

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 6 DECEMBER 2023

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair);
Councillors Yeo (Vice-Chair), Cresswell, Davies, Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Goss, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, Moore, Robinson, Rowland and Williams

RESOLVED ITEMS

62. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Moore declared a pecuniary interest in Items 72 and 73 as his partner had carried out the ecological surveys on both sites.

Councillor Yeo declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 75 as he was currently completing a PhD at the University of Reading.

64. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

The Committee considered a report setting out a schedule of applications to be considered at future meetings of the Committee to enable Councillors to decide which sites, if any, they wished to visit prior to determining the relevant applications. The report also listed previously agreed site visits which were yet to take place.

It was reported at the meeting that the previously agreed accompanied site visit to the Civic Offices would be held on 4 January 2024.

Resolved -

- (1) That none of the listed sites be the subject of a site visit;
- (2) That the position be noted.

65. PLANNING APPEALS

The Committee received a report on notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on planning appeals registered with them or decisions made and providing summary reports on appeal decisions of interest to the Committee.

Appendix 1 to the report set out details of eight new appeals lodged since the last Committee. Appendix 2 to the report set out details of three appeals decided since the last Committee. There were no reports on appeal decisions in Appendix 3.

Resolved –

- (1) That the new appeals, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) That the outcome of the recently determined appeals, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted.

66. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Committee received a report on the types of development that could be submitted for Prior Approval and providing a summary of applications received and decisions taken in accordance with the prior approval process as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO 2015) as amended. Table 1 set out four prior approval applications received, and Table 2 set out six? applications for prior approval decided, between 19 October and 23 November 2023.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

67. OBJECTION TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 5/23 RELATING TO 65-83 GROVE ROAD, EMMER GREEN

The Committee considered a report on an objection to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 5/23 relating to one Sycamore on Council land at 65-83 Grove Road, Emmer Green. A copy of the TPO plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and photographs were provided in Appendix 2.

The report stated that several complaints had been received from Emmer Green Kindergarten at 85 Grove Road relating to the Sycamore tree since 2019. Officers had responded to requests to prune the tree to alleviate the concerns raised and had done so in July 2022 and March 2023. Despite the pruning, concerns had continued relating to nuisance caused by the tree, as set out in a complaint letter, received on 13 June 2023, in which it had been suggested by the owner of the Kindergarten that the tree be pollarded. They had been advised this would not be good arboricultural practice for the tree, hence it would not be acceptable.

The complainant had made it clear that if the Council did not prune the tree to their satisfaction that they would hire a tree surgeon to prune the tree back to the boundary, which they had acknowledged would make the tree unstable. Given this, a TPO had been considered appropriate to protect the tree from such harmful works and this had been served on 19 July 2023.

The report summarised objections to the TPO that had been received from the owner of the Emmer Green Kindergarten and set out officer comments in response.

The report concluded that pruning had already been carried out and additional pruning had been agreed to alleviate the concerns raised. Significant work in the form of pruning the entire crown back to the boundary or pollarding would go against good arboricultural practice as it would be harmful to the health and amenity value of the tree. Without a TPO,

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the former could be carried out under common law. The presence of the TPO prevented detrimental works to the high-amenity, Council-owned tree and the recommendation was therefore to confirm the TPO.

It was reported at the meeting that the additional pruning had now been carried out.

Resolved –

That the Tree Preservation Order be confirmed.

68. LOCAL LISTING - THE RESTORATION PUBLIC HOUSE

The Committee considered a report on a proposal to add the Restoration Public House, 928 Oxford Road, Tilehurst to the list of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1: Location map
- Appendix 2: Relevant photos and illustrations
- Appendix 3: Nomination Form
- Appendix 4: Proposed Local List text

The report set out the results of the consultation on the proposal and an assessment against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, concluding with reasons why the building qualified for addition to the Local List.

Ward Councillor Mark Keeping attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this item.

Councillor Rowland suggested some typographical corrections and amendments to the proposed local list text and officers said that they would liaise with Councillor Rowland.

Resolved –

That the Restoration Public House be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

69. 231464/FUL - UNITS 49, 50 & 52, BROAD STREET MALL

Amalgamation of units 49- 50 and 52, change of use from Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) to sui generis use (family entertainment centre) and external alterations on Queens walk frontage.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information on proposed changes to conditions, on a pavement licence and an advertisement consent application and on the contents of an information pack sent to Councillors, including a proposed internal layout plan which was attached at Appendix 1 to the update report.

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Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

That planning permission be granted for application 231464/FUL, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the amendments to conditions set out in the update report.

