

SUPPLEMENTARY UPDATE AGENDA Planning Committee – 13 DEC 2023

Planning Applications

Agenda Item: 49

Site Address: 206 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead, RG40 3PX

Application No: 231643

Pages: 13-52

Representation

An additional representation has been received following the November meeting. The response to the scheme was submitted by a neighbouring resident at 11 Avery Close. This stated the following:

“Regarding Planning Application 231643. I was not aware nor ever advised about this application and have therefore not been able to register my objection. The proposed development backs onto my property and the size and elevations will directly overlook my property with views into the bedrooms and garden. This is a substantial change to the current property and those around it, I strongly object. It is not aligned with the Finchampstead NDP and being a 3 story property it is also not in line with planning advice for developed properties of this sort.”

(Officer note: Due to the fairly substantial separation distance between the two dwellings, it is not considered there would be any unacceptable overlooking from the replacement property. This matter is covered in the committee report)

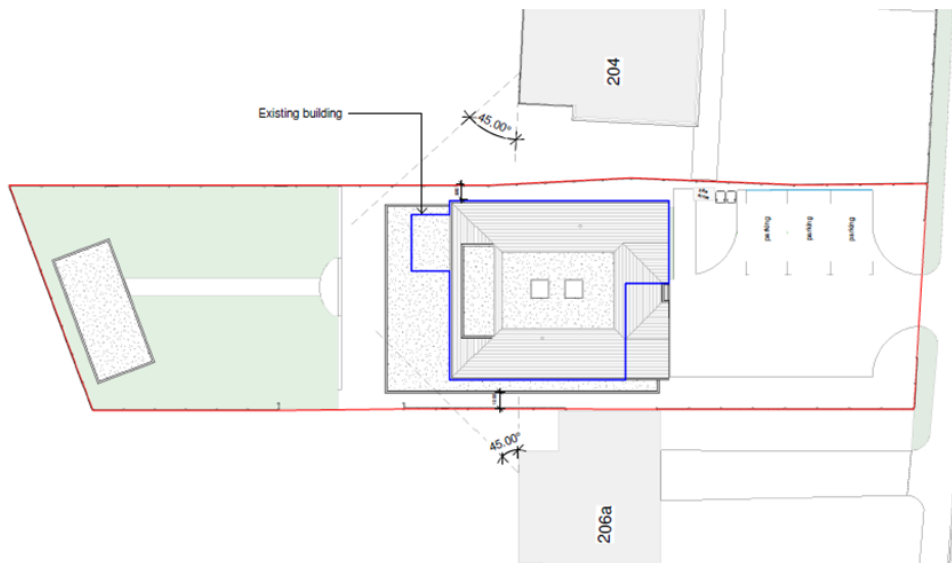
Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

The application site is not within a Strategic Development Location (SDL) and the replacement dwelling has three floors of accommodation, ground, first and the loft. Therefore strictly speaking, it is three storey and therefore contrary to the FNDP.

However, as discussed in the November report, the design of the property is of a conventional two-storey property with a loft conversion. In this regard, the three floors of accommodation would not result in the building being visually out of character or cause any discernible level of harm on the immediate character or appearance of the area. This has been covered in the report.

Neighbouring Amenity

A plan demonstrating the 45-degree test for loss of light has been submitted following the November meeting. This plan has been discussed in the December committee report and is displayed below for ease.



Agenda Item: 50

Site Address: LAND TO THE SOUTH OF GAZELLE CLOSE, WINNERSH, RG41 5HH

Application No: 230099

Pages: 53-92

Flooding and the EA's objection

Further information regarding the EA's objection and how this has been addressed is set out below.

The EA objected to the design because in their view it did not adequately address climate change allowance for flooding. They stated:

'flood risk mitigation measures to address flood risk for the lifetime of the development included in the design are inadequate because they will not make the development resilient to the flood levels for 1% annual exceedance probability flood with a 14% climate change allowance.'

The applicant's Drainage Consultant has advised that:

'the FRA uses a design level for the 1 in 100 year event plus a 20% increase in river level as an allowance for climate change. This is a larger climate change allowance than the 14% stipulated so is a worse case scenario. For clarity, the design flood level used is 39.34 which is the 1 in 100 year level including a 20% climate change allowance. The finished floor level of the store is then a further

950mm above this level at 40.29mAOD. The raised finished floor level of the store will provide flood risk mitigation over the design life of the development.'

