

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12 JULY 2017 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.15 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Tim Holton (Chairman), John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman), Philip Houldsworth, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Wayne Smith and Bill Soane

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: John Halsall and Oliver Whittle

Officers Present

Mark Cupit, Head of SDL Delivery
Chris Easton, Service Manager, Highways Development
Lyndsay Jennings, Legal Counsel
Arabella Yandle, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

Case Officers Present

Mark Croucher, Senior Planning Officer
Christopher Howard, SDL Delivery Manager
Pooja Kumar, Senior Planning Officer
Ashley Smith, Development Management Team Manager
Alex Thwaites, Senior Planning Officer

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor John Jarvis.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MEMBERS' UPDATE

There are a number of references to the Members' Update within these minutes. The Members' Update was circulated to all present prior to the meeting. It also contains details of properties to be visited prior to the next Planning Meeting. A copy is attached.

14. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor John Kaiser declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 21, application 171436 – Land adjacent to 1 Anson Walk, Shinfield on the grounds that he was a director of a company that had contracts with the client. (He left the meeting during consideration of the matter and did not take part in the vote.)

Councillor Angus Ross declared a personal interest in Item 22, application 170580 – Old Redingensians Sports Ground, Old Bath Road, on the grounds that he had assisted the applicant and received hospitality. (He left the meeting during consideration of the matter and did not take part in the vote.)

15. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

16. APPLICATION NO 170264 - LAND EAST OF FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, FINCHAMPSTEAD NORTH, WOKINGHAM, RG40 3HE

Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of land to Suitable Alternative natural greenspace (SANG) with associated landscape works and parking.

Applicant: Gladman Developments

The Committee originally heard this application on 14 June 2017, whereupon it was proposed that it be deferred until the Committee had visited the site. The Committee received and reviewed an addendum to the report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 11 to 34.

There were no further updates on this item. Members had visited the site on 7 July 2017.

Imogen Shepherd-Dubey, Wokingham Town Council, spoke against the application, stating that there was a clear link between the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and future housing developments in the area. She indicated that the application clearly referred to the housing developments so that it could not be argued that the two were separate. She went on to suggest that existing evidence indicated the road could not take an increase in traffic and referred to the loss of veteran trees and the cost implication of maintaining the SANG.

Clarissa Flynn, resident, shared a presentation and spoke in opposition to the application, stating that the Council were well aware of the strong feeling in regards to this application. She cited the National Planning Policy Framework, stating that sustainability should be put at the centre of proposals. Previous applications regarding development in Woodcrae had been relating to less extensive applications and had been denied by the Committee. The development of a SANG in isolation was premature. The application could not be seen in isolation from the proposed housing development as the same surveys had been used. She requested that, if not minded to refused, the Committee defer the application until the housing development application was due to come before the Committee.

Julian McGhee-Sumner, Ward Member, spoke against the application, outlining previous decisions relating to the same stretch of land and road and the impact on traffic of any development, and citing the clear references in the application to the proposed housing development.

In response, the Case Officer stated that further work had been carried out on veteran trees and that none would be removed. He went on to state that there would be no maintenance cost unless the SANG was connected to a development.

Members raised a number of concerns regarding the application and its link to the proposed housing development, which would impinge on the green gap between Finchampstead and Wokingham, suggesting that the application was premature and should be held back until such time as the housing application was ready to come to Committee. They suggested that the existence of a SANG at the time of the housing application would mean that the housing application would be more likely to be approved despite being, in their view, inappropriate in regards to sustainability, impacting the green gap and outside an established development area.

In response to Member questions, the Case Officer stated that use of open space as open space was an acceptable use of land in a green gap. The link to the housing development

was not hidden, but until that application came forward, the SANG would represent a country park. The SANG provision would not guarantee the success of a housing application in future.

The Head of SDL Delivery stated that the application involved using open space as publicly accessible open space. If a housing application came forward, the applicant would need to show there was a SANG and ensure its maintenance.

