

Sonning Common Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held via video conference on Monday 18 January 2021 at 1830 hrs.

Due to the exceptional circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 outbreak and in line with local government policy, this meeting was conducted via video conference among committee members and a council officer.

Present: Mr Rawlins (chairman), Mr Kedge, Mrs Lewis, Mr Fort, Mr Stoves, Mr Giles, Mrs Diwell, Ros Varnes, Deputy Parish Clerk and three members of the public.

P21/093 Apologies for absence: none.

P21/094 Declarations of interest: none.

P21/095 New applications:

095.01/P20/S4571/FUL. Changes to the approved road layout. Variation of condition 1 (approved plans), 2 (levels), 8 (parking and turning), 9 (cycle parking), 13 (landscaping), 16 (tree protection) and 17 (biodiversity mitigation) of application P20/S0626/FUL. Also variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application P18/S2631/FUL for various alterations, including garage enlargements and window and internal layout changes relating to the erection of 25 dwellings together with associated landscaping and public open space on land to the rear of 44 Kennylands Road RG4 9JT.

Resident Mrs Pearman outlined her objections to the application.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to recommend the refusal of the application (see attached letter).

095.02/P20/S3265/FUL. Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning application P19/S4108/FUL for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the construction of two detached four-bedroom dwellings at Indaba Lodge, Peppard Road RG4 9NJ.

After discussion members resolved that they had no strong views on the application.

095.03/P20/S4837/FUL. The construction of a new three-bedroom property within the curtilage of 53 Wood Lane.

The applicants outlined their proposal.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to support the application.

(Mrs Diwell joined the meeting).

095.04/P20/S4834/HH. The construction of single-storey front and two-storey rear extensions and alterations at Slades Wood, Widmore Lane RG4 9RR.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to support the application.

095.05/P20/S4572/HH. The construction of a single-storey front extension to provide an extended lounge, hall at WC at 2 Lambourne Road RG4 9LX.

(Members did not discuss this application since it had already been determined).

095.06/P20/S4720/DIS. The discharge of conditions 3 (engineering details, construction methods, materials), 5 (drainage) and 6 (landscaping) on application P20/S0459/FUL for the creation of a permanent access to Memorial Hall Field in the form of a priority junction plus the creation of 6 car parking spaces in addition to the existing 5 spaces (with one being for disabled use) at Kidmore End War Memorial Hall, Reade's Lane RG4 9LL.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to support the application.

095.07/P20/S4798/DIS. The discharge of conditions 3 (detailed sustainable drainage strategy), 9 (grass seeds mix) and 10 (landscape implementation) on application P20/S2526/FUL for groundworks for the provision of a sport and recreational facility at Kidmore End War Memorial Hall, Reade's Lane RG4 9LL.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to support the application.

095.08/P20/S4655/DIS. The discharge of conditions 22 (surface water drainage works) and 23 (foul drainage works) of application P20/S0626/FUL relating to the erection of 25 dwellings together with associated landscaping and public open space on land to the rear of 44 Kennylands Road RG4 9JT.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to support the application.

P21/096 To note:

096.01/P21/S0045/LDE. An application has been made, under permitted development rights, for land to be used for the storage of motor vehicles at the former kennel car parking area at Blounts Farm, Blounts Court Road RG4 9PA. Noted.

096.02/P21/S0055/LDE. An application has been made, under permitted development rights, for buildings to be used for storage at the calf sheds, Blounts Farm, Blounts Court Road RG4 9PA. Noted.

P21/097 Applications granted:

097.01/P20/S3587/FUL. A replacement retail unit, including attached one-bedroom accommodation, following the demolition of the existing retail unit and associated buildings at Brambles Floristry, 42A Wood Lane RG4 9SL. Noted.

097.02/P20/S4180/HH. Alterations to and the extension of the existing dwelling at 59 Woodlands Road RG4 9TD. Noted.

097.03/P20/S4353/DIS. The discharge of condition 4 (tree protection) of planning application P20/S3522/HH for the construction of a single-storey rear extension at 4 Gardeners Copse RG4 9JJ. Noted.

P21/098 Discussion on:

The Parish Council's response to the intended appeal by Inspired Villages against the refusal of planning permission by South Oxfordshire District Council for a new retirement village on land off the Blounts Court Road.

Mr Fort led a discussion on the intended appeal against a refusal of planning permission for a retirement village on land off the Blounts Court Road.

Mr Fort agreed to explore potential participation by the Council in a forthcoming public inquiry.

P21/099 Update on:

The emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

Mr Rawlins provided a brief update on the new Local Plan.

P21/100 Matters for future agendas: none.

