

Sonning Common Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in the Village Hall, Sonning Common, on Monday 05 June 2017 at 1915 hrs.

Present: Mrs Lewis (chairman), Mr Rawlins, Mr Rust, Mr Fort, Mrs Phillips-Tilbury and Mrs Varnes (Deputy Parish Clerk).

P18/030 Apologies for absence: Mr Kedge, Mr Stoves.

P18/031 Declarations of interest: none.

P18/032 Election of chairman and vice-chairman.

Mr Rust was duly elected as new committee chairman. Mr Rawlins was re-elected as committee vice-chairman.

P18/033 Public consultation time: none present.

P18/034 New applications:

034.01/P17/S1792/D. The proposed demolition of the NatWest Bank, 20 Peppard Road RG4 9SX.

After discussion members resolved unanimously to recommend approval of the application subject to adequate protection for neighbouring properties and road users from dust and construction-related hazards.

034.02/P17/S1693/HH. The construction of a single-storey car port at 13a Kidmore Lane RG4 9SH.

After discussion members resolved unanimously to recommend approval of the application.

034.03/P17/S1683/HH. Internal alterations, alterations to fenestration and a replacement garden shed at Meadowcraft, Blounts Court Road RG9 5HB.

After discussion members resolved unanimously to recommend approval of the application.

034.04/S1241/FUL. The variation of conditions 4 (landscape), 5 (planting), 6 (manoeuvring) and 7 (window) of planning permission P14/S3419/FUL – the construction of a two-storey dwelling with accommodation in the roof space, parking provision and associated landscaping (as amended by documentation received 16 December submitted by the applicant/agent revising the design of the dwelling) at 31a Woodlands Road RG4 9TD.

After discussion members unanimously resolved to recommend refusal of the application - in the strongest possible terms - and provide a detailed letter to South Oxfordshire District Council outlining their concerns (see letter attached).

It was also decided to send a report to the Health and Safety Executive alleging breaches of health and safety and road traffic legislation during the construction work.

P18/035 Applications granted:

035.01/P17/S1106/HH. A single-storey side extension; hip to gable roof at rear to blend with new roof at 6 Newfield Road RG4 9TB. Noted.

035.02/P17/S1160/HH. The demolition of an existing ground floor side garage with a flat roof to be replaced with a two-storey side extension with integral ground floor garage, bedrooms above and single-storey rear extension at 12 Park Close RG4 9RY. Noted.

035.03/P17/S1235/HH. The conversion of a garage to a store and garden room at 57 Woodlands Road RG4 9TD. Noted.

035.04/P17/S0961/HH. The construction of a single-storey rear extension and two-storey side extension with dormer windows (rear extension roof changed from hip to gable, window added to ground floor side elevation of side extension and dormer windows added to roof plans, as shown on amended plans received 28 April 2017) at 14 Old Copse Gardens RG4 9TH. Noted.

035.05/P17/S0850/HH. Extension to the front, internal alterations and upgrade of the roof to the existing side extension at 48 Peppard Road RG4 9SU. Noted.

P18/036 Applications refused: none.

P18/037 To note:

037.01/P17/S0305/FUL. Plans have been amended for the construction of a fenced seating area and replacement children's play area (children's play area repositioned and beech hedging provided as shown on amended plan received 11 April 2017 and revised block plan and hedge planting details received 15 May 2017) at The Butchers Arms, Blounts Court Road RG4 9RS. Noted.

037.02/P17/S1687/PDH. An application is being processed for the construction of a flat roof single-storey rear extension (depth 3.8m, height 2.9m) at 64 Essex Way RG4 9RG. Noted.

P18/038 Status reports:

038/01. The Memorial Hall Field project.

The deputy clerk advised that according to SODC planning officer, Phil Moule, (email of 01 June 2017), further minor amendments were being made to the proposed Section 106 agreement and planning application for SON 2.

038/02. The outcome of the planning committee's complaint into the development at 59 Orchard Avenue.

The deputy clerk advised that the planning enforcement team at South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) had opened a case on 21 March 2017 into the alleged breach of planning consent at 59 Orchard Avenue (see complaint attached). She said she had requested a written response from SODC.

038/03. A request to SODC that developers are required to reinstate pavements left in a poor state following construction work (see letter attached).

P18/040 Matters for future agendas.

Members resolved to bring forward the start time of the next Planning Committee meeting on Monday 19 June to 1900 to allow more time for the discussion of a major planning application (P17/S3707/O - outline proposal for 30 new homes at 44 Kennylands Road – SON 5).

Members resolved that the situation regarding the ending of the lease on the premises of Mike Farina Autos, in Sedgefield Road, be placed on the agenda for the next full council meeting on Monday 19 June 2017.

Members discussed the idea of South Oxfordshire's 12 large villages potentially forming an alliance to adopt a shared approach to the Local Plan 2033 consultation

and to protect neighbourhood planning. It was resolved to put the matter to the next full council meeting.

The meeting closed at 2040.

Date of next meeting: Monday 19 June 2017 at 1900.

Chairman: Dated:

SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office

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Clerk – Philip Collings

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Ms Caitlin Phillpotts
Planning Enquiry Officer
SODC

Thursday 08 June 2017

Dear Ms Phillpotts

Re: P17/S1241/FUL. Variation of conditions 4 (landscape); 5 (planting); 6 (manoeuvring); and 7 (window) of planning permission P14/S3419/FUL – the construction of a two-storey dwelling with accommodation in the roof space, parking provision and associated landscaping at 31a Woodlands Road, Sonning Common RG4 9TD.

The Planning Committee of Sonning Common Parish Council considered the above application at its meeting on Monday 05 June 2017. Further to our response consultation sheet (returned to you on Tuesday 06 June), I am writing to outline the Planning Committee's detailed objections to this proposal.

The Planning Committee urges SODC – in the strongest possible terms – to reject this application and enforce the planning conditions for the following reasons:

1. The appeal inspector set down clear planning conditions on the permission for this degrading development, which the parish council and residents believe must be strictly adhered to if public confidence in the planning system is to be satisfied. SODC has a responsibility to enforce these important planning conditions; otherwise a mockery will be made of the planning system.

Developers cannot be allowed to ignore the terms of their planning consent and construct developments as they wish without repercussion.

2. Oxfordshire County Council is opposed to the application. It is recommending refusal of the application because the parking spaces demonstrated do not meet current dimensional standards for a parking space which is obstructed on one side, as notified in the consultation response from OCC's Area Liaison Officer, Thomas Cockhill.

Mr Cockhill admits this detail was overlooked by the highway officer at the time. The Highways response during the application process was crucial. Both reports from the delegated officer and the appeal inspector refer to the lack of an objection from Highways as being a factor influencing their decisions to recommend and grant planning permission respectively.

Outlining his reasons for granting permission on 22 October 2015, inspector Jonathan Price states:

“Concerns over parking and highway safety have been raised, including in the comments from Sonning Common Parish Council. These concerns have been considered but in the absence of an objection from the local highways authority, and through the conditions proposed, the proposal is considered acceptable in this respect.”

He imposes the following Condition 6 on the permission:

“The dwelling shall not be occupied until the access to the site from Woodlands Road and the parking and manoeuvring areas shown in drawing No 013309/02A have been constructed, laid out, surfaced and drained in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

“These areas shall thereafter be retained and remain unobstructed for the access, parking and manoeuvring of vehicles with no wall, fence, hedge or other means enclosure provided along the front boundary of the site exceeding a height of 0.6 metres above the level of the centre line of the access for a distance of 4.8m from both sides of the access.”

In his consultation response, immediate neighbour Steve Playford, of 31 Woodlands Road, states that the defined gap for vehicle access has not been delivered by the new development, the existing gap being just 3.8m.

The requirement to provide clear visibility splays from both sides of the shared access cannot be met. The gap is too narrow and the applicant in this case has no control over the height of neighbouring hedges.

Condition 6 was imposed upon the development in the interests of highway safety and to ensure the provision of off-street car parking in accordance with policies T1 and T2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. It must be imposed.

Criterion (iv) of Policy H4 of the Local Plan also requires that there are no overriding highway objections.

3. This application does not meet the adopted Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan’s (SCNP’s) requirements for suitable infill and housing design.

Policy H3: Infill

Development proposals on infill sites (the infilling of a small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage or group of houses where they are surrounded on all sides by other buildings) will be supported where they are of a design which:

- positively responds to, where appropriate, the prevailing size, height, scale and mass, materials, layout, density and access of the surrounding area;*
- reflects the existing character of the village;*
- demonstrates that the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers will not be adversely affected through overbearing development and loss of light;*
- includes an appropriate amount of landscaping which complements and enhances the green and wooded character of the local area.*

Policy D1: Design

All new development within Sonning Common must demonstrate good quality design. This should include respecting the scale and appearance of the existing built environment, responding to and integrating with local surroundings and landscape context.

The development of the residential allocations should use soft boundary treatments such as trees, hedges or planting to enclose the front of plots and be in keeping with the character of the village street scenes, unless viability or other material considerations show a compelling justification for a different treatment.

Every effort should be made to avoid harsh urban parking courts. Design should ensure that parking is provided in a discreet and sensitive manner.

The harsh, urban-style paved parking court at 31a Woodlands Road is contrary to SCNP requirements. It degrades the rural character of the street scene.

Completely inadequate hedging materials have been used which do not enclose the front of the plot, as required by design policy D1. The development fails to provide, 'an appropriate amount of landscaping which complements and enhances the green and wooded character of the local area'.

(While the planning committee generally supports the appeal inspector's conditions, we note that Condition 6 – stipulating the maximum hedge height to be 0.6m – is at odds both with the adopted policies within the SCNP, as outlined above, and with the character of surrounding properties, as the attached photos show.

This underlines the fact that the plot is simply not big enough to accommodate a house of this size and meet policy requirements for parking and manoeuvring areas and character compatibility with the surrounding area).

Contrary to infill policy H3, neighbours are adversely affected by loss of light from this overbearing development and their privacy is compromised through being overlooked. The condition relating to obscure glazing for the kitchen window should be enforced.

The proposal is contrary to policies H3 (infill) and D1 (design) of the adopted Sonning Common Neighbourhood Plan and consequently must be refused.

4. This development has endangered – and has the capacity to further endanger – the safety of road users and pedestrians. The NPPF requires that vehicle movements associated with developments do not present severe harm. Policies T1 and T2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 require that adequate space is provided for parking and manoeuvring.

The development cannot demonstrate that the requirements for adequate vision splays for road users and pedestrians can be met. A dropped kerb across the front of the property should not be permitted if vision splay requirements cannot be met.

The developer left the pavement outside the new dwelling in an appalling state. Granite kerbstones – which contribute greatly to this established road's character – were broken and discarded under a nearby hedge. A stabilising arm from a delivery lorry left a deep crater on the pavement. The fact that the developer did nothing to repair these hazards shows his scathing disregard for public safety.

At its meeting on 05 June 2017, Sonning Common Parish Council's Planning Committee resolved that a separate report on health and safety issues associated with this new construction should be made to the Health and Safety Executive).

This development fails to provide adequate space for parking and manoeuvring and is consequently hazardous to public health and safety.

5. A Planning Enforcement inquiry has been opened in relation to this development, which has been found to be in breach of its consent in terms of its ridge and eaves heights. Unfortunately, Planning Enforcement determined to take no further action over this breach of planning consent – a controversial and disappointing decision as far as residents and the parish council are concerned.

The development at 31a Woodlands Road is deeply controversial. The handling of it to date by planning authorities has caused widespread consternation and resentment within the local community.

The parish council is appealing to SODC to attempt to restore public confidence by ensuring that the planning conditions set down by the appeal inspector are enforced. If they cannot be enforced the logical conclusion is that this new build should be demolished.

We request that this application is called in to SODC's Planning Committee for a decision to be made. Please keep us updated on the progress of this application.

I attach some photos in support of our comments above.

1. **Property frontage and damage to pavement.**
2. **Shared access, parking area and existing dropped kerb.**
- 3&4. Hedge lines in surrounding area contrasted with application site.
5. Materials on pavement during construction work.
6. Crane lift of roofing materials across pavement and public highway.
7. Pavement and highway obstructions from construction-related vehicles.

Thank you.



Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council
(On behalf of the Planning Committee)

cc Paul Harrison

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Mr Tom Crowe
Planning Enforcement
South Oxfordshire District Council

Monday 20 March 2017

Dear Mr Crowe

Re: P16/S3839/LDP. Conversion of loft space to form a habitable room incorporating a dormer window to the rear elevation and 2no roof lights to the front elevation at 59 Orchard Avenue, Sonning Common RG4 9LT.

I am writing on behalf of Sonning Common Parish Council's Planning Committee regarding the approved loft conversion above which is currently under construction.

A Certificate of Lawful Development has been issued by SODC for the works. The decision notice states:

"The proposed development, as detailed on drawings: LOC-001 and 02, complies with the provisions of Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes B and C of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended). The Council are satisfied that a Lawful Development Certificate can be granted for the proposal in accordance with the approved drawings."

We have re-examined the plans after viewing the construction work to date. It is clear that a Juliette balcony is detailed on Composite Plan 02, outside the full-length double French doors. This is contrary to the regulations governing Permitted Development for Householders B & C which state that, 'No veranda, balconies, or raised platforms', are allowed. (The relevant regulations are listed on the right-hand side of the plan).

This Juliette balcony is now being constructed, contrary to permitted development regulations. This will have an adverse impact on the privacy of neighbours and the amenity value of their properties.

Additionally, the Planning Committee would draw your attention to the following points:

1. The plans state, 'Side facing windows to be obscure glazed'. *A bathroom window plus a pair of floor-to-ceiling French doors at the rear overlook the gardens of numbers 45a and 47 Woodlands Road. Will SODC Planning confirm that ALL windows are to be obscure-glazed?*
2. SODC's notification describes the proposal as, '*An application for a Certificate of Lawful Development for converting the loft space to form a habitable room incorporating a dormer window to the rear and two roof lights to the front elevation of 59 Orchard Avenue RG4 9LT. There is NO mention of double floor-to-ceiling French doors to the rear in this description. This a clear safety issue.*

3. The extension is overbearing and overlooks the rear gardens of 45a and 47 Woodlands Road.
4. There is a large stainless steel flue which extends from the top of the conservatory to above the roof level. *This is unsightly, particularly for no. 47 Woodlands Road, and was NOT shown anywhere on the drawing.*
5. This extension, overlooking the AONB, detracts greatly from the appearance of the its surroundings and bears little resemblance to the original planning application.

Having drawn your attention to these issues, we recommend that Planning Enforcement view this case as a matter of urgency. We recommend that enforcement action is taken to ensure that this new development meets permitted development regulations and the terms of its planning consent.

We attach two photographs – IMG3001 is a close-up view of the loft extension, and IMG3003 shows its proximity to the rear garden of 47 Woodlands Road.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council
(on behalf of the Planning Committee)

cc Edward Church, Planning Officer

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Mr Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning Services
South Oxfordshire District Council

Monday 05 June 2017

Dear Mr Duffield

Re: damage to pavements, Sonning Common

Following significant damage to a pavement in the village following construction work, Sonning Common Parish Council would like to work with SODC to address the situation.

The attached photograph shows how the developer left the pavement following the construction of a new dwelling at 31a Woodlands Road - P14/S3419/FUL. (Also attached are photos taken during the building work showing how the pavement and public highway were used as extensions of the construction site due to the lack of off-road parking).

The distinctive granite kerbstones, which are an important part of the road's character, were broken and discarded under a nearby hedge while a crater was left on the pavement by a stabilising arm from an illegally-parked delivery vehicle.

This damage to the pavement created an unnecessary hazard to pedestrians.

The parish council wishes to ensure that this situation does not arise again. Could a requirement to leave the pavement in a good state following construction work please be included as a planning condition when consent is provided for future applications?

The parish council is willing to provide photographs to show the state of pavements pre and post the construction of new, consented developments.

Thank you.



Ros Varnes
Deputy Clerk, Sonning Common Parish Council