

## **Arborfield & Newland Parish Council**

### **The Parish Council Planning Committee**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **General**

The Planning Committee terms of reference have been produced to clarify the role in which the Committee and members therein are to consider issues and operate as a Standing Committee of Arborfield & Newland Parish Council.

##### **Membership**

The Arborfield & Newland Parish Council Planning Committee comprises of a maximum of 6 Councillors. The quorum of the Committee is 4 members. The Committee elects a Committee Chairman and Committee Vice Chairman from the Committee membership annually at the first Committee meeting after the Annual General Meeting of the Council or at the Annual General Meeting of the Council.

##### **Meetings**

Planning Committee meetings are held monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm, subject to requirement, except August and December.

Due to time constraints some Planning Applications are also dealt with at Full Council meetings held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, except August and December.

The minutes of the meetings to be produced and reported for approval at the next available Full Council meeting.

##### **Areas of Responsibility**

The Parish Council Planning Committee has delegated powers to respond to planning applications. It does not have the power to approve or refuse applications but is able to object to or to comment on all applications within the Parish boundary and on occasion as a neighbouring parish. The Parish Council are also permitted to speak at the Borough Council's Planning Meetings.

As the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the Borough Council is required to consult the Parish Council on all applications for planning consent within the parish. The Planning Committee of Arborfield &

Newland Parish Council has delegated powers from the full Council to comment on applications on behalf of the Council, but all Arborfield & Newland Parish Council members are notified of applications to be heard.

### **Principal Functions and Delegated Powers**

The Planning Committee has the delegated authority to comment on behalf of the Parish Council on:

- planning applications and licence applications
- planning appeals
- environmental issues including Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- highway and traffic implications and safety

The Planning Committee is responsible for:

- providing updates regarding the joint Neighbourhood Plan
- reviewing policy documents including the Village Design Statement (VDS)

### **Planning Applications**

Planning applications for comment are listed in the appropriate agenda circulated to the Planning Committee and in the case of a Full Council meeting, the whole membership. Planning applications can be viewed on the Wokingham Borough Council website and are received in the Parish Office in hard copy form which shall be made available at meetings.

Where time of receipt of the planning application and date for submission of comments does not allow consideration at a Committee meeting/Full Council meeting, the members of the committee may agree that the plans can be circulated by email and comments from the committee members received in the same manner. In this case, the proposed submission should be approved, on email, by a majority of the planning committee.

### **Responding to Planning Applications**

It is the Parish Council's policy to respond to all consultations on planning applications. Each application is considered on its individual merits. While considering the views of residents and other interested parties, the Planning Committee is not bound to pass on these views when making its

decisions. In the same way, Wokingham Borough Council is not bound to take account of the views of Arborfield & Newland Parish Council, although its local knowledge can often be influential in the outcome of an application.

Comments generally fall into one of the following three categories:

- No objection to the proposed development, possibly giving reasons
- No objection to the proposed development in principle, but expressing concerns over certain aspects of the application
- Objection to the proposed development, giving reasons

In addition the Parish Council may request the planning authority to consider imposing planning conditions if the application is granted planning approval, e.g. enhanced landscaping, times that industrial units can be in use.

### **Aspects that the Parish Council will take into account when formulating its comments on planning applications**

General. Whatever the application the Parish Council will always consider:

- The policies contained within the current Local Plan for Wokingham Borough and associated documents and the Wokingham Borough Council Design Guidelines. However the Parish Council will not consider itself constrained by such policies when commenting.
- Design Guidelines issued by the Government and by Wokingham Borough Council. Again the Parish Council will not feel itself constrained by such policies when commenting.
- The Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan
- The Arborfield Village Design Statement.
- The general design of the proposal, including materials used.
- The effect the proposal will have on neighbouring properties. However as neighbouring residents will be given the opportunity to comment directly to Wokingham Borough Council, comments by the Parish Council are only likely to be made if the proposal will have a detrimental effect.
- The local and wider environmental impact of the proposal including, but not limited to, visual amenity, particularly from where the development can be seen by the public generally, noise, dust, emissions, landscape, ecology, and bio-diversity
- Whether, in the Parish Council's view, the application will cause any highway problems.
- Provision of amenity space.
- Landscaping proposals where submitted.
- Local knowledge on flooding and drainage issues.
- Wildlife issues.

Extensions to existing dwellings. In addition to the above the Parish Council will consider:

- The design of the extension, both in its own right and compared to the existing structure.
- The size of the extension, both in actual terms, and relative to the existing dwelling and to adjacent properties.
- The size of the plot on which the complete dwelling will be positioned.

New Dwellings. The Parish Council will normally object to any new dwelling unless it is within the identified settlement of Arborfield & Newland, is fully supported by the Core Strategy, MDD DPD, the Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan, Arborfield Village VDS and other relevant documents, or is a replacement for a dwelling to be demolished. In addition to the General items above the Parish Council will consider:

- The size and design of the dwelling.

Other types of Applications. These will generally be considered on the effect that they will have on the Parish and local residents.

## **Responses**

The Parish Clerk will communicate to the Local Planning Authority the Committee's decision in respect of applications considered.

Where an application is subject to an appeal, the Committee is authorised to make written representation or to elect a member of the Committee to attend the hearing.

A member of the Planning Committee can be nominated to attend Planning Authority meetings as necessary.

All correspondence should be conducted through the Parish Clerk.

## **Review**

This document shall be reviewed annually.