

BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

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Minutes of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council Planning Committee held on 23rd May 2017 in Barkham Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mr C. Heyliger (in the Chair), Mr G. Dexter, Mrs Stubbs and the Clerk.

Apologies: Mr. L. Heath (on holiday) and Mr. A. Scott (on holiday)

17/719 Planning

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| 171186 | Langley Pond Farm, School Road Outline application for residential development of 18 dwellings with access off School Road and all other matters reserved (access to be considered) | Proposed Opposed |
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This application will be determined at the Planning Committee at WBC and does not require listing. Clerk to respond to WBC opposing that application. This major development is not included in the current local plan either as a confirmed or reserved site and should not be considered in advance of the forthcoming Local Plan Update and the Arborfield and Barkham joint Neighbourhood Plan. This is particularly important as the site is adjacent or near to several sites that have been offered under the recent 'Call for Sites' and should be considered in the context of any overall development in this area. These offered sites include 5BA013 (adjacent) and 5BA14 (across School Road) and sites 5AR007-0010 (nearby in Arborfield).

1. The site lies outside the settlement area and pursuant to Core Policy 11 of Core Strategy proposals outside these limits will not normally be permitted. The Design & Access & Planning Support Statement (DASS) submitted with this application refers to development outside the settlement area and whilst this policy does allow for some exceptions, none of these exceptions apply in this case, especially as this does not justify further encroachment of this rural location.

2. The site falls within a settlement separation zone referred to in the Core Strategy policy CP18.5 and should be maintained. The principle for such zones was endorsed during the examination of WBC's MDD in May 2013 by the presiding inspector who felt this was well covered by clear definition of the settlement boundaries and CP11.

3. The site is also within the Thames Basin Heath SPA 5km zone

4. The said DASS refers to the site as the 'only undeveloped gap between Wood Lane to the west and the junction between Barkham Road/Langley Common Road to the east.' This is true and is an argument that it should be retained as countryside, especially as it is an attractive area of land which contributes to the setting of a listed building, Langley Pond Farmhouse.

5. The frontage of the site onto School Road is marked by a pleasing hedgerow with a line of matured trees, although Section 15 of the Application incorrectly indicates there are no trees to be affected. Some of this vegetation will clearly have to be removed to provide site access and this will detract from the rural character of this road and should not be allowed.

6. The site has limited potential for sustainability. There is no nearby secondary schooling or shopping centre and medical facilities in the area are already heavily stretched.

7. School Road is a busy road, narrow in places, and often used by horse riders, where motorists often drive in excess of the speed limit. The flow of traffic is hindered by cars parking down the hill from the Coombes School at the start and the end of the school day, which adds to the hazards and congestion experienced in the area. Furthermore, the junction of School Road and Langley Common Road is acknowledged to be a dangerous junction with effectively a blind turning towards the west when leaving School Road, where several accidents have been reported. The additional traffic by accessing this site from School Road will compound these already

difficult traffic conditions and should not be allowed.

8. The said DASS states that access will be via a single point close to where the access already exists to serve Langley Pond Farm. Inspection of the site and plans suggests that one of the new houses will be built over the existing access to Langley Pond Farm, which indicates that another access point will be required closer to the bend. This apparent discrepancy should be investigated.

9. The area is prone to flooding, especially in Wood Lane and we understand there have been flooding problems on adjacent properties.

10. The site is close to Coombes Woodland, which is designated as a Local Wildlife Site and a local Geological Site used regularly by walkers and horse riders. Apart from that the site is also of scientific interest.

The above points will be further developed before submission to WBC.

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| 171300 | 370 Barkham Road Full application for the proposed erection of 1 replacement dwelling and garage following demolition of existing dwelling. | Proposed No Comment |
| 171304 | Willow Farm, School Road Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for use of the site as a dwelling house. | Proposed |

To be discussed in greater detail at the meeting on 13th June.

Clerk to contact the planning officer to ascertain whether the application is for the whole site or just the dwelling house. This is an extremely large plot of land and concern is raised as to the extent of the application.

Clarification is also required in understanding that this application is limited to rescinding Condition 2 of the original planning application of April 1974 (No. 00153) where the occupation of the dwelling is limited to a person employed locally in agriculture. BPC further understands that the application is not about changing the use of the land from agricultural use to general residential use as inferred from the letter submitted by Thimbley & Shorland dated 1 May 2017. Clarification is requested from WBC before a formal response can be submitted.

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| 170396 | Land Adjacent to Vine Ridge Farm, Sandy Lane Outline application for the proposed erection of 1 detached dwelling following demolition of existing outbuilding (access to be considered). | Refused |
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The Decision Notice was not available on the web site for the meeting on 9th May.

