

Charlbury Town Council
PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 24th July 2023 at 7.30pm in the Green Room, Memorial Hall

Present: Cllrs Peter Kenrick (in the chair), Gareth Epps (late arrival), Gary Harrison, Tony Merry, Claire Wilding, Emily Algar, James Styring, Nick Potter, Janet Burroughs, Frances Mortimer (early departure),
Town Clerk: Lisa Wilkinson, 10 members of public.

1. Apologies for Absence were received from Liz Reason.

2. Declarations of Interest on item 5a were received from:

- Emily Algar on 23/01575/HHD, 2 Hundley Way
- Janet Burroughs on 23/01148/FUL, Land west of Wychwood Paddocks
- Gary Harrison on 23/01598/FUL & 23/01599/LBC, The Bell
- James Styring on 23/01148/FUL Land west of Wychwood Paddocks and 23/01575/HHD, 2 Hundley Way.
- Nick Potter on 23/01637/FUL Charlbury House

3. Public time to include presentation from Cornbury Park and planning applicants.

John Jaques (estate manager) and Lord Rotherwick from Cornbury Park were present. They thanked the TC for the opportunity to address them.

- They updated the Council on the Wilderness Festival (3 -7 August) with key dates. Festival Republic, with their experience of organising large events, are now organising the festival.
- Cornbury House Horse Trials (6-10 September) will be using the same red route traffic system as has been successfully used at Wilderness.
- Rangers Lawn is now being used for events such as weddings, theatre, runs, nursery, Little Wild Things.
- North Lodge entrance: there are new posts at the gates, the river is being managed and flood plains being kept dry, they will be replacing the post and rail fence and clearing the bridge sides.
- Cricket club has asked for a 15m extension at far end of cricket pitch to extend the pitch. There is currently a planning application in with the District Council for this.
- The field between the cricket club and the river, where they were previously growing crops was often flooded so they are looking at a 5-year grass lay to stop erosion and soil leaching into river.
- New fencing material of hanit is being trialled near the woodland areas. This is made of recycled plastic so does not need repair.
- Shorthampton: the overgrown area next to the church was cleared and made into car park with an orchard planted next to it. They are currently in discussion with planners about this.
- Walks are being offered around the woodland. They have 1700 acres of woodland and are fighting ash die back.
- They are working with the Forestry Commission and Natural England to develop the forest.
- Finstock – a new entrance has been made for up for 7 treehouses to be established.
- School visits are taking place - forest school for Finstock and countryside learning day for five local schools. School children are learning about eco systems and the carbon cycle.
- Southill Business Park has 15 units supporting 35 commercial tenants. They are investigating installing solar panels to supply the electricity for tenants to use. There is a defib at Southill Barn

FM asked about connecting villages to Charlbury via footpath and cycle paths as Burford Rd is not safe to walk/cycle along. Lord Rotherwick asked FM to approach the estate office with a proposal for pedestrian access on Cornbury land.

PK explained about the TC's nature recovery planning. It is keen to work with as many stake holders as possible and Cornbury estate is crucial to this. Lord Rotherwick is happy to talk about this as he believes strongly in helping communities.

Planning application 23/01637/FUL Charlbury House

Neil Warner from JPPC, the planning agent for Charlbury House, talked about the resubmission of the planning application which was approved following withdrawal of part of the application – the equestrian centre and stables.

The resubmission now includes these, following completion of the further work required by WODC. The equestrian centre is required for equestrian events practice by a family member. Trees are being planted around the estate to be used as screening. There are plans for photovoltaics on the roof area. Questions of clarification from the TC:

Q: what is the intended use of the new Stonesfield Lane access?

A: this is for family access only.

Q: Concern locally over the access built on Fawler Road and across Oxfordshire Way.

A: unsure but will find out

Q: Fawler Rd access: concern about safety of this access, was permission given to take out the hedgerow?

A: unsure but will find out.

Q: Ecological Impact assessment seems to be only related to the previous application.

A: It covers both applications as the arena was originally in the first planning application when the EIA was written.

Planning application 23/01598/FUL & 23/01599/LBC The Bell, Church St

Simon Walker raised concerns about the differences in the stone used for the back and front walls. He also addressed the issue of the wall being built before planning permission had been granted and asked the TC to request the wall to be taken down.

4. To receive minutes of planning meeting dated 26th June 2023

These were received and signed as a true record.