The EA has raised concerns regarding the use of voids underneath the building, stating:

'The proposed utilisation of voids being implemented is no longer the preferred method. Reference should be made to paragraph 49 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Document titled "Flood Risk and Coastal Change" which states that "Whilst the use of stilts and voids below buildings may be an appropriate approach to mitigating flood risk to the building themselves, such techniques should not normally be relied upon for compensating for any loss of floodplain storage. This is because voids do not swallow up water to freely flow through them, trash screens get blocked, voids get silted up, they have limited capacity and it is difficult to stop them being used for storing belongings or other materials"

In response to this the applicant's Drainage Engineer has advised:

- 1) The bottom of the grills is set at proposed site levels and are arranged around 3 sides of the building so the water will be allowed to flow freely through them.*
- 2) The store will be subject to regular maintenance that will ensure the grills are clear. The frequency of inspections can be agreed via planning condition. It is worth noting the voids will be on display to the public so it is not in Aldi's interest to leave these filled with detritus.*
- 3) The scheme provides up to 499m³ of additional storage above that which currently exists on the site therefore gives some comfort that there is spare capacity should any issues arise.*
- 4) The development is a retail store and hence the majority of materials on site will be stock for sale and none of this could be stored in the void without security, logistic or hygiene issues. As above, the void will be on view and is it not in Aldi's interest to have this area left untidy. Checking this can be part of the routine maintenance which can be included as part of the maintenance planning condition.*

Overall, a detailed flood plain storage compensation scheme has been developed which offers an additional 499m³ of storage volume in the same format as the extant planning permission. The Council's drainage officer has advised that he is satisfied with the information that has been submitted and the applicant's response to the EA objection. Condition 25 includes a provision to have an effective management and maintenance plan for drainage and flooding infrastructure which directly ensure measure such as voids are regularly inspected, maintained and kept free of obstruction and debris for the lifetime of the development.

Highways

Further information is provided regarding the impact on the highway network.

Junction modelling for 2026 has forecast that for Gazelle Close there would be an average queue over the hour of 1 vehicle in the PM peak (17:00 – 18:00) and there would be 1 vehicle waiting to turn right into Gazelle Road. With the supermarket in operation, the average queue over the same period would be 8 and 4 vehicles during the same peak hour, respectively. The council's Highway Engineer advises that this does not have a major impact on the operation of this junction and would not have a significant impact on vehicles, including buses on Reading Road.

The highway information submitted states that in the weekday PM peak (17:00 – 18:00) the development would result in an additional 64 movements to the site and 54 movements out. Overall, this equates to an approximate 7% increase in vehicle trips when considering all movements along this section of Reading Road during the same period. The PM peak was chosen above the AM peak because it is a busier period and therefore represents a worst-case scenario.

During the Saturday peak (13:00 – 14:00), the development would result in a 17% increase in two-way traffic along Reading Road. With an additional 121 vehicle movements to the site and 162 outward.

The council's Highway Engineer is satisfied that the highway network can accommodate the vehicle movements associate with the development.

Conditions

Following the above comments regarding voids underneath the building, it is recommended that **condition 25** is amended to include an additional clause (iv) that specifically refers to the management and maintenance of such voids:

Flooding and drainage

No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until surface water drainage and flood mitigation works have been implemented in accordance with details that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. the submitted details shall include:

- i) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
- ii) include a timetable for its implementation; and
- iii) provide a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.
- iv) an effective management and maintenance plan which directly ensures voids underneath the building are regularly inspected, maintained and kept free of obstruction and debris for the lifetime of the development.*

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding

and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10

Following a review of the conditions, the trigger to conditions **12, 19, 26** is recommended to be changed to '*prior to the occupation*'. The conditions would read as follows:

Landscape management

Prior to the commencement *occupation* of the development a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned, domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Travel plan

Prior to the commencement *occupation* of the development a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The travel plan shall include a programme of implementation and proposals to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car and provide for periodic review. The travel plan shall be fully implemented, maintained and reviewed as so approved.

