

# OUNDLE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

## GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

VERSION 3 2021

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Oundle Town Council has no planning powers but it is a statutory consultee and responds to the local planning authority (North Northamptonshire Council) with comments on all planning applications within and affecting the town. We try to protect what we assess to be the interests of the residents of this historic and beautiful town. We try to obtain improved town infrastructure and facilities to accompany any significant housing development.

This document is intended to provide guidance to councillors commenting upon planning applications and is not intended to be mandatory. All planning applications should be determined upon their own merits.

## 2 RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### (a) LARGE DEVELOPMENTS

#### (i) Infrastructure

Applications for planning permission for further residential development should only be looked upon favourably if the applicant can demonstrate that there either is or will be sufficient infrastructure capacity to support and meet all the requirements which would arise from the proposed development (infrastructure being widely defined to include amongst other things the adequacy of (a) the road network and the provision of parking particularly town centre parking (b) foul and surface water drainage (c) water supply (d) schools (e) doctors and other health professionals (f) leisure and sporting facilities to include children's play spaces (g) shopping and (h) employment).

Within any future large developments there should be internal pedestrian and cycle ways and connections FOR THESE from the development to the existing built environment.

Roads within any future large developments should all be built to adoption standards as private roads within developments will not usually be supported. Road layouts within any future large developments should be constructed so as to avoid estate roads becoming rat runs.

(ii) Landscape setting

Any development proposed for Oundle should take into account the town's location in the Nene Valley and should, therefore, be sensitive to and have the effect of enhancing key views and vistas from the Nene Valley especially of the church spire. Any development should be located and designed in such a way as to be sensitive to the town's landscape setting retaining and enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area in which it would be situated or from which it would be viewed. We value the views of and into Oundle both from the road and from the River Nene itself and wish so far as is practical to preserve these views from residential or other development.

(iii) Location of development sites

In allocating or considering sites for development priority should be given to the re-use of suitable previously developed land and buildings and wherever possible development should take place within the existing settlement boundaries of the town rather than building on Greenfield sites beyond the existing settlement boundaries and/or towards the River Nene.

Any development should take place where it is likely to have the least visual impact particularly on and from the river as this is one of Oundle's greatest assets.

Applications to develop land in a way which would lead to coalescence between Oundle and any neighbouring parish or parishes will ordinarily be opposed.

If there is to be any residential development of the land off Herne Road between Beaumont House and the A605 consideration should be given to the construction of another access from and to the A605 Oundle bypass.

(iv) Scale of development

Oundle is suited to small scale developments rather than large estates as such development would be more in tune with the way in which the town grew in the past around courtyards and back lanes and developments which adopt such layouts (so far as they are consistent with safety and security) would be reflective of the town's heritage and more likely to be supported. There should, however, be no presumption that developments over a certain size should not be supported and applications for large developments should be judged on their own merits just as all other applications should be so judged.

## (b) SMALL AND SINGLE DEVELOPMENTS

We may not support planning applications to extend existing small houses on the grounds that the stock of supposedly more affordable housing is thereby diminished particularly on estates where planning permission was originally granted on the basis that a suitable balance had been struck between larger and smaller properties.

We may not support planning applications to convert garages into living accommodation if the result of so doing would be likely to lead to on street parking as opposed to off street parking.

We may not support planning applications to build an additional dwelling or dwellings within the curtilage of an existing dwelling if this would unbalance the street scene.

## (C) GENERAL

NNC will be asked to ensure that so far as practicable there is adequate affordable housing provision of 40% on all development sites with an affordable housing requirement. NNC will be asked to ensure that there is an appropriate housing mix on all larger developments with adequate numbers of one, two and three bedroomed properties.

We defer to Anglian Water as to the impact on the town's existing foul water drainage/sewerage disposal system of any residential development.

We defer to the Local Education Authority as to the impact on the existing educational provision within the town of any residential development.

We defer to the health professionals serving the town as to the impact on the existing health service provision within the town of any residential development.

If additional provision will be required in relation to foul water drainage/sewage disposal and/or educational and/or health services provision then we regard it as essential that any developer contributes to this through appropriate planning obligations as a condition of obtaining planning permission.

