

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2016 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.00 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Tim Holton (Chairman), Chris Singleton (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bowring, Philip Houldsworth, John Kaiser, Malcolm Richards, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Bill Soane

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: David Lee

Officers Present

Connor Corrigan, Strategic Delivery Manager
Chris Easton, Service Manager, Highways Development Management
Ian Bailey, Service Manager, Development Management
Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor
Arabella Yandle
Madeleine Shopland

Case Officers Present

David Smith
Alex Thwaites
Graham Vaughan

53. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Wayne Smith.

54. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MEMBERS' UPDATE

There are a number of references to the Member's Update within these minutes. The Members' Update was circulated to all present prior to the meeting. A copy is attached.

55. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Kaiser stated that he had been asked to list item 61 – Application no 161452 1-3 Coppid Hill, Wokingham by Barkham Parish Council for planning reasons. He asked that it be noted that he had not formed an opinion on the application and that he would base his decision on the case put before the Committee.

56. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

There were no items withdrawn or deferred.

**57. APPLICATION NO - 161839 BELL FARM, BELL FOUNDRY LANE,
WOKINGHAM**

Proposal: HYBRID APPLICATION

OUTLINE APPLICATION: A section of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) and associated infrastructure, including a cycle and footway. (All Matters Reserved)

FULL APPLICATION: Phased development for the erection of 128 dwellings and associated areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), open spaces and

drainage/attenuation. Two accesses from Bell Foundry Lane and a temporary cycle and footway. Demolition of existing farm buildings and one dwelling.

Applicant: Berkeley Homes

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 11 to 58.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed amendments to condition 2 to include Phasing Plan 410.CP.105;
- Proposed amendment to condition 11 regarding external plumbing and pipework;
- Proposed amendment to condition 28 to clarify the occupation of development phases following the completion of pedestrian and cycle links;
- Proposed deletion of condition 32 as the SANG was being dealt with comprehensively under the S106 agreement;
- Proposed additional condition regarding the requirement of visibility splays prior to commencement of vehicular access onto or from Twyford Road. This was in the interests of highway safety;
- Consultation response from the Environment Agency who confirmed that they had no objection to the application.

Members had visited the site on Friday 7 October.

In absence of Kevin Morgan, Wokingham Town Council, who had registered to speak in objection to the application, the attention of Members was drawn to a submission from Wokingham Town Council within the report.

Elkie Lees spoke in favour of the application on behalf of Berkley Homes, applicant. She stated that Thames Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England were satisfied with the application and that it met the requirements and conditions set by the Council. She commented on the width of the road, stating that the developers were seeking an application to widen the road and that to carry out the works, with a minimum loss of mature trees on the opposite side of the road, the developer was gifting land to facilitate the construction of the Northern Distributor Road. She also stated that the development would result in the provision of 24 acres of new public open space and CIL and Section 106 contributions to the Council of over £4m.

Councillor David Lee, Ward Member, spoke against the application. He raised concerns about the design and whether it met national policies / guidance and the Council's own policies regarding the layout, properties backing onto main roads, road widths and the use of fencing. He also questioned the size of gardens, which in some cases fell below the Council's policy of 11m in length.

In response to Member questions, Members were advised that the Manual for Streets referred to by Councillor Lee was guidance. The Planning Officer stated that the site layout had been designed in response to the rural nature of the surrounding area, opposite Cantley Recreational Ground and existing mature hedge and trees. Officers felt this layout in this instance was appropriate and the combination of design features provided interest and maintained surveillance and was in keeping with the area. . As a result, on this occasion and taking in to account the proposed planting of hedgerow trees proposed between the fence and road, the Officers felt the design solution on this application was

acceptable. The details of the boundaries would be dealt with under the recommended conditions, but officers advised that given the location of the boundaries of properties backing onto Bell Foundry Lane they would be constructed of brick. The combination of this and planting, whilst not acoustic in nature, would have the effect of deadening the sound of the road and reflected similar developments in the area such as Montague Park and within North Wokingham. The Planning Officer also commented on the length of gardens in the plans, indicating that there were only a few gardens which fell marginally short of the Council's 11m standard and the width of the gardens had been accepted as adequate compensation for any minor shortfall in length.

In response to a Member question Officers clarified parking allocation is in accordance with WBC standards.

Members questioned the capacity of the planned changes to the site to resist the impact of flooding. The Planning Officer stated that after a flooding episode in 2007, corrective work had been carried out to the existing culverts / ditches and that there would also be an opportunity to improve drains as part of the building of the Northern Distributory Road (NDR) and development. The Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that the ditch described and illustrated in the report had been made wider and deeper to increase its capacity, whilst still being integral to the landscaping and designed to be safely accessible to residents. He also indicated that as the ditch was located between the path and highway that it would be maintained by the Council as part of the highway.

