



PLANNING COMMITTEE - WEDNESDAY, 12TH AUGUST, 2020

In response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the above meeting is to be held virtually in line with Government guidelines. In place of public speaking, consultees, agents and applicants were invited to provide a written statement of up to 390 words (total per category) within the following categories – Town & Parish Councils, Objectors, Supporters, and Ward Members. The submissions as received by the given deadlines are attached.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage'.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive

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Planning Committee –12 August 2020

Written Public Submissions

Application No.201149 - Land East of Oak Avenue South of Sadler Crescent and north of A329 London Road RG40 1LH

Town and Parish Council – No submission(s) received

Objectors – No submission(s) received

Supporters – On behalf of the applicant, WBC.

- 1 “The Scheme is part of a local commitment to relieve congestion along key road corridors and is supported by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) in their work to deliver cross-boundary solutions to local transport network issues. The proposed Site was previously identified as part of the Keephatch Beech development, and has been designated as a Park and Ride (P&R) facility within WBC’s Core Strategy (2010), reinforcing the case that a P&R Scheme at this location forms part of a long-established preference for the Council’s transport solutions for reducing congestion and improving connectivity to Wokingham and Bracknell.
- 2 The Scheme would complement other A329 strategic corridor improvement schemes promoted by both WBC and BFC in contributing to mitigate the impact arising from new developments. The Scheme will provide 254 car parking spaces and provide an alternative travel choice along the A329 corridor. The Scheme aligns with the Council’s ambitions as the Site is allocated in WBC’s Local Transport Plan (Strategy 2011 – 2026).
- 3 The desired outcome of the Scheme is to improve accessibility through public transport by providing an alternative method of transport into Wokingham and Bracknell town centres, which would encourage more people to switch from using the private car to a more sustainable transport mode. By removing car trips, the Scheme would result in improved journey times to Wokingham and Bracknell town centres, especially at peak times which would have beneficial effects on reducing congestion and therefore driver stress, whilst facilitating air quality improvements and noise reduction. Overall, the Scheme will ensure public transport is more inclusive by ensuring good quality bus services to and from key destinations in the area.
- 4 The car park design include spaces and charging points for electric vehicles which will help reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change. In 2019 WBC declared a “climate emergency”, the Scheme contributes to the steps WBC

is taking to reduce adverse environmental impacts and improve public health in the area, and to make WBC carbon neutral by 2030.

- 5 The Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) submitted with the planning application provides an overview of the Scheme; sets out the need for the Scheme; assessed the material considerations, and examined how any residual adverse effects will be mitigated. The PDAS has assessed the Scheme against relevant planning policy and material consideration.”

Ward Members – No submission(s) received

Application No.200378 - Dinton Activity Centre, Sandford Lane, Hurst, RG10 0SU

Town and Parish Council - No submission(s) received

Objectors - No submission(s) received

Supporters – On behalf of the applicant, WBC.

“Chair, Members, good evening.

The proposals presented here this evening are to replace and expand existing important community uses that are offered on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council. The existing Dinton Activity Centre has seen better days and the proposals presented here are to provide modern, high-quality and sustainable buildings, to allow the Council to continue offering a range of outdoor activities, along with important Council run courses.

The improved facilities, whilst not expanding the day-to-day offering of the centre during the peak season, will allow the centre to operate through a larger portion of the year, providing important facilities to children and adults. This is largely thanks to the proposed new activity hall and improved indoor classroom area that can be opened up to provide additional lecture theatre style space.

The proposals are a result of extensive pre-application discussions with the Council’s officers, presentations to members of the public and careful review of potential impacts that the proposed development may have on the locality. It is considered that the resultant development has been carefully considered and will improve the offer at the site, whilst having no impact on neighbouring properties.

Whilst not a specific requirement of this proposal, due to its scale, a number of sustainable technologies will be utilised in the building to ensure it reduces its energy consumption needs and lowers its CO2 output.

Members, the scheme presented here this evening has been carefully considered, accords with relevant planning policy and provides a valuable and much needed contribution to local community services provided by the Council. As such, the

Council's Officer has recommended approval of the application and I request members support the positive recommendation and approve this application."

Ward Members – No submission(s) received

Application No.200951 - Sonning Golf Club, Duffield Road, Woodley, RG4 6GJ

Town and Parish Council – On behalf of Sonning Parish Council.

"Sonning is a Limited Development Location with limited access to shopping facilities and opportunities to access facilities within acceptable walking distance. Occupiers would rely heavily on cars. Properties immediately to the left of the site are low, 1 ½ to 2 storey, individually designed dwellings, contributing to the area's rural character. The plot, together with the Golf Club is in the countryside, where inappropriate development is considered 'harmful' and acts as a green buffer between Sonning and Woodley.

The outline plans (161529), allowed at appeal, included an illustrative view of the proposed development, showing modest detached 1 ½ storey dwellings, some detached, some semi-detached and a terrace of three.

