

# Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024** at **6pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

Present: Cllr Jackie Noquet (Chairman), Cllr Andrew Downes, Cllr Geoff Noquet, Cllr Alan Berks, Cllr Alistair Paul.

In attendance: 34 members of the public, District Cllr Chris Brant, Clerk.

**23. Public participation session** – None.

**24. Apologies for absence** – None.

**25. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda** – None.

**26. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024** - The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

## Finance

**27. To note and approve the following payments and receipts since the last meeting:**

**Payments:** Proposed and agreed.

29.05.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office May 24	£318.03
29.05.24	HMRC	Tax May 24	£62.60
03.06.24	NEST	Pension May	£21.55
29.05.24	Kirsty Buttle	Expenses	£7.20
29.05.24	Zurich	Annual parish insurance	£264.00
07.06.24	ICO	Data Protection Fee	£35.00
26.06.24	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Mowing churchyard 02 and 16.05.24	£300.60
26.06.24	N R Prickett	Grass cutting 5th June	£368.40
26.06.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office June	£318.23
26.06.24	HMRC	Tax June	£62.40
28.06.24	NEST	Pension June	£21.55
26.06.24	Keith Hicks	Reimbursement ink cartridges re D-Day event	£9.99
26.06.24	Sibford Village Hall	Hall hire for D-Day event	£55.00
26.06.24	B J Unwin Forestry Consultancy Ltd	Tree inspection report	£420.00

**Receipts:** Noted.

10.06.24	Lloyds	Interest	£22.67
09.07.24	Lloyds	Interest	£19.09

**Invoices to be paid:** Proposed and agreed.

Kirsty Buttle	Salary, office, and expenses Jul	£348.47
HMRC	Tax July	£62.60
NEST	Pension July	£21.55
Thomas Fox Landscaping	Mowing churchyard 6, and 20 June	£300.60

## Planning

**28. Planning applications received**

**24/00613/F - The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Burdrop.** Amended design to 16/01525/F - Erection of a single storey building providing 3 no en-suite letting rooms amended to three bedroom cottage for holiday let. The Parish Council has been consulted on planning application ref. 24/00613/F The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Burdrop, OX15 5RQ - Amended design to 16/01525/F.

The Parish Council does not object to the proposal in principle - however, it makes the following observations which should be taken into account by Cherwell District Council (CDC) in making its determination:

- any permission granted by CDC should be subject to a condition in the same or similar form to condition 9 of permission ref. 16/01525/F such that the proposed holiday cottage must only be used in connection with, and must remain ancillary to, the public house premises known as Pheasant Pluckers Inn (formerly Bishops Blaize/Bishops End);
- if the actual intention of this application is to seek consent for a holiday let cottage which is to be used without any connection to the public house, this should not be applied for as an 'amendment' to 16/01525/F but instead the proposal should be the subject of a new, standalone planning application. *(Response made using delegated powers).*

**24/01766/PIP - Former Paddocks, Backside Lane, Sibford Gower.** Permission in Principle - construction of up to 5 no. dwellings.

The parishioners in attendance were invited to give their views on the application. A number of people spoke and their comments were all in objection to the application for various reasons which can be found in their responses to the application published on the Cherwell District Council (CDC) planning portal. The councillors took notes on the views of the parishioners' comments and agreed that the PC response would be to strongly object to the application, with the reasons for objection being based on the issues raised about the process used to consult parishioners, the legal planning reasons already noted in some of the responses made, Highways' issues, and the impact on the Cotswold National Landscape, along with a request to the planning officer that if they are of the view that the application should be approved then the decision should be called in to be made by the planning committee. It was agreed that the **Clerk and Cllr Paul should write the response and submit it before the extended deadline for response.** It was agreed that as no response has been submitted by Highways to date the **Clerk should contact Highways to ask them to visit the site before making their response.** The Clerk should also contact the planning team at Cotswold National Landscapes to make them aware of the application and ask if they would consider submitting a response.

*34 members of the public and District Cllr Brant left the meeting at 7:15pm.*

The response agreed and submitted by the PC is as follows:

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application. Applications for Permission in Principle (PiP) are limited in terms of their scope to location, land use and amount of development. The Parish Council's objection is on the following key grounds.

