

Sonning Common Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in the
Village Hall on Monday 06 July 2015 at 1915 hours.

Present: Mrs Lewis (chairman), Mr Rawlins, Mr Reynolds, Mr Rust, Mr Richens, Mr Stoves (ex-officio), Mrs Varnes (Deputy Parish Clerk).

P16/033 Apologies for absence: Mr Kedge.

P16/034 Declarations of interest: Mr Stoves declared an interest in application P15/S2006/FUL - the construction of a new dwelling at 67 Woodlands Road RG4 9TD – next door to his home. He joined the floor while the application was discussed and voted upon by fellow committee members.

P16/035 Public consultation time. A number of residents together with agents and applicants spoke in relation to P14/S2391/FUL (amended plans for the development of 65 dwellings with associated public open space, landscape planting and new access on to the Peppard Road at Lea Meadow RG4 9NJ); P15/S2006/FUL (the construction of a new dwelling at 67 Woodlands Road RG4 9TD); and P15/S0725/FUL (extension to the existing dwelling and the creation of a new, attached dwelling at 58 Wood Lane RG4 9SL).

In relation to the Lea Meadow proposal, Mr Primrose, of Bird Wood Court, was concerned that the Draft Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan should not be bypassed by the application; that a 30mph speed limit be imposed along the Peppard Road; that the proposed road furniture be replaced by something more appropriately rural; and that tree protection orders be placed, where appropriate.

Stephen Trenwith, from Bewley Homes (the applicant), stated that 'soakaways' were proposed for drainage; that the location of the proposed access had changed following consultation with the parish and this was an improvement; and that he would liaise with Oxfordshire County Council's Highways Department over alternative road furniture.

Mrs Ryan, of Woodlands Road, objected to the proposal to build a new dwelling in the garden of 67 Woodlands Road, saying it was a large property out of character with the surrounding area.

Mr Kestell-Cornish (agent for 58 Wood Lane) confirmed that some of the issues that the parish council had been concerned about previously had been dealt with and listened to continued concerns from members over the proposed parking and access arrangements.

P16/036 **New applications:**

036.01/P14/S2391/FUL. Amended plans for the development of 65 dwellings with associated public open space, landscape planting and new access on to the Peppard Road at Lea Meadow RG4 9NJ. After discussion the committee agreed to recommend unanimously that this application be refused.

036.02/P15/S2006/FUL. The construction of a new dwelling at 67 Woodlands Road RG4 9TD. After discussion the committee agreed to recommend unanimously that this application be refused.

036.03/P15/S2007/HH. The erection of a first-floor rear extension and the demolition of an existing outbuilding at 15 Wood Lane RG4 9SJ. After discussion the committee agreed to recommend unanimously that this application be approved.

036.04/P15/S0725/FUL. Extension to the existing dwelling and the creation of a new, attached dwelling (as amended by revised plans accompanying agent's email of 08 June 2015) at 58 Wood Lane RG4 9SL. After discussion the committee agreed to recommend unanimously that this application be refused.

P16/037 Applications granted:

037.01/P15/S1132/HH. Single-storey side and two-storey rear extension plus front porch at 34 Kennylands Road RG4 9JT. Noted.

037.02/P15/S1315/HH. Single-storey rear extension and link to a converted garden outbuilding plus internal alterations and bay to side extension at 7 Sedgewell Road RG4 9TA. Noted.

037.03/P15/S1403/HH. A single-storey rear extension to replace the existing conservatory at 1 Carling Road RG4 9TD. Noted.

P16/038 Appeal lodged:

APP/Q3115/D/15/3030378. Appeal lodged against the refusal of planning permission for the construction of a detached garage (as clarified by agent's email of 13 April 2015) at 17 Peppard Road RG4 9SS. Noted.

P16/039 Notification:

P15/S1957/PDO. An application to change the use of an existing building from office use to a dwelling house is being processed by South Oxfordshire District Council. Noted.

039.02/P15/S1863/LDE. An application to retain the balustrading around the rear flat roof extension at 54 Woodlands Road RG4 9TE is being processed. Noted.

P16/040 Suggestions for future agenda items. None.

Date of next meeting: Monday 20 July 2015 at 1915.



Philip Collings, Parish Clerk

SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office

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

Clerk – Philip Collings

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Mr Peter Brampton
Planning Department
Abbey House
Abbey Close
Abingdon OX14 3JE

Friday 10 July 2015

Dear Mr Brampton

Reference: Amendment 1 to P14/S2391/FUL (Lea Meadow, Sonning Common RG4 9NJ)

The Planning Committee of Sonning Common Parish Council considered the above application at its meeting of Monday 06 July 2015. The Planning Committee notes that the current, amended application is an improvement on the previous application to build 82 homes. However, members consider that the proposal, as it stands, is unacceptable to the community and will not meet the village's housing needs. Members voted unanimously to recommend rejection of the proposal on the grounds that:

