

PLANNING REF : 190900  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Town Hall  
: Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire  
: RG40 1AS  
SUBMITTED BY : Wokingham Town Council  
DATE SUBMITTED : 05/08/2019

COMMENTS:

Wokingham Town Council P&T Committee. Objections as follows:

CP7: Ecological survey:

o various species on the site were discovered: bats (14.87), two active badger sets (14.92), hedgehogs (14.96), plenty of breeding birds (14.98), stag beetles (14.111) (14.144 states the site is of IMPORTANCE at local level for amphibians overall)

o many of the resultant points indicate a 'permanent minor adverse effect' on the ecology of the site

Note: with the increasing development within the area, local wildlife will be reduced in the surrounding areas and thus measurement in those areas will show decreased usage (for example in the report it indicates one abandoned badger set). Therefore such development will have a knock on adverse affect in the surrounding areas which in turn makes them 'available' for future development because there are is no or little wildlife.

CP3:

There are several 3 and 4 story places within the proposal these are not acceptable within Wokingham which has a limit to 3 stories in most places.

The community centre must be outfitted completely (not just walls and a floor). It must be separate from residential buildings due to potential noise from events.

Open space no amenity space (linked to not near to the proposed SANG site).

CP1:

Within the development one tree (T202) has a TPO on it and indication shows there is plenty of life left in the tree (what is the point of a TPO when a developer can remove such trees ?)

Explicit declaration within the proposal for no provision for cyclists.

Air quality measurements appear to be

'modeled' as opposed to tested, however to a degree this is

understandable to the new SDR not being present, but as a main route for lorries (to say Tesco) this will be a concern.

Noise: the houses next to the SDR must have adequate sound proofing (as complaints from the London Road on those new builds indicate are needed).

The

nomination of the SANG area is dubious because it is no where near the development and requires crossing a rail way line, and busy road and thus defeats the purpose of a SANG: provision of walking space/country park for the new residents. Rather a better location should be sort. It is simply using an area which cannot be built upon due to it's location next to railway line and A329(M) . If the area is selected as the nominated SANG then provision for noise barriers and pollution control must be put in place.

CP2:

From the developers own reports the nearby GP surgeries are over capacity (example: Burma Hills: 1583, Wokingham Medical Centre: 3353) this fails

CP2(a)

Comments on the South Wokingham SDL applications:

190900	Land to the South of Anne's Manor	Full planning application for the proposed change of use of land from nil use to D2 for proposed Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANG) with associated landscaping. To be read in conjunction with applications 190914 & 191068.
190914	Land at phase 2a of the South Wokingham SDL	Outline application with all matters reserved except for principal means of access to the highways, for up to 215 dwellings, public open space, play areas, associated infrastructure and landscaping. To be read in conjunction with applications 190900 & 191068.
191068	Land at phase 2b of the South Wokingham SDL	Hybrid planning application (part outline/part detailed) comprising an outline application with all matters reserved except principal means of access to the highways, for a mixed use development of up to 1,495 dwellings, a two form entry primary school, local centre (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D1 including community building D1/D2), public open space, play areas and associated infrastructure and landscaping; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), associated landscaping and temporary car park. To be read in conjunction with applications 190900 & 190914

General comments:

Wokingham Borough Council's own planning documentation states that the development should be 'nil detriment' to the existing communities. Unless the developers can robustly demonstrate that this is the case, the development should not be approved.