Reasons:

1. The proposed development is located outside of the settlement limits and is unacceptable in principle. The site is not identified as an allocated housing site and the Council can demonstrate an appropriate housing land supply as required by the NPPF. The proposed development in a countryside location would urbanise this area of the countryside.
2. The proposed dwelling, due to its siting and indicated scale, would increase the spread of built form in this part of the countryside, harmfully urbanising this part of the countryside.
3. The applicants have failed to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that the site is sustainable with regards to its location and access to services. The proposed development is not within walking distance of local facilities, amenities and schools and will result in a high level of car dependency contrary to the sustainable transport goals of the NPPF.

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| 160732 | 328b – 334 Barkham Road Full planning application for the proposed erection of 10 dwellings | Appeal |
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The Appeal will commence on 13th June at 10.00 a.m. at WBC and is scheduled to last for four days. Mrs Stubbs to attend the appeal and speak on behalf of BPC to oppose this development. The applicant Cala Homes has submitted a plan to show minor amendments to the site. Clerk to reply acknowledging receipt of the proposed alterations but stating that this does not alter our position and that BPC is strongly opposed to any further development at this location.

The main points that will be raised:

1. Site in Barkham falls within a 'Limited Development Location' and CP17 of Core Strategy clearly states that developments in such locations, up until 2026, should not exceed 25 dwellings, but with the 25 homes already built, this limit has already been reached. So approval of this application would be contrary to the Core Strategy by bringing the total development count to 35 dwellings.
2. The field on the site is an attractive green space enjoyed by residents for many years.
3. The development is highly visible from the public footpaths and will have an impact on the countryside/landscape.
4. It will have an overbearing impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.
5. Over development and over provision of dwellings on a Reserve site.
6. The site has limited potential for sustainability, as the site is well beyond easy walking distance to a shopping/district centre or medical facilities, and access to public transport within the area is somewhat limited.
- 7 Traffic issues onto Barkham Road are already close to capacity and further development of Arborfield Green will generate even more traffic in this corridor adding to further congestion.
8. From the plans it appear that access to the site will enter from the new access road from Barkham Road currently used by the new existing CALA Home residents, which means heavy construction vehicles will enter the site from this access, causing congestion, noise and disruption to these residents.
9. Site in a grassland paddock surrounded by mature oak and other trees, which will result in removal of at least 10 TPO trees. This will have a detrimental impact on the character, ecology, and appearance of the site,
10. The layout is compromised by the proximity of the remaining mature trees on site which while adversely impacting the long term health of the trees, will also have an impact on the amenity and living environment of future occupiers as many of the rear gardens will be overshadowed under the canopy of mature trees. This could further result in the heavily pruning or felling of those TPO trees that are retained.
11. Trees are essential to the Biodiversity of the area, providing landscape corridors for birds and other vertebrates, so culling of the trees will adversely affect the wildlife on this site.
12. We understand from neighbours that the site is occasionally prone to flooding and there could be drainage issues.
13. Given that the mix of dwellings are all moderate to large detached houses (with a minimum of 4 bedrooms), the development fails to make provision for on-site affordable housing, contrary to the requirements of CP5 of the Core Strategy.
14. There are no amenities for young children (ie playground facilities etc), which we would normally expect for a development of this size.

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| 160207 | Barkham Manor Farm, Barkham Road Without planning permission the material change of use of land and buildings to a mixed use for the purposes of a residential dwelling house (under construction), agriculture, event venue and hog roast/catering businesses. | Public Enquiry |
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The adjourned Inquiry will be reconvening at 10.00 on 16 June and is scheduled to run for 6/7 days to hear the agricultural evidence (then 24th July if this has not been finished) and then 11th, 12th, 13th, & 17th, 18th, October.

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| 162120 | 1A Bearwood Road Householder application for proposed erection of two storey front extension and two storey side extension, plus new driveway access from Barkham Road. | Approved |
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A letter was submitted to Marcia Head on 15 May to enquire if the additional building and garage extension within the garden of 1a fell within General Permitted Development rules, and if no response was forthcoming by the end of May, this should be followed up. Irrespective of the outcome of that, it was agreed (notwithstanding with what had been noted at the last BPC meeting), that we should first present our concerns to the new Chief Executive and Chairman of WBC copied to Simon Weekes (new executive director of planning to replace Mark Ashwell) in order to give them the opportunity to react, but at the same time making it quite clear that unless within a reasonable period of time we were able to foster a better working relationship and more of a willingness by WBC to engage with us, we would be referring our concerns to the Ombudsman. It was agreed Mr Dexter and Mr Heyliger would draft an appropriate letter summarising these concerns along with a chronological sequence of events associated with 1a Bearwood Road, and at the same time include a brief overview of other examples of issues of concern. Once prepared the draft will be circulated among the Councillors for any further comments.

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Next meeting of full Council on 13th June 2017 at 8 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee on 28th June 2017 at 7.30 p.m.