



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Kidlington Parish Council Planning Committee.
Held at 5.30pm at Exeter Hall on Thursday 11 January 2024**

Present: Cllr Doug Williamson, Cllr David Thurling, Cllr David Betts, Cllr Linda Ward,
Cllr Melanie Moorhouse, Cllr David Robey, Cllr Phil Wyse

Apologies: Cllr Alan Graham, Cllr Lesley Mclean

In attendance: Planning Officer – Joanne Gaul

20/P008: Declarations of Interest – David Betts for Item a) reference – Land North of Moors

20/P009: The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 were approved as a true record

20/P010: The following Planning Applications were considered:

- a) 23/03414/SO Land north of the Moors
- Proposal: Screening Opinion for the erection of approximately 300 dwellings, two cricket pitches, a pavilion and associated drainage, access and ancillary infrastructure
- KPC Response: Kidlington Parish Council response:
Kidlington Parish Council has objected to the potential allocation of this site for development in the Consultative Draft of the Cherwell Local Plan. To take forward this site towards a potential planning application is premature and should not proceed until the Local Plan is adopted by Cherwell District Council. To even consider submitting a Screening Opinion at this time is premature.
In any event Kidlington Parish Council considers that the environmental impact of the proposed development would be significant and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. In support of this position, the Parish Council has mapped out a number of reasons for an EIA in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 Screening Matrix
9. Water Resources
- 9.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?
YES. In addition to Cherwell District Council's comments on drainage, the land is upstream of housing around Mill End, where flood control measures are in place to prevent rainwater draining into the Cherwell when it is at capacity. The road at Mill End has flooded (with buses being diverted) during the recent storms. Additional upstream discharge into the river from the proposed development could make this a more regular occurrence. The land subject to this Screening Opinion has also been flooded recently.
10. Biodiversity (species and habitats)
- 10.1. Are there are sites (National and Local) that could be affected by the project?
YES: The Rushy Meadows SSSI is within 0.6km of the site. The site is adjacent to sites of local conservation value - to the Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area, the St Mary's Fields Local Nature Reserve and the Thrupp Community Forest. It is therefore part of wider varied habitat and provides a protective buffer / wildlife corridor to these important habitats.
The ecological assessment provided by the applicants is inadequate. A full EIA should be performed to determine if the project would have a significant effect and whether these can be mitigated.

10.2: Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?

YES: A wide variety of wildlife is known to be present in the area which incorporates a variety of valuable mature tree belts, hedgerows and rough grassland margins and a pond. The arable fields are of value to some important species such as Skylarks. Local ornithologists, including Oxford Ornithological Society, have records of bird sightings in the area that include several species on the Birds of Conservation Concern Red List including Swift, Skylark, Fieldfare, Mistle Thrush, Linnet, Yellowhammer, as well as birds on the Amber List.

A member of the Bat Group confirms that the tree lines are used by several bats, both types of Pipistrelle, and there have been sightings of both types of noctules over the fields, with the area near the woodland being something of a hot spot.

Great crested newts are believed to use the pond on the Moors.

The Parish Council considers that the current ecological report is inadequate to conclude that the development is unlikely to have significant adverse ecological effects given the potential richness of the site. In any case, it is premature to conclude that no breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering or migratory species will be affected without a much fuller and longer duration assessment.

11. Landscape and Visual

11.1 YES – the fields behind the Moors are a part of Kidlington’s cherished rural landscape setting. Their openness, accessibility and tranquillity have significant value both to the local community and the many visitors who come to walk the footpaths across them.

Building 300 homes on the fields would replace this with an urban extension and a significant loss of the amenity value.

11.2 YES - the project is in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people. The area is a popular rural recreational amenity with many visitors annually. Walking through or alongside a housing estate will be a significant change of the views and ambience of the location.

12. Cultural Heritage/ Archaeology

12.1 YES - the site will affect the setting and views to and from a listed building and the Church Street Conservation Area

Consideration of a proposed development’s impact on the historic environment is a required part of an EIA, yet this screening opinion application deals with this aspect only briefly. Significantly, it does not include the Heritage Assessment that has apparently been undertaken. The Conservation Officer was only able to supply a very limited response as she was not given the assessment and could only rely on the planning consultants’ own subjective summary, and conclusion that building 300 houses (including some of three stories) on the adjacent fields, would have ‘no impact’ on the setting of the Church and surrounding Conservation Area.

The applicant should provide the Heritage Assessment for evaluation in the light of NPPF historic environment planning guidance.

St Mary’s Church is a Grade 1 Listed building (meaning that it is of national/international historic importance) that dates from 1220. Its surroundings and setting are integral to the enjoyment and experience of it by local residents and visitors. It is set in the Church Street Conservation Area (Old Kidlington) with open fields on all other sides.

The tall, fine church spire “Our Lady’s Needle” is visible for many miles around. The open, rural setting of the church is integral to the cultural heritage value. The Public Rights of Way in the area are used by many thousands of people who can view the approach to church as it would have appeared to worshippers though the centuries. We understand the public rights of way are enclosure awards from 1818 and should be maintained to a width of 10 feet.

The proposed urban extension of the village would have a significant adverse effect in permanently restricting the multiple sight lines toward the Church. Currently it is visible throughout the footpaths which cross the proposed development site. Limiting this to selected, street oriented sightlines would irrevocably harm the ability to appreciate its heritage significance.

The applicants seek to mitigate the impact of keeping the final approach to the church open for a community orchard, a new cricket pavilion and two cricket pitches. However, they have informed the Parish Council that the pavilion will look over both cricket pitches AND is intended to be used as a commercial venue (for parties, weddings etc) throughout the year. The Parish Council is concerned that this is likely to be a substantial building that may be inappropriate neighbour to the church and conservation area, with concerns of potential parking and noise pressures.

A full cultural heritage impact assessment should be required as part of an EIA to address these concerns and ensure that the setting of the grade one listed building and conservation area are not adversely affected.

13. Transport and Access

13.1 YES - there are routes on or around the location which are used by the public for recreation which could be affected by the project.

Two public rights of way (PROWs) cross the site. They connect to a larger network of rural footpaths which link Kidlington to Thrupp, Shipton on Cherwell, Hampton Poyle and Bletchington. These are used for recreation by thousands of walkers from the local area and who travel to walk them.

Kidlington Parish Council considers that the land behind the Moors merits designation as a Local Green Space (LGS) under the emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2040. The area currently provides an immediate sense of being 'out in the countryside' giving residents easy access to an open, unspoiled and attractive, Oxfordshire landscape. Since this is not the case almost anywhere else on the village boundary, the land behind the Moors has a significant amenity value and is an asset that the Parish Council and residents want to retain as Green Belt.

The Parish Council considers that the proposed development of 300 dwellings will have a significant impact on the views and experience of open countryside walks currently enjoyed by users of the PROWs.

An EIA is required to assess the feasibility of screening the development adequately.

13.2 YES - there are transport routes around the location which are susceptible to congestion and would be affected by the proposed development.

Concerns relate to local transport, congestion along the Moors and air pollution.

The Banbury/Oxford Road is already severely congested at times and drivers make use of rat runs through residential areas., particularly The Moors, which is already subject to traffic calming measures.

The incorporation of a cricket pavilion/ hospitality venue is also likely to increase parking pressure within the development. There is concern that visitors to pavilion may use the nearby the church car park with overflow into Church Street and surrounding roads.

We consider that the proposed development could have a significant effect on traffic, air pollution and parking such that an EIA should be required.

14. Land Use

14.1 Existing land uses/ community facilities on or around which could be affected?

YES - As previously stated, this is an important open, rural location at the edge of Kidlington which is extensively used for recreation.

14.2 YES - Kidlington Parish Council proposed Green Ring around the village as part of the Green and Blue infrastructure and nominated this location for Local Green Space designation.

16. Cumulative Effects

YES - The proposed development needs to be assessed in the context of the new housing and employment development already coming forward for the Kidlington/ South Cherwell and Oxford City area.

Conclusion

Overall, Kidlington Parish Council not only considers this Screening Opinion premature in the context of the emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2040, but also fails in its attempts to avoid a full EIA which should be required at an appropriate time.

The environmental impact of the proposed development would be so enormous that we can't see how can EIA can be avoided.

In any case the application is premature, and should wait of the outcome of the Local Plan discussions. We have objected to the proposal in our response to the Local Plan on grounds that go well beyond this particular case and concern in particular the overall calculation of housing needs. Until these broader issues are resolved we do not believe that this particular application should be allowed to go ahead.

