

Meeting of Charlbury Town Council held on Wednesday 23rd August 2017  
at 7.30pm in the Corner House.

**Members Present:** Mr P Kenrick (Chairman), Mr R Prew, Mr V Hill. Mr P Morgan,  
Mr R N Potter, Mr R Puttick, Ms N Ely, Ms L Reason,  
Mrs K Broughton.

**Apologies:** Dr A Merry, Mrs J Burroughs, Mr R Fairhurst, District Councillor Mr A Graham.

Prior to the opening of the meeting, Ms L Leffman addressed Council. She reported that, as a County Councillor, she had recently met with GWR representatives in relation to the station car park proposals. The following points were made:

- Plans to use the field were controversial and likely to be expensive as it is not an ideal site.
- Cornbury's agent had said that this was the only land available.
- Additional parking is needed.
- GWR may contribute some funding (up to £10k) for traffic regulation orders and similar (town parking).
- Planning consent will be needed.

She went on to suggest that in her view it would be worth the Town Council seeking to discuss alternative sites with Lord Rotherwick.

**1. To receive the minutes of the last meeting.**

Mr Morgan proposed that the minutes be signed as a correct record, this being seconded by Mrs Broughton and agreed.

**2. To deal with matters arising.**

**Traffic sub-committee.** A meeting will be convened to pull together ideas for road/traffic issues in preparation for a meeting with OCC and the County Councillor.

**Station Car Park.** Meeting already arranged with Lord Rotherwick for 11th September. Clerk and County Councillor also to attend and raise the land matter with him then. Request to be made for Lord Rotherwick's agent to attend.

**3. Declaration of Interest.**

There were none.

#### **4. To sign orders for payment/receive report.**

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of accounts to be paid and explained these to those present. Mr Potter proposed that the accounts be paid, this being seconded by Ms Reason and agreed nem con. Accordingly cheques were signed by three Councillors.

#### **5. To receive a report from the Planning Committee.**

The committee had met on Monday 21st August. Claire King, Station Manager for GWR was unable to attend and will now do so on Monday 25th September at 7.30pm. The Chairman had prepared a response to the Lagan Homes plan for Jeffersons Piece and had circulated this prior to the meeting as requested.

Mr Morgan thanked the Chairman for the time spent on producing a detailed response and proposed that this be the Council's response to WODC, seconded Mrs K Broughton and agreed nem con.

#### **Plans considered:**

**17/02254/HHD** Erect conservatory at North View, Hixet Wood.

1. We have no objection.

**17/02331/FUL** Single storey extension to sports pavilion, Clubhouse, Spendlove Centre (Nine Acres), Enstone Road.

1. We have no objection.
2. We are the trustee of Nine Acres Recreation Ground.

**17/02432/HHD** Erect single storey rear verandah at 4 Cotswold View.

1. We have no objection.

**17/02376/FUL** Erection of 48 dwellings (up to 40% affordable housing) and associated works at land North of Jeffersons Piece, Charlbury.

The following comments on the next 3 pages, prepared by the Chairman together with a transport statement and position statement on new housing developments in Charlbury, were submitted in respect of this application.

**Consultee Response by Charlbury Town Council to Planning Application 17/02376/FUL  
– Erection of 48 dwellings and associated works on land north of Jefferson's Piece,  
Charlbury**

Charlbury Town Council contends that any decision on the above planning application at this time would be premature for reasons arising from the inspection of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan process. On this basis, further consideration of the application should be deferred awaiting the availability of additional evidence as indicated below. There is a recent precedent for such a deferral as agreed by the Uplands Area Planning Sub-committee on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017 for planning application 17/00829/FUL.

Firstly, arising from the recent West Oxfordshire Local Plan Examination hearings and at the request of the inspector, WODC has agreed to undertake and/or commission “*additional landscape/heritage appraisals of the non-strategic housing site allocations [...] in the Cotswolds AONB*” (of which this site is one) and to prepare reports “*that give further consideration to the suitability of the AONB ... site allocations in light of the [above landscape/heritage appraisals] as well as the need for housing in the AONB*”.\* The results of this agreed work will provide crucial evidence pertinent to the appropriateness of this major development. Having acknowledged the need for this additional work it would be totally inappropriate for WODC to rule on this application now in the absence of this additional information. It is understood that WODC expects this information to be available around mid-October 2017.

*[\* from letter dated 3/August 2017 from Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager, WODC to Malcolm Rivett, Local Plan Inspector]*

Secondly, as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process in Charlbury a local housing needs assessment (HNA) has been commissioned and is expected to report by mid-autumn 2017. This report will provide important evidence to inform local planning decisions in Charlbury in line with paragraph 54 of the NPPF which states that “*In rural areas, [...], local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, [...]*”. In view of the significant size of the proposed development and in the expectation that the Charlbury HNA report will be available by mid-autumn 2017, the town council requests that further consideration of the application be deferred until this latter report is also available and that significant weight be given to the evidence that it contains.