#### **Impact on AONB / Cotswolds National Landscape**

- The proposed development site lies only 1,100 metres from the AONB / Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) boundary and is in clear sight of the AONB, an area that is protected under national and local planning policies.
- Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that development within an AONB's setting should be 'sensitively located'. It cannot reasonably be argued that the application site, which is a greenfield site on the westernmost edge of a village that borders the AONB and sits firmly in its setting, is 'sensitively located'.
- Policy ESD 12 of Cherwell District Council's (CDC) adopted local plan states that 'High priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the Cotswolds AONB and the Council will seek to protect the AONB and its setting from potentially damaging and inappropriate development'.

- Policy 86, section 8.2 of Cherwell District Council's (CDC) emerging local plan states that CDC will 'Protect the Cotswolds National Landscape' (CNL).
- Part of protecting the AONB/CNL is to protect the view from the landscape. Given the proximity of the application site to the boundary of the AONB/CNL the view and its setting will be unacceptably impacted should this development go ahead.
- In light of the reasons above, this proposal is not in accordance with national planning policy and CDC's adopted and draft local policies. It follows that the application is clearly proposed in the wrong location and is an inappropriate use of land.

#### **Unsuitable access and traffic impacts**

- The access to the proposed development site would be from Backside Lane. In the application for PIP it is regularly referred to as 'Backside Road' which gives the impression of a metalled carriageway when in fact the lane is surfaced in loose gravel and 3.5 to 4m in width. The lane is not adopted by the highway authority – rather it is a designated bridleway (see Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way prepared by Oxfordshire County Council – PRoW refs. 348/8/20 and 348/8/30). The lane is wholly inappropriate for use by construction vehicles and is not able to support increased traffic flow.
- In addition to the above, the junction where Backside Lane meets Pound Lane is entirely unsuitable. In highway engineering terms this is a heavily compromised location. There is a major change in level between the land on Backside Lane and the carriageway of Pound Lane. The road is bifurcated at this point to reduce the impact of the gradient, but this has the effect of preventing any 'line of sight' for vehicles leaving Backside Lane and heading south. Additional vehicles will exacerbate this problem increasing danger to users of both Pound Lane and Backside Lane itself.
- Additional traffic during construction and once the proposed dwellings are occupied would have a direct impact on the way in which the lane is currently used by residents. The area is home to several young families. The 'shared space', low speed nature of the lane, currently creates a safe environment in which children are able to meet and play. Additional traffic generated by the proposed development would prevent this use, harm amenity, and cause significant and unmitigatable safety issues.
- The proposed development would be contrary to Policy TR7 (Development attracting traffic on minor roads) and SLE 4 (Improved transport and connections) of CDC's adopted local plan and Core Policy 22 of CDC's emerging local plan.
- For the above reasons, the proposal is in an inappropriate location and contrary to local policy.

#### **Rural areas and sustainability**

- Core Policy 86, section 8.2 of CDC's emerging local plan states that CDC will deliver on its Rural Areas Strategy through 'Tight management of speculative development and the avoidance of comparatively less sustainable development outcomes', 'Greater emphasis on development being supported by sustainable transport and active travel opportunity', and by 'Direct[ing] the development of new housing to the larger and more sustainable villages that offer a wider range of services and are more connected to our urban areas than the smaller villages'.
- Core Policy 21 of the emerging plan states that 'One of our key objectives for meeting the challenge of climate change is to ensure that housing and employment are located within sustainable locations. Encouraging sustainable transport modes, low-carbon technologies, and living closer to jobs, education, services and amenities can lead to reduced travel, reduced carbon emissions and generally more sustainable communities'.
- Whilst Sibford Gower has a primary school, a church, a pub and a doctor's surgery, the nearest post office / small 'top up' food shop is 1 mile away in Sibford Ferris. This lies on the other side of a steep valley and residents of Sibford Gower use their cars when they shop locally. More usually they will travel 6.5 miles to supermarkets in Banbury, 7 miles to food stores in Chipping Norton or 6 miles to

the more limited retail offer of Shipston on Stour. A similar pattern of vehicle use also exists for employment with residents travelling across a wide hinterland to work. The local bus service offer is minimal with no service in the evening or on Sundays. Travel by car has proved to be the only viable manner in which to carry out day to day activities.