- b) 23/03387/F 77 Oxford Road
Proposal: Demolition of bungalow and construction of new building comprising 5 flats (5 x 1 bed) in C3 use. Off street parking, bin and bicycle storage
KPC Response: Kidlington Parish Council objects to this application due to concerns about the parking provision which would make manoeuvring difficult leading to cars reversing onto the busy road or using the highway for parking. We also object to inappropriate location of the bin and cycle storage
- c) 23/03415/F 108 High Street
Proposal: Single storey extension to the rear, single storey extension to the side, extending garage 800mm to the front of the property adjoining a new porch at the same level. Loft conversion to the rear of the property.
KPC Response No objection
- d) 23/03429/F 8a Oxford road
Proposal: Form outside seating area for existing cafe, in place of 3 parking spaces.
KPC Response: No objection
- e) 23/02098/OUT Oxford University Development
Proposal: Outline application, with all matters reserved, for a multi-phased (severable), comprehensive residential-led mixed use development comprising: Up to 215,000 square metres gross external area of residential floorspace (or c.1,800 homes which depending on the housing mix could result in a higher or lower number of housing units) within Use Class C3/C4 and large houses of multiple occupation (Sui Generis); Supporting social infrastructure including secondary school/primary school(s) (Use Class F1); health, indoor sport and recreation, emergency and nursery facilities (Class E(d)-(f)). Supporting retail, leisure and community uses, including retail (Class E(a)), cafes and restaurants (Class E(b)), commercial and professional services (Class E(c)), a hotel (Use Class C1), local community uses (Class F2), and other local centre uses within a Sui Generis use including public houses, bars and drinking establishments (including with expanded food provision), hot food takeaways, venues for live music performance, theatre, and cinema. Up to 155,000 net additional square metres (gross external area) of flexible employment uses including research and development, office and workspace and associated uses (Use E(g)), industrial (Use Class B2) and storage (Use Class B8) in connection with the expansion of Begbroke Science Park; Highway works, including new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian roads and paths, improvements to the existing Sandy Lane and Begbroke Hill road, a bridge over the Oxford Canal, safeguarded land for a rail halt, and car and cycle parking with associated electric vehicle charging infrastructure; Landscape and public realm, including areas for sustainable urban drainage systems, allotments, biodiversity areas, outdoor play and sports facilities (Use Class F2(c)); Utility, energy, water, and waste water facilities and infrastructure; together with enabling, site clearance, demolition and associated works, including temporary meanwhile uses. The Proposed Development affects the setting of a listed building and includes potential alterations to public rights of way. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement
KPC Response:
Kidlington Parish Council are very concerned regarding the land to the North of Sandy Lane as it appears that substantial parts of the land are potentially reserved for business and housing. The application should be based on the Partial Review of the Local Plan to meet Oxford

Unmet Need. It is noted that the proposed housing is 1800 and the allocation in the local plan was 1950. If only 1800 units are planned, then there is a serious risk that there will be pressure on further greenbelt sites to make up this shortfall. Furthermore, the land which should be allocated for housing is potentially being used for employment. This is contrary to the local plan and will inevitably put more pressure on the need for further housing.

Kidlington Parish Council wishes to see the housing allocation met on this site to avoid the need for further housing allocations in the Kidlington area at a future date in the event of Oxford's unmet housing needs not being addressed associated with this development.

Kidlington Parish Council is seeking to ensure that this site is not utilised to address housing needs Associated with by Oxford University rather than Oxford as, again, it has the potential to create future demand to address the city's unmet housing needs on other Green Belt sites at a future date.

Kidlington Parish Council retains its objection to the proposed closure of the Sandy Lane crossing and does not consider application addresses that issue.

In addition, Kidlington Parish Council wish to see the application directly address the following: benefits that can be achieved through this development, particularly for Kidlington. The sports facilities that are to be provided, especially playing fields to help address any overall shortfall within the wider area of the relevant four parishes. detailed information about planned new onsite education provision

Until all these issues are fully addressed Kidlington Parish Council OBJECT to this application

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| f) | 23/03466/F | Unit 8. 4B Oxford Technology Park |
| | Proposal: | Addition of 2 x fume extract ducts on roof. Erection of external gas storage cage. |
| | KPC Response: | No objection |
| g) | 23/03489/F | 3 Springfield Road |
| | Proposal: | Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, rear loft dormer and rear garden shed |
| | KPC Response: | No objection |
| h) | 23/03514/F | Unit 5A & Unit 5B, Oxford Technology Park, Langford Lane |
| | Proposal: | Full planning permission for additional structures within the service yard at conjoined unit 5A and 5B |
| | KPC Response: | No objection |
| i) | 23/03519/ADV | Steven Eagell, Toyota, Oxford Motor Park, Langford Lane |
| | Proposal: | Removal of existing signage and installation of new illuminated and non-illuminated Toyota brand signage |
| | KPC Response: | No objection |
| j) | 23/03522/F | Rivendell, 68 Church Street |
| | Proposal: | Single storey side extension |
| | KPC Response: | No objection |
| k) | 23/03561/F | 74 Hazel Crescent |
| | Proposal: | Single storey side and front wrap around extension. Demolition of existing rear outrigger and replace with a single storey replacement extension |

KPC Response: No objection

- l) 23/03585/F 175 The Moors
Proposal; Extension and alteration of the existing 175 The Moors, to form 2 x 2 bed flats and 1 x 1 bed flat in place of the existing single dwelling house, with associated off-street parking, private amenity, secure bicycle parking and recycling and refuse storage provisions
KPC Response: Kidlington Parish Council objects to this application due to concerns about the parking provision, insufficient parking spaces for the size of this development. The distance from the nearest bus stop may mean that residents are more inclined to use a car.
- m) 23/03567/F 25-27 Oxford Road
Proposal: Erection of bin and bike storage in relation to application 21/03434/F
KPC Response: No objection
- n) 23/03592/F 42 Churchill Road
Proposal: Loft conversion with rear box dormer, front dormer and insertion of 1 no rooflight. Demolition and replacement of existing garage
KPC Response: No objection

Meeting Closed at 18.18