Reason: To encourage the use of all travel modes. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policy CP6.

Flood Response Plan

Prior to the commencement *occupation* of the development hereby approved, a Flood Response Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details thereby agreed shall be implemented in perpetuity unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is flood resilient and remains safe during flooding events.

The trigger to **condition 13** is recommended to be change to '*prior to the erection of the supermarket building*'. It would therefore read as follows:

Sustainable design

Prior to the commencement ~~of development~~ *erection of the supermarket building* full details of how the development will achieve a 10% reduction in

carbon emissions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details thereby agreed shall be fully implemented and maintained in working order in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure the development results in a 10% reduction in carbon emissions in accordance with policy CC05

Agenda Item: 51

Site Address: "Lee Spring", 10-12 Latimer Road, Wokingham

Application No: 223691

Pages: 93-189

General

Paragraph 1, page 94 at current reads:

*"The proposed application seeks permission to erect a three block, **three floor** development of 42 apartments of mixed tenure, following the demolition of an existing commercial building 'Lee Springs' off Latimer Road, Wokingham. The proposal further seeks to provide associated parking, cycle parking, access, landscaping, amenity space, biodiversity enhancements and waste storage."*

For the purpose of clarity, this should read:

*"The proposed application seeks permission to erect a **three block, four storey (GF, FF, SF, TF)** development of 42 apartments of mixed tenure, following the demolition of an existing commercial building 'Lee Springs' off Latimer Road, Wokingham. The proposal further seeks to provide associated parking, cycle parking, access, landscaping, amenity space, biodiversity enhancements and waste storage."*

Paragraph 6, page 95 at current reads:

"The policy compliant enhancement of further greenspace, recreation and allotments have been secured by obligation."

Following further assessment, given the viability position of the scheme, CIL liability, alongside the proposed on-site greenspace provision of two communal gardens and private amenity space/ on-site open space enhancements, the planning obligation to secure further greenspace, recreation and allotments has not been agreed by the applicant. In instance, officers have determined that withholding planning permission for failure to provide such an obligation considering the on-site improvements is unlikely to be a defensible position and therefore at this stage is not considered sufficiently necessary to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms. As such, based on the site-specific circumstances and current evidence presented to support TB08, this obligation is no longer being pursued at this time.

Paragraph 11, page 122 at current reads:

*"**CP5** echoes paragraph 110 of the NPPF, which seeks to promote sustainable travel in decisions..."*

For the purpose of clarity, this should read:

“CP6 echoes paragraph 110 of the NPPF, which seeks to promote sustainable travel in decisions...”

Financial Viability

Additional clarity on the financial viability of the proposal was sought by the Chair and Vice Chair for the benefit of committee members.

The submitted financial viability appraisal (FVA) set out that the proposed scheme is in notable deficit based on the agreed figures/ inputs provided. This is as a result of current high construction costs, borrowing rates, level of sustainability enhancements proposed and modest current residential sales values in this peripheral Wokingham Town Centre location. The proposal would therefore not be financially viable to build and subsequently unable to support any affordable housing.

Whilst the precise figures within the FVA remain confidential, the notable contributors to the site's viability position are as follows:

- Circa 82% carbon savings from minimum requirement and highly sustainable design;
- Modest apartment sales prices based on updated market information from Haslams;
- High construction costs (increases in material cost/ labour/ logistics);
- Remediation of previously developed land (inc removal, management and remediation of toxic building materials I.e. Asbestos);
- Finance costs (borrowing and interest);
- Unit Gross Internal Areas (GIA) exceeding Nationally Described Space Standards;

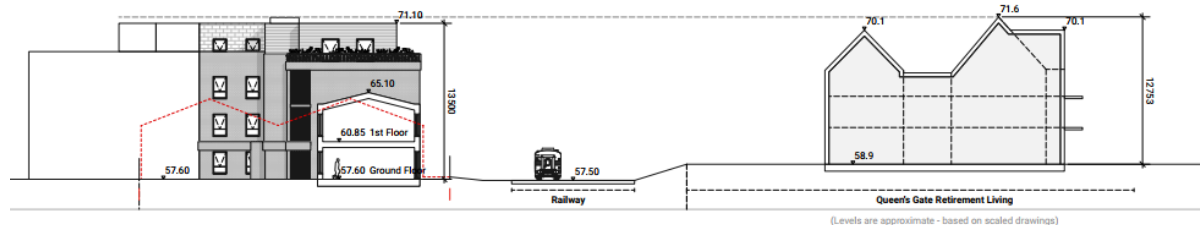
Given viability is a material consideration expressed both within CP5 and the NPPF, notwithstanding the above affordable housing position at this stage, the proposals are in accordance with the Development Plan and national policy.

