



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019 AT 8PM IN THE WEST ROOM

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Andrew McAuley (AM)

Matt Reid (MR)

Ian Hill (IH)

Terry Jackson (TJ)

**Co-Opted**

Gill Bindoff (GB)

**Press:**

David White – Henley Standard

**Providence Land:**

Jonathan Harbottle

**Minute Taker:**

Nicky Smallbone (NS)

**Members of the Public:**

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1. Apologies for Absence

Rob Smith, Alex Basden, Keith Woolfson, Tony Powell

2. Minutes of the meetings held 6<sup>th</sup> August are not yet accepted by Council

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Matters Arising

None

5. To consider the following applications:

**P19/S1927/O Land west of Pyrton Lane Watlington**

Outline planning permission for up to 60 homes with associated open space and sustainable drain

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/planning/ApplicationDetails.jsp?REF=P19/S1927/O>

**P19/S1928/O Land of Cuxham Road, Lane Watlington**

Outline planning permission for up to 70 homes with associated open space and sustainable drainage

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/planning/ApplicationDetails.jsp?REF=P19/S1928/O>

Discussion centred on both applications. The views of the committee and therefore, the response to the application are detailed below. TJ presented a response to these applications from the Watlington Climate Change Group (see attached).

WPC detailed comments are as follows :

### **Planning Application:**

#### **P19/S1927/O Land West of Pyrton Lane Watlington**

Outline Planning permission for up to 60 homes with associated open space and sustainable drainage.

#### **P19/S1928/O Land off Cuxham Road, Watlington**

Outline Planning permission for up to 70 homes with associated open space and sustainable drainage.

#### **WPC response to consultation on planning application P19/S1927/O & P19/S1928/O: Land West of Pyrton Lane, Watlington. 27 August 2019**

### **NO OBJECTION - UNANIMOUS**

Watlington Parish Council (WPC) considered these applications at the meeting of the Planning Committee on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019. The applications were considered in the context of the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) and were assessed against the criteria contained in the Watlington Housing Policies for Sites B & C. The views expressed by local residents were also taken into account. The Parish Council has taken a close interest in the progress of these planning applications and has been able to work with the developer to ensure that local knowledge and experience have been taken into account. The detail of the applications has evolved over time and now meets, in general terms, many of the criteria detailed in Section 6.5 of the WNDP, policies for Sites B & C. However, the final detail will be subject to further scrutiny should the application be approved by SODC. The parish Council supports the application and recommends approval by SODC on condition that the full delivery of the edge road is certain so that the required infrastructure is in place to allow the development to proceed without having an adverse impact on traffic and air quality in the town centre.

### **Comments in Detail**

Watlington Parish Council has no objection to this application subject to the comment/observations detailed below.

Because both applications are, in large measure, covered by the same paperwork the comments below should be read across to each application.

### **WNDP Policies and Criteria for Sites B and C:**

1. **P1:** Design of housing should take as the reference point the Watlington Design Guide however; as this is an outline application the final detail of layout and design will be considered as part of reserved matters. WPC felt that the housing density although higher than desired was below the National Guidelines and was acceptable for these sites. The average density, at 25 per hectare, slightly lower at the edges of development was acceptable. It was noted that there are houses on both sides of the road and in terms of good design WPC would prefer the number of dwellings on the outside of the road to be kept to a minimum in order to integrate the new development with the existing settlement and to enable good connectivity via cycleways and footpaths into the town and wider countryside.

**P1:** Account taken of heritage assets: the Built Heritage Statement seems very thorough. There is limited inter-visibility with Pyrton and Shirburn Conservation Areas however, there is no reference to views of the White Mark from Site C

2. **P2:** Edge Road is safeguarded. There is a high number of access junctions/points between the built areas and the edge road. It was felt that the number of access junctions should be limited to enhance highway safety and encourage both foot and cycle traffic. It was noted that there is a limited number of places it could cross Cuxham Road.
3. **P2:** Traffic mitigation. The main mitigation will be the delivery of the edge road. Land is safeguarded for the edge road.

