



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### **Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held in the Methodist Church Hall, 17 West End Road, Mortimer RG7 3TB on Thursday 13 July 2023 @ 6.45 pm]**

#### **Present:**

##### **Councillors:**

Cllr. D. Butler (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. M. Lock, Cllr. D. Morsley, Cllr. J. Wells

##### **For the Clerk:**

B. O'Reilly

##### **Public/Press:**

There were fifteen members of the public and no member of the press in attendance.

#### **Part I**

##### **21/0024 Public Session (for agenda items only)**

Thirteen members of the public in attendance gave an update to the Committee on recent activities at Fairfield Mobile Home Park (Birch Lane) and attempts to seek responses from West Berkshire Council to their concerns, including damage to trees on Birch Lane under TPO 201/222. Cllr. Bridgman advised he had been chasing WBC for a response to an enquiry he made to the WBC Enforcement team in May but had not had a response to date on the issues raised about Birch Lane. Cllr. Morsley advised she had contacted the new West Berkshire District Councillors representing Mortimer to make them aware of the situation and District Cllr. Nick Carter had visited the site on 4<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr. Butler asked the residents to submit a written summary to Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council in order for the parish council to make further enquiries on behalf of the residents.

Two members of the public were in attendance to listen to the discussion on application 23/01332/HOUSE, as the owners, and answer any questions the Committee had.

##### **21/0025 Apologies**

Not required.

**21/0026 To receive any declarations of interest**

None.

**21/0027 Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were received and unanimously **APPROVED** for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

**21/0028 Items to be taken into private session**

**To determine which items, if any, of the Agenda should be taken with the public excluded.**

Cllr. Bridgman proposed that agenda item 23/0029 a Tower House Farm Planning Application and 23/0029 b Tower House Farm Biodiversity and Green Space be taken with the public excluded.

Seconded by Cllr. Hill

**RESOLVED** unanimously.

**21/0029 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**

Minuted at Part II.

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

Minuted at Part II.

**c. Mortimer Station Car Park Planning Application**

As there would be no further action on this project from the parish council, Cllr. Morsley proposed that the item be dropped from future Planning Committee agendas.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman

**RESOLVED** unanimously.

**21/0030 Schedule of Planning Applications**

To consider the following planning applications:

**23/01332/HOUSE: 16 Windmill Road, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3RN**

Demolish existing garage and construct new detached garage building.

**SMPC Comments:** No objections.

**23/01524/FUL: Land Between Victoria Road and Goring Lane, Reading Road, Mortimer, Reading**

Construction of a formal path for pedestrians, cyclist and equestrian users from Mortimer to Burghfield.

**SMPC Comments:** Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council are not commenting as we are the applicant of this planning submission.

## 21/0031 Items for information only

### a. Decisions received from West Berkshire Council

The following decisions were received:

#### **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.

#### **b. Minor matters for information.**

- It was noted that a premises licence application related to Mortimer Café on Victoria Road was being reviewed at Full Council later in the evening.
- The Committee was advised that an application from West Berkshire Council for the redevelopment of Four Houses Corner Caravan site had recently been received and would be discussed at the next Committee meeting.
- Cllr. Hill asked about the query on a possible enforcement issue at 2 Crockers, Mowbray Hill, but was advised there had been no response from West Berkshire Planning to date.
- Cllr. Bridgman reported that he had had confirmation from WBC that the parish council would be notified of all future applications relating to conditions on Tower House Farm development after a recent submission was not raised to the parish council.
- Cllr. Bridgman proposed the parish council follow up his issues raised on whether permission was required for a building observed in the garden of 2 The Street as well as the issues raised at this meeting regarding Birch Lane.

#### **21/0032 Communications**

None.

#### **21/0033 Future Agenda Items**

None.

#### **21/0034 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**To pass a resolution to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified under 23/0029.a and 23/0029.b on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.**

Proposed by Cllr. Morsley.

Seconded by Cllr. Lock.

**RESOLVED** unanimously.

## **Part II**

### **21/0029**

**a) MOR006 (Land south of Tower Gardens) Planning Application**

**b) MOR006 (Land south of Tower Gardens) Biodiversity and Green Space**

The Committee was advised of an informal meeting held earlier in the day, requested by T.A. Fisher, to look at alternative plans being considered for the retaining wall and landscaping under Phase 2b. The parish council would write to T.A. Fisher thanking them for their engagement and state that although the parish council wouldn't comment on plans until the detailed application was submitted, the outlines seen were encouraging.

**Close**

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.