Date of next meeting: Monday 01 February 2021 at 1915.

The meeting closed at 1940.

Date of next meeting: Monday 01 February 2021 at 1900.

Chairman:

Dated:

SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office

VILLAGE HALL, WOOD LANE
SONNING COMMON, OXON, RG4 9SL

Clerk – Philip Collings

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Ms Nicola Smith
SODC Planning Officer
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Abingdon OX14 4SB

Friday 22 January 2021

Dear Ms Smith

Re: P20/S4571/FUL. Changes to the approved road layout. Variation of condition 1 (approved plans), 2 levels), 8 (parking and turning), 9 (cycle parking), 13 (landscaping), 16 (tree protection) and 17 (biodiversity mitigation) of application P20/S0626/FUL. Also variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application P18/S2631/FUL for various alterations, including garage enlargements and window and internal layout changes relating to the erection of 25 dwellings together with associated landscaping and public open space on land to the rear of 44 Kennylands Road RG4 9JT.

Sonning Common Parish Council's Planning Committee considered the above application at its meeting of Monday 18 January 2021. Members unanimously resolved to strenuously object to the application. They strongly urge SODC to permit no further variations to consented conditions concerning the road layout around plot 18.

Application P20/S4571/FUL is a second blatant attempt by TA Fisher to extend development into the adjoining Alpen Rose Orchard – in direct contravention of the main strategic aim of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and that of the emerging revised Plan, now well underway, to maintain Sonning Common's separation from surrounding settlements and avoid conurbation with Reading.

It is difficult to express in a letter just how strongly villagers feel about keeping Sonning Common separate and distinct from surrounding settlements.

Consistently, over many decades, this has been the overarching aim of local residents when considering the future size and shape of the village. Surveys and public consultations completed for the emerging revised Plan, the current Neighbourhood Plan and for the 2010 Sonning Common Community Plan show time and time again that residents value the fact that Sonning Common is an Oxfordshire village separate to Reading.

If this latest application - to create an access road to the Alpen Rose Orchard – is successful it will potentially open the way for development to take place on the adjoining site, which would be against the expressed desire of many existing residents and in contravention of the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan.

It is not speculation to say that it is the developer's clear intent to extend development into the adjoining site. The attached extract from a TA Fisher promotional brochure showing an arrow leading from SON 5 into the Alpen Rose Orchard, described as 'possible future development', confirms this as does the agent's letter in support of the application.

The agent seeks to argue that some precedence has been set for linking sites in Sonning Common concerning SON 2 and Lambourne Road and land surrounding SON 6 (Lea Meadow).

In the case of SON 2 (Sonning Grove) and its neighbour, Lambourne Road, there is no vehicular access between the two areas. In future there will be a pedestrian access only from Sonning Grove into Lambourne Road to allow residents to reach the village centre more easily on foot – a key part of the site's sustainability.

In the case of the road around the perimeter of Lea Meadow, this is clearly to allow residents and service vehicles to move around the site and was never designed with the intention of linking Lea Meadow with surrounding sites. I cannot comment on the Woodcote site since I do not consider it to be relevant to this case.

The damage this application would cause to established trees, as your tree officer has highlighted, and the important landscape buffer screening the site are other major reasons why it should be refused.

The inspector, who overturned an appeal against a refusal of planning permission for a proposed 90-home development on SON 26, which adjoins the Alpen Rose Orchard, concludes (page 34 of the decision): *The appeal site is in the semi-enclosed dipslope landscape character type. The site displays many of the characteristics of the LCT. The site is located adjacent to the Chilterns AONB and to the south is part of a wider area of open countryside. The site and the wider area of open countryside to the south have many of the attributes of the LCT and indeed incorporate some of those that are identified as the special qualities of the AONB, in particular the dry valleys, ridges and plateaus and wooded areas. These are physical attributes which lead me to conclude that in itself, and in its wider context, the site is more than ordinary countryside and is in my view part of a valued landscape. The site fulfils an important function in maintaining the rural setting of Sonning Common and the setting of the built up area in the wider landscape, including with the AONB.*

The inspector recognised the need to protect the countryside in this part of the village.

Sonning Common Parish Council's Planning Committee urges SODC to ensure that the approved plans are complied with and no further proposed variations to the road layout near plot 18 are permitted.

Finally, I would draw your attention to our earlier letter (attached), dated 30 March 2020, in response to TA Fisher's first bid to vary conditions on consented plans P20/SO626/FUL, in which we outline our concerns over potentially linking SON 5 with the Alpen Rose Orchard for development purposes.

Please do keep us informed of the progress of this application.

Yours sincerely



Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council