

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 14 JULY 2021 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.05 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Chris Bowring (Chairman), Angus Ross (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Stephen Conway, Pauline Jorgensen, Rebecca Margetts, Andrew Mickleburgh, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Bill Soane

**Committee Members in Attendance**

Councillors: Gary Cowan

**Councillors Present and Speaking**

Councillors: Prue Bray

**Officers Present**

Connor Corrigan, Service Manager - Planning and Delivery  
Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager  
Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor  
Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management  
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

**Case Officers Present**

Nick Chancellor  
Christopher Howard  
Simon Taylor

**11. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted from Carl Doran.

Gary Cowan attended the meeting virtually, and was therefore marked as in attendance, and was not able to propose, second, or vote on items.

**12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 June 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**13. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**14. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS**

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

**15. APPLICATION NO 210210 LAND TO THE SOUTH OF CUTBUSH LANE,  
SHINFIELD, RG2 9AA**

**Proposal:** Full application for the erection of TV Studio Building including studio space, workshop/storage area and production/office along with parking facilities.

**Applicant:** University of Reading

The Committee considered a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 17 to 74.

The Committee were advised that the supplementary planning agenda included:

- Correction to the site address, to state Land at Thames Valley Science Park, Shinfield, RG2 9LH;
- Addition of CP16 to the list of policies;
- Clarification regarding policy TB13 relating to this application;
- Clarification relating to floor areas;
- Updated condition 3 via insertion of a number of plan numbers;
- Clarification of condition 3 to state that 175 additional car parking spaces would be required for this development;
- Updated wording of condition 14;
- Update to condition 17 to extend delivery hours to 1am.

Mark Owen, on behalf of the applicant, spoke in support of the application. Mark stated that the global market for film and TV production in the UK had grown rapidly, due to a number of factors including digital streaming services and the continued attraction of the UK and its skill base as a location for filming and post-production work. There was a central demand for studio space outside of the M25, which was a key reason why the proposed location at Thames Valley Science Park was suitable. Mark added that the development of the science park was a key driver in improving skills, productivity and competition in a rapidly changing global economy. The proposals would form part of the University's future concept for the Science Park in creating "Innovation Valleys", focussed on film, TV and media. Mark stated that the proposals would create employment opportunities including 95 direct full-time employees, whilst ensuring that student engagement was a priority via close working with the University of Reading's School of Film, Theatre and Television, offering work placements, specialist training and mentoring schemes. Mark added that the design of the building had been carefully considered, and dark metal cladding was proposed to minimise the visual impact of the building. The existing earth bund to the south of the proposed development would assist in reducing the visual impact of the building as viewed from residential dwellings to the south of the Eastern Relief Road. Mark stated that additional screening would be placed on the existing earth bund, secured by condition, to further screen the facility. Mark stated that there was good pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the site, in addition to a frequent bus service. The parking arrangements for the development would utilise the existing Science Park car park in addition to an adjacent car park extension area which had planning consent. Mark concluded by stating that carbon emissions would be reduced by fourteen percent as a result of the proposed development, above the minimum ten percent reduction required by policy, and this was in addition to a biodiversity net gain of twelve percent, including the planting of an area of wildflower grassland.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether apprentices would be available for young people within the Borough. Chris Howard, case officer, confirmed that the applicant would be making a contribution to the Borough employment skills plan, and additional detail would be provided in future.

Andrew Mickleburgh sought assurances as to how far the earth bund would be extended in the south eastern direction, queried whether any other additional planting would occur on the site, queried why there was no landscaping plan attached to the large car parking area, and sought assurances that given the large public audiences that shows could attract – whether the revised 175 spaces was sufficient. Chris Howard stated that the earth bund was in situ on the site and ran to the eastern relief roundabout. Chris added that

officer would seek a contingency sum of S106 contributions to strengthen landscaping on the Hawthorn site. Chris confirmed that officers felt that the nearest residential properties would be sufficiently screened from the proposed buildings. Chris confirmed that the car parking was part of a separately approved reserved matters application, which had a landscaping condition attached. Chris confirmed that Highways officers were satisfied that the proposed 175 spaces were sufficient.

Stephen Conway sought clarification regarding the alternate recommendation, and queried whether public audiences could be accommodated within the proposed 175 spaces. Connor Corrigan, Service Manager - Planning and Delivery, confirmed that the alternative recommendation gave officers authorisation to refuse planning permission without having to come back to Committee in the event that a S106 agreement had not been completed in a timely manner. Relating to audience members and car parking, Chris Howard stated that around 350 to 550 audience members could be expected, with an average of three people per car. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that there was a regular bus service to the site, and an event management plan would be required for major events. Judy added that much of the wider Science Park car park would be vacant in the evening, as office staff would have left for the day.