The proposed dwellings are large 2 ½ storey dwellings of some height, that will tower over neighbouring dwellings and aimed at larger families than previously indicated. The 8 '5' bedroom, detached dwellings all have 'bonus' rooms on the second floor and must be considered as 6-bedroomed. Therefore, is sufficient parking provided?

These changes will have a greater impact on the area than previously suggested at Appeal and represents overdevelopment of the site and are out of keeping with the area due to their height, bulk and size.

The Appeal Inspector said of 161529 '***it is likely that the layout would be of an increased density and less spacious than the majority of surrounding development. The residential development would also diminish the existing value of green open space when viewed from adjacent residential properties***' This assessment was based on the illustrative view provided with the application. The impact will be so much greater if the proposed much larger dwellings are approved.

The Inspector also said: '***The proposal would be contrary to the countryside protection, environmental quality and landscape protection aims of policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and policies CC02 and TB21 of the Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 (MDD)***'.

In December 2019, Sonning Parish Council carried out a speed survey along that stretch of Pound Lane with support from WBC Highway Officers, in December 2019. A daily vehicle count of almost 7000 a day southbound towards the proposed entrance/exit, which equates to 14000 vehicles per day. Speeds of 65 mph and 60 mph, were recorded, indicating how dangerous the proposed exit would be, which is close to the scene of a recent fatal accident."

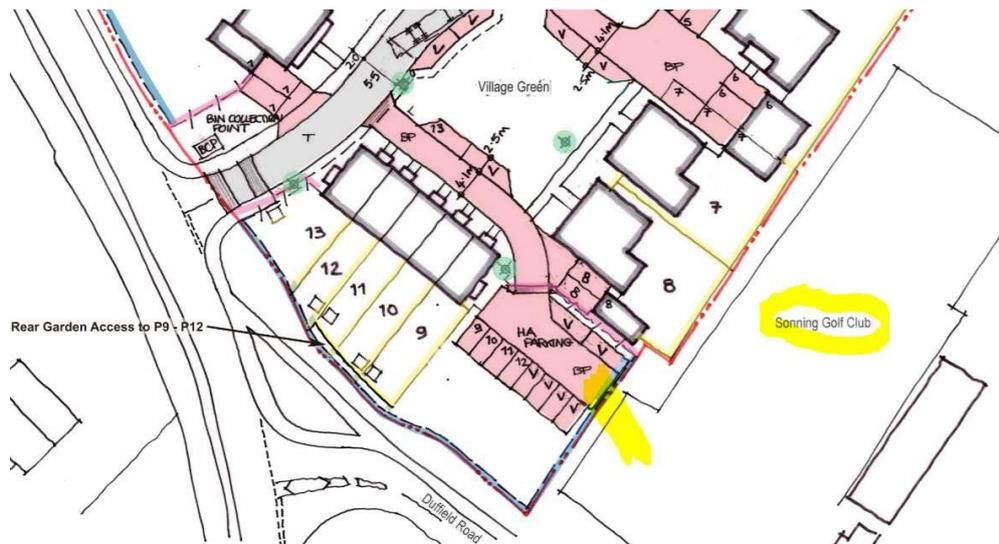
Objectors – Paul Etherington, resident.

“The planning reasons highlighted in my, and many others’ previous submissions in relation to this site/development remain, but the Planning Inspectorate regrettably elected to ignore them for reason of land supply which remains contested.

I would highlight that since the previous substantive application, Pound Lane, that many objectors highlighted as a dangerous stretch of road, has tragically seen a fatal accident. We highlighted:

- speeding
- flooding
- that the proposed access point is on a bend
- dangerously close to the points at which Mustard Lane, Duffield Road & West Drive join Pound Lane

Had the applicant chosen to provide site access through the golf club car park (ringed on their plan) perhaps at the indicated point into the car park it would be considerably less dangerous than the position proposed.



It would also avoid the developer cutting through the tree line/verge which are owned by Wokingham Borough and covered by Tree Preservation Order TPO 1505/2015. Notwithstanding that one mature TPO'd oak tree was mysteriously felled over a Bank Holiday weekend, it is sprouting well from what was left and there are still a number of trees and an attractive hedgerow making up the street scene (which officers previously highlighted as valuable).”

Supporters – Chris Rees (Alfred Homes), applicant.

“1.1 This Statement has been prepared in support of the consideration of the Reserved Matters Application on land at Sonning Golf Club, pursuant to the Outline Planning Approval granted for the erection of 13 dwellings on land adjacent to the

Golf Club, at which point the principle and the vehicular access for thirteen dwellings was approved.

1.2 The Reserved Matters application has been the subject of a pre-application submission with the Borough Council and has therefore been shaped by the advice received from Officers concerning the siting, scale, landscaping and appearance of the houses in line with best practice advocated by the Council.

1.3 As per the Outline Approval, the proposal consists of eight open market properties and five affordable housing properties, set around a central landscaped green. The houses are tenure blind and adopt a classical approach to their architecture and built form.

1.4 The proposal has been supported by a detailed landscape and planting plan, the focus of which is the shared green space within the centre of the development to which the residents have access and can enjoy.