Co-ordination:	The Parish Council urges Wokingham Borough Council to ensure that the development is well co-ordinated and not brought forward in a piecemeal way. Infrastructure must be planned and phased correctly to ensure it is available when needed to reduce the detrimental impact of major development on existing residents, services and facilities. This development, which is proposed to take a number of years to complete, will cause significant disruption to local residents. The impact of the construction phase on existing residents in terms of noise, dirt, pollution and traffic must not be underestimated and Wokingham Borough Council must use
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	every mechanism available to it to ensure that the development is delivered within this timeframe, and that detrimental elements of the construction works are mitigated as much as possible.
Housing numbers:	<p>This site was identified in the core strategy as able to accommodate around 2,500 homes. The plans have identified the infrastructure required for these additional homes. The parish council urges Wokingham Brough Council to resist additional units over and above this figure, to limit any additional strain on existing infrastructure, facilities and services.</p> <p>Management of overall housing numbers is also key to ensuring the ongoing protection of the green gap that separates the residential areas of Wokingham and Crowthorne. This green gap is a key element in distinguishing between the character of the two communities and will delineate between the urban fringe of Wokingham Town and the more rural, village character of Crowthorne and the residential areas in the south of the Wokingham Without parish.</p> <p>Since its initial inception, and the first rounds of public consultation, the layout of the proposed development, in terms of housing areas and green space, has changed significantly. The parish council expresses concern that the current layout proposal significantly diminishes the green separation gap between Wokingham and Bracknell, which goes against policy CP11 of the Core Strategy to retain a separation between the two communities.</p> <p>The retention of green space is also significant to the health and wellbeing of residents and to providing clean air.</p>
Housing mix	A good mix of housing types, allowing for first-time buyers, families and older residents will be key to supporting and developing a sense of community in this large-scale development, and not becoming a dormitory for commuters.
Building heights	<p>There is a significant proportion of the residential dwelling that is identified as 3 storey and in some cases, 4 storey. This does not appear to be in-keeping with the existing area, the retained residential dwellings adjacent to, and with the SDL area, nor the character of the area.</p> <p>4 storey buildings either side of the road must be set back from the road to prevent the creation of an intimidating, tunnel type feel.</p>

### Environmental:

Flood risk	<p>Mitigation measures relating to flooding should be undertaken throughout the construction phase. Waiting until 2027 to 'make good' is not acceptable to existing residents</p> <p>Robust monitoring and enforcement must be in place to ensure that flood risk plans are followed accurately, particularly given the increased incidents of extreme weather and the propensity of the surrounding land to flood. Equally, measures should be in place to ensure that actions on site to not detrimentally impact water flows off site.</p>
Tree protection	This site incorporates many large trees and is close to areas of ancient woodland, all of which provide valuable visual character to the area. Retained

	trees must be suitably protected with fencing that extends to the tree canopy, to mitigate against damage to these valuable landscape features.
Landscaping	<p>The 'countryside feel' of the area will be a key determiner in attracting new residents to Wokingham and ensuring that this is brought into the design of the housing areas is critical. There must be a transition from the countryside into the residential areas, with 'fingers' of green areas entering into the development, appropriate soft landscaping (native species, drought hardy where possible and with consideration for attracting wildlife)</p> <p>The plans include proposals for play areas. The parish council feels it is important to ensure that these play areas satisfy a wide age range, and do not focus only on younger children (i.e. pre-teens)</p>
Views	The retention of views to key areas of character including Ludgrove School and the Lucas Hospital will be critical to maintaining the character identity of the area and creating a sense of place.

### Construction Management:

Vehicles	<p>Well planned construction vehicle routes are required, to ensure that lorries use optimum routes, are kept away from residential areas as much as is practical, and limit actions which lead to additional noise and air pollution. Approved construction routes must be well sign posted from the primary highway network</p> <p>Construction vehicles should be speed restricted in residential areas to reduce air pollution</p> <p>Sites must incorporate wheel washing facilities at the earliest opportunity and have active management of the routes off site, to reduce the tracking of mud onto local roads.</p> <p>Enforcement of these conditions must be robust to limit the detrimental impact of the construction phase on existing residents.</p>
Materials deliveries	Deliveries of materials to the site should be undertaken at times to avoid peak traffic congestion.
Impact on the existing footpath network	Safe routes and footways must be retained during the construction phase, and temporary re-routing of footpaths and byways should be mandated, rather than closing routes off for prolonged periods of time.

