



## Planning Committee Meeting

Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

23/031 a

### Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council

#### West Berkshire Council Decisions

##### **23/00020/COND: Land South Of Tower Gardens, The Street, Mortimer Common, Reading**

Application for approval of details reserved by condition 11 (Emergency Water) of approved 19/00981/OUTMAJ - Section 73: Variation of condition 6-approved plans of approved application 17/03004/OUTMAJ: This outline application comprises two parts: Part a) The erection of 110 dwellings including affordable housing, public open space and associated landscaping with all matters reserved other than access and layout; Part b) The erection of a 3FE Infant School and 900sq m GP surgery (Use Class D1) with shared parking area with all matters reserved other than access.

**APPROVED** – 15 May 2023

##### **23/00297/RESMAJ: Land South Of Tower Gardens, The Street, Mortimer Common, Reading**

Application for Approval of Reserved Matters for the residential development of phase 3 comprising 52 dwellings including affordable housing, public open space and associated landscaping following Outline Approval 19/00981/OUTMAJ Matters to be considered: Appearance landscaping and scale.

**APPROVED** – 9 June 2023

**SMPC Comments: Houses** - the Committee was happy with the proposed appearance of the housing within phase 3 of the development but did note that plot 63-98 was a three-storey block of six 2-bed affordable units at the top of the phase site.

**Ground Surfaces** – the Committee noted that there was an inconsistency with some of the details between the Hard Landscape Plan drawing [207 B dated October 2022], the Planning Layout Colour [21-1099-055 dated 3 February 2023] and Planning Site Layout Phase 3 [21-1099-005 dated 3 February 2023] where the stepped pedestrian access from between plots 82 and 83 down to the lower access road had replaced the winding footpath shown on the Hard Landscape Plan.

**Retaining Walls** – the Committee was concerned and had reservations with the series of proposed retaining walls edging a number of individual plots in this phase 3 and the levels as indicated in the Street Scenes and Site Section drawings. Are these changes in height between and within plots appropriate, suitable, and safe?

Particularly of note on drawing 21-1099-052 were on cross section A, the drop from plot 82 to the stepped pedestrian footway, on cross section B the drop in level of at least 5m between plot 84 (where the garage is situated at the edge of the drop) to plot 83 below it and on cross section C the difference in height between plots 100 and 109.

The Committee also noted on drawing 21-1099-053, cross section D plot 74 the narrow and split-level rear garden, as also seen on cross section E (plot 78) and F (plot 81).

No details on the various types of retaining walls are given and hence it is not possible to consider whether they are fit for purpose.

**SUDs** - Whilst considering this application SMPC discovered an email of 22/10/2020 from John Bowden to Michael Butler with the subject FW: Tower Gardens / MOR006 –

Application 19/00981/OUTMAJ. The email concerns drainage calculations submitted by the developer. In item 5, on page 1, there is a statement:

“The swales, detention and retention basins and wetlands are noted as being under the maintenance responsibility of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council. Presumably this arrangement has come about through negotiation between the developer and SMPC, but as this is a major liability with possible engineering responsibility in the longer term, we need to be assured that SMPC with its very limited resources is fully aware of the implications of this arrangement and that appropriate commuted sums have been arranged. Conflicting with the apportionment of the maintenance responsibility of the Retention Basin to SMPC, the first paragraph of p15 of the Plan refers to the Management Company having this responsibility. Clarification is required.”

Whilst drainage is strictly not part of the current application, SMPC wishes to comment as this may be the last opportunity to do so. Drainage was considered in the related application 19/00981/ which was approved subject to considerable conditions on drainage. SMPC has not entered into any agreement for the maintenance of swales, detention and retention basins and wetlands. SMPC requires confirmation that is the case.

**Additional SMPC Comments:** The Committee was disappointed that the developer has not been able to reduce the height of plot 63-68 any lower than shown in its revised drawings but do note an effort has been made to address the recent comments made by West Berkshire Council and this Committee in March 2023 and, therefore, has no objections.

#### **23/00738/HOUSE: 18 Croft Road, Mortimer Common, Reading RG7 3TS**

Erection of conservatory (with glazed roof) at the rear of the property. Conservatory, 4m deep x 3.25m wide and approx 3m high.

**REFUSED** – 9 June 2023

**SMPC Comments:** No objections.