

## **RUSCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Planning Report, May 2020**

#### **Introduction**

Planning is one of the main activities of Parish Councils. They do not decide on planning applications, but the local authority (Wokingham Borough Council in our case) consults the Parish Council in reaching its decisions; the Parish Council comments on the applications using its local knowledge.

Parish Councils also have the opportunity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, setting out their vision for future development. Ruscombe PC is in the process of doing this, assisted by an enthusiastic and capable group of volunteers to whom we are most grateful.

#### **Planning Applications**

We have seen an interesting range of applications in the past year, ranging from the routine to the more unusual.

- There have been 17 applications for home extensions, alterations, or addition of garages, 15 approved, one refused, one pending.
- An application to use the glebe land opposite St James Church as a burial ground for Wokingham Borough was withdrawn.
- An application for automated gates at the McCarthy & Stone development in London Road was refused on the grounds that it was out of keeping with the surrounding area.
- There were a number of applications (mostly successful) for changes to listed buildings.
- An application to build two new houses on a plot in Ruscombe Lane, following demolition of one existing house, was refused on the grounds of over-development.
- There were two applications for conversion of commercial premises to residential, both at Ruscombe Business Park. The first, for 12 apartments at Spitfire House, was approved. The second, for 41 apartments at Interserve House, was refused pending resolution of ground contamination and noise concerns.
- An application for additional parking spaces at the Business Park was approved.

## **The Neighbourhood Plan**

The Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion. It will establish a set of planning policies for the future, primarily based on input from the community, via a survey distributed to homes in Ruscombe during March 2019 and also made available online.

The remaining stages are:

- Draft Plan Pre-submission Consultation.
- Submission of the Draft Plan to Wokingham Borough Council who will appoint an independent examiner.
- Local referendum (If more than 50% of respondents agree, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area).

## **Access to Planning Information**

If you are interested in finding out what local planning applications are being made, and what happens to them, the main source of information is the Wokingham Borough Council website's Planning section, which lets you search applications and follow their progress. The link is:

<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/>