Pauline Jorgensen queried whether there was additional detail regarding the bus service, and sought clarification relating to the accommodation block as stated on agenda page 17. Judy Kelly stated that there was a public bus service which ran 200m from the site, and the applicant was required to produce an event management plan for major events, which could run a shuttle bus to and from the railway station for example. This plan would be considered by officers, and could be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Chris Howard confirmed that the accommodation block referred to the area for the dressing rooms, behind the scenes, and public holding areas.

Angus Ross commented on his surprise that the car parking was taking up so much space, rather than being of a two-storey nature. Angus queried whether amended condition 14 should be reworded, to state that agreement of the local Planning Authority was required. Connor Corrigan stated that the condition could be reworded as follows "No recording or filming activity shall take place between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00 Mondays to Sundays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local planning Authority." Angus Ross proposed this new wording, which was seconded by Chris Bowring, and subsequently agreed by the Committee.

Sam Akhtar queried how many freelancers and contractors may work on site, and how many electric vehicle charging points would be provided. Chris Howard stated that officers had no control over the configuration of staff on site. In relation to electric vehicle charging points, the car park was approved in 2016 and therefore associated conditions could not be revisited at this stage.

Gary Cowan was of the opinion that in a climate emergency, every effort should be made to have electric vehicle charging points for all relevant planning applications. Judy Kelly stated that that electric vehicle charging would be available to the north of the car park, and the travel plan for the site committed to additional electric vehicle charging points as and when demand rose.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether the electric car charging infrastructure would be developed, to allow easy expansion in the future. Connor Corrigan confirmed that part

of the car park was already in existence, and the extended area of the car park would allow the infrastructure to be placed underground as the car park was developed.

**RESOLVED** That application number 210210 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 19 to 25, amended conditions 3 and 17 as set out in the supplementary planning agenda, and amended condition 14 as resolved by the Committee.

**16. APPLICATION NO 203616 HOGWOOD FARM SHEERLANDS ROAD  
ARBORFIELD**

**Proposal:** Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2179 (as varied by 181194, dated 14/11/2018). The Reserved Matters comprise details of 235 dwellings across parcels P2, P3 & P7 with access via development parcel P1 and the proposed Nine Mile Ride Extension bus loop; emergency access via Sheerlands Road, associated internal access roads, parking, provision of Public Open Space (PG1), children's play areas including a LEAP, LAP and LLAP and NEAP, together with parking, cycleways, footpaths, landscaping and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS). Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered

**Applicant:** Legal and General Homes Communities (Arborfield) Limited

The Committee considered a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 75 to 120.

The Committee were advised that there were no updates within the supplementary planning agenda.

Laura Powell, on behalf of the applicant, spoke in support of the application. Laura stated that the Hogwood Farm site was granted outline planning permission in 2017 for a mixed-use development including 1500 new homes and formed a part of the wider Arborfield Garrison SDL. Laura added that the first phase of this development included 178 new homes, of which approximately 90 were now occupied. Laura stated that the southern section of the Nine Mile Ride extension had also been approved in early 2020, with delivery expected next year. Laura added that the application before the Committee comprised the next residential phase of the development, comprising three development parcels which would lie immediately next to the south of Phase 1. Part of this application included proposals for a large area of open space, which would provide a green connection through the development to the SANG at the south of the site. Laura added that this would incorporate the wider bridleway network, as well as children's play areas and a trim trail exercise area. Laura stated that the application would deliver 235 high quality homes, ranging from 1 bedroom apartments to 4 bedroom houses, including provision of 82 affordable homes which was policy compliant. Laura added that the applicant had worked hard with officers to ensure that the proposals were both policy compliant and respected the character of the surrounding area. The proposals met Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC's) parking standards, and would achieve a ten percent reduction in carbon emissions, in part via the installation of photovoltaic panels and use of fabric first. Laura concluded by stating that the proposals would include the planting of 443 new trees across the residential area, and cited that no objections had been received from the public or stakeholders.

Angus Ross queried whether the payment for the SANG had been received and finalised. Nick Chancellor, case officer, confirmed that this had been agreed at the outline stage, and the SANG was now open.

