

Ms Emy Circuit
Delivery Manager
Development Delivery Team
Wokingham Borough Council
PO Box 157 , Shute End
Wokingham RG40 1WR

February 4th 2021

Dear Emy

Application no. 203535 Land at the junction of Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to comment on this application.

1. We are generally in favour of the application as traffic flow needs to be increased for the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) servicing the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SWSDL), however some areas may need to be reviewed.
2. The major drawback in the project is no work is projected on the railway bridge which will create a major pinch point in restricting the flow of traffic for high sided vehicles.
3. This also prevents the continuation of the south side shared pedestrian/cycleway coming into town. The existing path on the north side of the road under the bridge is already very busy and quite narrow.

There is considerable local demand for safe walking and cycling routes into the town centre from the south. This is recognised by Finchampstead Parish Council and Wokingham Without Parish Council.

Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy states that;

Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development) '*...the development must demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car...*'

Policy CP6 (Managing Travel Demand) '*...planning permission will be granted for schemes that:*
a) Provide for sustainable forms of transport to allow choice;
b) Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and public transport, enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including provision for those with reduced mobility, and other users.

The location is in an urban area close to the town centre and identified in the draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) as a designated walking and cycling route.

This proposal fails to meet any of these policy requirements with regard to entering or leaving the roundabout from the north.

Even without remodelling the bridge, if the plan made clear provision for cycle and foot traffic into the town centre, even if via an adjacent alternative route, it would have some merit.

4. Whilst we support the creation of the shared pedestrian/cycleway from Finchampstead Road into the existing signalled pedestrian crossing in Molly Millar's Lane and the continuation on the north side of Molly Millar's Lane, the current design is unlikely to encourage westbound cyclists to make the effort to cross the road to join it.

It is also questionable as to whether this is a suitable cycling route to the station as it is not the most direct route and requires cycling along a very narrow and congested section of Barkham Rd.

5. The Design and Access statement paragraph 4.4 states that '...there is not a pedestrian / cyclist desire line to cross Finchampstead Road South of the roundabout. This is wholly inaccurate as the existing light-controlled crossing that has operated at that location for over 25 years is very-well used. We agree with the recommendations in the road safety audit stage 1, especially point H – retaining the existing signalised pedestrian crossing in Finchampstead Road, south of the junction.
6. There will be some loss of trees including a loss of a mature oak with a TPO and there should be specific provision to replace these.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Veitch

Cllr Gordon Veitch
Chair Planning Committee