4. **P3:** The built edge needs to be softened and to blend into the landscape with the density reduced at the edges. The Design and Access Statement indicates that the density will be 25 dwellings per hectare, this should not be exceeded. Also lighting should be the minimum required on North side and to avoid a 'prominent illuminated boundary'.
5. **P3:** The layout and design must be landscape led and appropriate to setting of AONB – Built Heritage Statement – the massing of built areas must be broken up with appropriate tree planting.

**P3:** Views of Church tower should be factored in to design of layout (D and A statement) - there are no references to views of the AONB. Views of the White Mark on Watlington Hill should be protected, especially from within Site C.

**P3:** The views of the site from Watlington Hill should be shown from the top of hill not just the top of the White Mark. Good design and landscaping will be necessary to enable the development to fit into the landscape without having an adverse impact on views from the AONB.

**P3:** Lighting: correct zone used (E1) because of proximity to the AONB. The detailed lighting strategy to be provided later but it seems to conform to WNDP requirements Policy 3e and policies for Sites B and C.

**P3:** Recommendations in the Arboricultural report should be adopted.

**P3:** Points raised by the Watlington Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Board Environment Group should be followed to ensure that there is environmental benefit from the development. Detailed notes are attached.

6. **P4:** Green spaces to provide for biodiversity. The Ecological Impact Assessment includes useful recommendations in the summary – all recommendations should be adopted.
7. **P4:** Land for formal/informal recreation – Complies.
8. **P5:** Provision of affordable dwellings is stated to be in line with SODC requirements however, the Design and Access statement says 30% - this should be amended to 40%. This would also conform to the policies for Sites B and C.
9. **P5:** Climate change. WPC supports proposals made by the Watlington Climate Action Group regarding the proposed development. The notes are attached.
10. **P5:** Connectivity – there needs to be work done on the connectivity between cycleways/footpaths and the town centre, recreational areas the AONB. This is to include Bridleways. There are good opportunities to improve the network of linked routes and this would also benefit the residents of Marlbrook.
11. **P5:** Mix of housing - to ask the developers to consider some self-build housing. SODC will specify the mix of housing needed for the District.

#### **Additional points for Site C:**

1. **P3:** Buffer between site and Pyrton Manor estate – there seems to be a good buffer in place in the plan.
2. **P8:** Expansion of Primary and/or Secondary schools. OCC are only looking to safeguard land on site PYR 2.

#### **Other points:**

1. There needs to be an absolute guarantee of limited development on the outside of the schemes or of no future development on these sites.

2. Houses should have different faces – some looking away from the road. Would like to see a softer approach to the views of the houses on the road.
3. The positioning of 2.5 storey houses on the lower portion of Site B needs to be assessed against the requirement not to obstruct views of the AONB, White Mark and wider Watlington skyline.
4. There will need to be a review of permitted development rights on both sites to ensure that both the height to houses and potential for future light pollution does not adversely affect the setting or the dark skies requirements of the AONB.
5. It was noted that the only green space that will be dedicated to the Parish Council is the ‘rectangular leg’ of site B to the north. If no further green space is offered to the Parish Council then a comprehensive environmental management arrangement for all green space is required.
6. Strong consideration should be given to the development of a Watlington circular bus route that loops around and through the town using the new edge road. This would require bus stops to be positioned along the edge road. Consultations should be held with the local bus companies.
7. It was noted that the detailed plans will become clear under Reserved Matters however, it is strongly encouraged that the basis of the design and layout should be set at this stage.

6. **To consider the following amendments:**

**P19/S0818/O (Outline) Land at Britwell Road – Amendment 1**

Hybrid application comprising (1) Full planning permission for the demolition of the existing pig farm and its associated buildings; the erection of 183 dwellings (Use Class C3); the creation of a new vehicular access from Britwell Road; the creation of a vehicular access from the industrial estate road south of Cuxham Road; public open space; sustainable urban drainage system; landscaping; and other ancillary works, including off-site highway works; and (2) Outline permission for up to 650sqm of Use Class B1(a) floorspace with access and all other matters reserved (As amended by plans received 8 August 2019).

