

## **Copthorne Residents Society – Considerate Building Policy**

### **Agreed at 2023 AGM**

We are fortunate to live in an exceptional area with many benefits. It is too easy to forget the enormous effort that was expended when the Committee was first established in the 1970's to secure the space we all enjoy. Copthorne Road was a "rat run" between Scots Hill and The Green, with a constant stream of light and heavy traffic, and a road that was more potholes than surface! Our predecessors did us all a huge service by finally getting the road ownership, and closing off the bottom end of the road to make this such a desirable place to live. With this comes the desire to improve properties when the opportunity arises and so we have always seen a steady stream of building work and extensions, although the Covenants in place have prevented wholesale over-development. The Residents Committee thought it would be useful to have some guidelines for existing and new members to the Road and Closes to help ensure this remains a great place to live. To that end the following guidelines are presented as an aide memoire for residents and a background brief for architects and other professionals.

### **Considerate Building and Boundary Maintenance**

The Committee would like to encourage a positive approach when undertaking building work. This means briefing the Architects and Builders on some factors they need to consider:

**Covenants** These are in place for all houses and are enforced to prevent overdevelopment, as specified by Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, original owners of the land. Check architects are aware Covenants are in place and rigorously enforced, and these recommendations for considerate building work. Remember the restrictions on over-development, contributing to maintaining the road, height of fences, respecting the field behind the houses into the Valley, and such like.

**Considerate Planning** Where possible talk to neighbours about possible plans before they are too advanced so they can express any concerns they may have to avoid unnecessary legal or planning disputes. Be magnanimous if your ambitions for over-development get rejected by Three Rivers Council, the Committee or the Trustees. Remember the Road and Closes have a life well beyond any particular resident and the rules are there to protect this special environment for all time

**Considerate Building** Ask your Builders to adhere to the rules and norms of the neighbourhood, such as the 20 MPH limit, not parking on the verges, and where possible to park builders vehicles off the roads to allow access for Refuse Lorries and Emergency Vehicles. Where a potential roadblock is anticipated remember to inform neighbours and maybe request a temporary opening of the lower barrier to Scots Hill to provide an alternative route for residents.

**Considerate Maintenance** Remember to keep hedges and trees cut or trimmed back to your Boundary so as not to present dangers to pedestrians. To check the road width is 38 feet boundary to boundary for its whole length so please maintain that width.  
**Verges** - Stones and other deterrents to parking should be at least 12 inches from the road edge of the verge to prevent damage to tyres.

## Appendix – More detail for those who might need it.

Use is made of the Considerate Construction Scheme and guidance published by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and by the Planning Portal.

### 1. Making plans

Before submitting plans for new development it is recommended that building owners discuss these with their neighbours. Relationships with neighbours are important, especially in a community such as this where there is a relatively low turnover of houses and residents tend to stay for a long time.

Be magnanimous if neighbours, the CRS or Trustees object to plans. The Road and Closes have a life beyond that of the tenure of any resident and the Covenants and planning rules are there to protect this special setting for everyone. The planning portal states: *Let your neighbours know about work you intend to carry out to your property. They are likely to be as concerned about work which might affect them as you would be about changes which might affect your enjoyment of your own property*

The Croxley Green Parish Council has identified Copthorne Road as an Area of Character and Heritage and has developed guidance for considerate development that maintains the special character of the road. More details can be found in the following:

<https://www.croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk/index.php/information/planning-development/neighbourhood-plan>

<https://www.croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk/images/Misc/croxley-green-neighbourhood-plan-appendices-referendum-version--compressed.pdf>

Appendix C contains Advisory Guidelines for Household on sensitive development.

Remember if work is close to neighbouring properties it is covered by the Party Wall Act of 1996 which requires disclosure and consultation with neighbours.

### 2. Getting started

When construction work begins, please consider the items listed below. Please be mindful of the fact that the owners of a major building project may have moved out temporarily, and may not be aware of these issues, whereas residents experience a significant impact especially at a time when many are working from home.

#### A. Noise

The TRDC website contains the following statement:

#### Noise from Construction Sites

Construction noise is part of development and therefore a restriction on working hours is prescribed as part of their planning permission. The Control of Pollution Act 1974 gives powers to the Council to restrict working hours and allow conditions to be stipulated on the types of machinery/ plant that are used on construction sites. The Council expect noisy work on construction and demolition sites to be limited to:

- Monday to Friday – 08:00 to 18:00-hrs
- Saturday - 09:00 to 13:00-hrs
- No works on Sundays or Public Holidays

Before any particularly loud construction work, it is polite to give the neighbouring residents advance notice.

Sources of noise may also include:

- Radios – these should not be audible beyond the property boundary
- Sheeting – especially if it is torn and loose, creating noise in the wind
- Contractors vehicles - keeping engines running in the road

#### B. Parking

Please ensure that vehicles are parked off the road as far as this is possible. This is for reasons of safety, clear sightlines, and access for refuse vehicles and emergency vehicles. Please ask contractors and delivery vehicles not to park across neighbouring driveways.

#### C. Mud on the road

Construction vehicles may deposit mud on the road, which can create a slip hazard for pedestrians, cyclists and cars. For large excavations, it is requested that measures to limit this are considered. This would include wheel washing:

#### D Damage to verges

Construction vehicles can cause damage to verges of neighbouring homes. It is considerate to offer reassurance that any such damage will be made good once construction is complete.

#### E Damage to road surface

As this is a private road, residents are responsible for keeping the road surface in good shape. The road was resurfaced in the early 1980s using funds set aside for this purpose by the CRS and with an additional £500 contribution from most households. If it is necessary to cut into the road to connect with utilities such as water or drains, please inform the CRS. This will allow stewards to update the website and to respond to any queries raised by concerned residents. Please undertake to repair any cuts in the road surface carefully so as to maintain its integrity.

#### F Burning waste at business, trade or construction sites

The TRDC website states:

The burning of commercial or trade waste is not permitted on any site, without permission from the Environment Agency.

#### G. Safety

Maintain site safety with adequate signage, and screening; workers wearing appropriate safety gear such as hard hats, high vis jackets and safety footwear; restricting access to the site; ensuring that scaffolding and sheeting are secure, well maintained and removed as soon as possible.

Please ask contractors and delivery vehicles to observe the 20 mph speed limit in the road.