

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd June 2019

Present:	Cindy Creasy	Parish Council Chair
	David Butler	Parish Council Vice-Chair
	Clare Bamforth	Councillor
	Dean Cowley	Councillor
	Nick Jones	Councillor
	Steve Rawlings	Councillor
	Anne Swift	Councillor
	Neil Worthington	Clerk
	Jerry Kunkler	Wiltshire 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.

Anne Swift declared an interest in item 3.1 of the Agenda (planning application at Mulberry House) as she was the Architect and therefore left the meeting while this item was considered.

2. Planning

Application 19/04226/FUL & 19/04721/LBC Mulberry House - Demolition of conservatory and cloakroom, removal of flat roof and construction of new pitched tiled roof. Replacement of windows and various internal works.

A site visit had been carried out last week. Councillors spoke in support of the proposed changes which included the removal of various elements of the existing building which were not sympathetic with the listed cottage including the removal of the external staircase and upvc conservatory, replacing the flat roof with a pitched roof and replacement of mis-matched windows. The changes were considered to be a significant improvement.

A motion to support both applications was therefore proposed by Steve Rawlings, seconded by Dean Cowley and unanimously supported.

Application 19/04419/FUL Little House - Two storey rear/side extension and independent garage/store.

A site visit had been carried out last week. Councillors expressed their views on the proposals.

- There were reservations with regard to the size of the extension in comparison with the existing building and whether it would dominate. It was noted that although the extension looks large the footprint is only slightly larger than that currently taken up by the single storey section and garages.

- It was noted that shingles were proposed for the extension matching the existing roof which would provide continuity
- There was concern about the proposed walling materials being very different to those on the existing building. It was noted that the applicant proposed removal of the existing coating to expose the brickwork on the existing but concern was expressed as to how successful this would be. Therefore, if the existing remained with a painted finish the proposal to use brick and oak boarding on the extension would be a concern. It was noted that similar large extensions had been built at Chapel Cottage where a consistent wall finish of painted brickwork had been used successfully to provide a harmonious appearance and this approach would be better used for Little House.
- There is a history of flooding to the house and this should be taken into account in the design
- Although the extension was large the plot was considered large enough not to be an overdevelopment of the site
- It was noted that Little House was the first and last house seen in the village on the West side of the road and was therefore a significant house in the landscape. However, it was noted that the existing ridge height was fairly low so the proposal should not be too imposing.

A motion to support the application in principle but with the comment that the materials being proposed for the walls should be reconsidered to harmonise better with the existing building and that measures to prevent flooding of the property should be included in the design was proposed by Dean Cowley, seconded by David Butler and was unanimously supported.

Application 19/04526/FUL & 19/04209/LBC Church Farm - Demolition of agricultural buildings, conversion of 2no. barns, replacement of 1no. barn to form 6no. dwellings and ancillary works.

Revision to Application 19/03278/FUL Church Farm – Amended plans for 5-bed house to plot 7.

Cindy Creasy appreciated the large number of residents who were in attendance and had concerns about these proposals and advised that although there are two separate applications by different owners the Parish council and residents see them as one site and comments on either can be accepted as they are interlinked.

Anne Swift set out the major changes in the design.

Plot 7 – following the comments made by the Parish Council on application 19/03278/FUL the Architect had made changes to address some of the issues raised. The ridge height had been lowered by 0.6m and the floor level had been lowered by 0.15m. This reduces the height of the ridge, but it is still higher than the consented barn type house. The flint proposed for the external walls has been replaced by facing brickwork.

Plots 3 & 4 – this pair of new houses have been increased from 2 to 3 bed houses by using the roof space. 12 roof lights have been added. They each have 2 bedrooms on the first floor but no bathroom.

Plots 1 & 2 – this was originally one 3 bed house which has now been split into two 3 bed houses by removing the hall, cloakroom and utility rooms and by using the space originally utilised as two garages and a store. There are now 14 rooflights.

Plots 5 & 6 – this was originally one 3 bed house and has now been split into two 3 bed houses. Rooms have been built into the roof space requiring 10 rooflights. The space previously used as a two-bay garage (for Church Farmhouse) has been used as living accommodation and the new rear extension has increased in width by 1m and is now proposed to be two storey. Plot 6 has 2 bedrooms on the first floor but no first floor bathroom and has a kitchen 2m x 2.1m.

Over the site there are now a total of 18 bedrooms compared to 10 originally. There are now no garages, storage or ancillary space included in the scheme.

Councillors commented on the applications.

- The road access now seems more constricted as there are now allocated parking bays to each side
- The previously consented scheme was a compromise reached with the owners which allowed a large house on the edge of the Conservation Area as a necessary compromise to make the site viable for development
- The NP (and Wiltshire Core Strategy) allows for new houses only to be built in villages on infill sites. Having 7 houses on this site exceeds the definition of an infill site.
- The NP does not make provision for any new 5 bed houses (ie Plot 7)
- The NP does not allow for extending the linear development of the village – plot 7 clearly adds a further layer of housing
- The NP requires developments to be complementary to the existing properties – plot 7 will loom over the converted barns, Church Farmhouse and Wootton House
- The NP sets out to protect the AONB and the Conservation Area and expressed a vision for small parishes to evolve gradually – the changes to the consented scheme appear to have the primary motive of improving the financial gain from development
- There is no detail of the heating proposed for the dwellings and therefore no allowance for either oil storage tanks, gas storage cylinders or heat pumps which should be addressed as part of a comprehensive design. There is no mention of any renewable energy sources being used.
- The application seems to be incomplete and undetailed and seems to be a limited application just to get permission. Further applications will be necessary for bin stores, garden storage, porches etc to make the houses workable for future residents
- Plot 7 was only ever consented to allow for the viability – there is no guarantee now that the site is in dual ownership that this house could not be built and occupied without the existing barns being converted and falling into dereliction.
- The access to plot 7 between plots 2 and 5 has been narrowed by the inclusion of planting and appears very narrow creating a safety issue
- The increase in the number of houses by 50% will increase the traffic and density at the pinch point in the village which is exacerbated by the proposed narrowing of the road

