

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 21st September 2022 at
8.00pm in the Village Hall

Present: Mr C Broad Chair
 Dr J A Berry
 Dr S Druce
 Mr F Dumbleton

 Mrs M E Morris Parish Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Mr R Girling, Dr M Hansard and Mr M Urso-Cale.

2. **Declarations of Interest** - None

3. **Open Forum** - None

4. Outline application for the erection of up to 47 dwellings with associated means of access, car parking, new footpath links, public amenity space and landscaping (with all matters reserved except for access). Land off Upper Farm Road Chilton P22/V2002/O

Comments

Outline application for up to 47 dwellings. Land off Upper Farm Road P22/V2002/O

Chilton Parish Council note the similarities of this application with the previous application P14/V2462/O for 58 houses at the same location submitted at time when the VWHDC did not have a demonstrated 5 year housing supply. This application was refused permission despite the presumption in favour of the applicant in the absence of a 5 year housing supply.

Since 2015 there have been changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, the VWHDC Local Plan Parts 1 and 2 and a newly adopted Chilton Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, with the recent and ongoing approved plans for substantial development in the neighbouring settlements of Didcot, Harwell, Milton and Wantage the VWHDC does now satisfy the 5 year housing supply.

The views of Chilton Parish Council as they pertain to these planning control documents released since the earlier planning application on this land are outlined in the following.

1. **National Planning Policy Framework 2021**

Paras 176 are 177 are most relevant to applications in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty:

176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

177. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy; b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and c) any detrimental effect on the

environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

For the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

Chilton Parish Council consider the proposed development is a major development in the AONB as it lies outside the existing village settlement areas in an area of open countryside beyond the existing clearly defined southern boundary of the village and would constitute an increase in the number of existing houses in the Chilton Village settlement area west of the A34 by approximately 15%.

2. VWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 1

2.1 Core Policy 3 Settlement Hierarchy

Chilton is classified as a “Smaller Village” within the South-East Vale Sub-Area.

CP 3 States “Smaller Villages have a low level of services and facilities, where any development should be modest and proportionate in scale and primarily to meet local needs”

The proposed development of 47 houses is more than 15% of the number of houses in settlement area west of the A34 in Chilton Village.

Local needs for housing have been addressed within existing development areas outlined in the VWHDC Local Plan. It is noted that large housing developments are already ongoing in several settlements close to Chilton and the Harwell Campus, including Harwell, Didcot, Milton, Wantage and Hendred without incursions into the AONB.

Chilton Parish Council consider that the proposed development is neither modest or proportionate and is not required to meet local needs.

2.2 Core Policy 4 Meeting our Housing Needs

CP 4 States

“Development in Smaller Villages

At the Smaller Villages, limited infill development may be appropriate within the existing built areas of these settlements, or if it is allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031.”

Open Countryside

Development in open countryside will not be appropriate unless specifically supported by other relevant policies as set out in the Development Plan or national policy.”

Chilton Parish Council notes that the proposed development is not infill but outwith the existing built area. Furthermore, it is not within the adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or future parts of the Local Plan 2031. The proposed development is in open countryside beyond the existing clearly defined southern boundary to the village and not supported by other relevant policies or national policy. The view of Chilton Parish Council is that the application is not consistent with Policy CP4.

2.3 Core Policy 15 Spatial Strategy for South-East Vale Sub-Area

CP 15 again classifies Chilton as a ‘smaller village’ and Part 1 of CP does not include any housing allocations for Chilton.

Chilton Parish Council considers that the proposed development is therefore not consistent with Policy CP 15.

2.4 Section 5 Sub-Area Strategies – South East Vale

Para 5.108 States

“The conservation and enhancement of the North Wessex Downs AONB (as identified in Figure 5.4) together with its Management Plan will be supported (as required by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000)”.

Chilton Parish Council considers that the proposed development would neither conserve nor enhance the AONB and is therefore not supported.

3. VWHDC Local Plan 2031 Part 2

Part 2 of the Local Plan further reinforces that no additional housing sites encompassing Chilton Village were allotted in the update to Local Plan Part 1.

Chilton Parish Council Considers that there are no additional sites or policies supporting the application within Part 2 of extant Local Plan.

4. Chilton Village Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Plans are intended to contribute to planning decisions by supplementing the Local Plan. As detailed above the VWHDC Local Plan already has policies limiting the scale and location of developments to be permitted within ‘smaller villages’ and within the AONB.

The Vision Statement for the Neighbourhood Plan is:

“The vision is for Chilton to be a small, primarily residential village, within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty safeguarding its historic downland character whilst promoting sustainable development and improving local facilities to meet the needs of its residents throughout their lives.”

Policies P1 and P2 provide further supplementary guidance to the VWHDC Local Plan.

Policy P1 Location of Development

Development proposals within the existing three settlement areas, as defined in Figure 3.7, will be supported where they are in keeping with local character and are proportionate.

Policy P2 Design Styles for Development

1. New development or alterations to existing buildings within the existing Chilton settlement areas should be in keeping with the existing design style of buildings in those areas. Appendix 1 provides guidance on specific architectural styles characteristic of different areas within the village.
2. Development, or other land use proposals, in open countryside locations outside of the Chilton settlement areas should have regard to the downland character of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The North Wessex Downs Management Plan Chapter 2 gives details of the downland Character of the landscape.

The proposed development is outwith the settlement areas as defined in Figure 3.7 of the Neighbourhood Plan within open countryside and would not enhance the downland character of the North Wessex Downs AONB. Chilton Parish Council therefore considers the application not to be consistent with CP4 of the Local Plan or the vision and policies P1 and P2 of Chilton Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy P6 of the Chilton Neighbourhood Plan refers specifically to the mitigation of traffic noise, principally from the A34.

Policy P6 – Mitigation of Traffic Noise

1. Areas of existing screening should not be redeveloped without alternative procedures in place.
2. As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals in areas of high noise disturbance as identified in Fig.5.1 should incorporate noise-related mitigation, including where appropriate screening and planting.

The noise survey submitted by the applicant cites maximum recorded noise measurements of 82 db during the day and 70 db at night. Whilst internal noise levels could be reduced with appropriate glazing acceptable internal noise limits can only be achieved with the windows closed. External noise levels in gardens and open public places will exceed WHO guidelines.

Chilton Parish Council consider that the location of this proposal is within an area of high noise disturbance and that insufficient mitigation has been proposed.

5. Additional Reasons for objecting to this proposal

5.1 Access

Upper Farm Road is a single-track rural road used heavily by pedestrians, access to Chilton School, and race horses. The road is inadequate to support the addition traffic from a substantial new

housing development and the additional traffic would be hazardous to pedestrians, horse riders, and other users of the School, particularly at school start and finish times.

5.2 Chilton School

Chilton Primary School is at capacity and will be unable to accommodate children from this proposed development.

5.3 Adequacy of Sewerage

Thames water has confirmed that the existing infrastructure is inadequate to cater for the proposed development. Although the details have yet to be confirmed any improved sewerage infrastructure would result in significant disruption to existing residents.

5.4 Benefit to Local Community

There are no proposals to provide enhanced local facilities or amenities to support the local community.

Chilton Parish Council unanimously object to this application and wish to see it refused.

5. Outline application for proposed new office/research and development premises (Class E), associated car parking and landscaping. Land to the east of Horticulture House Chilton P22/V2096/O

Comments

Chilton Parish Council has no further comments on this application.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.30pm