

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 30 APRIL 2025

Present: Councillor Gavin (Chair);
Councillors Davies (Vice-Chair), Cresswell, Ennis, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, Moore, Rowland, Tarar and Yeo

Apologies: Councillors Lovelock

RESOLVED ITEMS

97. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

98. 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.

Resolved - That no additional site visits be arranged.

99. 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.

There were no appeals lodged since the last Committee in Appendix 1 to the report. There was one appeal decided listed in Appendix 2 and no reports on appeal decisions in Appendix 3.

Resolved – That the appeal decided, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted.

100. PL/25/0543 - PROPOSED TREE WORK TO ONE COUNCIL BEECH TREE BETWEEN HADLEIGH RISE AND HARLECH AVENUE

The Committee considered a report on proposed work to one Council-maintained Beech tree on land between Harlech Avenue and Hadleigh Rise in Caversham Park Village, which was subject to a Tree Protection Order (TPO). The tree was shown as T1 on plan TPO 60/14 attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that on 7 April 2025 an application had been received from the Arboricultural Contracts manager in Streetscene seeking consent for a 2m crown reduction of the Beech tree (application reference PL/25/0543). The reason for the pruning was cited as being 'to help alleviate complaints from local residents and Councillors for shade,

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overhang branches and debris causing drain and guttering blockages and mess'. An indication of the reduction was set out in Appendix 2.

The report stated that complaints had been ongoing for a number of years relating to nuisance issues caused by the tree. Ward councillors Councillor Mitchell (on behalf of 6, 8, 10 & 12 Hadleigh Rise) and Councillor DP Singh (also on behalf of Hadleigh Rise residents) had requested that Streetscene prune the tree to alleviate the residents' concerns. The work proposed aimed to alleviate the nuisance issues experienced by adjacent residents whilst not being harmful to the health or amenity value of the tree. It was understood that the residents did not wish to see the tree removed, only regularly pruned to address their concerns.

The report stated that a public notice had been displayed giving details of the proposed works and, so far, one response had been received from Councillor DP Singh in support of the works.

The report concluded that the works proposed were necessary in order to appropriately manage the tree to alleviate concerns. The proposed reduction would not have a significant detrimental impact on the health or amenity value of the tree. Subject to no substantive objections or comments being received as a result of the public notice, it was recommended that the works be approved.

Resolved –

That the proposed tree works to the Beech tree be approved, subject to no substantive objections being received within the consultation period.

101. PL/25/0464 - PROPOSED FELLING OF TWO TREES AT 26 KENDRICK ROAD, READING WITHIN THE KENDRICK ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

The Committee considered a report on the proposed felling of one Bay tree and one Conifer at 26 Kendrick Road, within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area, which was being brought to Committee as the owner of the property was a Councillor. A plan showing the property within the Conservation Area was attached at Appendix 1 and photographs of the trees were attached at Appendix 2.

The report stated that the trees were two of many within the rear garden of 26 Kendrick Road. The property had previously been an HMO and the garden and house had not been well maintained. The Bay tree was close to the rear elevation and required removal to erect scaffolding to carry out necessary gutter and roof repairs. The Conifer (on the boundary with Alpha House next door) was growing out of the base of the fence, had significant dead areas of foliage and was growing into the crown of the better Yew tree overhanging from Alpha House.

The report explained that on 20 March 2025 a Section 211 Notice (6-weeks prior notice of tree works in a Conservation Area) had been received for the felling of the two trees (reference PL/25/0464). The 6-week period would end on 1 May 2025 after which the proposed works could be carried out. The only way in which felling could be prevented was

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by service of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), but neither tree was worthy of a TPO, so the only appropriate response was to offer no objection to the felling.

Resolved –

That no objection be offered to the felling of one Bay tree and one Conifer.

102. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT - PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT, COMMITMENTS MONITORING BY PLANNING POLICY AND BUILDING CONTROL

The Committee received a report setting out details of the work and performance in the Planning Development Management and Building Control teams during 2024/25 with comparison to previous years.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the Committee's congratulations to the teams on their good performance be recorded.

103. PL/24/0173 (FUL) - BROAD STREET MALL, BROAD STREET

Part-demolition of existing retail units, car park and service areas, demolition and rebuild of car park ramp, and construction of a residential-led, mixed-use development fronting Queens Walk and Dusseldorf Way, including all necessary enabling and alteration works required.

