

**Minutes of an Open Meeting of the Parish of Fringford , held on
Monday 19th March 2018, in Fringford Village Hall at 8.15pm.**

Present: Cllrs David McCullagh (Chairman), John Fargin, , Les Harris,
John Reader, Mick Cowland and Jan Maciejewski .

In attendance: Cllr Barry Wood (CDC)

Apologies: Cllr Ian Corkin (CDC and OCC) and Cllr Adrian Thwaites

Also in Attendance : 75 Members of the Public

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the public and explaining the purpose for the meeting, which was to discuss the outline planning application for the land adjacent to Fringford Cottage.

First he updated the meeting actions that the Parish Council had taken so far:

They had

1. Requested that the application goes to the planning committee for determination – this request has been accepted.
2. Sent a request to Cherwell for clarification on a number of issues including the number and type of dwellings.
3. Drew their attention to the number of online responses (now at 5464).
4. Prepared a draft response which will be amended following comments from the meeting.
5. Points included in the draft are:
 1. Sustainability and need both at a local level and district level.
 2. Site location outside the village envelope and not a brownfield site as claimed.
 3. Impact on the neighbours
 4. Highway safety, traffic and parking
 5. Drainage Sewage and Flood risk
 6. Impact on Wildlife
 7. Detrimental effect on the street scene.

As the Applicant was present, he was invited to speak first. He explained to the meeting that the application was outline only, and was merely in order to establish the principle of development on the site. He accepted the concerns raised over the project and expressed his intention to engage fully with the Parish Council on the development.

Following this the immediate neighbour to the development addressed the meeting. She explained that she occupied Bakery Cottage which is immediately adjacent to the proposed access road and she was also speaking for the occupiers of One Step Cottage, Main Street, which directly faces the proposed access road to the site.

They have instructed a Planning agent to make submissions on their behalf, which have been shared with the Parish Council.

As the closest neighbouring properties they strongly object on the basis that serious harm will occur to their residential amenity and noise and disturbance of the development will seriously impact their existing quiet enjoyment of their properties. The proposed (and possibly under estimated number) of 36 vehicle movements per day, compared with the existing driveway serving one dwelling, would be unacceptable and contrary to the provisions of Local Plan Policy by way of the impact on the amenity of both Bakery Cottage and One Step Cottage.

The proposed access road is to be extended in width and located closer to the gable wall of Bakery Cottage which adjoins the site. The road will run along the whole length of Bakery Cottage and its garden and at the closest point is only 0.50m from the gable wall. The creation of the junction with Main Street will result in the removal of the historic stone wall that currently forms the outlook and visual amenity for both Bakery Cottage and One Step Cottage.

Noise disturbance from the close proximity of vehicles and resulting vibration could also impact the structural integrity of Bakery Cottage, along with the construction of the road and loss of a soakaway. This is a serious issue upon which they would seek legal opinion if the application is approved.

Visually the impact of a minimum of 36 vehicle movements per day will be detrimental to One Step Cottage due to headlight beams shining directly into the 4 front windows. The removal of the old stone wall at the front of Bakery Cottage would result in loss of privacy to the front windows therefore yet again affecting the quiet enjoyment of the property.

Previous planning decisions for dwellings on Fringford Cottage site were refused on grounds that; "the access was unneighbourly, detrimental to the stone wall which is part of the visual amenity and therefore adversely affecting the quiet enjoyment of the neighbouring properties".

Bakery Cottage is part of the traditional village setting being part of a row of 17th/18th century cottages; 3 of the buildings are Grade II listed. Bakery Cottage; incorporates a Grade II listed barn which was an old cart store. The access road will have a detrimental impact being only 12 metres from the listed barn. She requested that the Parish Council object to this application.

Following this there were the following questions and comments from the floor:-

The key to the proposed development is the suggestion that the paddock should be classified as "brownfield land"; this is not the case as it has only been used for grazing horses. If this application is permitted it could be a precedent for other similar applications on the periphery of the village. There is also a concern about the proposed access to the development.

Past decisions on planning applications have all confirmed that the land is not suitable for residential development, and many have been refused on the basis that the access is unsafe.

The visual amenity of the village is important, and would be eroded if the development was permitted.

Road safety in the village is of prime importance – there are no pavements and pedestrians walk along the road. Main Street is currently used for residents' enjoyment. The proposed development would increase the traffic along Main Street by about 35%.

The proposed development of 3 and 4 bedroom houses would also generate a significant increase in delivery vehicles serving the properties. This does not appear to have been taken into account in the application and therefore the traffic assessment should be challenged.

Furthermore Main Street has no facilities for disabled people, or wheelchair or pushchair users.

There is concern that the proposed development does not include enough car parking for the size of properties proposed. This means that cars from the development are likely to be parking on Main Street, which is already too narrow for 2 cars to pass each other, and will cause additional danger for adults and children using the road. Traffic will also be exacerbated by construction traffic during the build period.

There are worries about the proposed drainage strategy, including the siting of a foul water pumping station and an attenuation pond, particularly as the current foul water system in the village has no extra capacity.

The proposal fails to recognise the historic importance of Fringford. The link with Flora Thompson and Lark Rise to Candleford has been recognised by Cherwell District Council, who promote the area to tourists. There are regular visits by walking groups, many from overseas. The proposal will disturb the visual line of the cottages, and is an unreasonable disturbance of a historic treasure.

It should be noted that there have already been 2 refusals for development on this plot of land – nothing has changed – why should it be granted consent?

The site is currently a grassed paddock with stables, this should not make it a brownfield site suitable for development. It could also significantly affect the floodplain. Flash flooding can already impact the sewerage system, and, flooding has, in the past, required residents to move out of their properties.

It should be noted that the planning permission for the construction of the stables expressly provided that the remaining ground should not be considered a residential area.

Concern was expressed as to whether the school had sufficient places for more children from the village.

A resident living on the Green observed that there is regularly chaos with school traffic, an increase in traffic brought about by the proposed development would be unsustainable as Main Street is not wide enough to take school cars and construction traffic. Furthermore the school regularly walks children through the village, and extra traffic would increase the dangers to the children when doing this.

A resident asked how the proposed development would benefit the village as there are not enough facilities in the village to support it and there are few sustainable employment opportunities.

Concern was expressed that, should the development be granted, there would be a subsequent application to develop Fringford Cottage, which would be to the further detriment of the Village.

The meeting was advised by a resident that, a week earlier, an ambulance had not been able to pass through the Village; the access for emergency vehicles could deteriorate if the application were to be granted.

Residents commented that Fringford residents have a deep passion and care for their community and asked the Applicant to reflect on the issues brought up at the meeting. There was also concern that there had been two attempts to construct a through road through Fringford; additional development may provide an opportunity for this suggestion to return – which most residents would not wish to see.

Finally Cllr Barry Wood, District Councillor for Fringford made the following comments:-

1. Fringford has been here before
2. As a potential member of CDC's Planning Committee it would not be appropriate for him to indicate how he would vote on this application, as it is important he shows no bias, and makes his mind up having read all the papers put before the Planning Committee
3. Residents should watch the CDC Planning Portal and
4. He would appreciate being really clear about what the public opinion is to the proposed development.

At the close of the meeting the Chairman asked residents for a show of hands. The result of the meeting was that there was 1 resident broadly in support of the proposal and 74 residents broadly opposed to the proposal.