70. 221880/FUL & 221881/LBC - 23-24 MARKET PLACE

- 221880/FUL - Change of use of first, second and third floors from Class E to 4 x 1 bed flats and 1 x 2 bed flats (C3 use)
- 221881/LBC - Internal and external alterations including new ventilation outlets to rear elevation associated with proposed change of use of first, second and third floors from Class E to 5 flats (C3 use) under planning application ref. 221880

The Committee considered a report on the above applications. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information on the affordable housing contribution which had been agreed with the applicant and stated that all the recommended pre-commencement conditions had been agreed with the applicant. The Heads of Terms had been amended accordingly.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission for application 221881/FUL, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 15 December 2023 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the update report, with an additional clause regarding the private waste collection arrangements to allow the Local Authority to request at any time a log of the collections carried out;
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to make such minor changes to the conditions, Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement as may reasonably be required to issue the permission;
- (3) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (4) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report;
- (5) That listed building consent for application 221881/LBC be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report.

71. 221345/OUT - CURZON CLUB, 362 OXFORD ROAD

Outline Application for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a building of up to five storeys containing 30 flats, ground floor retail space and associated parking, with landscaping reserved.

The Committee considered a report on the above application which explained that consideration of the application had been deferred at the previous meeting to explore options for securing the possibility of community uses at ground floor level. The report proposed an amendment to the originally proposed Condition 4 to widen the use class restriction from Class E to Classes E and F2. The report had appended the original report submitted to the 1 November 2023 Committee meeting.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission for application 221345/OUT, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 1 February 2024 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the 1 November 2023 report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the 1 November 2023 report, with the amendment to Condition 4 set out in the 6 December 2023 report.

72. 230613/REG3 - AMETHYST LANE

Demolition and redevelopment of the Site at Amethyst Lane to deliver a new respite care facility alongside 17 new houses, soft and hard landscaping, parking and ancillary works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information on SUDS and ecology, additional consultation responses and corrections to the original report on objections received, additional conditions and additional plans submitted. The recommendations had been amended accordingly.

It was recommended at the meeting that an additional condition be added to remove Permitted Development Rights for the 17 houses in terms of porches, extensions, outbuildings and extensions to the roof.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

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Resolved –

- (1) That, subject to the confirmation of satisfactory on-site, off-site or a combination arrangement in terms of Bio-diversity Net Gain (BNG), the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission for application 230613/REG3, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement (unilateral undertaking) by 1 February 2024 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report;
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to make such minor changes to the conditions, Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement as may reasonably be required to issue the permission;
- (3) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (4) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the additional conditions as recommended in the update report and the extra additional condition recommended at the meeting.

(Councillor Moore declared a pecuniary interest in this item as his partner had carried out the ecological survey on the site. He left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision).

73. 230612/REG3 - DWYER ROAD

Redevelopment of the Site at Dwyer Road to deliver 30 new dwellings, alongside new access, soft and hard landscaping, parking and ancillary works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided further information on SUDs and on an updated response from the Natural Environment Officer regarding natural environment and ecology.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement and receipt of a satisfactory SUDS strategy by 31 January 2024 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report;

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- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to make such minor changes to the conditions, Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement as may reasonably be required to issue the permission;
- (3) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (4) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report;
- (5) That the external materials be approved in consultation with Ward Councillors.

(Councillor Moore declared a pecuniary interest in this item as his partner had carried out the ecological survey on the site. He left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision).

74. 230953/FUL - UNITS 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 BRUNEL RETAIL PARK, ROSE KILN LANE

Amalgamation and change of use of Units 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 from Class E to Class B8; installation of mezzanine floorspace; associated external works including reconfiguration of car park and cycle parking and landscaping works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting giving information on an amended site layout and correcting errors in the floorspace figures. The update report had appended an amended site plan and ground floor plan, and two additional conditions were recommended.

It was reported at the meeting that a further updated amended plan had now been received removing all forms of enclosure, which was shown at the meeting.

It was recommended at the meeting that an additional condition be added to remove Permitted Development Rights for any fences, gates and walls in order to ensure continued restriction on all forms of enclosure.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

That planning permission be granted for application 230953/FUL, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the additional conditions set out in the update report and the extra additional condition recommended at the meeting.

75. 231581/ADJ - TOB1, EARLEY GATE, WHITEKNIGHTS CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF READING

Full planning application for the erection of the headquarters building of European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF) with access parking and landscaping, following demolition of existing buildings.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting that set out comments from the Transport Development Control Manager and recommended that the Committee object to the proposal on the transport grounds set out in the report.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That Wokingham Borough Council be informed that Reading Borough Council raised an objection to the proposal on the transport grounds set out in the update report;
- (2) That Wokingham Borough Council be sent a copy of the report for their information and use.

(Councillor Yeo declared a non-pecuniary interest in this Item as he was currently completing a PhD at the University of Reading.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.32 pm)