



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 23rd June 2022 @ 7.30pm at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. D. Morsley (Chairman), Cllr. M. Dennett, Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. M. Lock, Cllr. A. Marsden, Cllr. J. Wells and Mr. N. Kiley (co-opted)

For the Clerk:

B. O'Reilly

Public/Press:

There were five members of the public in attendance.

Part I

22/0035 Public Session (for agenda items only)

Members of the public were present to state some of their arguments on the access and amenity issues related to the appeal lodged against the refusal of planning application 21/00563/FULD. The Chairman invited the public to stay and listen to the Committee's discussion on the matter under item 22/0041.

The residents were advised to submit their specific comments on the applicant's appeal documents to the Planning Inspectorate in writing. The issues they raised in relation to the proposed development could then be considered by the Planning Inspector alongside comments submitted by the Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council from this meeting.

22/0036 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. N. Carter and Cllr. S. Hill.

22/0037 To receive any declarations of interest

None.

22/0038 Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9th June 2022 were received and APPROVED for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

Comments Cllr. Carter had proposed to the minutes were considered but not included in the approved minutes.

Cllr. Lock gave apologies and advised the Committee that due to a misunderstanding she had not attended the meeting on 9th June.

22/0039 Items to be taken into private session

None.

22/0040 Current Projects

To receive any updates on current projects and consider any recommendations for resolution as reported:

a. Tower House Farm (previously referred to as MOR006: Land south of Tower Gardens) Planning Application

An update would be considered under item 22/0041 below.

b. Tower House Farm (previously referred to as MOR006: Land south of Tower Gardens) Biodiversity and Green Space

There was no update to report.

c. Mortimer Station Car Park

Cllr. Morsley confirmed that data collected from the car parking count for evidence of use had now been submitted to Mr. Edward Goose at Great Western Railway but that he was currently away from the office.

Mr. N. Kiley advised that, as Mr. Goose had indicated he wanted to meet with him, he would follow up and schedule a meeting and include at least one Councillor from this Committee.

A fifth member of the public arrived at the meeting.

22/0041 Schedule of Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered for comment:

APP/W0340/W/22/3293964: Land at 72 Windmill Road, Mortimer Common, Reading

Appeal relating to refusal of planning application 21/00563/FULD: Proposed new dwelling.

Cllr. Morsley stated that the parish council supported West Berkshire Council's decision and outlined a summary of the history of planning application 21/00563/FULD. The Committee reviewed the issue of the sub-standard access to the proposed site and the loss of amenity to neighbouring properties as raised by members of the public present at the meeting and by the West Berkshire Council's Planning Officer in their decision report of October 2021.

Cllr. Morsley proposed that, as the Chairman of the Committee, she would review the parish council's response from the notes discussed and, with the Clerk, finalise them for submission to the Planning Inspector.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett
AGREED unanimously

SMPC Comment: Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council supports the West Berkshire Council (WBC) decision to refuse this application. We draw attention to 29 letters of

objection from residents (from 20 different members of the public) for the application and no letters of support.

WBC gave two main reasons for their decision relating to access and residential amenity. The parish council would like to make the following additional comments to those submitted to WBC in 2021 when the planning application was being considered:

