

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 14 AUGUST 2019 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.55 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Simon Weeks (Chairman), Chris Bowring (Vice-Chairman), Gary Cowan, Pauline Jorgensen, Abdul Loyes, Andrew Mickleburgh, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

**Councillors Present and Speaking**

Councillors: Jim Frewin

**Councillors Present**

Councillors: John Halsall

**Officers Present**

Connor Corrigan, Service Manager – Strategic Development Locations, Planning Delivery  
Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager  
Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor  
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

**Case Officers Present**

Senjuti Manna  
Kayleigh Mansfield  
Alex Thwaites

**24. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Stephen Conway and Carl Doran.

**25. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 July 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

Item 23, 30 Hilltop Road, Earley:

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification that agenda pages 129 to 132 were duplicate plans for a different application;
- **Additional condition 2;**
- **Plan to be replaced by drawing no P1909 01A;**
- **Additional drawing P1909 02A.**

RESOLVED ... to 'The development hereby permitted may be liable to pay...', **and additional condition 2 as set out in the Members' Update.**

**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. A copy is attached.

## **26. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Pauline Jorgensen declared a personal interest in agenda item 28 on the grounds that she was the Executive Member for Highways and Transport. Pauline stated that she would continue to take part in the debate and vote.

## **27. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS**

There were no applications recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

## **28. APPLICATION 191010 - LAND AT AND ADJACENT TO ASHRIDGE FARM, NORREYS**

**Proposal:** Full application for a section of the Northern Distributor Road through Ashridge Farm, linking Bell Foundry Lane to the west with Kentwood Farm to the east, incorporating a new priority junction on Bell Foundry Lane and associated works including a shared footway/cycleway.

**Applicant:** Wokingham Borough Council C/O WSP

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 15 to 44. The Committee were advised that there were no Members' Updates.

Clare Williams, WSP, spoke in support of the application. Clare stated that this scheme was approved by Executive decision in 2015, and the scheme before the Committee was the best possible alignment including with regards to trees, natural habitats and the nearby listed building. Clare added that the plans had taken on board comments from Natural England and as a result additional planting would take place along the stretch of road. Clare stated that the entire length of the northern distributor road would include a shared pedestrian and cycle path. Clare commented that the planting and landscaping improvements to the area would result in a net gain in habitat and biodiversity, and concluded that the scheme would provide a safe and functional route for walkers, motorists and cyclists.

Simon Weeks commented that this application was a critical component of the northern distributor road, which was due to be completed in 2021.

Malcolm Richards queried how the modelling had shown a reduction in usage along Warren House Road. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, clarified that the proposed new section of road would move some of the vehicle flow away from Warren House Road.

Angus Ross commented that despite increasing the number of trees within the area, more consideration needed to be made to the carbon offset each tree provided, with a large tree offsetting more carbon than several smaller trees. Simon Weeks commented that smaller trees had a much higher survival rate when moved than a larger and more mature tree. The Biodiversity Officer had previously stated that biodiversity would be increased as a result of this application and the scheme adhered to Natural England's metrics.

**RESOLVED** That application 191010 be approved subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 16 to 24.

## **29. APPLICATION 191640 FOUNDRY COLLEGE, BUDGES GREEN, WOKINGHAM RG40 1PX**

**Proposal:** Full planning application for the change of use of office accommodation (Use Class B1 (a)) to school (Use Class D1) to form an enlarged school, along with change of use of amenity land to school playing field, erection of single storey extensions, relocation of existing temporary classrooms and associated hard and soft landscape works.

**Applicant:** Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 45 to 72. The Committee were advised that the members' Update included reference to 3 additional comments received regarding this application.

Jim Leivers, WBC Assistant Director – Learning, Achievements and Partnerships, spoke in support of the application. Jim stated that the current building provided a poor level of facilities for pupils, and this application intended to improve these facilities by expanding the size of the school whilst reducing the number of people travelling to the school. Jim added that this application would improve the overall site so that the site was more secure for neighbours, pupils and staff. Jim stated that a number of meetings and dialogs had taken place with local residents, and the application would provide a safe environment for its pupils with better facilities to enable them to reach their full potential.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried whether an annual car parking management strategy could be implemented as part of this application, and sought clarification as to whether Highways had checked the visibility splays at the corner of Budes Gardens Road and whether as a result the site boundary needed to be moved a short (0.5m-1m) distance away from this corner. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, clarified that the travel plan mechanism would be used to monitor various aspects including car park usage and school drop offs. Judy added that the travel plan would routinely be updated annually. Judy stated that the visibility from the corner of Budes Gardens Road was measured from 2.4m back from the junction and was considered acceptable in accordance with standards.

Gary Cowan raised concerns regarding the proposed increase in the site boundary towards Budes Gardens Road. Gary was of the opinion that this was not beneficial to the scheme, and several residents were not happy with this proposal. Jim Leivers clarified that there had been consultations and conversations with residents and local groups with regards to this application. Jim added that both sides of the proposed boundary were already owned by Wokingham Borough Council.

Pauline Jorgensen sought assurances that should the fence be moved at the boundary that it would be properly landscaped. Senjuti Manna, Case Officer, confirmed that landscaping would take place at the site boundary.