Members raised questions regarding the odour plume from an existing sewage treatment plant that might affect properties on the site. The Planning Officer stated that works currently being carried out by Thames Water would reduce the existing emissions from the treatment works by 46%. The prevailing winds were South-Westerly. Whilst change of wind direction would occur, according to meteorological data the residential areas would not experience odours level greater than 3 ouE/M³ for more than 175 hrs per annum. This is in accordance with Environment Agency guidelines.

A Member questioned the development being in this location since, although it was within the SDL boundary defined in the Core Strategy, it represented an addition in relation to the SDL Masterplan. The Planning Officer stated that this is a sustainable location, given its position on the NDR (with bus services) and the walking and cycling opportunities that would be available to connect it to Wokingham. There is also the planned delivery of infrastructure to accommodate the population growth in the SDL. The development mitigates its impacts through its design and S106/CIL contributions.

A Member asked about the siting of the affordable housing within the development. The Planning Officer stated that Registered Providers of Affordable Housing preferred that the houses be grouped together for management purposes. This is a relatively small number of affordable dwellings being brought forward (26) and mirrors the clustering of affordable housing being brought forward in the individual phases of the other developments within the SDL sites. A good distribution of affordable housing will therefore be secured across the SDL.

In regards to the public footbridge, Members were advised that a new bridge would have a steel frame and would be easy to maintain and this cost would be covered under maintenance contributions.

RESOLVED: That application No. 161839 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 13 to 22, with conditions 2, 11, and 28 amended, the deletion of condition 32 and the additional condition as set out in the Members' Update.

58. APPLICATION NO - 161747 LAND AT ARBORFIELD GARRISON, BIGGS LANE ('PARCELS A-G')

Proposal: Application for Reserved Matters for the erection of 223 dwellings together with access from Sheerlands Road and the Nine Mile Ride Extension, with associated internal access roads, parking, landscaping, open space, footpaths, bridleways and sustainable urban drainage (SUDS), relating to Parcel A-G land.

Applicant: Crest Nicholson Operations Limited C/O Boyer Planning Ltd

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 59 to 90.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed update to conditions 2 and 6;
- Proposed removal of condition 5 as this was covered in a previous condition on the outline (hard and landscaping details);
- Proposed amendment to condition 9 to ensure satisfactory development in the interests of sustainable travel;
- Member note clarifying that drainage matters formed part of the outline application and as such did not come under this application.

Members had visited the site at the outset of the development of Arborfield Garrison.

In response to Members questions, the Planning Officer stated that there was an overall density of 33 houses per hectare, which was within guidelines. The Service Manager, Highways Development Management indicated where there was access to the school and clarified the proposed increase in public transport that was outlined in the Public Transport Strategy Plan.

In response to a Member question, the Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that the pond is likely to require some deepening and widening to allow for a discrepancy in the submitted detail. The Council is happy with the submission and has confidence in the scheme but requires the updated drawing to demonstrate to Council that the scheme will be delivered in accordance with the approved drainage strategy.

A member questioned the frequency of the bus service, requesting 15 minutes and its provision early in the build-out of the development to ensure its take-up, rather than the habit of reliance on private cars. The Officer stated that this would have to be balanced against the risk of an early service being under-used and terminated but would be implemented as early as practicable.

RESOLVED: That application no 161747 be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 61 to 64, with the updates and amendments to conditions 2, 6 and 9 and deletion of condition 5 as set out in the Members' update.

59. APPLICATION NO - 161631 PULLEYN TRANSPORT, CHURCH LANE, THREE MILE CROSS

Proposal: Full planning application for the demolition of existing office building and erection of a cold store warehouse (B8 use class), with ancillary drivers rest accommodation with associated parking and landscaping, the closing of the existing access with formation of a new means of access.

Applicant: Pulleyn Transport Ltd.

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 91 to 106 and Supplementary Agenda pages 3-18.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed amendment to the report relating to floor space;
- Information regarding the mitigation and compensation strategy for bats;
- Clarification regarding the increase of traffic movements expected as a result of the development;
- Clarification of the reference made to the special circumstances of the business;
- Confirmation that the Policy Officer raised no objection to the proposal in respect of policy CP11;
- Illustration of the alteration of the pathway gradient to control egress;
- Proposed amendment to condition 2 to update plans;
- Proposed changes to condition 12 regarding external lighting;
- Proposed additional condition regarding the implementation of the mitigation and compensation strategy to ensure impacts on a protected species and residential amenity are mitigated;
- Proposed additional informative regarding the specification of bat tubes and bat boxes to be used for roost compensation.

Members had visited the site on Friday 7 October.

Thomas Rumble, Woolf Bond Planning, spoke on behalf of the developer in support of the application. He stated that the plan was supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as it offered local employment. He also commented on the access to the site, indicating that the plan would offer an improved view from Church Lane, a separate car park area, a bicycle store and a wider access to permit lorry movement.

Members raised questions regarding the increase in traffic movements and the impact of the proposed application on an area designated as countryside. The Planning Officer stated that the figures in the report presented a worst case scenario in terms of the increase of traffic movements and that this was offset by the improved driver and parking areas on the site and the change to the design to preclude lorries turning left. It was noted that, when viewed in the context of the existing site and the development of a landscaping bund, no harm could be demonstrated.