Councillor Angus Ross proposed that the application be refused on the grounds that the proposed SANG was designed to facilitate an unsustainable housing development on adjacent land; as such the SANG development was considered to be a premature and unsustainable form of enabling development. The proposal was therefore considered to be contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP1 and CP11.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor John Kaiser.

Resolved: That Application no 170264 be refused on the grounds listed above.

17. APPLICATION NO 170010 - LAND NORTH OF CROFT ROAD, SPENCERS WOOD, RG7 1DR

Proposal: Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2013/0346 for 363 dwellings including internal access roads, garages, parking spaces, SUDS attenuation, open space, play areas and associated landscaping.

Applicant: Taylor Wimpey and David Wilson Homes

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 35 to 66.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- A proposed update to the plan numbers listed in Condition 2, and
- A clarification regarding the percentage of affordable housing in the application and that over the site as a whole.

Nick Paterson-Neild, Agent, spoke in favour of the application, outlining the background of the application. He stated that the site was being developed within the Strategic Development Location Plan (SDLP) and included affordable housing, allotments, play areas and a sports field. He indicated that the parking had been designed to meet Council standards, with visitor spaces scattered through the site. There would be a range of presentations, with the more formal housing along primary routes and informal housing nearer the centre, delineated by hedging.

In response to a Member question regarding the delivery of the Eastern Relief Road (ERR) being delivered late, the Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that whilst the ERR is opening late from its current construction programme, it is actually being delivered early in the wider context of housing delivery and the trigger placed upon it through associated planning legal agreements.

In response to Member questions regarding parking, turning and road widths, the Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that the application complied with the Council's standards regarding passing and turning heads and the scheme had been

assessed demonstrating vehicle tracking. There is a parking management strategy secured under the Outline planning consent which will allow for parking to be monitored and issues addressed through measures to be agreed. Issues around inappropriate parking on roads both adopted and private would be addressed by the parking management strategy and could also be addressed under the Council's Civil Enforcement Policy which is due towards the end of this year. Primary and secondary roads vary in width but would be at least 5m wide.

In regards to Member questions regarding footprint and the existence of a SANG, the Case Officer stated that the internal space in the properties met standards and that the gardens were of the right dimension and could comfortably house a shed. The Mays Farm SANG had already been delivered, but other SANGS would need to be in place prior to the commencement of the development. Drainage was covered under reserved matters and fell under the outline application.

Resolved: That Application no 170010 be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 35 to 66 and the clarifications and plan numbers as laid out in the Members' Update.

18. APPLICATION NO 170618 - MATTHEWSGREEN PHASE 3

Proposal: Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline planning consent O/2014/2242 (outline consent for approximately 760 dwellings and associated infrastructure) for Phase 3 of the development comprising 74 dwellings, associated amenity space, access, garaging and parking, internal roads, pathways, drainage and associated landscaping and provision of a section of the streamside recreational park. Appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered.

Applicant: Linden Homes

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 67 to 90.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed insertion of drawing numbers under Condition 1;
- Proposed replacement of Conditions 3 and 7 regarding road widths and splays;
- Proposed deletion of Conditions 5 and 8;
- Proposed additional Condition regarding a temporary footpath;
- Additional informative regarding utilities, and
- Updated parking provision table.

Members had visited the site in 2015.

Nick Laugharne, Agent, thanked the work that had been done by the officers and stakeholders. In answer to a Member query regarding allotments, he stated that they did not make up part of reserved matters. There were open access areas and the site had been linked to other developments.

In response to Member queries regarding access and road widths, the Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that there was evidence to show that vehicles could access all areas. The number of unallocated parking spaces was higher than required by standards.

In response to Member questions, the Case Officer stated that drainage matters had been agreed to in the outline application. Funding had been secured through Bovis for the offsite assisted living units. The upper flats had balconies that were designed for a table and chairs. The end wall had a number of windows that would provide natural surveillance. A condition could be added stating that the application would not vary the conditions on the original outline application.