The architectural characteristics of any new development should be of a high quality and appropriate to their setting and should take into account the provisions of the Council's Design Statement. Where any such developments are located within or directly adjacent to the town centre conservation area they should be constructed of local stone and slate so as to be in keeping with neighbouring buildings.

All new housing should be constructed to deliver maximum energy efficiency.

Any planning applications for residential development should provide adequate on-site parking which is at least in line with the relevant policies of NNC Highways.

Developers should contribute adequately not only towards the associated infrastructure developments required in accordance with the identified Community Infrastructure requirements but also towards the provision of new and/or improved facilities through an appropriate planning obligation.

Oundle Town Council has identified the following Community Infrastructure requirements:

- A) Improvements to the flow of pedestrians and vehicular traffic in the town centre
- B) Improvements to and the expansion of car parking provision both in the town centre and outside it
- C) The construction of trails, walkways and cycle ways around the town to provide for the well being of residents and to develop opportunities for tourism
- D) The expansion of cemetery and allotment provision within the town.
- E) The provision of a large community space suitable for use as a festival site.
- F) The provision of new or enhanced facilities for sport and recreation.

Oundle Town Council is not willing to adopt further open spaces and/or play equipment on new developments due to the long-term financial impact of this upon the council but will expect large developments to include suitably equipped play areas to be maintained either by developer owned or resident owned management companies.

Oundle Town Council will seek alternative provision of pitches etcetera in the event of any development affecting any of the existing sporting facilities within the town and will not promote the development of those within the ownership of the council for non-sporting or recreational use.

Oundle Town Council will oppose development on important green spaces within the town including the Chapel gardens and Fletton Field.

## TREES

Applications relating to tree husbandry will not normally be objected to subject to any contrary view of the NNC tree officer.

Applications to fell/remove trees will be considered taking into account the type of tree or trees and its/their location and the reasons given for felling/removal with a default position of objection but OTC will usually defer to the view of the NNC tree officer.

## POLICIES AFFECTING THE CONSERVATION AREA

### (a) SOLAR PANELS

Save in exceptional circumstances the grant of planning permission for the installation of solar panels on the roofs of any building in the conservation area regardless of how limited the visibility of the installation may be is unlikely to be supported.

### (b) INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGNS

Save in exceptional circumstances the grant of planning permission for the installation of any internally illuminated signs on buildings in the conservation area or installed internally but visible externally is unlikely to be supported.

### (c) EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGNS

There is no objection in principle to externally illuminated signs being erected on any non-listed building in the conservation area but if the nature or number or size or general appearance of any sign is out of keeping with the conservation area it is unlikely to be supported.

### (d) CHANGES TO SHOP FRONTS

There is a presumption in favour of the retention of existing shop fronts which are appropriate to the building in question even on buildings where the planning use has changed from A1 retail such that the grant of planning permission to change such shop fronts is unlikely to be supported.

### (e) ROOFING MATERIALS

Any roof which comprises Collyweston tiles shall only be repaired or replaced using Collyweston tiles.

## EMPLOYMENT AREAS

### (a) EXISTING AND ALLOCATED EMPLOYMENT AREAS

We seek to preserve existing and allocated employment areas for that purpose. We seek the redevelopment of previously developed employment land to provide new employment areas. We would support the re-development of existing/allocated employment areas for other purposes (eg residential) only if it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes and that an alternative use would not be detrimental to the overall supply and quality of employment land within the area. If there is no such reasonable prospect then if the site is contained within the existing built environment it should be preferred as a site for residential development to a Greenfield site and in particular to a site lying outside the existing settlement boundary.

(b) RETAIL AREAS

We are unlikely to support retail developments located at the periphery of the town or outside the existing settlement boundary if the effect of such developments would impact upon the vitality of the town centre.

We wish to maintain retail premises within the defined shopping frontage area and would therefore be unlikely to support applications for change of use unless it could be demonstrated that any continued retail use was likely to be financially unviable.

We would support applications for change of use to residential at first floor level or higher within the defined shopping frontage area if this would have the effect of bringing into beneficial use parts of properties that are not used or underused currently.