

Wootton Rivers Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd September 2019

Present: David Butler Councillor (Vice Chair)
Dean Cowley Councillor
Nick Jones Councillor
Steve Rawlings Councillor

Jerry Kunkler Wiltshire Councillor

Apologies received from Cindy Creasy, Anne Swift, Neil Worthington & Clare Bamforth

1. Planning

Application 19/04526/FUL & 19/04209/LBC - Demolition of agricultural buildings, conversion of 2no. barns, replacement of 1no. barn to form 6no. dwellings. Demolition and alterations to walls. Formation of new access with car parking and associated landscaping. Alterations to the scheme approved under applications 16/11051/FUL and 17/03881/LBC

The Vice Chair, David Butler opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and stated that there was only one item on the agenda which was to consider the revised application for the development at Church Farm.

A motion was proposed by Dean Cowley to allow Julian Beames who had agreed to take the minutes (in the absence of the Clerk), to be allowed to make comments during the meeting and this was accepted by all councillors.

David Butler then summarised the situation with regards to the application which has been revised by the applicants as a result of the feedback from the planners. This feedback had; it was stated, been heavily influenced by the very considerable feedback they had received from residents. Councillor Butler stated that it was therefore pleasing to see that local residents' comments were being taken into account as part of the process and that this was directly affecting the planner's deliberations and residents were again encouraged to make comments following the meeting directly to Wiltshire Planning.

It was noted that Wiltshire Council planning department had only granted a 3-day extension to the comment period even though many councillors were unavailable to attend the meeting and this was not considered helpful.

With regards to the revised plans, Councillor Butler summarised the current revision and the main changes from the previous submission as follows:

- There is no change in footprint from the previous submission
- There is a reduction in the overall number of rooflights on the site from the previous total of 36 down to 19, and the placement of the remaining rooflights is much more acceptable.
- The height of units 5 & 6 is as per the original submission
- Specific bin storage areas have now been identified within the site and bin collection areas are now marked on the plans
- There is no change to the overall number of dwellings

It was noted that this application is again separate from, and does not consider the large house (plot 7) that has already received planning approval at the rear of the site, proposed changes to which, have recently been refused by Wiltshire Council.

It was again mentioned by several present that the separation of the application for the large house and the main site was not seen as helpful by the Parish Council or residents as it made it much more difficult to consider the site as a whole.

Discussions took place regarding whether either one of these developments could take place separately and the conclusion was that as they are not now linked, either could be built separately or both could be built.

A point was raised regarding the NDP and the fact that this stated that new houses in the area covered by the NDP should '*not exceed 5-6 in a 15 year period*' and this was a development now of 6 dwellings and Wiltshire planners should take note of this in considering the application. (Correction to the draft minutes – the Made NP states that 'the level of growth to be about 6 new properties between now and 2026' – a 9 year period.)

A discussion took place regarding whether the site would be adopted by Wiltshire Council and whether the bins would be collected from inside the site or from the kerbside on the village road. It was felt that the site would not be adopted and that the bins would be placed on the road at the collection points identified on the plans. This was seen as a better solution by many people as adoption of the road might lead to undesirable changes to the road layout which would not be sympathetic to the village scene. It was mentioned that there was a lack of detail regarding the pathways and the bin collection points on the plans and it would be useful if this could be clarified.

The narrowing of the road was again raised, and concerns expressed that this could lead to congestion with bin lorries blocking the road.

A discussion took place regarding whether the plans as submitted in regard to the internal layout of the properties was realistic or indeed marketable. Many of those present felt that this would change when the developer actually built the development. It was noted that there was no real means of controlling this aspect of the development as variations can be accepted after the application has been approved.

This point led to a discussion with regards to permitted development rights and the need to control further on-going additions to the site. There was a concern expressed that the increase in the number of dwellings and the consequent reduction in the size of

rooms would lead to a lack of storage space and therefore future requests for extensions or other buildings. A view was expressed that a request should be made to withdraw permitted development rights as part of the approval.

A discussion took place as to whether the application was in line with Wiltshire Core Policy 48 for small villages, in particular if this development was infill. It was mentioned that during previous discussions, Wiltshire planners had accepted that it was in line with the policy and therefore likely to be approved if their other objections were resolved.

The NDP was mentioned in terms of being a means of controlling development in the village and that this was a test of the strength of the NDP. Jerry Kunkler stated that as far as he knew no NDP had been breached. It was therefore felt that they are powerful and should be used to influence the outcome.

The traffic study was questioned, in particular the choice of 'edge of town' cases to support the statistics. It was pointed out that 'edge of town' areas have nearby schools, shops, places of work, and transport links, none of which is available in Wootton Rivers and therefore the increase in traffic will likely be very considerably more than is calculated in the report.

Several attendees expressed the view that many of the objections previously raised had been addressed by the revised plans and that to continue to object would weaken the influence that the Parish Council and residents would have in influencing those areas which could be changed. Accepting that the overall development would take place but being able to influence the details was therefore desirable.

There was concern that 'planning creep' was still an issue and that if the Council did adopt this line then it must insist that there was no further permitted development as a condition of this approval.

It was also suggested that the Council ask the planners to consider the NDP in terms of its expressed desire to have a mix of 2- and 3-bedroom properties in the village rather than the current plans which are all 3 bedrooms.

A point was raised regarding the extension at the rear of plot 5 which had originally been justified and accepted by planners as providing garaging for Church Farmhouse. The revised plans still show this as accommodation (although single storey) and not garaging. This should not be accepted as planning guidance for the conversion of buildings states extensions and additions should be avoided in such cases especially as now, it has no other justification.

In coming to a conclusion Councillor Butler suggested that a list of items be drawn up which the Parish Council would request as condition on them supporting the revised application.

This list suggested was:

1. To remove permitted development rights on the site in order to guard against further 'planning creep'.
2. More detail to be submitted on the plans for the bin stores, collection points pathways and fuel tanks etc.

3. A strong control should be retained over the quality of build to be adopted in order to ensure the development remains in keeping with the village.
4. Re-iterate the desire of the Parish Council and residents to see a mix of 2- and 3-bedroom dwelling on the site in line with the adopted NDP.
5. Confirmation of the position and number of rooflights as current elevation drawings and floor plans are contradictory.
6. The extension at the rear of Plot 5 should be removed as this is not now justified as per the original compromise, when it was providing garaging.
7. Wiltshire Planners should be reminded of the fact that they only granted a very short extension to the comment period and this was, and still is considered very unsatisfactory.
8. An engineer's report should be provided by the developers which details the conversion of the barns.
9. A revised archaeology report should be submitted covering the site as the current report is now out-of-date.
10. A revised ecology report should be submitted covering the site as the current report is now out-of-date (it was noted by a resident that barn owls have been sighted in the barns this summer).
11. The site boundary lines should be checked as these appear to be incorrect on the submitted plans.
12. More details should be requested regarding bin collection.
13. The Planners should be reminded that the NDP states that the desired level of development in the village 'is 5-6 new properties in the 15 year period of the plan'. (Correction to the draft minutes – the Made NP states that 'the level of growth to be about 6 new properties between now and 2026' – a 9 year period.)

Based on the above list of conditions being attached Councillor Butler as the Vice Chair proposed the following motion for consideration:

That the Parish Council support the revised application with conditions.

Dean Cowley seconded the motion which was unanimously supported.