Stephen Conway voiced his approval for on-site provision of 35 percent affordable housing. The remaining Committee members concurred with this sentiment.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried whether parking standards would be met if garages were not used within the calculation, queried whether garages could be converted to other uses, sought details on the number of homes being fitted with photovoltaic panels, and queried whether it could be assured that upgrade works to the water and sewerage networks would be completed by Thames Water prior to occupation. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that if garages were disregarded then there would still be provision for two parking spaces per property across the site. Judy added that the garages could not be converted without prior planning permission approval. Nick Chancellor stated that the site would reduce carbon emissions by a figure of 10 percent by a variety of means including photovoltaic panel provision, however he did not have the precise figures regarding photovoltaic panels to hand. Regarding the sewerage network, Nick stated that outline works were to be in place prior to the occupation of the 200<sup>th</sup> property. The first phase of the development included just over 200 properties, and Thames Water were working closely with the community and WBC to ensure that there were no issues.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented that in her experience, only a very small number of residents used the garage for parking. Rachelle queried whether the visitor spaces would be situated on the site, queried whether electric vehicle charging infrastructure would be installed prior to occupation, and queried whether gas appliances should be being installed in a climate emergency. Judy Kelly stated that research had been carried out which showed that 50 percent of residents used their garages for parking. Judy added that there were 85 unallocated spaces spread around the site, and officers were awaiting more detail regarding the proposed electric vehicle strategy for the site. Connor Corrigan, Service Manager – Planning and Delivery, stated that officers were applying existing policy in relation to the climate agenda. Connor added that building regulations would change in time to restrict gas boilers at new developments.

Gary Cowan commented that Legal and General had been very good locally, and had worked with the community on improvements. Gary asked that traffic calming be explored for the sake of residents in the local area.

Pauline Jorgensen queried whether the estate roads would be built to an adoptable standard. Judy Kelly confirmed that the roads would be built to an adoptable standard via a highways construction condition, and the applicant was likely to offer the roads for adoption in the future.

**RESOLVED** That application number 203616 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 76 to 84.

#### **17. APPLICATION NO 211045 136 CLIFTON ROAD, WOKINGHAM**

**Proposal:** Householder application for the proposed conversion of existing garage to provide habitable accommodation to facilitate use of the property as supported living with a live-in member of staff, including internal alterations and installation of 1 no. Air Source Heat Pump to the side of the property.

**Applicant:** Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee considered a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 121 to 140.

The Committee were advised that the supplementary planning agenda included an update relating to the ground source heat pump included within the planning application.

**RESOLVED** That application number 211045 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 121 to 123.

**18. APPLICATION NO 211634 HATCH GATE FARM, LINES ROAD, HURST**

**Proposal:** Full application for the proposed erection of an agricultural building

**Applicant:** Belcher Farms

The Committee considered a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 141 to 158.

The Committee were advised that paragraph 23 on page 149 of the agenda should refer to further evaluation, rather than elevation.

Gary Cowan queried why this application could not be carried out under permitted development. Simon Taylor, case officer, stated that this was classified as a major development due to the red line area and the floor space of the proposal.

Stephen Conway queried whether this application could set a precedent for other built forms on the site, should the barn no longer be needed. Simon Taylor stated that this application had a demonstrable need for agricultural purposes, and unless a future application was for a different agricultural building then it was unlikely that a different type of built form would be approved, although any future application would have to be considered on its own merits.

**RESOLVED** That application number 211634 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 142 to 144.

**19. APPLICATION NO 211398 FORMER SHOWCASE CINEMA CAR PARK/PARK & RIDE SITE, LODDON BRIDGE AND THE BADER WAY INTERCHANGE, WINNERSH**

**Proposal:** Full application for the proposed change of use of the former car park to the storage of materials, shoring and temporary works equipment and vehicles associated with civil engineering business (Use Class B8), including welfare unit, gates, and fencing

**Applicant:** Hochsoll Properties Ltd

The Committee considered a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 159 to 186.

The Committee were advised that there were no updates within the supplementary planning agenda.

Christian Leigh, agent, spoke in support of the application. Christian stated that there had been a productive pre-application process between the applicant and Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) officers. Christian added that the site was woefully unused, and that the use cases of the site were restricted due to the potential for flooding on the associated land. Christian stated that this application would provide a much needed viable use for the site, which would provide employment within the local area. Christian stated that the application would provide additional planting and secure fencing.

Prue Bray, Ward Member, commented on the application. Prue stated that the site flooded, however this did not preclude use of the site for storage purposes. Prue stated that one such flooding incident in 2007 was catastrophic, and caused a number of vehicles to be written off despite the flood warning system being in operation, as car had become marooned within the car park and could not reach the exit roads. Prue commented that she would hate to see this happen again, and asked that an informative be added to make the applicant aware that flood water had the potential to block the exit roads from the site.