RESOLVED: That application No. 161631 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Supplementary Agenda pages 4 to 9, with the Report and condition 2 and 12 amended and the additional condition and informative as set out in the Members' Update.

60. APPLICATION NO - 162328 LAND ADJACENT TO 9 MIDDLEFIELDS, RUSCOMBE

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 2no two bedroom semi-detached dwellings with associated parking.

Applicant: Wokingham Housing Limited

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 107 to 120.

Members had visited the site on Friday 7 October.

It was noted that all the properties in the development were to be affordable homes. As such, the applicant could apply for the development to be made exempt from CIL.

In regards to comments in the report about congestion, Members were informed that a survey had been carried out by the applicant and which demonstrated that there was sufficient capacity for on-street parking in the surrounding area.

RESOLVED: That application No. 162328 be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 108 to 111.

61. APPLICATION NO - 161452 1-3 COPPID HILL, BARKHAM ROAD, BARKHAM

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of 3no 4 bedroom detached dwellings and 1no 2 bedroom bungalow with additional parking for 1 - 3 Coppid Hill (access to be considered).

Applicant: Mr P and D Robins

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 121 to 130 and Supplementary Agenda pages 19-30.

The Committee was advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification of the proposed parking provision including a revised plan;
- Proposed updates to plan numbers in condition 2;
- Proposed additional condition regarding the clearance of visibility splays in the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Members had visited the site on Friday 7 October.

Laurence Heath, Barkham Parish Council, spoke in objection to the application, outlining the concerns held by local residents in regards to traffic on the road and the positioning of the entrance to the development. He indicated that the 20 mph speed set for part of the road, as a safe road for Bohunt School, should be extended or that the entrance should be moved.

Bill Graham, WMG Architects, spoke in favour of the application on behalf of the developers, outlining that the application fitted with the NPPF as an in-fill build and that it met Wokingham Borough Council requirements. He stated that the design concerns expressed by the Parish Council were not covered by the current application and would be addressed as part of a future application for reserved matters.

In response to the speakers and Member questions, the Service Manager, Highways Development Management stated that there had only been two slight accidents in the last 5 years and that the presence of a mini-roundabout often resulted in slowed traffic movements. He outlined the changes to the original plan and explained the improvements that had been made to improve parking provision and that the indicative outline scheme could provide sufficient parking levels in accordance with the Council's standards, especially when considered in the light of the fact that the garages had not been included in the calculations.

RESOLVED: That application No. 161452 be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Supplementary Agenda pages 20 to 24, with the amendment to condition 2 and the additional condition as set out in the Members' Update.

62. APPLICATION NO - 162396 2 HOLME GREEN, EASTHAMPSTEAD ROAD, WOKINGHAM

Proposal: Application to remove condition 6 of planning consent F/2009/0075 for the proposed erection of single storey rear extension, first floor side dormer extension and creation of porch on front elevation. Condition 6 restricts permitted development rights relating to enlargements or alterations, alterations to the roof, construction of porches and construction of enclosures or outbuildings.

Applicant: Mr and Mrs S and J Rowbotham

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 131 to 142. There was no further update.

Members noted that the removal of the condition had been permitted by changes in regulations and that the neighbouring property, as the second of the two semi-detached houses, had no conditions limiting permitted development rights attached..

RESOLVED: That application No. 162396 be approved, subject to the conditions set out on Agenda page 132.

63. PRE COMMITTEE SITE VISITS

The Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services had recommended that a pre-Committee site visit be undertaken in respect of the following applications:

- 161596- Land to the West of Thames Valley Park Drive - Full application for the proposed development of a Park and Ride facility providing approximately 277 vehicular spaces, motorcycle parking and associated vehicular access and landscaping - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area.
- 162329 – 21-26 Tape Lane, Hurst - Full application for erection of 11 dwellings with access, parking and landscaping - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area including adjacent countryside.
- Ref: 162387 – Wheatlands Manor, Fleet Hill, Finchampstead - Full application for the proposed installation of domestic solar panel array - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area including adjacent countryside.

Members considered the Quarterly Enforcement Monitoring Information included in the Members' Update. Members requested more information regarding the Enforcement Appeal Decision made on Upper Culham Farm.

RESOLVED: That a pre-Committee site visit be undertaken on Friday 4 November 2016 in respect of the following applications:

- 161596- Land to the West of Thames Valley Park Drive - Full application for the proposed development of a Park and Ride facility providing approximately 277 vehicular spaces, motorcycle parking and associated vehicular access and landscaping - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area.
- 162329 – 21-26 Tape Lane, Hurst - Full application for erection of 11 dwellings with access, parking and landscaping - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area including adjacent countryside.
- Ref: 162387 – Wheatlands Manor, Fleet Hill, Finchampstead - Full application for the proposed installation of domestic solar panel array - to assess the impact of the development on the character of the area including adjacent countryside.