



MINUTES OF THE 'REMOTE' MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2020 AT 6PM

Present:

Councillors:

Andrew McAuley (AM)
Terry Jackson (TJ)
Matt Reid (MR)
Ian Hill (IH)
Nicky Smallbone (NS)
Rob Smith

Co-opted Member:

Gill Bindoff (GB), Tony Powell (TP)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

Members of the Public:

Peter Richardson (PR)

1. Apologies for Absence
There were none.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March were accepted by Council on 10 March 2020.
One amendment was agreed Minute 2/Page 1, to change the date of the acceptance of the minutes from the 11th February to the 10th March.
Resolved: That with change as shown above, the minutes of the meeting above be agreed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman at a later date.
3. Declarations of Interest
There were none notified.
4. Chairman's remarks
AM said that this meeting would be conducted as usual with him going around each councillor asking their opinions on each application and then again afterwards for the vote. He gave the order he would do this in.
5. Matters Arising
GB asked whether there had been any reply from Enforcement about the fencing at the development by the Church regarding the Post meeting note (Minute 10 refers) TH has chased this up, we are waiting for an update. KT said she did not believe so but will investigate it tomorrow. It was noted that the Vicar has now moved into one of the houses.
Post Minute Note: KT has sent an email to the case officer.
6. To consider the following applications:
P20/S0866/LB Barley Mow Cottage, 13 High Street, Watlington
First floor rear extension and associated alterations
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 proposal. Barley Mow Cottage is a Grade II listed building in the centre of the historic town of Watlington and sits within the Watlington Conservation Area. The proposed first floor extension (which will sit above an existing 1960s flat roofed rear extension to the property) will improve the accommodation and will enhance the overall aesthetics of the building. This development does not alter or affect the historic nature of the building nor does it alter the streetscape. Overall, the proposal complies in full with policy P1 (a – e) of the WNDP. It respects the local and historic character of the town, enhances a significant heritage asset and relates well to the established character of the street scene. However, the Parish Council has a concern regarding the inclusion of two windows on the east (side) elevation in particular the one which will be inserted into the middle 18th Century portion of the property. The Council would have liked to have seen the Conservation Officer's comments regarding this alteration to the listed structure. Also, the provided plans indicate that this window will have obscured glazing about we note that it faces directly onto a window in the adjoining property less than 5m away. We would like confirmation that this is adequate to ensure privacy.

POST MINUTE NOTE: More information had been received on this and the Committee agreed to withdraw the above comments and to re determine this once a site visit can take place.

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P20/S0907/FUL The Howe, Howe Road, Watlington
Erection of indoor riding arena 40m x 20m

Vote: 4 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention

NO OBJECTION

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 proposal in principle however, it fully supports the comments made by the County Archaeological Services (SODC) in that a full archaeological survey must be carried before a final planning decision is taken, WNDP Policy P1 (f). The Parish Council accepts that the visual impact of the development is low when viewed from the surrounding footpaths and roads however, WPC believes that an assessment of the visual

impact from the footpaths that climb the Chiltern Hills to the south of the property should be made. It also, strongly recommends that should planning permission be granted the material used for the cladding of the exterior walls should be of wood rather than green plastic-coated corrugated metal sheeting. This would soften the appearance of the building as the wood ages and mellows over time. The Parish Council has concerns about the potential for light spill given that the building has large areas of translucent sheeting on the southwest elevation and 32 skylights. WPC feels that if the arena is to be used in the hours of darkness there should be some method of masking the internal lighting. Also, external lighting must be kept to a minimum and shielded so as not to impact the local wildlife. WNDP Policy P3 (a) & (e) are applicable. WPC accepts that the potential to site the building in an alternative location has been investigated and rejected for several sound reasons however, every effort must be made to ensure the impact of the structure on the surrounding area is minimised in order to protect the AONB.

P20/S0698/FUL Popes Cottage, Greenfield
Demolition of existing house and construction of replacement dwelling

Vote: 3 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions

NO OBJECTION

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 in principle to this development. The proposed property is not overly large for the site and its design is in keeping with other properties in the area. The internal design and layout will provide better family living accommodation. However, WPC fully supports the Countryside Officer's concerns regarding the biodiversity and ecology of the area and the potential impact on the bat population. It is imperative that the recommendation made by the Countryside Officer is enforced and that a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) is carried out and the results published before a final planning decision is made. Also, in order to conserve the landscape and ensure that replacement planting be secured by way of a planning condition the Forestry Officer's recommendations should be adopted in full. WPC also, has concerns about the use of the access track during the demolition and construction work. The access track is a public bridleway and must be kept free of construction traffic to ensure safe public access at all times, this must be enforced through a planning condition and a strict traffic management plan.

7. To consider the following Amendments
There were no amendments to discuss.

8. Decisions

<u>APPLICATION</u>	<u>SODC DECISION</u>	<u>WPC RECOMMENDATION</u>
P20/S0590/FUL Car Park Watlington Hill Rd	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>No Objection</i>
P19/S4337/FUL land between Nos 40-60 Hill Road	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>No Objection</i>
P20/S0025/HH 24 Brookside, Watlington	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>No Objection</i>
{20/S0089/LDP Marigold Cottage, Howe Hill,	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>WPC were not asked for comments</i>
P19/S0039 Whitehouse Farm, Britwell Road	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>WPC were not asked for comments</i>
P20/S0060/HH 55 Britwell Road	<i>Planning permission is GRANTED</i>	<i>No Objection</i>

Permissions noted.