Resolved: That Application no 170618 be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 67 to 90 and the plan numbers, amended conditions and new conditions as laid out in the Members' Update and the additional condition 1: Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to affect or vary the conditions imposed by planning permission O/2014/2242 dated 02/04/15 which conditions shall remain in full force and effect save in so far as they are expressly affected or varied by this permission.

19. APPLICATION NO 170686 - PARCELS H-J, ARBORFIELD GARRISON

Proposal: Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2280 for the erection of 179 dwellings with access from the Nine Mile Ride Extension (NMRE), with associated internal access roads, paths, circulation areas, car parking including garages, landscaping, open space and associated infrastructure and works. (Parcels H, I and J).

Applicant: Redrow Homes Limited C/O Pegasus Group

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 91 to 118.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed update to the car park strategy;
- Proposed amendment to Condition 2 to include final plans, and
- Proposed additional conditions 7 to 11.

Laura Humphries, Pegasus Group, spoke in favour of the application, stating that Pegasus Group had worked closely with Crest Nicholson and officers to take an overarching view of the whole site and to ensure that the development before the Committee would not compromise other areas on the site.

In response to Member questions, the Case Officer stated that an associated SANG was already open. The design and access statement outlined the garden village principle and stated that the design had to conform to that principle.

Resolved: That Application no 170686 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 91-118, the updated car parking strategy, amendment to conditions 2 and the additional conditions as laid out in the Members' Update.

20. APPLICATION NO 171328 - 15-27 HIGH STREET, WARGRAVE, RG10 8BU

Proposal: Full planning application for demolition of existing car showroom, repair/MOT garage plus "Suncroft" dwelling and proposed erection of 10 dwellings with provision of car-parking, private amenity space, bin and bicycle storage.

Applicant: Oracle Marker Ltd

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 119 to 146.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Updated category type to Major, and
- Proposed additional condition regarding site levels information.

Peter Palmer, Business Owner, spoke against the application, stating that his business employed 30 people who would be put out of work when the site was developed. He indicated that a business presence was an integral part of village life and suggested that improvements to the garage would welcome.

Elizabeth Butler, Secretary of the Alms Houses, spoke in objection to the application, outlining the possible impact of the increased use of the track, construction traffic, uncontrolled parking, pedestrian safety, difficulties with refuse collection, loss of business from the village centre, overdevelopment and the lack of affordable housing.

John Halsall, Ward Member, spoke against the application, stating that the benefits of the application were doubtful. The increase in vehicle movements would be considerable and the necessity for cars due to the lack of local services meant that the parking provision was not adequate. The target market for the development was necessarily wealthy people who would have two cars per property as standard and would not be using public transport. He suggested that 2-3 affordable homes could be developed, to be managed by the almshouses.

In response, the Case Officer explained that the need for housing and employment needed to be weighed up. The policy team had looked at the application in relation to the local plan and had not opposed it. Part of the garage site was sui generis, that is not subject to a specific class. It was the loss of the B2 use that carried more weight. In relation to refuse collection, he stated that the site could be adequately serviced.

In regards to the question of affordable homes, the Case Officer explained that the site was a brown field site with a high existing value and the decontamination of the site. If affordable houses were to be included in the scheme, it would become unviable. The previous application had had 11 units, but this was reduced to 10 due to over development, and this had resulted in financial constraints. Any reduction in units would also make the plan unviable.

The Service Manager, Highways Development Management, stated that there would only be one more property with egress on Wargrave Hill. In the last 5 years, there had been no accidents associated with the junction or within its vicinity. Supporting information indicates that the garage produced more traffic than the proposed homes would. The removal of the garage would end the need for commercial deliveries or waste disposal.

In response to Member questions regarding overdevelopment and sustainability the Case Officer stated that the application fell in to a modest development location within a settlement boundary. There was an acceptance that these were not subject to the same degree of sustainability and had, in this case, been deemed sustainable. The garden sizes met the council standards of 11m.

