

ENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

A Planning Committee Meeting was held at Enstone Parish Hall on Friday 19th January 2018 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT Parish Councillors N. Knott (Chair), P. Butler (Vice-Chair), A. Lee, D. Robottom, P. Johnson, R. Parker, T. Gilbert, P. Shaw, M. Ivings, C. Glendinning, District Cllr. Andrew Beaney and thirty members of the public

APOLOGIES All Councillors present

Cllr. N. Knott welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that only residents living within Enstone Parish were entitled to vote at the end of the meeting. Residents outside the parish could speak during the meeting but were unable to vote. Cllr. Knott explained that questions would be taken from the floor and then the Parish Council would formulate a response to West Oxfordshire District Council Planning Department.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

87. The following application had been received for consideration:-

The Driving Centre, Enstone Airfield, Enstone, 17/03745/OUT. *Construction of museum building, show lane building, corporate hospitality building, energy centre/store building, workshop building. Formation of car exercise road. Construction of 28 holiday lodges. Formation of landscaped grounds. Associated site services and external works. Diversion of public footpath.*

The following concerns were raised and discussed:-

TRAFFIC

This was a huge issue for many people. The proposed planning application would affect the whole area for six days per week with Wednesdays being the only day when the museum would be closed. Concern was expressed, not only relating to the increase in the volume of traffic, but also the speed of traffic passing through local communities. There would be a lot of pollution for what is seen as a playground for the rich. Considerable doubt was expressed regarding the projected traffic volumes – when added to the already ever-increasing volumes of traffic generated by Soho Farmhouse, it was felt that the area would be inundated with traffic. At the recent Steeple Barton Parish Council meeting, ten out of fifteen residents were against the proposal. There is no information regarding new traffic signage, routes to the museum, a roundabout or other traffic calming measures.

S106 MONIES

Clarification was required concerning this. The application proposes to put £12.7 million renovating the property on the Tew Estate. This is a private house on a private estate which would have no public benefit. Cllr. Peter Butler outlined how S106 monies can be spent – they are used to support the provision of services and infrastructure as follows:-

- a) Improvement to Highways
- b) Recreational facilities
- c) Education
- d) Health
- e) Affordable Housing

Everyone at the meeting were unanimously opposed to these monies being spent on the proposed renovation of the property on the Tew Estate. The following clarification is required:-

- I. Is the money for the renovation to come from public funds, S106 monies or otherwise?
- II. Are the funds for the renovation from the sale proceeds of the sale of land towards the proposed application?
- III. How would the public benefit from this renovation?
- IV. Will there be public access to the renovated house?

The following suggestions were made as to the possible use of S106 monies:-

- 1. Traffic calming measures
- 2. A new GP surgery – at present, all residents travel to either Chipping Norton or Charlbury
- 3. Improved sewerage and management of surface water, particularly along Chapel Lane
- 4. Improvements to Enstone School – District Cllr. Beaney explained that this would not be possible as the proposed housing is for twenty-eight holiday lodges meaning that there would be no increase in the number of children coming to the area

ROAD STRUCTURE

It was felt that the roads in the area are inadequate. Traffic speeds consistently through local villages making it unsafe for pedestrians, dog walkers, cyclists, agricultural vehicles, horses and their riders. The recent increase in accommodation at Soho Farmhouse has added to this problem. The road network needs investment to gain improvements. It was suggested that a bypass be considered. Ongoing road maintenance is a major problem – there are numerous potholes and the edges of roads are encroaching onto verges. Many visitors to the area are not experienced in driving in rural areas and are a danger to animal life. Their speed is considered to be completely inappropriate and the narrow lanes are used as rat runs.

HEYTHROP PARK

Expansion has recently taken place which will add to the traffic volumes and should this proposed application go ahead, there was a worry that Heythrop Park would also seek further expansion.

EMPLOYMENT

Whilst the prospect of employment for local people is attractive, it was suggested that there is fairly full employment already. In fact, some businesses are struggling to fill existing vacancies.

JUNCTION OF A44 WITH B4030

It is long-acknowledged that this junction is very dangerous, especially for those unfamiliar with the area. The situation can only get worse with an increased influx of motorists visiting the museum.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REPORT

Concerns were raised regarding the pollution of water courses following disturbance during building works. There are believed to be Second World War disused fuel tanks on the proposed site. Clarification is required and satisfactory arrangements organised to deal with these dangers.

ECOLOGY REPORT

This report was produced in December 2016. At this time of year, most animals and all flora are dormant. A further study must be undertaken during the spring and summer months.

NOISE

Concern was expressed regarding an increase in noise. Whilst a report has been produced, the public require assurances and regular monitoring to be undertaken and for these requirements to be conditional, should planning be granted. With the rich buying the proposed properties, what controls can be exercised over the use of helicopters?

BRIDLEWAY

It has been suggested that the existing bridleway be moved to the perimeter of the new development. Should this be unacceptable, Mr. Hedigan indicated that the bridleway can be left where it is.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

The question regarding the use of 60 acres of agricultural land was raised. The Agricultural Land Classification system forms part of the planning system in England and Wales. It classifies agricultural land in five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. The top three grades, Grade 1, 2 and 3a are referred to as 'Best and Most Versatile' land, and enjoy significant protection from development. Grade 4 and 5 are described as poor quality agricultural land and very poor quality agricultural land. A member of the public advised that the land in question is not G1, G2 or G3a but more likely to be G4 or G5 and would, therefore, not be a planning issue. However, the thrust of the discussion was in two directions:-

- (1) The loss of agricultural land of differing quality and economic value – this would be a technical matter for the planners, but also more importantly
- (2) The change of character in the area, making it less rural and the resulting visual impact. The meeting raised several concerns regarding this.

HOLIDAY HOMES

Considerable concern was raised as to whether the 28 proposed "holiday lodges" would be residential or holiday homes. Some documents on the WODC website refer to Residential Community for collectors/owners of vintage and classic cars. There now appears to be a suggestion that they are intended as holiday homes for let. Clarification is required as different rules apply in terms of planning regulations in each case. What are these properties and their terms of use? The parish already has enough property available for short-term holidays, at Soho Farmhouse, for example.

LIGHT POLLUTION

Opinions were expressed regarding light pollution, particularly from the main museum building. The assumption is that there are highly valuable cars stored and, accordingly, there will be security lights to support the security cameras. The public would expect appropriate conditions be placed on any development, should permission be given.

The Chair asked the residents to vote:-

- | | |
|----------------------------|----|
| a. For the application | 0 |
| b. Against the application | 17 |
| c. Wishing to abstain | 5 |

The residents thanked Enstone Parish Council for all its work undertaken relating to the planning application. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and reported that a report would be sent to the Planning Officer regarding the above concerns.

88. There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.40 pm

89. Dates of next meetings:-

- Thursday 25th January 7.15 pm
- Thursday 22nd February 7.15 pm

Chairman