5a. Planning applications received:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	TC decision
23/01287/S73	Alder House, Market St, Charlbury	Removal of condition 3 (extraction and ventilation control) and variation of condition 4 (opening hours) to allow a change in the opening hours of planning permission 23/00114/FUL	No objection
23/01575/HHD	2 Hundley Way, Charlbury	Change of exterior finish of property from pebble dash to a flat coloured render.	No objection
23/01637/FUL	Charlbury House, Woodstock Rd, Charlbury	Demolition of existing dwelling house and erection of replacement dwelling with associated outbuildings and landscaping works. Conversion and extension of existing cottage to form pool house with ancillary shower/changing facilities. Repair and extension of field barn (revision to planning approval)	See below*

		22/02066/FUL) to allow for inclusion of new stables and indoor riding arena.	
23/01488/HHD	4 Woodfield Drive, Charlbury	Erection of single storey front extension	No objection
23/01532/HHD	Moredays, 36 The Slade Charlbury	Installation of dormer window in rear elevation to replace existing rooflight.	No objection
23/01697/HHD	1 Chartwell Drive, Charlbury	Replacement of a flat roof over porch with pitched roof and replacement of flat roof to pitched roof with dormer window	No objection
23/01148/FUL	Land west of Wychwood Paddocks, Charlbury	Erection of sports amenities building for Charlbury Primary School with associated works (amended plans).	No objection
23/01740/LBC & 23/01739/HHD	Dyers Hill House, Dyers Hill Charlbury	Internal and external alterations to existing fenestration, including replacement dormer windows in West elevation and internal changes to first floor layout.	No objection
23/01704/LBC & 23/01703/FUL	The Bull, Sheep St, Charlbury	Internal and external alterations to include the construction of four dormer windows to front roof slope	No objection
23/01493/FUL	7 Hughes Close, Charlbury	Erection of detached dwelling and widening of existing dropped kerb (amended plans)	No objection
23/01598/FUL & 23/01599/LBC	The Bell Hotel, Church St, Charlbury	Erection of Cotswold stone wall and railings to the front of The Bell.	Object. See below**

*** 23/01637/FUL Charlbury House**

Charlbury Town Council objects to this application which contravenes policy NE5 of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) due to the site's location within the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks' Conservation Target Area (CTA) and the increased scale of the proposed equestrian centre development (see below for further details). We therefore ask that the application be referred to the Uplands Planning sub-committee.

Councillors are also concerned about the impact of increased site access for large vehicles (e.g., motorhomes) especially if these were to utilise access points other than the main drive onto the B4437 Woodstock Road. In addition, the increased scale of the proposed equestrian centre suggests the potential for future commercial usage and expansion which would be unacceptable in this sensitive location within the AONB and CTA and outside the built-up area.

If, notwithstanding the town council's objection, WODC is still minded to approve, then we ask that the **following conditions** be applied to any approval (as explained further below):

1. Vehicular access to the equestrian centre to be restricted to the existing northern drive from the B4437 only.
Reason: to avoid harmful impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties (e.g., in Stonesfield Lane) in line with WOLP policy OS2, to avoid damage to public rights of way (e.g., Oxfordshire Way) and in the interests of road safety.
2. Usage of the equestrian centre to be restricted to **private/domestic** use.
Reason: to limit the impact on the CTA
3. No further expansion of the facility towards Charlbury to be permitted.
Reason: to avoid increased impact and harm to the sensitive environment of the CTA and to avoid coalescence of developments in line with WOLP policy OS2
4. Submission and approval of an updated EIA demonstrating how the impact of the revised proposals for the equestrian centre will be mitigated by the application of further targeted conservation actions.
Reason: to ensure that the aims of the CTA are achieved in line with the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and WOLP policy EH3 recognising that the CTA represents one of the most important areas for wildlife conservation in Oxfordshire.

In more detail:

- Plans for the equestrian centre are significantly more extensive than those suggested in the earlier approved application and read as a substantial development rather than a private adjunct to the house. Given the location of the site within the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks' Conservation Target Area (CTA), the equestrian centre development currently proposed clearly contravenes policy NE5 of the CNP which states: "*Development proposals will not be supported in the three Conservation Target Areas as identified in Map 2*" (the Blenheim & Ditchley Parks CTA is one of the three CTAs so identified). Furthermore, policy EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (WOLP) also provides detailed protections for CTAs requiring development to work *towards achieving the aims and objectives of CTAs and to take all opportunities to enhance biodiversity and meet the aims of CTAs*. Whilst the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) submitted with this application acknowledges and addresses the site's location in the CTA, it was prepared for the earlier approved planning application and has not been updated to reflect the increased scope of the current proposals for the equestrian centre.
- In its response to the previous application, the town council asked for vehicular traffic access to be prohibited via Stonesfield Lane but this was not included as a condition (other than for construction traffic). However, the current application acknowledges that the proposed equestrian centre will need to accommodate additional access by large vehicles including motorhomes and we therefore ask again for this condition to be included to reflect the change in scope of the proposed development.
- Aspects of the proposed equestrian centre development appear more aligned to a commercial enterprise (e.g., extensive parking areas suitable for motorhomes and the inclusion of a viewing room) and also suggest that expansion of the facility may be sought at a future date. These would be unacceptable within the sensitive environment of the CTA and AONB as well as risking coalescence of development with the town of Charlbury.
- Although not directly related to the current application, concerns have been raised about increased estate access across the Oxfordshire Way bridleway and a newly expanded access onto the Fowler Road (B4022) which is hazardous for traffic safety, especially for cyclists. We therefore wish to ensure that such routes would not be used to access the equestrian centre in the future.

****23/01598/FUL & 23/01599/LBC The Bell**

Charlbury Town Council **strongly objects** to this “effectively retrospective” application and requests that the wall erected to the front of the building without permission, be removed on compliance grounds and because it contravenes policies NE2 and HE2 of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) as explained below.

- A. **Status of the planning application – retrospective or not?** We note that the application is NOT classified as “retrospective” although it was not visible to us until after work on the wall had been carried out. We also note that the application dates on the portal and on application documents pre-date the work. This lack of clarity is somewhat academic however, as there is no doubt that work commenced without permission. This is a clear compliance issue.
- B. **CNP Policy NE2 – Protecting important views.** This policy requires developments to respect important views and specifically mentions the view down Church Street. Within Church Street, The Bell is a prominent feature that is important in defining this part of the town centre. The area in front of the hotel building has remained open throughout living memory highlighting the significance of the building in the town centre streetscape. The introduction of a wall is unwelcome and inappropriate here and does not respect the view. Although the wall is low, plans to plant a hedge within the wall would significantly increase the height and prominence of the new boundary and would further obscure the frontage of the hotel building.
- C. **CNP policy HE2 – Locally Appropriate Design.** This policy will not support development proposals which detract from the character of the neighbourhood area or which conflict with the guiding principles in the Charlbury Design Guide (Appendix C to the CNP). As explained in (B) above, the proposed wall will clearly detract from the character of the neighbourhood area and the inclusion of a hedge within the boundary wall conflicts with paragraph C.4.1 of the Charlbury Design Guidance for the streetscape design within the historic town centre.
- D. **Proposal does not correspond to the built wall.** Paragraph 3.7 of the Planning and Heritage Statement specifies a dwarf wall measuring roughly 0.25 metres tall. The wall actually built measures approximately 0.65 metres. Paragraph 3.7 also indicates black wrought iron railings of a similar height. These discrepancies will have the effect of increasing the prominence of the wall and the detriment to the street scene and view as referenced above.

5b. 23/00392/LBC The Bell Charlbury

To note correspondence on front wall built without planning permission. Concern has been raised by a resident that the wall outside the Bell has been built without planning permission. To note a planning application for this work has since been submitted.

5c. Planning Outstanding:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	TC Decision
23/01493/FUL	7 Hughes Close, Charlbury	Erection of detached dwelling and widening of existing dropped kerb	No objection
22/02970/LBC	Redding Wyck House Market Street Charlbury	Internal and external alterations to replace existing sash windows within northeast (front) elevation.	No objection
21/03936/FUL	Whistler, Fowler Rd, Charlbury	Demolition of existing stables. Erection of self-contained unit ancillary to the existing dwelling	Withdrawn
23/01148/FUL	Land West Of Wychwood Paddocks Charlbury	Erection of a sports amenities building for Charlbury Primary School with associated works	No objection

5d. Planning Decisions:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	Decision
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23/01254/HHD	12 Nineacres Lane, Charlbury	Erection of front porch	TC -No objection WODC - Approved
23/01178/HHD	Greenmantle The Slade, Charlbury	Replacement entrance porch	TC - No objection WODC - Approved
23/01346/HHD	15 Lee Close, Charlbury	Erection of a single storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing garage	TC -No objection WODC - Approved
22/03536/FUL	Wayhill, Spelsbury Rd	Demolition of existing dwelling. Erection of two semi-detached dwellings with shared garage and associated landscaping	TC - No objection WODC - Approved
23/01095/LBC & 23/01904/HHD	Loaf Cottage, 39A Sheep St, Charlbury	Reconfiguration of existing dwelling together with the insertion of new rooflights reinstatement of existing high-level window (amended plans)	TC -No objection WODC - Approved
23/01317/HHD	52 Ticknell Piece Rd, Charlbury	Erection of single storey rear extension	TC -No objection WODC -Approved
23/00749/FUL revised	Charlbury Community Centre, Enstone Rd, Charlbury	Erection of extension to south elevation to provide a purpose-built community gym (amended)	TC -The TC welcomes the revised plans. WODC - Approved

6. To consider setting up task and finish group for the Local Plan revision

It was agreed that PK, TM, CW, GE and EA are members of this group.

7. To agree a TC response to the GWR ticket office closures consultation

A response to the consultation was agreed. The Conservation Committee will be asked to take up issues with the condition of the fabric of the building. Cotswold Line Promotion Group will be contacted and a copy of the response sent.

Thanks were given to EA for drafting a reply to the consultation.

Meeting closed: 21.25