9. Land at Britwell Road – Discharge of Conditions.

AM had sent out the following email to OCC

'To seek an update on the progress of the appointment of the Consultant to carry out the assessment work in relation to the Watlington edge road and to address a couple of issues in regard to the discharge of conditions detailed above.

At the combined meeting held in Watlington on 30th January this year we were advised that the consultant would be appointed by the end of March. Has this happened and if so when can the Parish Council expect to see the scope of work that the consultant has been commissioned to carry out? We realise that the present Coronavirus crisis will not allow any face-to-face meetings with the consultant, however, we would appreciate any update you can give us.

On the issue of the discharge of conditions relating to the development on Watlington Site A by Bloor Homes, the Parish Council feels that, although there is no statutory requirement to consult with outside agencies, there is an excellent window of opportunity to ensure that the solutions will benefit the whole community and not just the development in question. WPC firmly believes that the positioning of new bus stops and shelters on the Cuxham Road will not serve either the present community or the expanding community well. WPC strongly feels that any new bus stops should be positioned on the edge road in order to serve the wider community as it expands across all five development sites. To provide a bus service for the new developments will entail a re-routing of the present service, which can only be done in consultation with the Oxford Bus Company and the local community (Parish Council). Therefore, it seems sensible to coordinate the proposed green transport plans and any enhancement/routing of the Watlington bus services between all interested parties. We ask that no decision on the placement of bus stops on the Cuxham Road be made until plans for the edge road are finalised. This will also serve to protect the chalk stream that runs along the Cuxham Road as well as the trees and vegetation in the area.

The second condition relates to the junction of the site road with the Britwell Road. At a site meeting between WPC and OCC in January 2019 the issue of headlight disturbance caused by traffic exiting the site on the neighbouring properties opposite the junction was raised. The potential solution discussed was to install a 'living fence' barrier (similar to the fence in Benson) to shield the properties before the future final layout of the junction is completed. This is important as the residents of Britwell Road are deeply concerned about both the noise and light disturbance ahead of the completion of the edge road'

10. Correspondence

1. **SODC for information only:** P19/S4337/FUL Land between Nos 40 & 60 Hill Road Variation of Condition (s) 1 (approved plans), Condition 7 (access), Condition 9 (parking & turning), Condition 10 (visibility splays), Condition 12 (paddock land) on application ref P18/S3664/FUL to relocate approved garaging and combine it with home office provision, create a shared private drive, and omit the shared paddock area (as amended to reduce the size of the garage buildings and remove dormer windows) (Variation of condition 1 - approved plans on application ref P18/S0523/FUL. Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 7 (Landscape) of Planning Permission P17/S2410/FUL Proposed erection of two detached 4 bed houses with associated parking and amenity space provision (as clarified with details of access arrangements and visibility splays).) – **This was noted.**

2. **SODC – Anna Badcock has asked for comment on the following:**

As Councillors we have some concerns about Planning continuing unabated during this current time. As you probably know, all planning practices stay the same other than officers are unable to visit sites, committee is unable to sit or visit sites and the public and Parish Councils are unable to debate planning applications at committee. However, currently officers are still able to approve applications. I'd be grateful to hear your views on this, and whether you think this is an acceptable way to continue business, or whether you think a pause should be put on planning applications until we are once again able to resume the democratic process in full?

If you strongly believe we should press pause and quickly, I have been asked if you could email directly Mark Stone, CEO of SODC and John Howell MP.

This issue was discussed, and it was agreed that we send a response to Anna Badcock stating that:

WPC, like you, is concerned that the planning system does not break down during this time of crisis and that we do not forfeit the democratic process. Now that councils have been granted, by central government, the powers to hold virtual committee meetings, including voting on motions, we believe that the planning system should continue to allow parish councils to scrutinise, debate and comment on all planning applications. This should certainly be the case for all small and non-contentious applications. However, we accept that there will be occasion when a difference of opinion arises between the Parish Council and the planning officer. To overcome this there should be, routinely, a dialogue between the planning officer and the Parish Council. This is particularly relevant when a case officer is minded to recommend approval of an application that a parish council had objected to. WPC is very concerned by the selective use and interpretation of the policies in the WNDP by case officers and strongly feels that it is vitally important that, when a decision is likely to go against the Parish Council's recommendation, the case officer should, as a matter of procedure, contact the Parish Council either by email or phone to discuss the logic, reasoning and interpretation of policy so that both parties can better understand why they had made the decision they had. This process would greatly help all parish councils to better understand a planning officer's decision process and rationale, help to alleviate any confusion/misunderstanding and has the potential to save time and effort.

With regard to larger potentially contentious applications and applications that would go to committee, these should be put on hold until such time that SODC's Planning Committee can meet and public representation can be made. Decision on these types of applications cannot and must not be decided under delegated powers.

11. Any Other Business

1. **Request for information on WNDP** – To appoint someone to liaise with Emily on NP questions for her dissertation.

Resolved: That Peter Richardson be appointed.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 19.25PM