### Traffic

Southern Distributor Road	It is imperative that the layout for the western end of the distributor road is determined and the road approved for construction before the planned construction of any additional housing. If the routing issues cannot be resolved, the addition of some 2,000 new homes will detrimentally impact on local traffic routes and is not acceptable to an already worried public.
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	<p>Although the SDR seeks to address traffic movements east-west and allow traffic to avoid Wokingham Town Centre, traffic routes going 'north-south' (i.e. to the M3) do not appear to have been addressed. This cannot be acceptable.</p> <p>The impact of these proposal on the road network beyond the development site must be given greater consideration. The parish council urges Wokingham Borough Council to seek robust evidence of this consideration, along with details of any necessary mitigation measures required, before any development can get the go-ahead.</p>
Roundabout at the Eastern Gateway	The routes of the roads joining this roundabout are unclear from the application plans
Junction to Star Lane Crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queuing traffic at this junction is likely to increase with more level crossing closures. Stationary vehicles will be backing up past the school. The associated pollution created by queuing traffic is therefore a concern for the school and housing.</li> <li>• Routes into Grays Farm Sport Hub will also use this junction if the access to the hub is from the north of the site. The traffic impact of this facility must be assessed before approval can be given.</li> <li>• The plans need to give greater consideration for safe pedestrian and cycle access across the railway line, particularly given the proposed secondary school for the site is located across the railway.</li> </ul>
Junction of Heathlands Road and Easthampstead Road	<p>The parish council anticipates that this route will become more attractive as a Through route for traffic heading to the M4, particularly to traffic coming from Crowthorne, Sandhurst and Finchampstead as it will avoid Wokingham Town Centre. This road is unsuitable for significant increases in traffic volumes due to its rural nature.</p> <p>Again, the impact of these proposal on the road network beyond the development site must be given greater consideration.</p>
Junction of Heathlands Road and Nine Mile Ride	This junction is currently unsuitable for larger vehicles and cannot take additional vehicle capacity. The junction currently sees queued traffic along both Heathlands Road and Nine Mile Ride for significant parts of the day. The pollution that this traffic creates has a detrimental impact on the health of local residents and on pupils attending St Sebastian's primary school and proposals which lead to increased traffic queues are unacceptable. The existence of traffic lights at this junction will likely lead to an increased use of Honey Hill which is a narrow country lane with little lighting and a number of bends and is unsuitable for large vehicles.
Junction that joins Waterloo Road, Old Wokingham Road and Peacock Lane	Although identified as a potential access route for construction traffic due to its distance from existing residential housing, it would need significant improvements to driver visibility for this to be viable.

## Access

Footways	<p>The parish council wishes to see proposals which bring about enhancements to the existing network of footpaths, byways, cycle paths and green ways (widening, improving visibility but retaining a rural feel).</p> <p>Providing routes within the new developments and ensuring these connect with routes to the existing residential areas and facilities / services will encourage walking and cycling and reduce dependency on the road network.</p>
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## Sports hub & village centre

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sports hub at Grays Farm sits outside the boundary of the SDL. As such, buildings on the land should be located as close as possible to the residential areas to avoid urbanising more of the green space that separates the communities.</li> <li>• The loss of good, working agricultural land at Grays Farm is regrettable</li> <li>• The principal vehicle route into the sports hub should be from the SDR, to limit additional vehicle journeys on the surrounding road network. Pedestrian and cycle access from the south should be incorporated into the proposals.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed retail centre and community hub should be a focal point for the community and must be a high quality design that enhances the area.</li> </ul>

## Going forward

General comments	The development must have a strong reference to the existing rural context
Climate change	The parish council expects to see features incorporated into the development that support the borough's developing climate emergency policies and strategies, including (but not limited to) the use of solar panels, grey water harvesting, electric charging points and cycle parking.

