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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2008

**Present** Alice Wilkinson (Chairman), Jackie Jeffery, Shirley Newman, John Illenden, Michael Forrer, Jim Gillett, Nick Ray, and Liz Black. There were no residents present.

**Apologies for absence** - Chris Drew, John Davies and District Councillor Emma Hobbs.

**4608/08 Open Forum** - There were no residents present.

**4609/08 Declaration Of Interest** - None

**4610/08 Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July 2008** - The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

**4611/08 Urgent Matters Arising from the above Minutes** - There were no matters arising which were not on the agenda.

**4612/08 PLANNING**

**a) Applications for Information and Comment:**

1583 Convert garage to habitable room at 94 The Hawthorns.- No Parish Council Comment.

1587 Demolish existing dwelling & erect 2 four bed dwellings and 1 four bed chalet bungalow at 43 Old Bath Road. - No Parish Council Comment.

1621 Erect Boat Shelter at Windrush, Thames Drive. - No Parish Council Comment.

1585 Reserved matters. Repeat application Training, Hotel & Leisure centres on Land at Sandford Farm. Following discussion the Clerk was asked to write as follows:-

*This is an old application O/1999/69524 for which a further extension to an approval given many years ago is being sought. It is this Councils view that this consent should not be given without full consideration of the new circumstances which now prevail:-*

- 1. This proposed development is in an area prone to flooding. According to the Environment Agency reports provided with application O/2008/1282 the land on the southeast of this site has flooded many times in the last 10 years. The report suggests an increasing risk of flooding where in the most recent years part of the proposed site was flooded and in 2005 half the site was flooded. It is therefore the view of this Council that this part of the site must be considered to fulfil the criteria for inclusion in the 'functional flood plain' and that the remainder of the site must be in the 'high probability to flood' risk category. According to PPG25 (now PPS25), areas where the flood risk is greater than one in a hundred years should not be used for development unless there is an overwhelming reason why development should take place. There is no such reason for developing this site. Indeed there is every reason why this contaminated site should not be disturbed.*

*Council is also concerned that laying extensive areas of concrete can only add to the risk of flooding in adjacent areas. This too is precluded by recent legislation.*

*Charvil being on the edge of the flood plain has experience of poor decision making on flooding issues. There are three areas of the village where PPG 25 was highlighted at the planning stage by this Council, but was regrettably ignored, and development allowed. All three areas now flood regularly. In the past there had been this tendency not to implement PPG 25, and*

other legislation. With recent experience of Flooding and Contamination the public expects this issue to be taken seriously and for developments of this kind not to be allowed.

- 2 There are no clear benefits to this proposed development. It is doubtful and not proven that this kind of commercial premises are needed nor are appropriate at this location at the heart of the Country Park. Council would draw attention to the reasons given by the inspector for refusing another application in this green gap between settlements in report APP/X0360/A/06/2016692. "The proposal would be a visual intrusion into the countryside .....the proposal conflicts with local and national policies to protect the countryside."
- 3 The Country Park has developed since this application was first granted. Charvil Meadows and Charvil Country Park have now been added and this site is now at the centre of an area of significant ecological importance.
- 4 This site is contaminated. The potential for harm from disturbing this waste is a serious local issue. This Council believes that public concern about pollution has been heightened and decisions made in 1999 do not reflect current concerns. It is no longer acceptable to assume that a health risk in places of work is acceptable.
- 5 The need to preserve the green separation strip between settlements has been accepted as important in a number of recent appeal decisions. In dismissing an appeal for the land west of Park Lane to be included on the land for housing list the Inspector quoted the retention of the green separation strip between settlements as his main reason.
- 6 The proposed large buildings will be visible from many of the beauty spots within the Parks, and indeed from parts of the Parishes of Charvil and Hurst and from the residential area of Woodley. Policy DP6 of the Structure Plan states "..... that land outside settlements should only be used for purposes which contribute to the economy through activities which can only be undertaken in rural areas". There is no evidence that there is an essential need for this development to be on this site in a rural area on land which is an important green separation strip

**It is this Council's unanimous view that this proposal is potentially damaging and dangerous and above all it is neither essential nor appropriate to the location. In these respects it does not comply with many policy requirements. There are many examples where Inspectors have dismissed applications for development in this area and it is important that planning decisions are consistent if the planning process is not to be brought into disrepute. This Council therefore recommends that this application be refused.**

1728 Demolish garage & erect 1 3-bedroom Bungalow at 15 Charvil House Road - No Parish Council Comment.

1529 Part single & part two-storey extension at 26 Park View Drive South. - No Parish Council Comment

**b) Appeals- The following refused applications have been appealed:-**

3113 Demolish single storey side extension and erect two storey side extension plus raise existing roof at Pooh Corner Waingels Road. - No Parish Council Comment.

2821 Demolish existing & erect 3 detached dwellings at 2 Strathmore Drive. - Following discussion the Clerk was asked to write as follows:-

*Five previous applications have been submitted for demolishing the existing building and redeveloping this site. The first application (F/1998/68005) was for rebuilding three houses on the site and this was followed by an application (F/1998/68517) for rebuilding two houses on the site. Both of these were refused by Wokingham District Council and were dismissed on appeal T/APP/X0360/A/98/1012315/P5). This was later followed by a third application (F/1999/70159) to develop two houses, this was again refused by Wokingham Borough Council and dismissed on Appeal (T/APP/E0360/A/00/1036562/P6). The main reason for refusal both at the application stage and at the appeal stage was that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the street scene and on the character of the area.*

*We now have two new applications, one of which for 2 houses is the subject of this appeal. This application is similar to the previously refused applications in respect of detriment to the street scene and the character of the area. The written representation appealing against the refusal contains no new reason why the decision to refuse should be reversed. The reference to Pipistrelle Way has no relevance to the street scene at the entrance to Strathmore Drive, and the reference to the proposed redevelopment of 43 Old Bath Road, which has recently been refused, should similarly not influence the decision on this application.*

*Copies of our earlier reports on these two applications are attached for your convenience. These point out that whilst there may have been some minor changes to the lay out on the more recent applications, any high density development of the proposed kind will have a similar damaging effect*

on the open street scene at the entrance to Strathmore Drive. That was the main reason for all the refusals.

This new application is similar to the second application F/1999/70159 for demolishing the existing house & erecting 2 detached dwellings. This was refused by Wokingham District Council and again dismissed on appeal T/APP/E0360/A/00/1036562/P6. It is the considered view of this Council that if the planning process is to retain credibility it has to be consistent and this appeal should therefore similarly be dismissed.

- 0472 Demolish existing & erect 3 detached dwellings at 2 Strathmore Drive. . -  
Following discussion the Clerk was asked to write a similar report to that above but modified for 3 houses.

**c) Approvals - The following approved items were noted:-**

- 1073 Two storey side extension to form garage with rooms over and convert existing garage to habitable room and enlarge existing front dormer at 18 St Patrick's Avenue.
- 1091 Single storey side extension at 47 Gingells farm Road.
- 1265 Erect two storey & single storey rear extensions Plus Raise roof with rear dormer windows. 55 Park View Drive North.
- 1283 Dormer window in rear elevation at Dandy, Milestone Avenue.

**d) Refused - The following refused item was noted:-**

- 1269 Industrial B2 use building at Grove Service Station, Old Bath Road.

**e) Refused on Appeal - The following item refused on Appeal was noted:-**

- 2158 Appeal to discharge conditions on plans previously approved on appeal to incorporate front & rear extensions at 25 Park View Drive South.

*Clerk's Note: I have spoken to Planning enforcement and the situation is that the Planners have contacted the owners informing them that in accordance with the dismissal of the appeal the houses have to be removed. It is also understood that the owners have asked for a meeting to discuss the options. Apparently Wokingham Borough Council have to initially take the extreme view. If the owners offer to compromise, they will be informed that it will again have to go to appeal.*

- f) Planning Policy Briefing – On 17<sup>th</sup> September. Councillor Jeffery to attend.**

- g) Borough Housing Land Availability Workshop – On 23 September. Councillor Jeffery to attend.**

**There being no other Planning Business the Planning Meeting was closed.**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- 4613/08 Finance Reports** – Council reviewed the monthly financial reports which were noted.

- 4614/08 Authorisation of Payments** - Council considered the cheques report including the Clerk's and Asst. Clerk's half yearly Home as Office expense of £175. Cheques as detailed were then approved and signed.

- 4615/08 External Audit report for 2007-8** – The decision of the external auditor is awaited.

**4616/08 Donations** - One new request from the Air Ambulance was considered. After discussion it was agreed that this met the Council's criteria as a local charity and an award of £250 was agreed.

**4617/08 Multi -Sport Area** – A response from Paul Turrell is still awaited. Council asked that a further reminder be sent and agreed that Borough Councillor Hobbs be asked to apply pressure to elicit a reply.

**There being no other Finance business the Finance Meeting was closed.**

## **REPORTS**

**4618/08 Village Hall Management Committee**, Notes of a meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July were noted.

### **Matters arising:**

20 Year Celebration - The final accounts excluding receipts were approved.

Toilet Refurbishment – It was noted that the work had commenced.

**4619/08 Amenities Committee Report**

### **Matters arising:**

i) Action on St Patrick's Playground Safety Report – The recently received quotes for replacement equipment which meet the new standards are still being considered

ii) Replacement bench at St. Patrick's - The Assistant Clerk is still in contact with Waitrose to negotiate provision of a sponsored bench

iii) Travellers at East Park Farm - The Clerk was asked to contact Wokingham Borough Council again to follow up our request for all the wooden bollards to be replaced with concrete bollards.

**4620/08 District Councillor's Report** - Councillor Hobbs was not present.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

**4621/08 Country Park Management and Fishing Rights** – Council considered a response from Chris Buggy indicating the hand-over is still awaiting land registration.

**4622/08 Landfill in The Hawthorns** - Following a consideration of a response from the Environment Agency, the Clerk was asked to request Borough Councillor Hobbs to help in establishing what might have happened to the missing papers and precisely when the designation 'behind the Village Hall' was made.

## **HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**4623/08 Quiet Lanes** - Council reviewed a draft response to a letter from the Wokingham Borough Council Solicitor. Councillors approved the letter and again expressed disappointment at the lack of support. Following discussion the Clerk was asked to hasten the promised further response from Keith Baker.

## **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**4624/08 CCB Annual Meeting & Conference July 15** – John Illenden attended. A short report will be available before the next meeting.

**4625/08 W B C & Parish/Town Charter** - Councillor Gillett to review.

**4626/08 Village Fete –**

Due to rain a reduced profit of only £51 was made on the BBQ.

Councillors expressed outrage at Wokingham Borough Council charging the Charvil Village Fete Committee for use of the Hawthorns Park, which was given to Residents of Charvil as a planning gain for the Hawthorns Estate. It was pointed out that the Annual Village Fete is a free non profit making street party for the residents of Charvil. The Parish Council provides the Village Hall, grounds and car park free, as was the Hawthorns Park by the Borough Council until this year. The Clerk was asked to seek an explanation from Wokingham Borough Council why this charge is now deemed necessary.

**4627/08 Village footpath walk** - Following discussion It was agreed that the Village footpath walk would take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September. Meet at Lands End at 10.00am.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION** (Documents circulated after the meeting) - Wokingham Borough Council Meetings Agendas, & Minutes, Staff Bulletin, Town & Parish News,

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**4628/08 Saltex Exhibition at Windsor 2,3&4 September**. Councillor Black will attend if available.

**4629/08 Trading Consent for Kebab Van at Milestone Avenue** - No Parish Council Comment.

**4630/08 Dates for 2009 Meetings** – The draft list of dates for 2009 was approved subject to the following amendment to the draft:-

*‘The Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009’*

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00pm**

.....Signature  
Chairman of the Council

Signed on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008