

WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held in the Function Room, Village Hall, Woodcote
Wednesday 3rd January 2018 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Chairman	Mr. R. Peirce
Vice Chair	Dr. G. Botting.
	Mr. A. Crockett
	Mr. M. Smith
	Mrs. S. McGurk
	Mr. D. Booth
	Mrs. D. Hadaway
	Dr. P. Sudbury
Parish Clerk	Ms. Jenny Welham

1. To receive apologies for absence.
Mr. B. Williams.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest
None.

3. **Public Forum**: Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise, with the permission of the Chairman. Approximately 30 members of the public present one from the press mostly to speak on Planning Application P17/S4336/FUL.

Mrs. Francis Cork spoke on two matters these being;

Litter in and around the village, whilst she acknowledged that the centre of the village is kept clear she said that the Oxford Road was bad and the A4074 stretch past Woodcote was also bad and could SODC do something about this. The Clerk advised that as it is alongside the Highway it would be OCC who would be responsible but as they have very limited funds it is unlikely they will do a litter clearance anytime soon. The Chairman asked the Clerk to progress this matter to try to get a clearance carried out.

Street Lighting stating that the street light opposite Londis on Reading Road was not working but she could not read the number. The Clerk said this can be reported on Oxfordshire Fix My street and the more people that report it the better. The Clerk to report and said it can be reported without number.

4. To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th December 2017.
Approved as a true record.

5. Matters arising from those Minutes not on the agenda elsewhere.
None.

6. Planning Applications

P17/S4336/FUL (Full Application) Proposal: The demolition & clearance of existing development. Change of use of the land to a park home site & the development of all associated infrastructure to allow the siting of 16 residential park homes with landscaping. Address: The Old Reservoir Greenmore Woodcote RG8 0RN.

The Chairman began discussions by giving an overview of the position regarding this site stating that it is a site in the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan and it already has existing planning granted for 20 dwellings which has been approved in the last 12 months.

He stated that this new application has many aspects that are contrary to the policies in the WNHP and SODC Core Strategy. The applicant is seeking development of this site stating that there are two water mains that run under the site making it impossible to develop over the top of these said water mains for housing due to the foundations required. Thames Water have commented that there is only one water main and that this could be diverted at the developers cost. The Chairman stated that this is not a valid planning reason to state that the site cannot be developed, it is a financial matter.

The application does not specify any social housing the dwellings all appear to be for private sale. The footpath along the front of the site is no longer detailed and the development does not meet the WNHP parking policy T8 and has far too few parking spaces per dwelling.

The Chairman invited members of the public present to speak;

Mr. F. Dixon who represents the landowner spoke stating he can find reasons to support this application. He referred to the WNHP being “silent” on park homes, he said that the application had been misunderstood and that this is the first pass to apply for change of use of the land, if this goes through then a site license is required and at this point much more detail is provided regarding the development such as the parking and infrastructure.

He referred to SODC policy on mobile homes which states they can be provided where they are suitable as homes, stating young people often use these homes as a first step to get on the housing ladder and that older people downsize to these homes. The average cost of these homes being £200K making them affordable.

Mr. Dixon passed round photographs to show that they are not unsightly and the development would not be like a holiday caravan park.

Mr. A Gibbons

He raised his concern regarding the fact that no normal mortgage lender will grant a mortgage on such homes and purchasers need to go to a specialist lenders who are much more expensive and therefore does make such homes out of reach of young people trying to get on the housing ladder.

He stated the legal substance of these homes is questionable and the Government had in 2013 tried to address this matter unsuccessfully. The purchaser never actually fully owns the home and the landlord or landowner can dictate matters on their property as and when they wish. For this reason he felt that these home would not be suitable.

Ms A. Stewart

Spoke and raised the question about when are any homes actually going to be built in Woodcote as they are needed? She felt that nothing had been built and there were problems with some of the WNHP sites.

The Chairman replied stating that homes had been built on the Old Bus Depot site, ten of which are social housing. He stated that work has been done with the Chiltern Rise site and the connecting Garden Centre site and that the landowner has now appointed a developer and it is hoped that development of the site will begin in the not to distant future. He commented that once the planning has been granted the landowner is responsible for when any developments starts within the timeframe of the planning application which is 3 years.

Francis Cork

She asked why this site had not been developed as per the previous granted planning application?

The Chairman replied stating that the only reason provided was the existence of the water main, which appears to be a financial reason rather than a planning reason.