Bill Soane commented that reference within the report to Colemans Moor Lane should have referred to Colemans Moor Road. Bill stated that he had spoken to local residents, who were mostly now content with the proposals. A few queries remained, including whether there would be any temporary tower lighting, whether there was potential for any harmful chemicals to spill into the Loddon in the event of a flood, and whether the opening hours could begin at 8am rather than 7am. Bill commented that the site flooded more frequently than every five years, and queried whether vehicles could not enter the site out of hours. Simon Taylor, case officer, clarified that tower lighting would not be allowed under conditions. Simon added that he would envisage that the vehicles would fill up with fuel off-site, meaning that no fuel would be stored at the site. Simon clarified that the 7am opening time was fairly typical for this use type as it builders required access to the materials early in the day to allow for an early start on building sites. Simon confirmed that no vehicles could access the site out of the prescribed 7am to 7pm hours.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented that the site could get very damp and wet, and advised that the applicant should park vehicles carefully to accommodate for this. Rachelle added that this was a good use for the site in her opinion, so long as harmful chemicals were not stored on-site.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried how many entry and exit points were on the site and whether these allowed for a safe evacuation should there be a sudden and severe flood, queried whether a condition could be added to require an evacuation plan to be created to minimise risks of flooding damage, and queried whether the proposals could increase flooding risks to nearby residential properties. Simon Taylor stated that the flood risk assessment had discussed the associated risks on the site, and the applicant was planning to store a lot of expensive equipment on site and it was therefore in their own interest to be aware of the risk of flooding. There were no changes to the existing ground on the site, and the site was to remain open for water to pass through the fences in the event of flooding. Simon stated that an evacuation plan would not provide any additional securities for WBC, and it was in the applicants own best interest to have plans in place to ensure their equipment was not damaged by flooding.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried why informatives 1 and 2 could not be secured conditions, queried whether the speed limits on Bader Way in relation to the two nearby roundabouts caused any safety concerns. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, stated that should planning permission be granted for this application, this

did not give any rights to the applicant to use the public right of way areas for storage, which was why only informatives were required in this instance. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that Highways officers were happy with the proposals. The existing speed limit was 40MPH, and the site had existing access established. Judy added that vehicles would turn left in to the site and left out of the site, pulling vehicles off of the main stream of traffic onto a separate lane prior to reaching the site. Judy stated that the site had previously been used as a park and ride site, with buses regularly entering and exiting the site safely.

Angus Ross was of the opinion that this site was unsafe to be used, due to the site being within flood zone three. Angus stated his surprise that the Environment Agency had not objected to this application on safety grounds. Angus added that he was concerned that the river Loddon could become contaminated by the vehicles and other materials being stored on the site in the event of a flood, and stated that he could not support this application.

Gary Cowan was of the opinion that no materials should be stored on site which could contaminate the Loddon in the event of a flood. Gary queried the level of tree removal on the site. Simon Taylor stated that condition 9 could be strengthened to state specifically what could be stored on site. Relating to trees, Simon stated that tree removal would be minimal on site.

Sam Akhtar raised concerns relating to part of the site being in flood zone three, and the risk of pollutants such as red diesel being released into the river in the event of a flood. Sam added that he could not support the application on this basis.

Pauline Jorgensen queried whether the route of the nearby cycleway would be appropriate and not place between fences, and queried whether the on-ramp was being re-opened. Simon Taylor stated that the public right of way was outside of the red line boundary for this site, however the applicant was fully open to working with WBC officers in relation to the public right of way in the future. Judy Kelly confirmed that the existing access was deemed acceptable by officers, and there were no plans to re-open the on-ramp

Stephen Conway proposed a new condition, which stipulated what could be stored on-site, to be agreed in consultation with the Chairman and the local Ward Members. This proposal was seconded by Chris Bowring, carried, and added to the list of conditions.

Andrew Mickleburgh proposed a new condition, obliging the application to develop an evacuation strategy for the site, to safeguard employees and visitors to the site amongst others. This proposal was seconded by Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, carried, and added to the list of conditions.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented that vehicles did drive at speed in that area, and that there was an additional exit into the adjacent cinema car park.

**RESOLVED** That application number 211398 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 160 to 164, additional condition stating specifically what could be stored on-site as resolved by the Committee, and additional condition requiring creation of an evacuation strategy for the site as resolved by the Committee.