The Committee considered a report on the above application, consideration of which had been deferred at the meeting on 2 April 2025 to seek further information on matters raised by the Committee. The report set out further information on: affordable housing; open space and leisure; and disabled person's parking and Electric Vehicle charging. Copies of the original report and update report submitted to the 2 April 2025 meeting were appended to the report.

The legal adviser reported at the meeting that a new Planning Code of Conduct had been adopted by the Council's Standards Committee on 22 April 2025 and one change in the new code of conduct was the advice to members of the Committee to not vote on an application where consideration had been deferred from a previous meeting, if they had not been present for the consideration of the matter at that original meeting. The legal adviser noted that such Councillors were advised against voting on the deferred application unless the individual Councillor was satisfied that they had been able to receive all the relevant information needed to involve themselves in the decision. The new Planning Code of Conduct would be included in the Council's Constitution and a copy of the code would be sent to all Councillors.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Members of the Committee queried whether the Discounted Market Rent level for the affordable housing units would be calculated relative to the market rent for other similar units or to the average market rent for the whole building and whether the rent would actually be affordable compared to prevailing local rents. It was requested that the wording

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used in S106 agreements for other Buy to Rent schemes be examined and officers come up with suitable wording for the relevant S106 agreement Heads of Terms to ensure that the units would be affordable.

The Committee also requested that the wording for the Heads of Terms relating to the study into a feasibility scheme for bridging and/or environmental improvements over the IDR from the BSM development/Minster Quarter area be written to ensure that such a study would be independent and unbiased.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission for application PL/24/0173 (FUL), subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 4 August 2025 (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 submitted to the meeting held on 2 April 2025, as amended by the update report tabled at the meeting held on 2 April 2025 and the report to 30 April 2025, and with any necessary amendments to ensure the affordability of the rent of the affordable housing units and to ensure that the study into a feasibility scheme for bridging over the IDR would be independent and unbiased;
- (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 to 2 April 2025, with the amendments to conditions set out in the report to 30 April 2025;
- (5) That a copy of the new Planning Code of Conduct be sent to all Councillors.

(Councillors Gavin and Moore declared that they had not been present at the meeting on 2 April 2025 when the above application had originally been considered. They took part in the discussion on the application but abstained from voting.)

104. PL/25/0291 (FUL/REG3) - OXFORD ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, 146 OXFORD ROAD

Proposed upgrades to playground equipment, suitable for children with Special Educational Needs.

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

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Comments were received and considered.

The Committee enquired whether it might be possible to recycle any of the old playground equipment if still usable.

Resolved –

- (1) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, planning permission for application PL/25/0291 (REG3/FUL) be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report;
- (2) That the applicant be asked to consider recycling of any old playground equipment if possible.

105. PL/25/0292 (FUL/REG3) - WHITLEY PARK PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL, BRIXHAM ROAD

Proposed upgrades to playground equipment, suitable for children with Special Educational Needs.

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the development PL/25/0292 (FUL/REG3) be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report;
- (2) That the applicant be asked to consider recycling of any old playground equipment if possible.

106. PL/25/0471 (FUL/REG3) - 59 HONEY END LANE

Change of use from Class C3 dwellinghouse to C2 children's home including alterations to front elevation, internal refurbishment and minor landscaping works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

It was reported at the meeting that no responses had been received to the public consultation by the end of the consultation period on 25 April 2025.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

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That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the development PL/25/0471 (FUL/REG3) be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report.

107. PL/24/1589 (VAR/REG3) - THE WILLOWS, 2 HEXHAM ROAD

Full planning application for the erection of a building containing a day centre providing social care services (Use Class E(f)) and 42 residential units including specialist housing (Use Class C3) with landscaping, car parking and access but without complying with Conditions 2, 13, 14, 21 & 22 of permission PL/23/0279).

The Committee considered a report on the above application. The report had appended the original report and update report on application PL/23/0279, that had been considered by the Committee on 1 November 2023.

It was reported at the meeting that no responses had been received to the public consultation by the end of the consultation period on 25 April 2025.

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 PL/24/1589 (VAR/REG3), subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 30 May 2025 (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 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 report.

108. PL/25/0342 (FUL/REG3) - THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL, HARLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM

Proposed upgrades to (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) SEND play equipment and new 3m security fencing to enclose the proposed play area within the existing site boundary, following demolition of existing play equipment.

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The Committee considered a report on the above application.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the development PL/25/0342 (FUL/REG3) be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report;
- (2) That the applicant be asked to consider recycling of any old playground equipment if possible.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.53 pm)