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/planning/ApplicationDetails.jsp?REF=P19/S0818/O>

This amendment has been produced, at the request of OCC, to show the potential route of the edge road through Site A to join with the Watlington Industrial Estate spur road.

**OBJECTION – UNANIMOUS**

GB said that WPC should resist the re-routing of the road, as the proposed route does not conform to the indicative route in the WNDP and is therefore, not what the overwhelming majority of Watlington residents voted for. The committee’s discussion and comments are summarised in the detailed submission below. It is emphasised that this objection is to the amendment of the route and not the original application for development on this site.

**WPC response to consultation on planning application P19/S0818/O: land at Britwell Road. 27 August 2019**

**OBJECTION**

This is an amendment to planning application P19/S0818/O that shows the redesign/re-alignment of the edge road through the development site known as WAT A. Watlington Parish Council (WPC) understands that this amendment has been submitted at the request of OCC Highways as part of its technical assessment of the options for the routing of the edge road. WPC submitted its previous response to this application on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 and those comments are still extant.

WPC considered this application at the meeting of the Planning Committee on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019. The application was assessed against the criteria contained in the Watlington Housing Policy Site A as detailed in the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) section 6.5 Allocated Development Sites and other policies contained in the WNDP.

WPC has supported this application on two previous occasions however; it is unable to do so this time. The illustrative route using the access road to the Watlington Industrial Estate does not conform to the requirements and policies contained in the WNDP. Policy 2 (a) is clear that the land safeguarded for the edge road should be 'in accordance with the indicative route' which follows the original line for the edge road on the site. The revised route does not follow the expected, indicative route, that is at the core of the plan and which is strongly supported by a majority of Watlington residents. The new routing drives a split through the site dividing it into two distinct areas, isolating the northern (larger) portion. The amended route leaves too many homes on the outside of the edge road and is therefore, not acceptable from both a highways safety and a social integration stand point. The requirement for numerous road and footpath junctions from the housing sites onto the new route increases highways safety concerns and the positioning of the road will inhibit easy and safe foot and cycle passage into Watlington. (P1, P2, P4, P5)

It is noted that the majority of the green space, the designated recreational areas and the LEAP and LAP now sit within the northern portion therefore; children from the southern portion would have to cross the B Class road to reach their play areas. Also, the LEAP and LAP now open directly onto the road rather than being safely embedded within a safer housing environment. This is totally unacceptable.

WPC recognises that this amendment has been driven by external factors and is not the applicant's preferred route however, it cannot support this amendment on the basis that the amended route is contrary to the policies in the WNDP. WPC stresses that it has previously supported development on this site, based on the original layout and the contribution that the plan makes to the route of the edge road in accordance with the WNDP. It is important to note that this support is conditional on the delivery of the full length of the edge road being certain. Appropriate planning conditions need to be in place to ensure that the level of development is limited on the site until the new road is constructed and in full use. This condition is to ensure that the integrated plan for the growth of Watlington proceeds with the required infrastructure in place.

7. Land at Britwell Road P17/S3231/O - Appeal - Update on preparation of the Parish Council's case following input from the NPAB.

The planning appeal lodged by Archstone against the non-determination of its planning application P17/S3231/O will be heard on 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019. WPC has registered as a Rule 6 participant at the appeal. WPC will present evidence that the development, if granted planning approval, will have a detrimental impact on both the air quality and traffic congestion experienced in the centre of Watlington unless the edge road is built ahead of, or in parallel with, the development.

**Resolved : That Planning Committee give permission to the NPAB in conjunction with Councillor Ian Hill for preparation for the appeal.**

**Recommendation to Finance Committee : To allocate funds (maximum amount to be set by Finance Committee) to pay for an expert witness to represent WPC at the appeal on the impact on health of high levels of pollution.**

8. Any Other Business  
None

**The meeting closed at 9.25pm**

