

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 18th April 2016

Present: David Wardlaw Parish Council Chairman
Clare Bamforth Parish Council Vice-Chair
Michael Farr Councillor
Glenn Leech Councillor
Steve Rawlings Councillor
Neil Worthington Clerk

Apologies: Paul Neale Councillor

1. Declarations of Interest and the granting of dispensations.

Councillors were reminded of the Code for Conduct and the need to declare any interest relating to the items on the Agenda. David Butler had written to declare that he had a pecuniary interest in the planning application relating to Noyes Farm and would therefore not attend the meeting. No dispensations were requested.

2. Revised Planning Application for the demolition of existing agricultural buildings, erection of 4no new dwellings and conversion of existing agricultural building to residential use at Noyes Farm (Ref 15/11063/FUL)

A revised submission had been made to reflect comments received on the initial scheme. The major changes were :

- There were now 3no 4 bed and 2no 3 bed properties proposed in lieu of the 2no 5 bed and 3no 4 bed originally proposed
- Ridge heights of the 3no houses on the highest part of the site had been reduced
- Plot 5 had been redesigned

Councillors expressed their initial views that the alterations to original scheme were generally welcome but there had been insufficient changes to affect the reasons for making the original decision to object to the scheme. It was noted that although the number of bedrooms had been reduced the footprint of the houses remained the same.

Richard Butler and representatives from Fowler Architecture spoke in favour of the application and reported that Wiltshire Highways were satisfied with the proposed access, the Conservation Officer had advised on the design changes which had been made and support for the scheme had been received from owners of the 2 adjoining properties.

Richard Butler spoke to explain the financial reasons for the number and size of houses being proposed which would enable investment in the farm business which was an important local employer and provider of small houses in and around the village. In addition there were many benefits in relocating the livestock business out of the village as had been done in a number of neighbouring villages.

He also reiterated his views that the responses to the site specific questionnaire had shown support from the village.

Councillors had the opportunity to ask questions of the applicant and Architects after which the Council received the views from 4 villagers (included members of the Neighbourhood Development Plan steering group) who opposed the application and endorsed the validity of the NDP questionnaire.

David Wardlaw stated that this was a very difficult decision to make and summed up the discussions stating that there was a conflict between what would be a good business decision for the farm enterprise and what the village wants - based on the NDP questionnaire. The last major development at Priest Croft added three large houses to the village stock, Noyes Farm would add five and the future scheme at Church Farm was likely to add another six. The draft NDP states that the community does not support large executive housing and favours mixed housing types with 2/3 bedrooms.

David Wardlaw tabled a proposal that the application should be rejected. This was seconded by Glenn Leech and was put to a vote of the council. The vote was unanimous in favour of the proposal to object, with no abstentions.

David Wardlaw would draft out the detailed response and circulate to all Councillors for approval before issuing to Wiltshire Planners. The reasons for the objection were agreed that the proposal conflicts with :-

1. Wiltshire Core Strategy
 - a. Site is not infill
 - b. Elongation of the village
 - c. No provision of affordable housing
2. Wootton Rivers Draft NDP
 - a. Site is outside the Village Boundary
 - b. Size of houses
3. Other Considerations
 - a. The benefit to the Parish is insufficient to outweigh the drawbacks
 - b. Access problems

It was also agreed that Jerry Kunkler would be asked to call in the application to the Planning Committee.

Date of the next meeting – The Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council - 9th May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall