

Charlbury Town Council
Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

on Monday 11th December 2023 at 8pm in the Green Room, Memorial Hall

Present: Cllrs: Peter Kenrick, Liz Reason, Gary Harrison, Janet Burroughs, Emily Algar, Town Clerk: Lisa Wilkinson, 12 members of public.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from David Green, Gareth Epps, Frances Mortimer, Nick Potter, Claire Wilding, Tony Merry and James Styring.
2. **Declarations of Interest** were received from Gary Harrison for planning application 23/03071/FUL.
3. **Public time to include presentation from Harper Crewe (23/03071/FUL)**
Jim Clemence presented an objection to planning application 23/03071/FUL on behalf of Friends of West Oxfordshire Cotswolds.

They object to this development:

- It is not adjacent to town, not sustainable, damaging to the landscape.
- There have been lots of delays not mainly due to legal challenges.
- Young Dementia supported living scheme has been shown to be unviable.
- Original site layout showed incorrect boundary.
- Ancient Woodland has been razed: national policy is clear that ancient woodland is irreplaceable.
- Housing is needed in the town but not at any cost.

Savill's, the planning agents for Harper Crewe presented a summary of the new planning application 23/03071/FUL.

- 37 homes off Forest Road. (51% affordable housing)
- Developer has been trying to pursue this development for many years but has been thwarted at various stages. Surveys have been revised and they are confident that this is fully achievable.
- The dementia care element has been removed as there is a change of policy in how this is delivered: now more community based. Same basic principles but with assisted care bungalows.
- 5-metre buffer to edge of ancient woodland.
- Ecology surveys carried out show that there is no impact on wildlife.
- Highly sustainable, energy efficient dwellings with a change of design to a more vernacular form.
- Units are lower in height and skylights have been removed.

Comments were made from members of the public on planning application 23/03021/FUL & 23/3022/LBC:

A resident supports the Bull in general however he objects to any reduction to parking spaces in the Bull as car parking is precious in Charlbury. It is becoming a public safety hazard as visitors are parking on corners, buses are getting stuck and there is no access to emergency vehicles when this happens.

A resident of Browns Lane reported on the constant smoke pollution outside his home, being unable to open a window. Environmental Health Officers have visited his house. The structure is inappropriate for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4. **To receive minutes of planning meeting dated 20th November 2023**
These were received and signed as a true record.

5a. Planning applications received:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	TC Comment
23/02894/LBC & 23/02893/FUL	Lees Rest, Woodstock Road, Charlbury	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of replacement dwelling to form an extension to the existing farmhouse and associated landscaping. Refurbishment of existing farmhouse. Repair, conversion and extension of existing agricultural buildings to provide ancillary accommodation. Erection of replacement barns for leisure, agricultural and equestrian use together with associated landscaping.	No objection.
23/02997/FUL & 23/02998/LBC	The Bull Inn Sheep Street Charlbury	Internal and external alterations including single storey rear extension and redesign of kitchen layout	No objection however, the redesign of the kitchen reduces parking spaces (application 23/03021/FUL & 23/3022/LBC) The temporary wash-up area had no planning permission and this seems to be regarded as permanent in this application, making this application part retrospective, which the TC deplores.
23/03021/FUL & 23/3022/LBC	The Bull Inn, Sheep St, Charlbury	Alterations to pub garden and car park (part retrospective)	Object. Neighbourhood Plan policy ECT7 states that there should be no net reduction in parking spaces (<i>ECT7: Proposals for extensions and alterations of existing buildings should not result in a net reduction of parking spaces</i>). WO Local Plan policy OS2 (Neighbourliness) is also being disregarded. The Bull has received constant complaints from neighbours about inappropriate street parking by their customers (as they cannot access the car park) causing buses to get stuck on Browns Lane, and about noise and smoke pollution caused by constant use of the garden and car park for outdoor dining. The TC deplores retrospective planning applications.
23/02820/HHD	Stable Cottage, 2 Hixet Wood, Charlbury	Erection of first floor and single storey rear extensions (part retrospective)	No objection.
23/03071/FUL	Land south of Forest Rd, Charlbury	Erection of thirty-seven dwellings including access road, landscaping and associated earthworks	Support. See below for full comment*.
23/03110/HHD	8 Elm Crescent Charlbury	Erection of single storey front and rear extensions	No objection.

23/03099/HHD	Little Paddock 34 Elm Crescent Charlbury	Erection of single storey side extension to existing garage outbuilding	No objection but requests use of building remains ancillary to the main house.
23/02924/HHD	Thornycroft Woodstock Road Charlbury	Replacement of existing windows	No objection.

***23/03071/FUL Land south of Forest Rd, Charlbury**

Full text of support comment:

23/0307/FUL Land south of Forest Road Charlbury

Charlbury Town Council supports this application acknowledging the intent to address the housing needs of the parish of Charlbury as expressed in section 5 of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (CNP) and specifically the need for affordable and low-cost housing. In this regard we consider the application to be compliant with CNP policies CH2, CH3, CH6 and CH7.

We recognise that this application is NOT supported by CNP Policy CH1 as the location does not genuinely adjoin the existing built-up area. However, we also note that the Neighbourhood Plan was written on the assumption that a similar development on this site, approved at that time under application 15/03099/FUL, would go ahead. Taking these matters into account, the town council is prepared to support this specific application on this site, subject to conditions/agreements as set out below, having judged that it addresses the aspirations of CNP policy CH1 in all other respects.

Any development within the strong and sensitive landscape of the Evenlode valley is potentially problematic and great care is required to ensure the protection of the natural environment in line with section 7 of the CNP. CNP policy NE3 is crucially important here and in this regard, the town council has judged that on balance, and in this specific case only, the public benefit from the proposed development outweighs potential harm to the landscape and natural environment, and that any such harm has been minimised and mitigated as far as practicable by the proposal. However, in order to justify the town council’s judgement in this regard together with its general support for the scheme, we ask that any approval addresses the following matters by condition and/or legal agreement to ensure compliance with the CNP.

1. Biodiversity & Wildlife Conservation – CNP Policy NE5
The development site is adjacent to a Conservation Target Area (CTA) identified as of great importance for wildlife conservation. Commitments should be secured to deliver biodiversity net gain, including addressing the aims of the CTA (as per the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan) and providing an enhanced wildlife-friendly environment. Conditions and/or agreements should reflect CNP paragraphs 7.3.5 to 7.3.12.
2. Dark Skies – CNP Policy NE4
In accordance with the requirements of CNP policy NE4, we ask that any approval be conditional on a requirement for all external lighting to be provided at the lowest possible levels and that features (e.g. roof lights), which could be detrimental to dark skies, are avoided.
3. Safe Walking and Cycling access – CNP Policy ECT9
Walking and cycling access between the site and the town centre is extremely problematic especially over the railway bridge, with narrow pavements and fast traffic approaching the town down the hill of Forest Road. In order to ensure compliance with CNP policies ECT9 & ECT10, we ask that any approval be conditional on the provision of measures to address the issue of safe walking routes (e.g. by the provision of traffic calming measures, extension of the 20mph zone and/or wider and relocated pavements).

4. Easy access for all - E-bikes – CNP Policy ECT10

The council is concerned that residents will be deterred from walking and cycling to the school and town facilities by the distance and hills as well as the safety issues as above. In order to demonstrate how the development will address the movement needs of all ages and abilities as required by CNP policy ECT10, we ask that measures such as the provision and/or support for E-bikes for residents, including provision of e-bike charging points for all units be required for any approval.

5. Solar panels.

In line with the town council’s commitment to zero carbon, could the proposed level of solar panel provision within the development please be increased?

5b. Planning Outstanding:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	TC Decision
23/02177/FUL & 23/02178/LBC	The Corner House, Market St, Charlbury	Internal and external alterations including works to fenestration and improved access	No objection with comment*
23/02790/HHD & 23/02791/LBC	Valmar Sheep Street Charlbury	Internal and external alterations to include the construction of additional dormer to rear roof slope, insertion of roof light to existing kitchen and changes to internal layout to include relocation of family bathroom to first floor	No objection
23/02704/LBC	Took House Sheep Street Charlbury	Relocate internal first floor wall	No objection
23/02836/HHD	18 Elm Crescent Charlbury	Erection of single storey rear extension and construction of a detached home office building. Works to include conversion and extension to front of garage to create separate gym and storage areas along with construction of front entrance canopy	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 22/02066/FUL) to allow for inclusion of new stables and indoor riding arena.	Object
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
23/02399/FUL	Land North Of Woodstock Road Charlbury	Erection of a residential development comprising of 28 dwellings (inc. 50% affordable housing), the provision of public open space and landscaping, demolition of existing garages and provision of new garaging, a vehicular access via Woodstock Road and pedestrian access to Hughes Close together with associated works.	Object

5c. Planning Decisions:

Ref no:	Address:	Proposal:	Decision
23/02523/HHD	Wychwood View, Stonesfield Lane, Charlbury	Removal of 2 Velux windows to be replaced by one dormer window	TC - No objection WODC - Approved

23/02547/HHD	4 Hone Court Charlbury	Conversion of attic into habitable accommodation	TC -No objection provided it meets the requirements of the WODC net zero carbon toolkit. WODC - Refused
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- 6. New Premises Application Reference W/23/01303/PRMA – Wilderness Festival**
No objection.