- The application relies heavily on the village being a Category A village in the current adopted local plan, but this is due to the Sibfords being included in that plan as a single village which does not reflect reality. Sibford Gower and Sibford Ferris are two distinct villages with two separate Parish Councils. This has been recognised in the draft local plan with Sibford Gower designated as a 'smaller village' such that only limited infill development may be appropriate and only to the extent that it is in keeping with local character, proportionate in scale, and meet local housing needs, and/or provide local employments, services and facilities. The proposed development is not infill, does not meet any identified housing need, and will not provide local employment, services, or facilities.
- In light of the above, it is clear that this proposed development is not sustainable, would be contrary to CDC's emerging Rural Areas Strategy. It follows that in policy terms the proposal is in an inappropriate location.

#### **Application red line boundary**

- National Planning Practice Guidance states that an application red line 'should include all land necessary to carry out the proposed development (eg land required for access to the site from a public highway, visibility splays, landscaping, car parking and open areas around buildings)' (Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 14-024-20140306).
- As mentioned above, Backside Lane is unadopted. It seems clear to the Parish Council that there would need to be significant works carried out to Backside Lane to bring it up to an acceptable standard to enable it to receive construction vehicles and the additional traffic associated with the proposed dwellings once occupied.
- It is therefore the Parish Council's view that the extent of the red line area submitted with the PiP application is invalid because the red line does not include all land necessary to carry out the proposed development.

#### **Other reasons**

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to point out to CDC that many detailed and well-thought-out representations have been made by members of the local community, a large concentration of which have been submitted by residents of Backside Lane who will be directly affected by this proposal. It is vital that CDC has due regard to these representations. In addition to making many of the points raised by the Parish Council above, the representations are key to forming a comprehensive understanding of the practical constraints 'on the ground'.

#### **Procedural points**

- In addition to the above reasons, the Parish Council would like to note that it has been contacted by parishioners who have raised concerns about the process followed in the case of this application, in particular with regard to documents being sent out which didn't give parishioners the required 21 days period in which to respond. Although the date was then extended to 8<sup>th</sup> August, the Parish Council is told that there are still letters with incorrect dates causing confusion and potentially deterring people from making a response as they do not think they have sufficient time to put together a response.
- The Parish Council requests that if the view of the planning officer does not match the view of the Parish Council to object to this application that the application be heard by the planning committee in order for the final decision to be made.

**24/01929/TCA – Glebe Farm, Main Street, Sibford Gower.** T1 x 1 - Mature healthy 80 foot populous balsamifera marked by cross on plan in boundary hedgerow, previously pollarded requires repollarding

to 15 foot at request of neighbour at Rose Cottage, whose garden is overshadowed from midday onwards. Access through our orchard means there will be some disturbance to mature apple trees; felling by professional arborist using zipwire to lower branches. **No objection.**

**29. Planning decisions received**

**24/01298/TCA – Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School, Main Street, Sibford Gower.** Please refer to Tree Survey supplied as an attachment (see Cherwell District Council planning web pages). **Approved.**

**23/02030/F - Ruby Cottage, Street Heading North From Acre Ditch, Burdrop.** Installation of an air source heat pump at rear of garage. **Approved.**

**Community**

**30. To consider responding to the consultation regarding implementing a 20mph speed limit throughout the existing 30mph areas in Sibford Gower –** It was proposed and agreed that the **Clerk should submit a response to the consultation in support of the 20mph speed limit.**

**31. Information exchange –** The clerk advised that another PC has expressed an interest in purchasing the speedwatch camera that is currently held by Sibford Ferris PC but was paid for by both parishes. The councillors agreed that they have no objection to SFPC selling the camera and splitting the income between both councils.

Meeting closed @ 7:30pm

**Date of next meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

Signed..... Date.....