

Present: Councillor Maskell (Chair);

Councillors Brock, Emberson, Gavin, Hopper, McEwan, Page, Rowland, DP Singh, Vickers, J Williams and R Williams.

Apologies: Councillor Robinson.

RESOLVED ITEMS

It was reported at the meeting that application 181465/NMA (85 Bedford Road) had been withdrawn.

27. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. QUESTION

The following question was asked by Councillor J Williams:

The Government is currently running two consultations which aim to fast track fracking and bypass local authorities' role in decision making, undermining local democracy. It proposes to allow the exploration phase of fracking under Permitted Development, and to have the production phase of fracking decided centrally by government, taking decisions away from local councils.

Although we don't have fracking in the South East, this is an important principle and could be easily extended to include the kind of oil and gas exploration which is currently being promoted elsewhere in the UK.

Can the Chair of the Committee please tell me, has the Council already responded to these consultations, and if so could he let the Planning Committee know a summary of its comments?

If it has not yet responded, does the Chair agree with me that Planning matters regarding dangerous extraction techniques should be decided on at a local level and not become part of a power grab by the current Government, and will he ask officers to respond before the deadline of October 25th?

REPLY by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Maskell):

Hydraulic fracturing (sometimes referred to as 'fracking') is a technique used in the extraction of oil or gas from shale rock formations by injecting water at high pressure. As Committee will be aware, this process has caused some controversy in many areas.

The government's position is that there is a pressing need to establish whether or not there are sufficient recoverable quantities of unconventional oil and gas present to facilitate economically viable full scale production.

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As part of its response to the potential for the extraction of oil or gas from shale rock, the government is currently consulting on two proposals in relation to the extraction of shale gas.

The first consultation relates to proposed changes to permitted development rights for non-hydraulic shale gas exploration. Permitted development relates to activities which do not require formal planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. The consultation seeks views on the principle of granting planning permission for non-hydraulic shale gas exploration development through a permitted development right.

It is important to note that this consultation only relates to shale gas exploration and to proposals which do not include hydraulic fracturing (i.e. fracking). It specifically states that, "it would not be appropriate for it to allow for the injection of any fluids for the purposes of hydraulic fracturing."

By law, development which is likely to have significant effects on the environment requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment would not be permitted development. The formulation of any permitted development right will also have regard to environmental and site protection laws such as those for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Scheduled Monuments, conservation areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and World Heritage Sites, National Parks or Broads.

Members should be aware that there are considerable permitted development rights for drilling and other works for minerals-related exploration under Part 17 Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

The second consultation is an Initial consultation on the criteria for including major shale gas production projects in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime. This would bring such shale gas production projects in line with other energy projects of national significance such as the development of wind farms and gas fired generation stations.

In this case, the final decision for granting or refusing development consent would rest with the Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). This would remove local decision-making from such projects, albeit the Secretary of State would have the final decision in the case of an appeal against a local decision.

In relation to other forms of oil and gas exploration, these are not covered by the consultation. There are no known commercial resources of oil and gas in Central and Eastern Berkshire. There are currently no licence areas within Central and Eastern Berkshire. A former licence area within Windsor (PEDL 236) was relinquished in 2014. There were also two exploratory wells within the Central and Eastern Berkshire area but these were completed in 1966 and 1974 respectively.

Reading Borough Council, along with Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, are currently jointly preparing a Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan. A consultation on the Draft Plan is currently underway and closes on 12th October 2018.

The plan notes (paragraph 5.95) that the lack of a current licence area and the fact that earlier exploratory wells did not lead to further appraisal or production suggests that there are limited opportunities presently for the provision of oil and gas. The plan states that "it is considered that should technology advances and more information on the geological conditions become available, and the situation changes, there is sufficient guidance within the NPPF to determine any application for oil and gas. It is therefore proposed that the plan does not contain a policy on oil and gas."

The two consultations, therefore, have little direct relevance to Reading Borough or indeed Berkshire. Nevertheless, this is a further measure by the government to remove decision-making from local authorities. Planning Applications Committee may therefore wish officers to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council to object to the removal of local decision-making in relation to any activity associated with such a controversial form of extraction.

