

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2015 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.55 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Simon Weeks (Chairman), Tim Holton (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bowring, John Kaiser, Bob Pitts, Malcolm Richards, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Chris Singleton and Wayne Smith

**Other Councillors Present**

Councillors: Keith Baker and UllaKarin Clark

**Officers Present**

Clare Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services  
Chris Easton, Service Manager, Highways Development Management  
Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor  
Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Officer

**Case Officers Present**

Dan Hay, Pooja Kumar and Justin Turvey

**67. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**68. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 November 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**MEMBERS' UPDATE**

There are a number of references to the Members' Update within these minutes. The Members' Update was circulated to all present prior to the meeting. A copy is attached.

**69. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Wayne Smith declared that, although he had listed Item 81, application 152680 - 1 Pykes Farm Cottages, Forest Road, he still had an open mind with regard to the decision.

**70. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS**

No applications had been recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

**71. APPLICATION NO. 150260 - 97 OXFORD ROAD**

**Proposal:** Full Application for demolition of existing community building (D1 use class) and erection of a single storey replacement building for use as Gospel Hall (D1 use class).

**Applicant:** David Parsons

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 11 to 34.

The Committee was advised that the Members' Update included:

- clarification on the position, height and area of the current and proposed buildings;

- clarification from the applicant on the proposed use of the building;
- information from the Council's Environmental Health Officers;
- examples of D1 uses;
- Town Council comments on the lawful use of the site which were omitted from the report;
- further submissions from local residents and the Officer's responses;
- recommended changes to conditions 2 and 6;
- a correction to the Noise Management Plan;
- the recommended replacement of conditions 7 and 8 with one condition 7; and
- a recommended additional condition 13.

It was noted that Members visited the site on 4 December 2015 to assess the impact on the character of the area and adjacent properties.

Colin George, representing Wokingham Town Council, spoke in objection to the application.

Keith Rogers, representing local residents, spoke in objection to the application.

UllaKarin Clark, Local Ward Member, spoke in objection to the application.

Ian Douglas, Agent, spoke in favour of the application.

In response to questions raised about the D1 use class of the building, Mary Severin, the Borough Solicitor, confirmed that the D1 use class would be retained by the property even if the building was demolished.

The Chairman reminded Members that D1 use class meant that the building could already be used as a Gospel Hall but that, if the new planning permission was granted, it provided the opportunity to introduce some conditions.

Members asked for clarification on the roof line and position of the building and its effect on the character of the area and the provision of parking spaces. The Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed roof line was 0.2m higher than the existing building; it was set back 5m for the line of the neighbouring houses; and the separation from the boundary was 0.5m. If the new building was not set back then there would be a loss of one or two parking spaces.

Clare Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services, clarified that, due to the set back of the building there would be no terracing effect. She referred to other similar applications which had been approved and said that it would be difficult to justify refusal on the grounds of the effect on the character of the area.

In response to suggestions that the conditions should specify a later start time on Sundays, the Chairman referred to other planning appeals in which the inspectors had allowed start times of 05:45 and 06:00.

Members asked the Officer if changing the design of the façade had been considered to make it appear more residential. The Agent indicated that the Applicant would be open to that.

**RESOLVED:** That application No. 150260 be approved, subject to the conditions set out on Agenda pages 12 to 14 with conditions 3,6,7 and 8 amended and a new condition 13 added as set out in the Members' Update; and with the Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services and the Chairman authorised to grant planning permission following final agreement on the front elevation and the materials being submitted.

**72. APPLICATION NO. 152192 - 7-9 WILTSHIRE ROAD**

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a block of 33 sheltered apartments for the elderly; construction of basement parking and surface parking spaces; associated integral refuse bin store, electric pavement car store and cycle store; modification of existing access.

**Applicant:** Renaissance Retirement Ltd and Bancroft Developments

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 35 to 66.

The Committee was advised that the Members' Update included:

- clarifications on the parking provision, the contribution for affordable housing and visibility at the access; and
- a recommended deletion of condition 25.

It was noted that Members visited the site on 4 December 2015 to assess the impact on the character of the area and adjacent properties.

Peter Tanner, Applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

The Chairman suggested that condition 23, which specified that one or more occupants of each dwelling must be over 60 years of age, should be amended to 65 which is likely to result in a lower level of car ownership. The Applicant indicated agreement with this.

Members asked about the visibility at the access and safe routes for users of mobility scooters. Chris Easton, Service Manager, Highways Development Management, confirmed that visibility, although partially restricted by a tree, was adequate and that access to the town and other facilities for users of mobility scooters or wheelchairs was deemed appropriate.