1. Substandard access drive.
 - Vehicles for things like removals, supermarket deliveries, garden supplies, etc. will have to park in Windmill Road and transfer goods manually for the length of the drive, necessitating parking for a considerable period in in Windmill Road. The type of vehicles that the appeal states as being able to use the drive only covers the smaller vans used by some parcel delivery companies. Many deliveries would entail parking on Windmill Road and walking the access lane.
 - The photographs in Fig.15 showing Windmill Road with almost no cars parked on the highway are exceedingly fortuitous for the appeal; this is not a typical view and at most times of day and night there are significant numbers of cars parked on the road.
 - It is clear that fire service and refuse collection vehicles cannot access the proposed property. We are not competent to comment whether the sprinkler system proposed sufficiently mitigates the fire service requirement but feel this is an important enough issue that it should not be left to the building regulation stage of the planning process in this case. If residents of the new house have to take their refuse out to the road, they will have to place a wheelie bin and two boxes on the frontage of the properties that abut the access drive. This will reduce the on-street parking and exit visibility for a whole day every week (assuming residents of new house are out at work).
 - The appeal does not explain at all how all construction materials and equipment required to build the house will be delivered onto the site as the access lane is not wide enough, nor has a turning area, for vehicles such as large flatbed trucks, cranes or other construction machinery.
 - Point 6.15 about visibility from the access point being the same as from other driveways is misleading; delivery, removal, refuse collection, and emergency vehicles do not use other driveways but rather pull up kerb side on Windmill Road.
 - With regard to point 6.22, we object to our communications with WBC Planning being labelled as lobbying. It is the duty of a parish council to use local knowledge to draw to the attention of the Local Authority facts that may not be known to them. This was particularly the case during Covid lockdown when the opportunities for case officers to visit a site were very restricted. It is also our duty to take into account the representations made to us by residents in forming our opinion. More than 10 residents were directly in touch with the parish council and/or attended planning committee meeting to appraise us of their objections to this application. Contrary to the statement in the appeal, the appellant did not contact the parish council at any time.
2. Detriment to residential amenities of King St properties to the south of appeal site.
 - We agree with WBC that the recently built house to the rear of 24 King St would be negatively impacted and therefore the proposal does not meet the requirement of Policy GD1 General of the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan to consider the amenity of existing residents adjacent to the new development. A further point of that policy, namely that such developments are encouraged to prepare a Site Design Brief including community involvement and to consult with the parish council on this prior to planning submission, has not been followed by the applicant.

- Figure 6 would appear to contradict 6.64 that states the boundaries of the site are defined by existing landscaping.
3. Other points the Parish Council wish to make
- Two previous applications (76/05410/ADD and 88/30914/ADD) have been turned down for this site on the basis of:
 - 1) loss of amenity /overlooking and
 - 2) substandard access.
 - The suggestion that the proposed downstairs bedroom would be suitable for disabled or elderly people is spurious as there is no proposed downstairs bathroom, only a toilet.
 - The parish council strongly recommends that the Planning Inspector makes a visit to the site prior to deciding on the appeal.
 - We would also recommend that if the Planning Inspector is mindful to approve the appeal, a Construction Method Statement is required to show how the house can be built without obstructing the access lane for the other users over a significant period of time.

22/01422/RESMAJ: Land South of Tower Gardens, The Street, Mortimer Common, Reading

Approval of reserved matters following Outline Permission 19/00981/OUTMAJ [Section 73: Variation of condition 6-approved plans of approved application 17/03004/OUTMAJ: Matters seeking consent: Appearance, Landscaping and scale (Phase 2b).

SMPC Comment: The Committee had no objections in principal but, with regard to the proposed composite timber garages on plots 51 and 58, would want a condition imposed that the home office spaces, as shown on drawing 21-1009-130-A, shall not be used at any time other than for purposes incidental to the residential use of the dwellings known as Plot 51 and 58.

22/0030 West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Cllr. Dennett advised that, after reviewing the West Berkshire's Proposed Main Modifications to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan as agreed at the last meeting, he recommended that due to lack of relevant expertise, the Committee was not in a qualified position to comment on the legal compliance of the main modifications.

The Committee unanimously agreed with this decision and no comments would be submitted to West Berkshire Council.

22/0031 Items for information only

a. Minor matters for information.

The new barber signage at the arcade of shops on West End Road has raised enquiries from residents but it was considered that the shop signage was within the guidelines under Class 5. It was noted that should the sign be illuminated, this would then require planning permission. Cllr. Morsley advised that she had approached West Berkshire Council for clarification on the signage and was awaiting a response.

Cllr. Morsley advised that several members of the public had contacted her in relation to their opposition to the proposed solar farm in the adjacent parish at Bloomfield Hatch Farm (22/01330/REG3: Land North of Bloomfield Hatch Farm).

They were advised to contact Wokefield Parish Council who, it was understood, have not yet submitted their response to West Berkshire Council.

22/0032 Communications

None.

22/0033 Future Agenda Items

None.

22/0034 Exclusion of Press and Public

Not required.

Close

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.