Mr. L. Woolley

As a member of the WNHP Advisory Group he stated that they are aware there is an older demographic in Woodcote and that they may downsize from larger 4 bedroom houses. He stated that when asked these residents preferred apartments which come with less exterior maintenance in a block specifically for retired people.

These residents would still wish to make a good investment with their released capital and felt that a park home was not the type of investment that many of these older residents would consider, for all the reasons already stated regarding the legal substance.

The Chairman then allowed Mr. Dixon to speak again, and he stated that he had been in touch with Thames Water who state there are two water mains and that they are not being helpful regarding diverting them and that this is looking like it will not be possible. He said that to build homes would require piling for the foundations making the prices very expensive. He also stated that the WNHP is out of date.

The Chairman responded firmly stating that the WNHP is not out of date and it is a recognised legal document. He also advised that work is already well underway for the second Neighbourhood Plan for Woodcote and that the public consultation for this is 23rd and 24th February in the Village Hall.

The Chairman then asked that the Council members views for this application. The inputs from the Councillors;

Cllr. Smith stated that this application contravenes WNHP policies H2, H3, H7, H8, D1, T8 and C5 and therefore cannot be accepted.

Cllr. Sudbury felt that homes are needed for young families and people who wish to downsize but he is worried about the legal aspects of obtaining a mortgage for such homes and their legal status, making them unsuitable.

Cllr. Booth he agreed with all comments already made

Cllr. Botting stated that this application does not meet 8 policies within the WNHP and the matter of the water main at this point is irrelevant as the WNHP policies have to be met for any new development.

Cllr. Hadaway agreed with all previous comments but asked what happens if a site in the WNHP cannot be developed? The Chairman replied that any site is possible for development, however if a developer finds that the financially it is an expensive site to develop this is not a valid planning reason not to grant planning.

Cllr. McGurk was not against housing in the village as it is needed but said she is adamant that the WNHP should be protected and upheld. She stated that there is more than one way to build homes and this needed to be explored for this site within the existing granted application.

The Chairman proposed that this application be refused, the Councillors vote was unanimous. The PC recommend Refusal.

P17/S4211/HH (Householder) Application Type (see definition over): Other

Proposal: Proposed first floor extension. Address: Horns Farm Tidmore Lane Woodcote RG8 0PH. Parish Council Recommend approval.

6.1 Applications Granted by SODC:

P17/S3057/HH Alterations and extension to include double storey side extension to north east end, new front portico, single storey extension to kitchen wing, alterations to landscape, including relocation of hedges, relocation of garage, relocation of tennis court. (As amended by plans received 2017_11_24 to omit proposed all development/work relating to the dwelling house). Site Location : Langtree House Red Lane Woodcote RG8 0PA.

6.2 Applications Refused by SODC

None.

6.3 Other Planning Matters

None.

7. Finance

Payments Approved

British Telecom £85.24 December line rental and Broad Band.

Woodcote Village Hall £58.00 room hire for NHP meetings in January.

Noted no receipts.

7.1 Quotations/Grants received for review/approval.

Estimate from Blandy & Blandy regarding pursuing the registration of land Tidmore Pool.

£1500 - £2000.

The PC agreed that before proceeding it would be necessary to check if the Conservation Group had the relevant documentation required. Clerk to progress.

8. Other Village Committees & Groups Reports

Village Hall Committee – Meeting on Monday 8th January.

The Clerk advised that the Pavilion floor was flooded on the morning of 3rd January and this will need the roof being inspected. To be discussed at the meeting on 8 January.

Traffic Advisory Group

The Clerk continues to chase OCC for the costing for the Zebra Crossing. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her continued persistence progressing this matter.

Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group – The public consultation for NHP2 will be 23rd/24th February, advertising this will shortly be released.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Botting for the continued work being carried out by the Group.

Village Green no new meeting.

Woodcote Rally Committee have donated a total of £24500 to local charities following 2017 rally.

9. Other Matters for Chairman

Cllr. Sudbury asked if any sites for the NHP 2 been specified as self build? Cllr. Botting replied that the Group were looking at this. Cllr. Sudbury also asked that other building methods should be considered in the NHP2. Cllr. Botting stated that the group need to first make sure sites are allocated for development the type of building on such sites can then part of the process.

10. Correspondence

Letter from Chilterns Conservation Board in reply to the letter the Clerk sent regarding what matters they are working on in the South Oxfordshire area. Clerk to circulate the letter.

11. To note date of the next Parish Council Meeting: Wednesday 17th January 2018.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signed Date.....