1.5 The application has been the subject of full due diligence with account taken of the distances and orientation to the adjacent residential dwelling to the north and the long-term preservation of the trees on site subject to the tree preservation order.

1.6 Moreover, the proposal has been shaped and formed with Officers, with no objections from any statutory consultee and with a resulting architectural approach that will add to the character of the area and deliver an array of housing types and tenure.

1.7 With the principal of residential development and the access already established, we would respectfully ask that the outstanding Reserved Matters for the 13 new homes before the Committee today are approved.”

Ward Members – Michael Firmager, Sonning Ward Member.

“I was aware this application as a major development would come before the Planning Committee if officers were minded to approve the application. However, I listed the application as the local Borough Council Member.

I am against this application for the following reasons:-

- 1) It is out of character with the area. Also, it is overbearing and with restricted room for development;
- 2) It is inconsistent with the conditions set out by the Appeal Inspector, especially with the increase in the height of the buildings, which is of detriment to the character to the village;
- 3) The access will be onto Pound Lane causes me great concern, which is extremely dangerous being on a bend. Pound Lane itself can be either a fast road or one with traffic jams depending upon the amount of traffic on the A4 going into Reading or onto the A329(M). This development will only add more traffic to an already over loaded road network.

I hope this committee will take on my comments mentioned here and before, together with those of Sonning Parish Council and the Sonning & Sonning Eye Society and refuse this application.”

Application No.201143 - Land adjacent to 166 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead

Town and Parish Council – Gordon Veitch, Finchampstead Parish Council.

“We object to this inappropriate overdevelopment of the site. The proposed development would cause issues with privacy for residents of The Dittons due to the close proximity of the static/mobile homes.

We believe WBC currently has adequate provisions for gypsy and traveller pitches. We understand the existing plans appear inaccurate, the layout of existing pitches is incorrect and do not represent the current layout of the site.

If WBC is minded to approve this application we ask that conditions are added to any approval:

- Siting of mobile homes to be an acceptable distance from adjoining properties.
- Landscaping to offer satisfactory visual protection to existing properties.
- Light pollution, any street lights to be positioned and directed within the site.”

Objectors - No submission(s) received

Supporters – Emily Temple, agent.

“Thank you Chairman, and good evening.

We are pleased to bring forward this site allocated in the draft local plan update, for prospective development. As Councillors may know, the land at number 166 has been home to an existing gypsy and traveller site since 2008 when two pitches were approved, with expansion to 4 pitches following planning approval in 2014.

The site is located immediately adjacent to the Modest Development Location of Finchampstead. The site is operated by the occupants and owner of 166 Nine Mile Ride; being so close they are able to keep a watchful eye over the running of the site. The development would also use the existing access and hardstanding so there would be no apparent visual change when viewed from the road.

The current council need for pitches is identified as 5.5 pitches. Whilst some permissions have been granted they have not yet been implemented. Being an extension of an existing site, the land at number 166 is both suitable for development, available and deliverable immediately. This meets an ongoing need for household expansion as existing Gypsy Traveller children in the area grow up and form their own independent households. A larger site such as proposed is well below the 15 pitch maximum set in Government advice, whilst still accommodating larger single family groups.

I am pleased to note there is no objection from statutory consultees such as Highways and Environmental Health. I can confirm a written response was sent to a Planning Contravention Notice issued to the applicant during the course of the application. The site is being operated fully in accordance with the existing permission for 4 pitches, and the applicant is committed to complying with the conditional requirements indicated by officers, such as landscaping, and a legal agreement to secure SPA mitigation.

I hope that you are reassured by my comments today. We trust that we have worked well with officers throughout the application process to date, responding to queries as requested. It's therefore respectfully requested that your officer's recommendation be supported today. Thank you."

Ward Members – Simon Weeks, Finchampstead South Ward Member.

"Residents have expressed significant concern about this proposal to double the number of pitches on this site within a residential area. 4 pitches were allowed on appeal in 2009.

The site is constrained as follows:

- a TPO applies to the site;
- 12 established residential houses share a boundary with this site;
- the site is designated as Countryside;
- WBC currently has a 9.09 years land supply for gypsy and traveller pitches;
- the application conflicts with a CP11.

Despite the TPO, a number of trees on the site have been lost but as you will see at paragraph 31, it is noted trees *are shown illustratively*. We should adopt a precautionary approach and secure an Arboricultural Assessment first, to ensure no further harm to the remaining protected trees.

Looking at the proposed site layout, you will see that 3 of the new proposed pitches (numbers 5, 6 and 7) are positioned right on the boundary and will impact on the amenity of numbers 8 and 9 The Dittons. I have received repeated complaints over the last few years about burning of plastic waste and noise, so the positioning of additional pitches so close to the boundary is inappropriate and likely to exacerbate this problem.

It is possible the site could be re-configured to minimise the potential impact on neighbours. Additionally an appropriate survey of the TPO is required to support this application, so I cannot support this application and would urge the Committee to refuse it in its current form."

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