Notwithstanding the above, the town council also wishes to make the following comments relating to the application:

**1. Factual Error relating to public consultation.**

In section 6.1 of the Design & Access Statement (Page 44 - Public Consultation – Parish Council Meeting) and in section 2 of the Statement of Community Involvement (Pages 6 & 7 – Meeting with Charlbury Town Council), the applicant asserts that “*Lagan Homes England and West Waddy ADP attended and presented within the public participation section of a Charlbury Town Council meeting*” – this is not the

case. Representatives of Lagan Homes England and West Waddy ADP attended a specifically arranged meeting with the chairman of Charlbury Town Council and the Town Clerk only. After presenting their case, the applicant's representatives were handed a copy of the Town Council's position statement on new housing development in Charlbury. A copy of this position statement is appended to this response for information.

2. **Access & Transport**

Access to the site is extremely problematic and we do not believe that the application addresses this issue effectively. We are pleased to note the proposal to include non-motorised access to Hundley Way to encourage walking and cycling into the town centre but pedestrian safety issues around the "Enstone Road Cross Roads" will deter many from walking and, given the major scale of this development, we believe that the development should therefore fund a safe crossing. A detailed response to the application's Transport Statement is appended below and addresses these and other access and transport issues.

3. **Community Infrastructure**

A development of this size will only be sustainable if associated infrastructure is enhanced in line with the increased housing and population. The development should therefore be required to make contributions to support this infrastructure. Key requirements include support for primary and pre-school places, play areas, community facilities and pedestrian and traffic safety.

4. **Other matters**

In view of the size, and impact of this proposed development we request that the application is referred to the Uplands Planning Sub-committee and that a site visit is held. Please can OCC Highways officers also visit the site to appreciate the impact that the development will have on traffic movements through the proposed access points.

Please can due consideration be also be given to the comments, concerns and objections raised by neighbouring residents.

**Charlbury Town Council**

## **Planning Application 17/02376/FUL Consultee Response to the Transport Statement**

In contrast to the care that has obviously been taken with other aspects of the application, the Transport Statement is a disappointingly cursory document which is littered with factual inaccuracies. For example, it claims there are six buses per hour from Charlbury (in reality, a maximum of three, and often less) to Oxford, Chipping Norton and "Whitney", via a stop on "Nine Acers Lane"; that there are two trains per hour to London (in reality, 1.1 on average) and to "Moreton-in-March"; and so on. The document is entirely reactive and does not advance any measures to improve transport for residents, simply relying on the provisions of the existing network.

### **Access during construction**

This is a very significant development, the largest in Charlbury for over 20 years - and the previous large one (Ticknell Piece) had direct access from a main road. There will be heavy, continuous construction traffic over a sustained period, the brunt of which will be borne by residents of surrounding roads.

An unsurfaced haul road should be considered from Ditchley Road for construction traffic. Given the flat terrain, this should be achievable and affordable assuming landowner consent can be obtained.

### **Access for new residents**

Once the development is operational, the additional car journeys generated will inevitably have an impact on residents of the Green estate. The Transport Statement unaccountably omits to quantify this impact, focusing only on the impact on the Slade/Ditchley Road junction (pp8-9) which understandably looks smaller in comparison.

The objection made by Christine Battersby (lodged on the WODC planning portal on 14th August) suggests an alternative via the new Kearsey Court development off Ditchley Road. This is certainly worth considering.

However, if that cannot be achieved, traffic management measures should be proactively implemented for the Green. As the Transport Statement notes, there are two potential routes to the new development: via Elm Crescent, or via The Green itself and Kendal Piece. One of these routes could be provided with discreet traffic calming; the other could be closed to through traffic by the installation of bollards or similar, which would permit through walking/cycling traffic but prevent through motor traffic. The choice of preferred route should be informed by off-road parking provision; stop-start traffic past parked cars is particularly dangerous for playing children and other residents.

### **Walking and cycling provision**

The real challenge, however, is to minimise motor traffic and encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport instead.

The plans, particularly the Transport Statement, are disappointingly silent on this, saying

merely that "future residents of the proposed development will be able to make a proportion of their journeys by more sustainable modes of transport". This is not acceptable for a development of nearly 50 houses. The developers should be expected to encourage sustainable travel rather than merely relying on, and increasing the load on, existing infrastructure.

It is well recognised in Charlbury that the greatest disincentive to walking from the northern developments (the Green and Ticknell Piece Road) is the lack of a safe crossing at the junction of the Slade, Enstone Road and Nine Acres Lane (the "Enstone Road crossroads"). This is the main walking route to town centre facilities and the railway station. The very short pavement on the southern quadrant of the junction (south side of the Slade) means that pedestrians are required to cross in the midst of queuing traffic in one lane, while looking in three different directions for turning traffic.