- SODC already has a Core Strategy and adequate housing supply in place for the area.
- The site is outside the built area of the village – as always noted by SODC – and can only, therefore, be developed via the Sites and Allocations process of the Core Strategy/Local Plan or the authorised NDP. IF the site is developed, it must be in line with a Local Plan which allocates it. It does not. The developers have not complied with the emerging NDP requirements.
- The proposed number of homes – 65 - is too high and is at odds with the NDP Working Party's recommendation – backed by public consultation - of a maximum of 60 dwellings on the site.
- There is no clarity on housing types and mix. Bewley Homes state that they have used "their expertise" to tell SODC what the mix needs to be. Sonning Common has a fiercely unbalanced housing stock that has arisen from decades of large extensions. This needs to be addressed. The NDP Working Party has collected ample evidence to prove that a greater proportion of smaller properties are required in Sonning Common to meet the demand from residents who wish to down-size and from young families starting out.
- The proposed visual screening – given the topography of the site and buffer zones, including for wildlife movement corridors – is inadequate.
- The stand back from the AONB is inadequate.
- Detail on proposed ridge heights is insufficient.
- The proposed, main access is an improvement on the previous application. However, the proposed street furniture is inappropriate and should be of a more rural nature.
- It is essential that a 30mph speed limit be imposed along the Peppard Road from the Bird in Hand pub towards the village.
- The emergency access route must not be via the wildlife corridor and footpath behind Essex Way.

- To ease security concerns, lighting needs to be sufficient to illuminate the public footpath from Kennylands Road to the site, dense hedging should be in place all around the site and access from Hagpits Wood to the site should be prevented.
- Suitable fencing would need to be in place along the boundary with Hagpits Wood to prevent any unwanted access to the wood.

It is vital that the applicant now works with the NDP team and local community to reach an acceptable solution for the development of this site.

The committee feels strongly that this application - as it stands - should be refused to preserve the integrity of the emerging Sonning Common NDP and in recognition of the views expressed by hundreds of residents through consultation on the Draft Plan.

Please take into account the comments above along with those outlined in the letter to you dated 25 September 2014.

We would be grateful if the parish council could be kept informed, at all stages, of the progress of this application.

Yours sincerely



Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council

cc Councillors Paul Harrison and Martin Akehurst

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Ms Emma Bowerman
Planning Department
Abbey House
Abbey Close
Abingdon OX14 3JE

Friday 10 July 2015

Dear Ms Bowerman

Reference: P15/S2006/FUL (67 Woodlands Road, Sonning Common RG4 9TD)

The Planning Committee of Sonning Common Parish Council considered the above application at its meeting on Monday 06 July 2015. Members voted unanimously to recommend that this proposal be refused on the grounds that:

- It cannot be classed as appropriate infill since it is not “closely surrounded by other buildings”, as required by planning policy to be acceptable (policies CSR1 and H4)
- It is an adverse development and is out of character with the surrounding area (contrary to G2, G4, C4, CSEN1,)
- It would adversely affect the privacy of neighbours and their enjoyment of their properties (contrary to D3 and D4)
- The proposed access would cause disturbance to neighbours
- The proposed dwelling is of poor design (contrary to D1)
- It would have a negative impact on conservation and the improvement of biodiversity (contrary to CSB1)

In summary, this proposed backland development is wholly inappropriate for this site. If it were to be allowed, it would set a dangerous precedent for further unwelcome attempts at ‘garden grabbing’ that would seriously degrade the character of one of the oldest, most established roads in the village.

Furthermore, the potential impact from this development on the adjacent AONB is of serious concern. A property with a proposed ridge height of 7m would impact negatively on the AONB. Number 75 was built prior to existing planning laws, post-World War 2, yet it has a very low ridge height of circa 4.6m. The importance of the AONB boundary for wildlife and the adjacency to Old Copse should not be underestimated. Bats are prevalent at the location, despite the suggestions of the applicant.

For all of the above reasons we urge you to reject this unsuitable and detrimental application.

If SODC considers approving the application, despite our planning committee’s strenuous objections, we request that you refer the matter to SODC’s Planning Committee (as per your constitution) so that parish councillors and residents may have the opportunity to make further representations.

Please keep the parish council informed as to the progress of this application.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ros Varnes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council

Cc Councillors Paul Harrison and Martin Akehurst

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Mr Simon Kitson
Planning Department
Abbey House
Abbey Close
Abingdon OX14 3JE

Friday 10 July 2015

Dear Mr Kitson

Reference: Amendment 2 to P15/S0725/FUL (58 Wood Lane, Sonning Common RG4 9SL)

The Planning Committee of Sonning Common Parish Council considered the above application at its meeting of Monday 06 July 2015. Members voted unanimously to recommend that this proposal be refused on the grounds that:

- The proposed parking in front of the property would be detrimental to the street scene and the character of the village centre – contrary to policies G2 and D1.
- The application provides inadequate vision splays leading to concerns over community safety – contrary to policies D6, T1 and T2.

Members recognised that their previous concerns over potential damage to the root protection zone of the mature tree in the front garden had been adequately addressed. However, they remained concerned about the character of the street scene being degraded by the proposed parking area in front of the dwellings, the unwelcome precedent it would set and the potential safety hazard to motorists and pedestrians from cars backing out onto Wood Lane, the busy main route through the village centre.

Furthermore, the proposal would lead to the loss of on-street parking in an area which is under considerable parking pressure already. The village centre plays a vital sustainable role for the whole community. Until these important village character, safety and practical issues are adequately addressed, the committee urges SODC to reject this application.

If SODC considers approving the application, despite our planning committee's strenuous objections, we request that you refer the matter to SODC's Planning Committee (as per your constitution) so that parish councillors and residents may have the opportunity to make further representations.

Please keep the parish council informed as to the progress of this application. Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Ros Varnes

Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council
cc Councillors Paul Harrison and Martin Akehurst