## Wokingham Without Parish Council's comments on the revised SDL applications

190914	Land at phase 2a of the South Wokingham SDL.	Outline application with all matters reserved except for principal means of access to the highways, for up to 215 dwellings, public open space, play areas, associated infrastructure and landscaping.
191068	Land at phase 2b of the Sough Wokingham SDL.	Hybrid planning application (part outline/part detailed) comprising an outline application with all matters reserved except principal means of access to the highways for a mixed use development of up to 1434 dwellings, a two-form entry primary school, local centre (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D1 including community building D1/D2), public open space, play areas and associated infrastructure and landscaping; and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), associated landscaping and temporary car park.
190900	Land to the South of Anne's Manor	Full planning application for the proposed change of use of land from nil use to D2 for proposed Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANG) with associated landscaping.

### Comments:

The SW SPD document states that the identification of SDLs represents major opportunity to plan for new development in a comprehensive manner and avoid the need for piecemeal small-scale housing development. Wokingham Without Parish Council is disappointed that this strategy is not being realised and in fact development is proceeding in a piecemeal manner to the detriment of existing and future residents.

#### 1. Sports hub

The development proposals need to provide greater detail to demonstrate how the development will integrate with the Gray's Farm sports hub. Previous iterations of the development proposal showed the principal highways access as a direct route from the SDR, but this has been removed and is now shown as an indicative route from the district centre. As the proposals for the district centre are not detailed in this hub, the parish council is unable to review the suitability of this proposed access, and as such feels that the plans for the district centre need to be worked up to an extent that the integration of the sports hub access with the wider highway network can be demonstrated.

#### 2. SDR

The current proposals show an incomplete plan for the SDR at the western boundary. The parish council is concerned that the proposed through-route from Molly Millars Lane to the London Road may not materialise. The unintended consequence of this will be a significant additional traffic burden on the existing road network through and within Wokingham Without. As such, WWPC requests to see further information on the proposed highways solution for the western boundary.

#### 3. Traffic impact and nil detriment

WWPC has significant concerns over the incomplete proposal for the SDR and the possible impact this will have on local roads. WWPC would like to see evidence of how the existing plans will demonstrate nil detriment to the existing road network within Wokingham Without, and particularly on junctions such as the Easthampstead Road/Heathlands Road, Easthampstead Road/Old Wokingham Road and the Nine Mile Ride.

#### 4. Cross-boundary co-operation

Wokingham Without Parish Council would like to see demonstrable evidence of effective working between WBC and BFC, particularly on highways matters relating to access to the sites from the eastern edge. This will be particularly important for existing residents in relationship to agreements over construction vehicle access routes into the development site.

#### 5. CTMP

In relationship to a Construction Traffic Management Plan, WWPC requests an opportunity to provide input into this plan to ensure that residents' concerns over traffic noise and disturbance are taken account of.

#### **6. Post-commencement community forums**

WWPC requests that WBC make plans to host community forum sessions at appropriate times and in appropriate locations, to ensure that residents have a platform to raise concerns once development commences.

#### **7. Sustainable transport links**

WWPC would like to work with WBC to bring forward plans for sustainable transport links between the new development area and the existing Wokingham Without community both through enhancing existing foot and cycle links and in identifying new routes that will connect new residents to existing community infrastructure, and vice-versa.

We note that the Design and Access Statement P44 (4.23) notes that internal PROW will be retained. WWPC is concerned that existing PROW within the SDL, but outside the red line for application 191068, will be overlooked. Enhancements to these existing routes, including footpaths WW10 and WW12 will help connect the (wider) new development with existing community facilities in the south of the parish, such as St Sebastian's Memorial Hall, Crowthorne Tennis Club, Heathlake and Pinewood.

#### **8. Other concerns during the construction period**

WWPC wish to ensure that the following issues are taken into account in the plans:

- Construction noise
- Dust from soil heaps
- Potential for untreated top soil to wash into the water system
- Potential disruptions to water courses and ponds