In response to Member queries regarding the unique nature of the site in relation to parking, the Case Officer stated that the number of car parking spaces in the application exceeded standards.

Councillor Wayne Smith proposed that the application be deferred pending to enable the developer to take on board and consider the Committee Members concerns with the site regarding parking and layout.. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Philip Houldsworth.

Resolved: That Application no 171328 be deferred.

21. APPLICATION NO 171436 - LAND ADJACENT TO 1 ANSON WALK, SHINFIELD, RG2 8JU

(Councillor John Kaiser declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and left the meeting before the item was addressed.)

Proposal: Full planning application for the proposed erection of 2no two bedroom flats and 2no one bedroom flats with associated parking and landscaping. (Part retrospective)

Applicant: Wokingham Housing Limited

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 147 to 170.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed amendment to the Planning History, and
- Proposed amendments to Conditions 7 and 8.

Members had visited the site in 2015.

Darren Toes, Wokingham Housing Limited, spoke in favour of the application, stating that it provided valuable affordable housing in the Shinfield/Woodley area, using land with little amenity value. There would be an increase in the number of car spaces and solar panels would be installed, which would reduce energy costs for lower income families.

In response to a Member question, the Case Officer explained that the application was a full application as the additional parking was outside the existing red line.

Resolved: That Application no 171436 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 147 to 170, the amendment to the Planning History and the amendments to conditions 7 and 8 as laid out in the Members' Update.

22. APPLICATION NO 170580 - OLD REDINGENSISANS SPORTS GROUND, OLD BATH ROAD, SONNING, RG4 6TQ

(Councillor Angus Ross declared a personal interest and left the meeting before the item was addressed.)

Proposal: Full planning for the proposed installation of artificial grass pitch (AGP) to form a full sized playing enclosure measuring 122 x 80m with associated technical areas. Installation of new pitch perimeter and associated gated entrance to form a playing enclosure, new hardstanding, new (artificial) flood lighting, new maintenance equipment

store and retention of soil arising onsite to form a sculpted grass mound to an adjacent grass pitch.

Applicant: Rugby Football Union

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in Agenda pages 171 to 196.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Proposed amendment to Condition 5 pertaining to landscaping;
- Proposed amendment to Condition 12 pertaining to lighting, and
- Proposed amendment to Condition 14 pertaining to the submission and approval of an event car parking management plan.

Gary Reynolds, CEO of the Redingensian Rams Club, spoke in support of the application, explaining that the Club had worked closely with the Rugby Football Union (RFU), who had provided the details and the technical information for the application. He outlined the background of the Club and its aim to increase the uptake of rugby amongst children from state schools. He went on to explain that the state of the pitches was not able to support the projected growth in the Club and that the Club had been chosen as one of those to benefit from the installation of an artificial pitch donated by the RFU.

In response to Member questions regarding light spill, the Case Officer stated that the amended Condition relating to lighting included measures to control light spill and that directed lighting would be made use of. There were examples of other pitches in the county that used this system and they were viewed as adequate.

In response to a Member query regarding noise, the Case Officer stated that the existing use of the Club permitted all pitches to be used when the Club was open. The opening hours would not be increasing. Environmental Health Officers were happy that the distance between the artificial pitch and the side wall of a neighbouring care home was sufficient, especially as it would be subject to strengthened boundaries and planting. The design of the site meant that standing supporters would mostly congregate near the parking areas and by the existing club house where there was hard standing available.

In response to a Member query regarding access and parking, the Service Manager, Highways Development, stated that the number of extra parking spaces exceeded Council standards. In regards to access, the likely increase in traffic movements was not seen as a concern. It would be monitored and incorporated in to the event parking management plan.

Resolved: That Application no 170580 be approved subject to the conditions set out in Agenda pages 171-196, and the amendments to conditions 2, 12 and 14 as laid out in the Members' Update.