of the fence would mitigate the issue and agreed that the level of overlooking was insignificant and individuals would need to be very determined to achieve this. She therefore proposed that the application be approved as per officer's recommendation.

This was seconded by Councillor Jackson who felt the addition of trellis was a simple and obvious solution.

Councillor Cotterill disagreed with this viewpoint and sympathised with the neighbour. He felt that the additional windows should be obscure glazed.

Officers advised that the addition of obscure glazing was discussed however, it was agreed that an increase in fence height was the preferred option. With regards to timescale, the applicant would be required to carry out the work within one month of the decision.

In response to a question from Councillor Cooper, officers advised that adding obscure glazing was an enforceable condition, however, on this occasion the applicant did not want it.

Councillor Postan referred to the difficulties that neighbour disputes could cause and the relationship had clearly broken down to result in solicitors' letters being exchanged. He also felt that the trellis was a suitable solution.

The Officer recommendation of approval was then put to the vote and was carried.

Approved

27 19/02916/HHD Grenemore, Chastleton

The Planning Officer introduced the application with a recommendation of refuse. This item was taken in conjunction with the following application 19/02917/LBC which dealt with the listed building consent for the site.

The applicant, Mrs Maggie Todd, addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of her submission is attached as Appendix C to the original copy of these minutes.

In response to a question from Councillor Chapple, Mrs Todd confirmed that they were not living in the property and it remained empty.

The applicant's heritage consultant, Mrs Elaine Milton, addressed Members in support of the application. A summary of her submission is attached as Appendix D to the original copy of these minutes.

Councillor Postan confirmed with the officer that original features may be lost if a doorway was created into the lean to. Officers also confirmed the design of the front door and highlighted the area of glazing to the top of the side elevation of the extension.

The Conservation Officer explained her position regarding rooflights which would sit flush to the roof slope and were not as visually dominant. She described the creation of the internal doorway as 'puncturing' the existing fabric of the building and the introduction of a woodburner would be detrimental.

Councillor Beaney clarified that he had called this application in to Committee although the report did not detail this. He felt that the additional dormer windows would complement the existing ones and rooflights would be alien to the character. He did not have any issue with the glazing at the top of the front door due to its small size and suggested that the applicant could work with the Conservation Officer to agree a compromise regarding the glazed section at the top of the lean to extension. He therefore proposed that the application be approved subject to the removal of the woodburner and the glazed section located at the top of the 'lean to' extension. He felt that the introduction of the internal doorway was satisfactory.

This was seconded by Councillor Owen who sympathised with the applicant as he lived in a similar property and understood the difficulties of transforming old buildings to cater for modern living.

The Business Manager, Development Management, reminded the Committee that as the existing roof was predominantly roof slate, the introduction of the dormer windows would alter that. The introduction of the internal doorway would also permanently change the external and internal fabric of the building.

Councillor Colston confirmed that the dormer windows would be located on the west side of the building and would not be visible to the street scene. He confirmed that he did not like rooflights and the glazing above the front door was not an issue for him.

In response, the Conservation Officer advised that in her opinion the property was sufficiently sized to accommodate five people in its current state. She felt it was important to retain the original floorplan of the building and the area currently used for storage was separately accessed, and to alter this would impact on the heritage asset. The current dimensions of the space were sufficient to house a kitchen and to extend it would harm the setting of the building.

Councillor Davies assured the conservation officer that Members had huge respect for her role which was a valuable asset to the Council. However, she felt Members' role was to assist the community and enable this family to live comfortably in their property. She made reference to the ability to make

changes to a 17th Century building in order to make it habitable and would not like to see the property erode.

Councillor Chapple suggested that, if officers were keen to keep the asymmetric design, could one of the dormer windows be offset to match the original. However, she agreed with the proposer regarding the glazing to the extension and the removal of the fireplace from the application.

A number of Members agreed that the addition of a fireplace in the building was an issue and options for an alternative flue were discussed. In addition, the Committee mainly agreed that the introduction of rooflights instead of dormer windows would be alien to the character. It was accepted that a building of this age would naturally evolve over the years and effort had been made to maintain original features and preserve the footprint.

Councillor Cooper stated that the decision was marginal and although he could see what the applicant was trying to achieve, felt it could be one step too far.

Following a robust discussion it was agreed that the application should be approved, contrary to officers' recommendation and subject to:

- The removal of glazing from the top of the existing lean to extension;
- No alteration to the internal fabric of the building to allow for the installation of a woodburner; and
- Applicant to liaise with the Conservation Officer regarding the positioning of additional and existing dormer windows and alternative options for the installation of the woodburner.

Approved.

36 19/02917/LBC Grenemore, Chastleton

The Planning Officer introduced the application with a recommendation of refuse. This item was taken in conjunction with the above application 19/02916/HHD which dealt with the house holder development consent for the site.

The applicant, Mrs Maggie Todd, addressed the meeting in support of the application. A summary of her submission is attached as Appendix C to the original copy of these minutes.

The applicant's heritage consultant, Mrs Elaine Milton, addressed Members in support of the application. A summary of her submission is attached as Appendix D to the original copy of these minutes.

For full details of the debate, please refer to the above minute.

It was proposed by Councillor Beaney and seconded by Councillor Owen that the application be approved.

Following a robust discussion it was agreed that the application should be approved, contrary to officers' recommendation and subject to:

- The removal of glazing from the top of the existing lean to extension;
- No alteration to the internal fabric of the building to allow for the installation of a woodburner; and
- Applicant to liaise with the Conservation Officer regarding the positioning of additional and existing dormer windows and alternative options for the installation of the woodburner.

Approved.

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68 Main Road, Long Hanborough

The Planning Officer introduced the retrospective application, which requested permission for a single storey extension to be used for food preparation. Members noted that there was an additional representation from the Parish Council regarding the extractor fan. Officers were recommending approval.

Members were advised that the Environmental Health Officer had visited the site and provided a detailed response. In addition, they were satisfied with the application subject to conditions. Officers also advised that Condition 2 of the report would be amended to include details of the flue.

Councillor Davies reminded the Committee that the difficulties that the Parish Council were expressing were borne out of a breakdown of trust between all parties. She advised that the site was directly next to the school and was impactful on children. She stated that she would feel happier if the condition had been put in place before permission was granted because she was concerned they would not be met otherwise.

Officers advised that if the conditions were not met, the Council would be entitled to open an enforcement case. Members were assured that the premise was now on officers' radar and there was a three month time limit on the conditions.

Councillor Davies proposed that the application be approved and urged officers to ensure the premise was enforced strongly and monitored appropriately.

This was seconded by Councillor Postan who supported the planning officers and hoped this would give them control over a problematic site. He also commented that the refuse bins detailed on the photograph made a mockery of the character of the area.

The Officer recommendation of approval was then put to the vote and was carried.

Approved.

47. APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS AND APPEAL DECISIONS

The report giving details of applications determined under delegated powers was received and noted.

The meeting closed at 3.45pm.

CHAIRMAN