Abdul Loyes queried whether double yellow lines should be implemented outside of the entrance to the site to allow for emergency vehicle access. Simon Weeks suggested that double yellow lines were not implemented at this time and they do not always have the desired effect of stopping people parking.

Gary Cowan proposed an amendment to the recommendation, whereby the fence boundaries be retained in their current positions. This proposal was not seconded and subsequently fell.

**RESOLVED** That application number 19164 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 46 to 48.

### **30. APPLICATION 191024 LAND AT MATTHEWSGREEN FARM, WOKINGHAM**

**Proposal:** Application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission (O/2014/2242). The reserved matters comprise details of the local centre incorporating retail use on ground floor and 16 dwellings on the upper floors, with associated parking and landscaping. Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be determined.

**Applicant:** Bovis Homes

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, as set out in agenda pages 73 to 108.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- An additional neighbour consultation received on 3 August 2019 and associated Officer comment;
- Altered recommendation due to receipt of further clarity regarding the proposed Deed of Variation;
- Altered Condition 2.

Peter Warren, Agent representing Bovis Homes, spoke in support of the application. Peter stated that the application would provide a viable amenity space for the community, with the overall layout if the proposed site being complimentary to the neighbouring school. Peter added that the retail units and parking availability would be an asset to the community, and the scheme would deliver the next phase of the Matthewsgreen Farm development, which sat within the North Wokingham SDL.

Pauline Jorgensen queried how this application conformed to Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC's) parking standards, and sought clarification as to the public transport provision. Judy Kelly, Highways Development manager, stated that there was a bus stop nearby. Judy added that the scheme complied with WBC's parking standards including the provision of disabled spaces.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether residents of the proposed flats would be allowed to park in the retail spaces. Connor Corrigan, Service Manager – Strategic Development Locations and Planning Delivery, stated that it was unlikely that residents would be able to park at the retail units as it would be up to the retailers to manage their own allocated parking provision for their customers.

Angus Ross queried how the proposed garden area would be maintained in future. Connor Corrigan stated that the applicant would either be responsible for the maintenance of the garden or they could hand the garden over to WBC, which would allow the Council to maintain the garden going forwards.

A number of Members queried how electric vehicle charging would be implemented at the proposed development. Connor Corrigan stated that it was up to the applicant to suggest where the charging points be located, and Officers would then agree or disagree. Connor added that the policy around electric vehicle charging was new and emerging.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried whether the affordable housing provision would remain in perpetuity. Connor Corrigan clarified that the affordable rent properties would be handed over to a social landlord and would have to be retained as per the S106 agreement.

**RESOLVED** That application number 191024 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 74 to 78, amended recommendation due to receipt of further clarity on the Deed of Variation as set out in the Members' Update, and altered condition 2 as set out in the Members' Update.

**31. APPLICATION 191651 SILVER MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALDER GROVE, SHINFIELD RG2 9RA**

**Proposal:** Full planning application for the proposed temporary use of the upper floor of school (D1) building to provide office accommodation (B1) for a 5 year period until the school is fully occupied.

**Applicant:** Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee received and reviewed a report about this application, set out in agenda pages 109 to 120.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- An additional neighbour comment and associated Officer response;
- Additional Travel Plan condition;
- Additional Car Parking Management Condition;
- Additional Travel Plan informative.

Jim Leivers, Assistant Director – Learning, Achievements and Partnerships, spoke in support of the application. Jim stated that the application before the Committee would allow Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) to make efficient use of existing resources by placing various WBC education staff at the site for up to 5 years. Jim added that this application formed a part of the Council's overall staff accommodation strategy.

Jim Frewin, Ward Member, commented on the application. Jim stated that he was very supportive of the concept of the application making efficient use of WBC property whilst it was surplus to requirements. Jim raised concerns over the safeguarding aspects at the school including external visitors meeting staff, and sought reassurances that these had been considered. Jim queried what the process would be to review whether the upstairs space needed to be used by the school before the five year period concluded.

Connor Corrigan, Service Manager – Strategic Development Locations and Planning Delivery, clarified that staff could not access the school teaching area as this access would be controlled centrally through the school reception. Connor added that, for example, a film could be placed on the windows of the staff section of the building to prevent overlooking of the play areas, however this was an operational matter which could be addressed quickly with any other issues that might arise. Connor stated that as the school was to be under WBC control, should the school need to use the space before the five year time period was up WBC staff would move, this was to be reviewed annually.

Jim Leivers clarified that all staff housed on site would be education staff whom would all be DBS checked.

Gary Cowan raised concerns that the neighbour comment had not been fully considered within the officer report. Gary questioned the conclusion that there was a good bus service at the site, stating that the nearest stop was 0.5 Miles Reading bound, and 0.6 miles Arborfield bound. Simon Weeks stated that as many of the staff were likely to visit pupils within the Borough, they would likely rely on a private vehicle and not public transport.

Simon Weeks proposed that an additional informative be added, stating that the upstairs was to be used either solely by WBC staff or solely as part of the school, and in no circumstances as a mixture of the two. This proposal was seconded and subsequently approved and added to the list of informatives as part of the recommendation.

**RESOLVED** That application number 191651 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 109 to 110, additional travel plan and car parking management conditions as set out in the Members' Update, additional travel plan informative as set out in the Members' Update, and additional informative regarding usage of the upstairs by either WBC staff or as a part of the school as agreed by the Committee.