

## Full Council

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>20 June 2017</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>P17/S1670/LB – The Elms, 32 Upper High Street</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer</b>

### Background

1. Members will recall three previous major planning applications on this site. In July 2014 P14/S2176/FUL, an application for 37 dwellings and publicly accessible open space was submitted and granted permission on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2015. In July 2016 an application for 87 dwellings and apartments for extra care homes was applied for, P16/S2407/FUL, but subsequently withdrawn prior to determination on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016. In March 2017 P17/S1069/FUL an application for 85 dwellings and apartments for extra care homes was submitted. This is awaiting determination.
2. A similar listed building application to this current one, P14/S2395/LB, was submitted along with the full planning application in July 2014. Together with the full application and the related outline application for proposed works at Elms Park, P14/S2310/O, these were considered at Full Council on 7 April 2015. A decision on the listed building application was deferred to the Planning & Environment Committee of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015 in order to allow the report of the County Highways Officer to be considered.
3. At the subsequent meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee, given that the County Council's Highways Officer raised no objections a recommendation to approve the listed building application was made by the Town Council.
4. The County Council carried out public consultation in early 2016 into a suggested restricted parking scheme for Elms Road, based on a scheme with double-yellow lines along the north side of Elms Road found within the Transport Assessment submitted with application P14/S2176/FUL. As a result of the consultation, the County Council approved a different parking regime that retains most of the informal parking on either side of Elms Road, subject to post-development monitoring, on 9 June 2016.

### Proposal

5. The scheme is for access to the developed site: Works and alterations as follows: (i) partial demolition of the boundary wall along Elms Road and creation of vehicle entrance with erection of new plinth walls and painted metal railings with 2no. brick piers; (ii) the removal of wooden gates at site entrance on Upper High Street and repairs to 2no. existing piers; (iii) the erection of 2no. new stone piers and timber boarded electric gates at the private entrance to The Elms; (iv) new timber boarded gates at the entrance to the annex to The Elms (32a) with repairs to 2no. existing stone entrance piers; (v) erection of a new 2m high stone boundary wall to the annex to The Elms (32a); (vi) the erection of 2no. new bollards; (vii) the partial demolition of an existing brick wall and creation of a new footpath and cycleway; (viii) repairs and refurbishment of existing stone ha-ha and provision of new metal fencing.
6. The applicant declares in their submitted Planning & Heritage Statement (May 2017) the following:

“The current planning application for Extra Care development is based on **the same access, boundary and curtilage alteration details as those approved** by the Planning

and Listed Building consents issued in August 2015 (P14/S2395/LB). However, the passage of time, submission of a new Heritage Statement and change to drawing numbers between the approved and proposed schemes means that a new application for Listed Building Consent is needed in order to ensure that it properly corresponds with any new permission granted for the site”.

### **The Southern Boundary Wall**

7. The section to be demolished will have two new piers to hold and finish the perforated wall and a splayed entrance to satisfy highway safety concerns. The materials chosen for the pillars will match the existing wall and the pillars will be topped by pyramidal coping stones. Iron railings will extend from the pillars and mirror the vehicle splay except where they turn 90° to cut-off obvious pedestrian access to the meadow behind. The railings are terminated with metal posts.

### **The entrance from Upper High Street –**

8. The stone piers at the Upper High Street will be repaired using existing materials. It is proposed that the wooden gates, which are described as modern, are removed in order to keep the pedestrian/cycle access permanently open.
9. A stone wall of approximately 1.6m in height currently separates The Elms from the proposed footpath from Upper High Street. It is proposed that the current access through that wall, made from timber posts and five-bar gates will be removed and replaced with ashlar stone pillars that will match those fronting Upper High Street. Timber, full-height gates will hang between them. A hedge will be grown behind the wall to a height of about 2m.
10. The entrance piers to The Elm’s former annexe (32a) will be repaired and similar wooden gates hung between them.
11. A new stone wall, 2m in height is proposed between The Elm’s southern-most outbuilding and the existing southern-most wall. This creates a passageway between the two walls for the pedestrian/bicycle route that is some 22m long. Hardwood bollards topped with stainless steel lamps are shown at the entrance in order to prevent motorised access.

### **12. Ha-ha**

It is proposed that the existing estate-style rail fencing that sits in front of the ha-ha, extending westward, will be replaced and re-sited to sit atop the ha-ha. The stonework below will be repaired using matching materials.

### **Parking on Elms Road**

13. Within their Planning and Heritage Statement the applicant proposes switching the car parking to the southern side of Elms Road “in order to improve visibility for those using the entrance” (paragraph 3.6). They further refer to highway proposals “set out in the Transport Statement which accompanies the full application for the proposed extra care development”.
14. The applicant has, within a revised Transport Assessment document accompanying planning application P16/S2407/FUL for Extra Care housing, once again submitted a proposed parking scheme that extends double-yellow lines along the north of Elms Road. The southern side of the Road is similarly treated, with the exception of around 50 metres for residents parking.
15. Between March and April 2016 the County’s Traffic Safety and Accident Prevention Team undertook a public consultation regarding introducing parking restrictions along the length of Elms Road. There was much local opposition to this as many of the local residents rely on

Elms Road for safe parking. The local opposition was supported by Thame Town Council and District Councillors. As a compromise, parking restrictions were limited to the new entry into the Elms development and the Elms Road/Windmill Road junction. As some concern remained over this compromise it was agreed that monitoring of the arrangement would be undertaken once the Elms development had completed.

16. The detailed text that accompanies the parking restriction plan (see attached) states: *“At the junction with Windmill Road there is a small extension of the existing double yellow lines on both sides of the road to keep the junction free of parking. At the eastern end the new restriction only covers the immediate area of the entrance to the new development plus the bend into Broadwaters Avenue. The yellow lines opposite the new entrance are longer than on the north side to protect the garages and driveway of 1 Elms Road (the informal white access marking will be removed)”*.

### **Observations**

17. The sudden termination of the railings and footpath, at right-angles to the road do not provide a welcoming entrance to what will become a public park.
18. It is not clear how the new, 2m high boundary wall to The Elms can be built in the “no-dig” root protection area of the existing trees.
19. It is believed that the applicant has not been informed of the new, approved County Council parking scheme for Elms Park.
20. Given the former approval of P14/S2395/LB, and the fact there appear to be no other alterations from that scheme, it is suggested that the application would be acceptable should the County Council’s approved parking regime be substituted for the applicant’s revised scheme.

### **Recommendation:**

#### ***The Committee is asked:***

- i) ***To recommend amendment of planning application P17/S1670/LB – The Elms, 32 Upper High Street to incorporate the agreed parking plan as agreed by delegated decision by the Oxfordshire County Council’s Cabinet Member for Environment (including Transport) on 9 June 2016.***