

Retirement Village, Wyvale, SOHA, Village Signs, Local Councillors & Neighbourhood Plan

Notes from Parish Council:

A new year and a brief update note on significant outcomes and imminent planning matters, some of which may have already been commented on in the local press.

Good News: The large-scale retirement village application for land next to the A4155 has been refused by SODC Planning. We continue to fight any future such applications on this site and the appeal just notified by the applicant in this case.

Disappointing News: Wyevale – the parish council fought against the largely residential application for housing at Wyevale, but the application was approved by the SODC Planning Committee. We and Harpsden Parish Council felt strongly that the site should be retained for low key commercial purposes, as classified in the Henley & Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan. The value of and profits to be made from residential development is such that it is limiting the opportunities for small businesses.

Procedurally, we also believe there are governance issues in the conduct of the committee and councillors in determining this application, which makes the decision unsound, and have consequently asked the Secretary of State to review this decision and ‘call it in’. We await that review.

Regrettable News: Given consideration of many aspects of the outcome of the Wyvale application and SODC’s revisions to the Local Plan, the parish council also unanimously (1 abstention) passed a motion of no confidence in our two Ward Councillors, Paul Harrison and Will Hall, the latter being rarely seen at PC meetings. I cannot recall Shiplake feeling it necessary to take such action in the past, but it was felt necessary given expressed views that they have not acted in the interests of this parish.

SOHA News: The new Sydney Harrison House development is coming along rapidly. We have had an assurance that SOHA will support community use of the new lounge, subject of course to proper process and liaison with residents – we will keep an eye on this and let you know when the work is due to be completed.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP) News: Updates on the development of Shiplake’s plan have been limited in recent months due to changes in national policy (NPPF) and SODC’s cabinet personnel. These have resulted in changes of direction affecting SODC’s Local Plan proposals.** More specifically, changes that are contrary to guidance previously provided to Shiplake. The Shiplake NP Steering Group has sought to address all the issues and necessary changes to our plan, that have arisen as a result. You can now expect to receive more frequent and detailed updates, including requests for feedback on revisions to our plan. The ‘pre-submission’ consultation document will be made available as soon as possible.

Visitor Signs: The parish council would like to put up some visitor signs with interesting information about the village, its history and amenities etc. Some directions on how to locate the Thames Path would also be useful! We anticipate having one or two similar to the one near Ferry Cottage, at the old ferry crossing. We do need a volunteer(s) to suggest suitable sites and wording – anyone out there who could help us with this please? Let us know via: feedback@shiplakevillages.com

Tudor Taylor – Chair, Shiplake Parish Council

**** An SODC Local Plan Consultation @ Henley Town Hall - Saturday 19 January, 10am-2pm**