



# Watlington Parish Council

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022 AT 7PM HELD ON ZOOM

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Andrew McAuley (AM) – Chair  
Matt Reid (MR) – Vice-Chair  
Ian Hill (IH)  
Rob Smith (RS)

**Co-opted Members:**

Nick Thomas (NT), Tony Powell (TP)

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

**Members of the Public:**

Roddy Orr

- Apologies for Absence  
Gill Bindoff, Rob Smith
- To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 which were accepted by Full Council on the 8/11/2022.  
**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting above be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.
- Declarations of Interest  
There were no declarations of interest notified.
- Matters Arising  
**Airband** – MR reported that salespeople have been knocking on doors in Watlington trying to sign people up. It was noted that Lewknor are very against the high poles. MR was told that Airband are re-assessing their economic plan. It was agreed that we send a note to Airband asking them to clarify the position. We had previously requested a meeting with them, but they said it was not an appropriate time.
- To consider the following applications:  
[P22/S3102/FUL](#) Old School Place, Watlington  
The proposal is to replace the current electric storage heaters in the block which consists of 27 flats and the 7 bungalows surrounding the block with gas heating.

It was thought that there were no planning grounds on which to object. However, WPC is disappointed thought that SPHA have not sought to find an alternative solution to the use of gas. WPC had written to SOHA asking them to consider other heating sources and that there was grant funding available, but the officer rebuffed this.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

[P22/S3802/FUL](#) Old Stables, Watlington Park  
Convert and extend the existing building to provide a 3-bed dwelling.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

**Applicable WNDP Policies:**

- P1 Protect and Enhance the Character of Watlington and the historic Setting of the Town
- P3 Conserve and enhance the natural environment

WPC has no objection to this application. WPC welcomes the conversion of the Old Stables into a 3-bedroom property. WPC notes the increased footprint and use of glazing and thus the potential detrimental impact on the nocturnal wildlife in this sensitive area of the AONB through light-spill but welcomes the use of innovative methods to mitigate any impact on the surrounding area. Also, through the sympathetic use of new materials, the development should continue to sit well within its setting.

[P22/3977/HH](#) 16 Watcombe Road, Watlington

Proposed rear first floor extension, single storey rear extension, single storey front infill extension, fenestration alterations to the existing house and new pitched roof over the existing garage.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

**Applicable WNDP Policies:**

- P1 Protect and Enhance the Character of Watlington and the historic Setting of the Town

WPC has no objection to this application. The property sits within the Watlington Conservation Area (WCA) however, the proposed single storey extensions will have no impact on the WCA.

[P22/S3799/HH](#) 15 Britwell Road, Watlington

Earthworks to afford 2 number car parking spaces to the site of exiting dwelling, car parking suds pavements. Retention of exiting hedgerow.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

WPC has no objection to this application. The proposed works will greatly improve access and provide a larger and safer parking area beside a small cottage that is poorly positioned on Britwell Road.

[P22/S3966/HH](#) 13 Prospect Place, Watlington

Proposed single storey rear extension (replacing existing conservatory). Proposed front extension, and proposed fenestration alterations to the existing house.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

**Applicable WNDP Policies:**

- P1 Protect and Enhance the Character of Watlington and the historic Setting of the Town

WPC has no objection to this application. The property sits within the Watlington Conservation Area (WCA) however, the proposed single storey replacement of the existing conservatory will have no impact on the WCA. The slightly larger footprint and small front extension will allow for the provision of much more flexible living and sleeping accommodation. Care must be taken to avoid light spill.

6. To consider the following amendments/Permitted Development:

[P22/S4068/HH](#) Glebe Farm, Cuxham Road, Watlington – Amendment 1

Erection of an oak framed home office/gym and occasional accommodation.

**NO OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

**Applicable WNDP Policies:**

- P1 Protect and Enhance the Character of Watlington and the historic Setting of the Town
- P3 Conserve and enhance the natural environment

WPC has no objection to this application. The proposed development, a home office/gym, sits outside

the town limits of Watlington and is not within the Watlington Conservation Area (WCA). The positioning of the development within the residential curtilage is such that it will not have a detrimental impact on any neighbouring properties or the surrounding countryside. The proposed construction materials are appropriate for an agricultural setting and will blend into the farm setting.

[P22/S3363/FUL Grove Farm](#), Patemore Lane, Pishill – Amendment 1

Conversion of existing barn into single 4-bedroom dwelling, construction of new car port and renovation of existing stables. Demolition of all other site buildings and upgrade of existing vehicular entrance (as amended to detail the extent of the domestic garden and to reduce the areas of glazing).