29. SITE VISITS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted, at the meeting, 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.

Resolved -

- (1) That the under-mentioned applications, together with any additional applications which the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of an accompanied site visit:

180471 - 42 BULMERSHE ROAD

Demolition of existing garage and erection of a three storey semi-detached dwelling of three self-contained two bedroom flats (amended).

181365 - 31 WINDERMERE ROAD

Revised proposals for the part single and part double storey side and rear extensions to existing dwelling. (Resubmission of 180784).

- (2) That the under-mentioned applications, together with any additional applications which the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of an unaccompanied site visit:

181555 - GROVELANDS BAPTIST CHURCH, OXFORD ROAD

Demolition of existing chapel and church hall. Redevelopment of the site to provide a three storey mixed use development comprising of community halls and ancillary accommodation at ground floor level, 2 x one bedroom flats, 6 x two bedroom flats and 2 x three bedroom flats at the upper floor levels, all with associated external amenity space, car parking and cycle storage.

181469 - SOUTHCOTE LODGE, BURGFIELD ROAD

The application is to replace the existing timber sliding sash windows, with new white uPVC double glazed sliding sash windows to the Grade II listed part of the building only. The site also has additional new buildings that form Retirement Housing consisting of 1 and 2 bedroom flats. The replacement windows will be identical to match in style and size and are to be installed into the various existing opening aperture of the Grade II Listed Building.

30. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding nine planning appeals, the method of determination for which she had already expressed a preference in accordance with delegated powers, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of four decisions that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the following appeal decision in Appendix 3:

170019/FUL - FORMER PRIVATE CAR PARK, EAST STREET

Erection of 4 storey building to provide 103 student accommodation units (Sui Generis), landscaping, access and ancillary works, following removal of a 49 space car park.

Hearing.

Appeal allowed, subject to a S106 agreement.

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;
- (3) That the report on the appeal decision set out in Appendix 3 be noted.

31. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of 13 pending prior approval applications, and in Table 2 of eight applications for prior approval decided between 22 August and 28 September 2018.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

32. PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES IN AND ADJACENT TO ST MARYS CHURCHYARD, ST MARYS BUTTS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for proposed works to Council-maintained trees within and adjacent to St Mary's Churchyard, which were subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 10/06. A copy of the TPO plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that, whilst the trees were not owned by the Council, the Council inspected and maintained them under a historic agreement. The works proposed were not considered to be harmful to the trees' appearance or future health and were reasonable works in order to appropriately manage the trees. No objections or comments had been received as a result of the public notice and it was therefore recommended that the works be approved.

Resolved - That the proposed tree works be approved.

33. PROPOSED WORK TO ONE PLANE TREE AT WEST FRYERNE, PARKSIDE ROAD

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for proposed works to one Council Plane tree (T2) at West Fryerne, Parkside Road, which was subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 6/07. A copy of the TPO plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that officers had inspected the tree and the works proposed were considered to be reasonable works to manage the risk presented by the tree. No objections or comments had been received as a result of the public notice and it was therefore recommended that the works be approved.

Resolved - That the proposed tree works be approved.

34. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered reports by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

Resolved -

- (1) That, subject to the conditions now approved, permission be **granted** under planning legislation and, where appropriate, under the Advertisement Regulations, as follows:

Listed building consent for internal and external alterations associated with the proposed change of use from bank (Use Class A2) and offices (Use Class B1a), to a food hall with bars (Use Class A3/A4) at ground floor level, 24 guest hotel bedrooms (Use Class C1) at 1st and 2nd floor levels and bar (A4 Use Class) at third floor level with alterations to create roof top terrace (planning application ref. 180863).

Granted as recommended.

Conditional consent and informatives as recommended, with an additional condition to require submission of a scheme for repair of the wrought-iron 'Lloyds Bank Chambers' lettering on the side entrance and then retention and maintenance of this feature.

Comments received and considered.