Members are advised that whilst at the current stage there is no policy requirement to do so and the proposals in terms of affordable housing complied with the viability requirements within local and national policy, the applicant has agreed to accept a late-stage viability review (with profit share), to assess the 'as-built' viability of the proposal. 60% of any profit achieved over the percentage agreed within the originally submitted FVA, will contribute to off-site affordable housing provision via contribution in lieu. This is secured via S106.

Building Heights

Further clarity was requested on the height of the proposed building, and how this is approached by the Wokingham Borough Design Guide.

The building height, at 4 storeys (up to third floor) sits at c13.5 metres. By virtue of the lower land level of the site, the proposal would sit lower in height than the adjoining Queens Gate development as shown below:



In terms of the application of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide, R9 states as follows:

Buildings taller than their surroundings may only be acceptable where they are sited:

- **on major routes, where the scale and significance of the street warrants additional height;**
- **in landmark locations;**
- **fronting onto major green open spaces within built up areas (see Section 8: Rural & Settlement Edge);**
- **fronting key urban public spaces within larger schemes;**
- **in settlement centres where there are already other appropriate examples; and**
- **in local Borough centres, particularly with a mixed-use ground floor**

The application site directly abuts the Southwestern railway line, sits adjacent to the Barkham Recreation Ground, is located within a major development location adjoining a major Borough centre with numerous appropriate examples of 4 storey development.

It is noted that since the inception of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide in 2012, numerous developments of similar height to that proposed (and exceeding this) have been approved in accordance with the Development Plan locally to the site, for example Premier Inn, Carnival Pool, Elms Field, Queens Gate and Peach Place which is ode to Wokingham Town Centre's location (and Major Development Location on the periphery) identified for sustainable growth.

Considering the above, the proposal is considered to accord with the guidance within the Wokingham Borough Design Guide which when combined with accordance with the Development Plan (as expressed within the Officer's Committee Report) justifies the proposed height.

Agenda Item: 52

Site Address: Heathlands Farm, Honey Hill, Wokingham, RG40 3BG

Application No: 231524

Pages: 191-214

No updates.

Agenda Item: 53

**Site Address: Land North of Cutbush Lane, West of Upperwood Farm,
Cutbush Lane, Shinfield. RG2 9AA**

Application No: 231561

Pages: 215-216

pp. 218 - Revised plans have been received which has slightly reduced the floor area of the proposed workshop. This down from 1375m² as stated in the summary information on page 218 of the committee report to 1250m² (a reduction of 5m for the north west and south east facing elevations). This is a minor amendment and will reduce the overall visual impact of the proposed building. On this basis there is no need to re-consult neighbours and the assessment on character etc is not material affected by the changes.

pp. 227 – amend the resolution A to include the requirement to provide Employment Skills Plan contributions as set out below:

- ii – secure a Employment Skills Plan contribution / mitigation

re-number the administrative clauses accordingly.

pp.227 – supersede the plans cited in condition 2 and replace these with the following:

18546-SBR-FS-XX-DR-A-80401 Rev7
18546-SBR-FS-XX-DR-A-80403 Rev5
1008-CSL-ZZ-XX-DR-S-011 RevF
1000 CSL ZZ XX DR S 012 RevF
1008-CSL-ZZ-XX-DR-S-013 Rev E

pp. 235 – add in a bullet point for reason for refusal 1:

- Employment Skills Plan contribution / mitigation

pp. 235 – add in MDD DPD policy TB12 for the reason for refusal.

Pre-emptive site visits

None at this time

Non-Householder Appeal Decisions

Non-Householder Appeal Decisions will be reported quarterly prior to the following meetings as part of the Supplementary Planning Agenda:

- January 2024
- April 2024
- July 2024