Without attention to this junction, many new residents will, understandably, choose to drive instead. This is contrary to local planning policy (e.g. Policy T1 of the draft Local Plan). In addition, given the limited parking opportunities in Charlbury town centre, it effectively serves to privilege out-of-town developments with parking (in other towns) at the expense of businesses in Charlbury town centre.

The development should therefore be required to fund a safe crossing at the Enstone Road crossroads. The exact form of this would need to be designed by OCC but could potentially comprise an extended footpath plus (set-back) zebra crossing across the Slade, as one example.

The proposal to include a non-motorised access onto Hundley Way is to be commended. This will provide the most direct walking/cycling route to the town centre as well as giving access to the countryside. However, the route is marked only as 'footpath' in the Design & Access Statement. The route should be constructed to shared-use pedestrian/cycle standards, and dedicated as such, so that residents can safely cycle to the town centre via the Hundley Way route.

An additional footpath access through the open space area onto Hundley Way, at the northern edge of the site, should also be formalised to encourage access to the countryside.

### **S106 contribution**

OCC traditionally ask for a S106 contribution for bus services and infrastructure. However, OCC no longer provide subsidised bus services in the Charlbury area; the infrastructure provided (i.e. bus stops) is minimal; and usage of OCC's on-demand Comet service is minimal in Charlbury due to the provision of scheduled bus/train services.

A contribution to OCC's bus budget would therefore not be appropriate as it would inevitably be used outside Charlbury. The equivalent contribution should therefore be directed towards encouraging sustainable travel by providing a safe crossing by the Enstone Road crossroads (see above).

## **6. To deal with Correspondence.**

**WODC.** Giles Hughes reference Rushy Bank application - position and possible re-submission. Noted that advice is being taken by WODC on this matter.

**WODC.** Wilderness post event feedback. Clerk to compile a reply to include traffic issues, pedestrian access and rights of way report. Request that organisers hold public meetings for 2018 event.

**Mr P Morgan.** Use of rooms vacated by the Library in the Corner House by the Town Council. Following discussion it was agreed to request that the trustees consider the Council's request for the future use of the rooms. Request to be made by the Clerk with a copy of Mr Morgan's ideas for usage by Council.

**RBL.** Wreath layer for Remembrance Service. October agenda.

**Soldiers of Oxon Museum.** Grant request to November meeting.

**Mr Clemence.** Procedures - noted.

**Cotswold Gateway Project.** Ms Reason proposed that Dr Merry and Mr Fairhurst represent the Council in this matter, seconded Mr Potter and agreed.

**Possible Car Museum at Enstone Aerodrome site.** The Chairman will attend a preliminary meeting by invitation (11th September).

## **7. To consider the Neighbourhood Forum.**

The report on progress on the Neighbourhood Plan raised the following points:

Two reports have been commissioned and funded by the Locality Grant.

- a. Local Housing Needs Assessment (Charlbury area only) i.e. as per N/H plan area.
- b. Local Area character assessment.

Each of these are necessary for the evidence base of the N/H plan,

There will be a workshop on 5th October and a presence at Street Fair to publicise work done and ongoing and to seek volunteers.

Local green spaces are being assessed.

Landowner interest in development sites (potentially) had been dealt with as advised by public advertisement.

Minutes of meetings should be on the website.

Community Action Plans are being prepared for three areas. Funding to be considered at next meeting. Council may be asked for grants.

## **8. To set a date and agenda for the October working group meeting.**

The meeting will be held in the Corner House on Wednesday October 11th at 8.00pm.

The agenda will include: **1.** Future elections - encouragement of candidates. **2.** Procedures for addressing Council and Planning meetings. **3.** Corner House matters.

## **9. To consider the procedure for addressing Council.**

To be discussed at the next working group meeting.

## **10. To receive reports.**

- a. Cemetery. Rack needed for storage of watering cans.
- b. Corner House and Memorial Hall. New representative needed by Council as Mr Morgan is not a trustee and will leave the managing committee. There were further discussions in relation to the Corner House and local 'sniping' which was considered unjustified by Mr Prew and he believed that any concerns should be directly addressed to the trustees. Mr Prew left the meeting at 8.57pm.
- c. Mill Field, Watery Lane and bridges. Report circulated. Management plan for September meeting.
- d. Nine Acres. Report/minutes of meetings circulated.
- e. Quarry Lane and Ticknell. All well. Graffiti is colourful.
- f. Wigwell. Report circulated.
- g. Gifford Trust. Report circulated.
- h. School Governor. No report.
- i. Transport/Station. No report.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.07pm.

Signed.....  
Chairman