181297/LBC - 17-27 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET

Minor internal and external alterations associated with the proposed change of use of first, second and third floor from office to serviced apartment use (use class C1) comprising 15 x 1 bed units and 4 x 2 bed units.

Granted as recommended.

Conditional consent as recommended.

That recommended Condition 2 'Detailed plan of window and doors details' include secondary glazing, like-for-like windows replacement and 'conservation-style' rooflighting.

Comments received and considered.

(2) That consideration of the following applications be deferred for the reason indicated:

181365/HOU - 31 WINDERMERE ROAD

Part one, part two storey side and rear extension.

Deferred for a site visit.

Objector Suzana Lucas, and the applicant's agent Sunil Mehan, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

180683/FUL - LAND ADJACENT TO 300 KINGS ROAD

Construction of a part five part three storey building of 14 residential apartments (C3) and associated undercroft car parking.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which explained that objections had been received on behalf of the adjacent landowner/developer which required further investigation and discussion with the applicant. It was therefore recommended that the application be deferred.

Deferred as recommended.

- (3) That, subject to the requirements indicated, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be **authorised to determine** the following applications under planning legislation:

180863/FUL - 1 - 2 MARKET PLACE

Change of use from bank (Use Class A2) and offices (Use Class B1a), to a food hall with bars (Use Class A3/A4) at ground floor level, 24 guest hotel bedrooms (Use Class C1) at 1st and 2nd floor levels and bar (A4 Use Class) at third floor level with alterations to create roof top terrace.

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 24 October 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended, with an additional informative that the manager's flat was ancillary residential.

Comments received and considered.

180909/FUL - CLARENDON HOUSE, 59-75 QUEENS ROAD

One storey roof extension, part six, part nine storey side/rear extension and mews houses providing 43 new residential units together with associated services enclosures, parking and landscaping (amended description).

An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out a further objection that had been received, with officer comments, and recommended additional conditions for the provision of a sprinkler system and to retain lifts in working order.

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 10 November 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended in the original report with the additional conditions as recommended in the update report.

Comments and objections received and considered.

Objector Tim Bales, and the applicant's agent Jonathan Walton, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

181296/FUL - 17-27 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET

Proposed change of use of first, second and third floor from office use (B1a) to serviced apartment use (use class C1) comprising 15 x 1 bed units and 4 x 2 bed units.

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 24 October 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended.

Comments received and considered.

171238/VARIAT - JACKSONS CORNER, 1-9 KINGS ROAD

Preservation of the building frontage to 1-9 King's Road (insertion of 3 new windows); retention and enlargement of commercial space (ground floor and basement levels) and conversion of upper floors to 18 residential units. Demolition of commercial ancillary accommodation to rear and construction of new 5 storey residential block of 15 units plus creation of central courtyard, as permitted by application 160849 but without complying with conditions 2, 15, 18, 23, 25, and 27, incorporating minor internal layout and external changes to the approved scheme.

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to agree a variation of the Section 106 legal agreement linked to planning permission 171238/VARIAT to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as originally agreed.

Comments received and considered.

180418/OUT - 199-207 HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM

Outline application for the demolition of nos 199-203 Henley Road and erection of 42 dwellings at 199-203 Henley Road and to the rear of 205-207 Henley Road with associated access from Henley Road (considering access, appearance, layout and scale).

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 7 November 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning,

Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended in the report to the 5 September 2018 Committee meeting.

Comments and objections received and considered.

- (4) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the **carrying out of the following developments be authorised**, subject to the conditions now specified:

181606/DEM - CENTRAL SWIMMING POOL, BATTLE STREET

Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of Central Swimming Pool down to ground level.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out an additional response received to the public consultation, with officer comments on the issues raised.

Conditional approval and informatives as recommended in the original report.

Comments received and considered.

35. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the current status of all outstanding enforcement notices/prosecutions, including cases where formal enforcement action and/or prosecutions had been undertaken but where the action taken had not yet resolved the breach of planning control. An overview of all outstanding cases involving formal action was attached at Appendix 1.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6 & 7).

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.47 pm).