

Present: Mr C Broad Chairman
Mr F Dumbleton
Mr R Girling
Mr J Lewis

1 member of the public

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Dr Druce and Mr Morris.
2. **Declaration of Interest** None.
3. **Minutes** of the last Meeting were approved and signed.
4. **Open Forum**
Mr Payne mentioned his concerns regarding the trees and landscaping.
5. Amendment to application P16/V1243/O Erection of 18 Dwellings – Manor Close Chilton
Chilton Parish Council wishes to reinforce its previous objections both in the light of information arising from the Lower Road Chilton Appeal and the progress of the Vale Local Plan which means planning considerations have materially changed.

1. The application would give a circa 5% increase to the historic village of Chilton to the east of the A34. Appeals against refusal for a similar scale of development in an AONB including Mevagissey, Poppleford (2211701) and Staunton(2204158) have been classified as Major Developments and dismissed because they failed to demonstrate the exceptional circumstances dictated by NPPF para 116.

This application also fails to show exceptional circumstances. In submissions to the recent Lower Road Chilton Appeal, the Vale forcibly argued that these schemes must be judged in a Local Context and for the Appeal and this application that means the historic Village to the east of the A34. However, the Officer's report para 6.9 instead takes the argument submitted by the Appellant at the Appeal and judges the application in a wider context including Chilton Field which makes the application look smaller in terms of impact. The Vale's Appeal submission para 23 considers "local context" when considering whether the development is Major and argues at length that the context should only include land to the east of the A34 and NOT Chilton Field or the wider Harwell Campus .

2. The proposed development is on the boundary of the historic Village and would have a major impact on its character by removing an important landscape feature, namely a green belt that separates the Village from the A34 slip roads and the A34 itself. It would have a significant effect on the landscape of the AONB. Again the Appeal submissions by the Vale sought to show greater harm to the landscape and character of the village caused by developments on its boundaries.

3. The Local Plan has now passed an important milestone namely the end of consultation on the modifications. This removes much of the uncertainty that the Appellant claimed at the Lower Road Appeal existed about the timescale for its adoption and fully supports the arguments made by the Vale that the Plan should be given significant weight. Specifically in relation to the Local Plan, para 3 of the Appeal submission refers to the adoption of the Local Plan and the significant weight that should be given to it and this was before consultation closed! The Council anticipates it will very soon be the development plan! The consultation period has now ended so removing the main argument that the Appellant at the Appeal gave for uncertainty about its adoption. It is therefore most surprising that the Officer's Report para 5.2 takes a different view, to the Vale's own carefully explained position, when they explain not only that the Plan has a 5yr housing supply surplus of 7.1yrs but also it classes Chilton as a small village suitable only for small developments of 4 or less houses.

There is therefore no presumption in favour of development and the application fails to comply with the Local Plan. So, again the Officer's Report does not support the Vale's submissions to the Appeal.

The Officer's recommendation is contrary to these key arguments and this application should now be refused.

Two further material considerations for refusal are;

4. The present soft landscape and tree cover of the land comprising this application is especially important as the site is adjacent to a major landuse change currently approaching completion viz. the conversion of the agricultural land between the site and the A34 to a major traffic intersection. The impact of the geometry of the interchange has not to date been taken into consideration for the various housing applications on this site.

The topography of the land on the flanks of Hagbourne Hill is such that at night the headlights of traffic leaving the southbound A34 carriageway on the new slip roads and circulating downhill onto the new roundabout will be directed down on to the new development. As such it is important for the new residents that all possible light and acoustic screening opportunities be employed to mitigate traffic nuisance from this major adjacent intersection. As such the proposed removal of tree cover other than at the immediate entrance to the development in Townsend to make space way for the proposed 18-unit development and its service road suggests that there is over-densification and that to protect the wellbeing of the future residents located adjacent to what will be a very busy intersection a smaller number of units spaced differently is indicated.

5. The development would also have a major impact on the infrastructure particularly the sewers which regularly surcharge.

The Parish Council repeats that the Officer's recommendation is contrary to these key arguments and this application should now be refused.

6. Application for 3 dwellings, 1 - 2 Pond Cottages P16/V2118/FUL

Comments

The Parish Council had no objections.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.45pm.