### **OBJECTION -UNANIMOUS**

#### **Applicable WNDP Policies:**

P3 Conserve and enhance the natural environment

WPC objects strongly to this planning application. Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that 'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection'. The site, currently classed as agricultural land, sits within the Chilterns AONB and as such must be afforded the highest level of protection from inappropriate development. Also, the policies in the NPPF, South Oxfordshire Local Plan 35 and the WNDP are explicit in the need to ensure that any development within the AONB must not have an adverse impact on the environment, must be of the highest standard and must meet an identified need. This proposal fails on all three counts.

The settlement of Pishill does not feature in the SODC Settlement Hierarchy and as such is considered by SODC as an unsustainable location for any form of development. It lacks basic amenities; is not served by public transport; does not have direct access by foot to a service centre and is in a dark sky area where travel by foot at night would be extremely unsafe. The reference to an extensive public footpath network is misleading as it would be unwise to use any of these paths at night. It is evident that any requirement for travel to either work, school or local service centres for shopping will require the use of private vehicles. It is for these very reasons that Pishill is not considered by SODC as suitable for housing development.

This proposal for a four-bedroom residential property fails to comply with many of the policies governing development, including development in rural areas. The applicant uses as justification for this application SODC Local Plan 35 Policy H1. 3 (vii) *[the development] would bring redundant or disused buildings into residential use and would enhance its immediate surroundings*'. However, Local Plan 35 Policy EMP10 Development in Rural Areas, 5.29 states that *'Buildings to be reused should be permanent and substantial, and not require reconstruction. To meet this requirement, buildings should normally be enclosed on all sides and the whole of the structure covered by a roof and it should be in a sound structural condition'*. This building is not sound. There is no evidence that a structural survey has been undertaken to ascertain the building's integrity and very limited detail of how the building would be converted. The plans indicate that, rather than a conversion of the building, there would have to a large scale rebuild with very little of the original structure being retained. This cannot be termed 'bringing a redundant or disused building into residential use'. Also, the design cannot be considered appropriate for this rural location where the materials used would be in stark contrast to its neighbours and therefore would have a strong detrimental visual impact.

It must also be noted that the building being proposed for conversion was originally granted planning permission under a temporary permission for as long as it was retained in agricultural use. It is no longer used as an agricultural building and therefore, should,

under the terms of its permission, be demolished. Local Plan 35 Policy EMP 10 5.31 is applicable; *'To prevent the proliferation of buildings in the countryside, planning permission for the conversion of farm buildings may be subject to conditions to prevent their replacement by new buildings under permitted development rights. Similarly, the Council is unlikely to grant planning permission for the conversion of buildings erected as the result of a temporary permission or under permitted development rights where they have clearly not been genuinely needed or used for agriculture.'*

Finally, in pre-application advice, for an earlier planning application on this site by the same applicant, issued in December 2019 the case officer stated that 'As the site lies in the countryside and outside of any of the district's defined settlements where additional housing is acceptable in principle, I do not consider that the principle of redeveloping the site for new build housing would be acceptable.' So, it is very difficult to understand how this application for a four-bedroom residential property can be considered for approval on a site that is assessed by SODC as unsustainable for development; has no access to public transport and is not within walking distance of a service centre. In short, development of this site will increase the pressure on the road network with all journeys (beyond walks in the local area for leisure) requiring the use of a car.

For the reasons stated above WPC strongly objects to this application.

If the officer is minded to approve to ask Anna Badcock to bring to the SODC Committee.

7. Decisions

<b><u>APPLICATION</u></b>	<b><u>SODC DECISION</u></b>	<b><u>WPC RECOMMENDATION</u></b>
P22/S3283/LB The Main House Watlington Park	<i>Permission Granted</i>	No objection
P22/S3871 5 Sheldon's Piece	<i>Permission Refused</i>	No comment

Decisions were noted.

8. Correspondence/Attachments

1. SODC P22/S3283/LB – The Main House, Watlington Park. This application has been withdrawn
2. Lewknor Parish Council – Re poles for Airband – Their conclusion was that there were no suitable sites for poles and cables should be put underground.
3. SODC P22/S2454 Grove Farm New Access – The application has been withdrawn
4. SODC P22/S3566 – The Main House, Watlington Park. This application has been withdrawn
5. OCC and Roddy Orr – Emails re P22/S3607/FUL on application and traffic issues – copied for information.

**Correspondence above was noted.**

9. Any Other Business

**Edge Road** – MR reported that there was a workshop with Pyrton on this. The junction between the edge road and Britwell Road was discussed. OCC have stated that the sweep to from the Britwell Road into Red Kite View will be retained within the Bloor site. It was noted that this is the original design from the first planning application. The present T Junction was always planned as a temporary measure. However, we had asked that the sweep be wider which would require the use of adjacent landowner's land. MR to speak to the OCC project manager to seek clarification as to why the wider sweep is not being taken forward as per the Parish Council's wish.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 20.17**