



Costs Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 1026

by **E Pickernell BSc MSC MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2026

Costs application in relation to Appeal Ref: 6004809

1029 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6TL

- The application is made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sections 78, 322 and Schedule 6, and the Local Government Act 1972, section 250(5).
 - The application is made by Chris Thorpe of Chesters Place Limited for a full award of costs against Reading Borough Council.
 - The appeal was against the refusal of planning permission for the development of new building to provide 2 no. 2 bedroom and 6 no. 1 bedroom flats along with the creation of 6 parking spaces and associated landscaping following the demolition of the existing building.
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Decision

1. The application for an award of costs is refused.

Reasons

2. Parties in planning appeals normally meet their own expenses. However, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that costs may be awarded against a party who has behaved unreasonably and thereby caused the party applying for costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense in the appeal process.
3. I note that various amendments were made to the proposal during the course of the application. I have been provided with copies of numerous emails between the Council and the applicant, seeking to resolve various issues. However, the Planning Practice Guidance is clear that costs may only be claimed in relation to planning appeals rather than during the application determination period.
4. In this instance, the Council ultimately refused the application and the reasons for refusal were supported by well-articulated reasoning. That the negotiations did not ultimately result in an approval, does not necessarily mean that unreasonable behaviour has occurred. Conversely, it seems considerable time and effort was afforded by the Council to assist the applicant.
5. I recognise that the Officer report does not fully engage with the findings of the viability assessments. However, it is clear that no completed obligation was before the Council at the time that it made the decision and as such I do not consider that it was unreasonable to conclude that the proposal did not make adequate provision for affordable housing.
6. The Council has engaged with the preparation of the obligation and provided further explanation to support the reason for refusal as part of the appeals process. Consequently, I do not consider that unreasonable behaviour has occurred in this regard.

7. I conclude that unreasonable behaviour resulting in unnecessary or wasted expense has not been demonstrated and an award of costs is not warranted.

E Pickernell

INSPECTOR