In response to queries about the level of the contribution for affordable housing, Clare Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services, clarified that the contribution in this case was around 3% instead of the usual 30%. She explained that the matter was examined by an independent consultant who confirmed that the development would not be commercially viable if the company was required to pay the full contribution.

**RESOLVED:** That application No. 152192 be approved, subject to the completion of a Legal Agreement and conditions set out on Agenda pages 36 to 42 with condition 25 deleted as set out in the Members' Update and condition 23 amended to state 65, instead of 60, years of age.

**73. APPLICATION NO. 152569 - ST JOHN AMBULANCE, CHURCH ROAD, WOODLEY**

**Proposal:** Full application for the proposed upgrade and alteration works to existing telecommunications base station.

**Applicant:** CTIL Ltd and Vodafone Ltd.

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 67 to 82.

The Committee was advised that the Members' Update included:

- amendments to the 'Representations' section of the report;
- clarification on the history of development in the area.

It was noted that Members visited the site on 4 December 2015 to assess the impact on the character of the area.

Richard Dolinski, representing Woodley Town Council, spoke in objection to the application.

Richard Beasley, representing local residents, spoke in objection to the application.

James Cain, Agent, spoke in favour of the application.

Keith Baker, Local Ward Member, spoke in objection to the application.

In response to suggestions that the new transmitters would interfere with free-to-air television, the Chairman stated that this issue had not been raised by anyone until this meeting and it was not possible at this stage to discuss such a technical matter without the input of qualified experts.

Members asked for clarification on the increased width of the mast which was the reason a new application was necessary. Officers stated that at the height of 5.5m the increase in width was from 40cm to 55cm, which was just over the 30% limit.

The Chairman asked Officers if it was possible to prevent any further increases in the height of the mast which had already increased from 12.5m to 17m since the mast was first erected. Clare Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services, stated that it was not possible to take the permitted development rights away.

**RESOLVED:** That application No. 152569 be approved, subject to the conditions set out on Agenda page 68.

#### **74. APPLICATION NO. 152680 - 1 PYKES FARM COTTAGES, FOREST ROAD**

**Proposal:** Proposed erection of a two storey side extension to dwelling.

**Applicant:** Ms C Gaines

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 83 to 100.

The Committee was advised that the Members' Update included amendments to the 'Planning History' and 'Neighbour Impacts' sections of the report as well as a clarification on noise issues.

It was noted that Members visited the site on 4 December 2015 to assess the impact on the character of the area.

The Planning Officer recommended refusal of the application on the grounds that the extension represented an inappropriate increase in scale, form and footprint away from the original building to the detriment of the countryside and landscape character. Also, the extension was not considered to relate well to the existing dwelling and would have an unbalancing effect on the terrace.

Mark Leedale, Agent, spoke in favour of the application.

Members noted that the size of the plot was quite large, that the only public viewpoint was at the end of a road that was no longer a through road and that there was a busy and noisy motorway slip road behind the property.

The Planning Officer clarified that the extension increased the overall footprint of the existing house by 47%.

**RESOLVED:** That application No. 152680 be approved, subject to conditions including the standard three year limit, plans and materials to be submitted and approved and provisions made in relation to the protection of Great Crested Newts. Conditions to be agreed by the Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services.

## **75. PRE COMMITTEE SITE VISITS**

The Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services had recommended that pre-Committee site visits be undertaken in respect of the following applications:

- 152661 – The Maidenover, Silverdale Road, Earley - Full application for the proposed change of use from public house (Use Class A4) to retail (Use Class A1), to assess the impact on the character of the area and highways.
- 152913 – Thames Bridge House, Henley - Full application for the proposed erection of an apartment block comprising 4 x 2 bedroom flats and associated development. Demolition of existing buildings, to assess the impact on the character of the area and adjoining residents amenity.

**RESOLVED:** That pre-Committee site visits be undertaken on Monday 4 January 2016 in respect of the following applications:

- 152661 – The Maidenover, Silverdale Road, Earley - Full application for the proposed change of use from public house (Use Class A4) to retail (Use Class A1), to assess the impact on the character of the area and highways.
- 152913 – Thames Bridge House, Henley - Full application for the proposed erection of an apartment block comprising 4 x 2 bedroom flats and associated development. Demolition of existing buildings, to assess the impact on the character of the area and adjoining residents amenity.

A site visit agreed at the 11 November 2015 Meeting in respect of 152374 - Land adjacent to 8 Budes Cottages, Keephatch Road, Wokingham, which was not carried out, would now be undertaken on 4 January 2016.

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