

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee
held on 28th November 2022 in Charvil Village Hall at 8pm**

Present Rob Jones, Isabelle Bray, and Mike Heath

Apologies Pat Sutlieff

Absent Narinder Ryatt

22/239 To Approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022

These minutes were approved

22/240 OPEN FORUM – One resident attended out of interest but had also objected to Application number 223303

22/241 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE CLERK – There were no interests declared

22/242 Highways

To note the latest information from the Speed Indicator Device and to note its recent move

The device is now measuring speed as drivers head toward Twyford. The average speed is nearly 31MPH and the maximum is a worrying 73mph. This is pretty concerning as visibility coming out of roads like Edward Road is not great.

To hear an update on Speedwatch

The clerk already has permission to purchase a speed gun and signs and has been asked to progress this.

22/243 Environment

To hear an update on the tree planting and the planting of the oak tree

The oak tree planting went to plan, and Councillors Heath and Jones are going to install the plaque this week. The tree planting is progressing well, with many people involved, which is promising. The last planning sessions are planned for 3rd and 4th December, at St Patrick's Recreation Ground.

To note the date for the Community Orchard planting has been moved to 10th December because of the unseasonably warm weather this month

This was noted, but all the ground has been prepared already in preparation.

22/244 Planning

a) The following applications were discussed (266)

223303 Application to vary conditions 2 and 3 of planning consent 220673 for the proposed erection of a part single, part two storey front extension with part pitched roof and part flat roof. Single storey front extension to porch with canopy. Changes to the main roof from hip to gable to include 2 No rooflights, rear dormer and removal of rear chimney stack to create habitable space. Single storey rear extension with changes to fenestration. Condition 2 refers to approved details and the variation is to allow changes to the height of the single storey rear extension, the addition of a roof light and changes to fenestration, including the addition of a Juliet balcony at Iffleigh, Park Lane – the clerk was asked to comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council would like to object to these variations of conditions for the following reasons.

1. *The height of the single storey rear extension as built is at least 30cms more than the approved plan - possibly more - and this is enough to reduce light into the neighbouring property to the north side.*
2. *The dormer is highly visible from two roads, and at least three neighbouring properties, and as built, is completely out of keeping with the rest of the road. The finish needs to be in keeping with other properties, and have a tiled finish, as approved in the application 220763.*
3. *The inclusion of a full-length window and Juliet balcony at second floor level is unacceptable. This means the amenity of all three neighbouring properties is compromised.*

- 223329 Application to vary condition 5 of planning consent 212128 for the proposed conversion of existing dwelling to 3no. 1-bedroom self-contained flats and 1 studio self-contained flat, associated parking and amenity space, plus changes to fenestration. (Part Retrospective). Condition 5 refers to Landscaping, and the variation is to allow the retention of concrete access paths and insert grassed areas and shingle around the base of the tree (Retrospective) at 36, Park View Drive South – no Parish Council comment
- 223400 Application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension to form porch, single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory plus erection of a first-floor front extension at Ash House, Milestone Avenue – no Parish Council comment
- 223455 Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the proposed erection of up to 230 dwellings, including open space, internal access, parking, drainage measures and landscaping following the demolition of all existing structures on New Bath Road, Twyford – The clerk was asked comment as follows:

Charvil Parish Council has grave concerns about this application. This site, in the site assessment conducted by Wokingham Borough Council in October 2019, was deemed unsuitable. The land is largely grade one farmland, which is clearly economically viable, and at a time when food security is regarded as highly important, such development seems at odds with the national interest.

The main points of concern are as follows:

1. *Potential flooding effects on vulnerable areas of Charvil. While most of the proposed site is in Flood Zone one, the site falls sharply away to flood zone three, and the River Loddon. The proposal does include flood mitigation measures, but these will be managed privately, and as such, are always likely to be vulnerable to changes of ownership, liquidation etc., and there is no guarantee of long-term management. Even with these measures, there is little forward planning for the likely climate change effects in the area, with the River Thames likely to adversely affect the flow of the River Loddon in periods of extreme wet weather. In situations such as these, the extra pressure on the flood plain between Charvil and Twyford would be too great, and the most vulnerable homes in such circumstances, are in Charvil. In short, by building at the top of the hill, the homes at the bottom are likely to be adversely affected in the increasing extreme wet weather incidents.*
2. *Sewerage. The area is served by the Wargrave Sewerage works that lies just to the north-west of the proposed site. While we understand that this is supposed to have the capacity for extra housing in the area, there is already an issue with its proximity to the confluence of the Rivers Loddon and Thames, that at times, sewage is released into the river. By reducing the ability of nearby land to take as much rainwater as it currently does, the net result is likely to be more incidents of such pollution. This is unacceptable.*
3. *Traffic and transport. There are some worrying inaccuracies in the evidence supplied by the consultants on this topic. The bus service is limited and does not run on Sundays; there are no direct traffic-free footpaths between Twyford and Charvil, and neither is there access to the Thames Path on the south side of the river; the shared use cycle track along the A4 does not meet the new standards for active travel published in 2020; the assessments on traffic accidents are dominated by a period covering lockdowns and school closures; and other traffic assessments were*

undertaken in the summer holidays, when traffic is generally lower, and there was no school impact. Traffic flows in the morning are far greater than advertised, and the projected numbers of cars on the local network is much lower than is likely to be the case. This will have an impact on both the air quality management zone in Twyford, but will also impact on Charvil, with greater tailbacks through the village, and more people trying to avoid the A4 by using the Old Bath Road, which also backs up through Charvil. It will also lead to more traffic trying to access Sonning Bridge. While the ambition of a 20-minute neighbourhood is laudable, the current plans are unlikely to achieve this.

Other general observations are that neither Charvil Parish Council nor its residents were consulted, although clearly, they are interested as quite several responses to the consultation were from Charvil residents; and this would be yet another piecemeal development, that will fail to serve the residents of the northern parishes, as it will do little to improve the major infrastructure that is necessary to accommodate large scale development.

- b) Planning Application Approved** - The following approvals were noted:
- 223025 Application for the proposed single storey side extension, first floor rear extension following demolition of existing garage and store, and removal of existing rear dormer at 35, Park View Drive South
 - 223133 Application for the proposed garage conversion and changes to the flank and rear elevation fenestration at 112, The Hawthorns
 - 222834 Application for the proposed conversion of a single dwelling house dividing the existing dwelling and garden to allow for two individual residential dwellings. To include rear paddock area one 3no. bedroom dwelling and one 2no.bedroom dwelling and the conversion of existing garage to habitable space at 6, Old Bath Road

The meeting closed at 8.59 pm