- Although the height of plot 7 has decreased the style and scale of the building will still be very visible from footpaths and the canal
- The increase in number of units will affect the tranquillity of the village as no other areas of the village has a similar density
- The design of plot 7 is too formal and introduces another farmhouse style building onto the plot
- The Conservation Officer and AONB response to the original scheme both said that the hierarchy of buildings on the boundary of this site should diminish in scale and appearance – this design for plot 7 does the opposite
- The Heritage Statement states that the vernacular style as designed better suits Wootton Rivers and is more honest architecturally. This may be true if it was an individual house in an infill plot but in this unique location it needs to blend in with the existing buildings.
- There are still concerns about the access to plot 7 as it cuts across the already consented development
- The D&AS states that the changes are to make the site more viable but there is no information about what has changed since this argument was used to justify the inclusion of the large house
- The gardens are now very small and squeezed in to fit around the increased number of houses
- The general feeling of the site is now more urban and not suited to the village
- Wiltshire Council states that development in Wootton Rivers should be infill only and respect the character and form of settlement – 5 extra houses was felt to be pushing the limit of development but 7 is now too many
- Wiltshire's core strategy is to keep development away from small villages – this creates a dense centre in the village
- The increase in houses will add further 245 car journeys and there has been no update in the traffic assessment to allow for the additional houses
- Normally curtilage listed buildings are only allowed to be extended to make a suitable living space. The extension to plot 5 & 6 was only allowed because part of the existing barn was being used for the Church Farmhouse garaging. These garages have now been incorporated into plot 6 as living space and there is therefore no longer any need for the extension to be allowed. It should be noted that the size of this extension has increased in floor area and is now 2 storey.
- There is no allowance for affordable housing provision which should be incorporated into schemes of 5 or more houses.

Comments from the floor were invited. In addition to comments similar to those made by Councillors the following were also made

- The Architects had argued that the existing barns were not curtilage listed and LBC was therefore not necessary. It was noted however that this argument had not been accepted by Wiltshire and that therefore the application for LBC had been made.
- There was a view that the Parish Council should just refuse to engage with these alterations and insist on the consented scheme being implemented. Unfortunately, this was not an option as planning laws allow for further

applications to be made and unless the PC take the opportunity to comment the application may go through unopposed.

- The scheme will result in more people and noise etc added to the village
- It is not clear from the drawings if the design of the road access has changed – it should remain as consented
- If the scheme is likely to get approval from Wiltshire the PC have the option to call the application in to be considered by the planning committee
- As the scheme is incomplete in terms of the likely need for outbuildings, bin stores, oil tank or other heating apparatus permitted development rights should be removed to prevent indiscriminate additions being made after occupation
- There are no dimensions on the drawings – it is necessary to properly assess the impact of plot 7 for a drawing showing the exact heights of the large barn to be demolished, the consented house and the proposed new house to be issued
- The implications of having 9 dwellings (including Church Farmhouse and its flat) having access off a private drive with regard to safety including the impact of children playing in the courtyard with 16/17 cars, delivery vans, refuse lorries, fuel deliveries etc
- The application is incomplete in that it fails to address the impact of the proposals on the village
- The NP was supported by the entire village and has been adopted by Wiltshire but is hardly referred to in the D&AS
- The Heritage Statement states that the setting of the historic buildings was diminished by the construction of the modern barns – it is surely also diminished by the construction of a modern house

Application 19/04526/FUL & 19/04209/LBC Church Farm - Demolition of agricultural buildings, conversion of 2no. barns, replacement of 1no. barn to form 6no. dwellings and ancillary works.

A motion to object to these applications on the grounds that the proposals are for too many properties, the layout of the yard, the impact of additional properties on the rest of the village, contravention of the Wiltshire Council strategy for small villages, the urbanisation of the site and the likely proliferation of additional infrastructure necessary to make the properties liveable was proposed by Dean Cowley, seconded by Anne Swift, and was unanimously supported.

Revision to Application 19/03278/FUL Church Farm – Amended plans for 5-bed house to plot 7.

A motion to object to this application on the grounds previously stated in the PC's response but updated to include reference to the changes shown on the revised drawings was proposed by Anne Swift, seconded by Steve Rawlings and was unanimously supported.

Wiltshire Councillors Comments

Jerry Kunkler advised that he had met with Wiltshire's planner dealing with this proposal who at the moment was waiting to receive comments from the consultees before making a decision.

He confirmed that he was able to call in the application but would prefer to negotiate between the applicant and planners to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

3. Date of the next meeting – 22nd July 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.