

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Planning Committee Meeting 26 November 2023

Four Houses Corner Public Consultation Agenda item 23/088

To consider and approve any comments to be submitted to
West Berkshire Council.

BACKGROUND

West Berkshire Council wishes to reopen as soon as possible Four Houses Corner, a designated Traveller site near Ufton Nervet. The site itself has been a recognised Traveller site since 1982 when the first long lease was granted on the site for the purposes of providing static Traveller accommodation.

To provide new fit-for-purpose accommodation, the original site facilities were vacated and fully demolished between 2020 and 2022 and the residents housed in temporary accommodation.

Current design proposals set out in planning application No: 23/01552/REG3, including the radial design, remain the same as those presented in December 2018 to ward members and parish councils. The only significant change is that a small community block is being replaced by another individual pitch and amenity block. Designs and materials generally reflect best practice, are indicative of up-to-date static traveller sites across the country and where emergency services have had past input into current proposals.

The site in its original form had planning permission from 1981 for 21 Traveller pitches, including dayroom accommodation. Of that 21 only 18 pitches were provided. The current proposed scheme the council wishes to deliver provides 17 pitches and associated individual dayroom accommodation. The 17 pitches are designed to take either one static caravan or two tourer caravans. The dayroom accommodation consists of 30sqms of internal space and with residents' sleeping in caravan accommodation. There will be 17 legal agreements between the council and private individuals allowing them and their dependents to occupy individual pitches.

Refurbishing Four Houses Corner is a substantial part of the West Berkshire's compliance with statutory duties in respect of Gypsy and Traveller site accommodation generally in the WBC district and specifically in respect of Four Houses Corner residents in temporary accommodation who maintain their existing legal agreements and right to live on site.

Refurbishment of the site may also provide the West Berkshire with further options to use this site in order to meet its wider housing duties, dependant on future occupation numbers.

[You can find more information on the proposals for the site, including historic planning applications and approvals on the Planning Portal.](#) (this will take you to the application 23/01552/REG3)

CONSULTATION

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/four-houses-corner>

As proposals for Four Houses Corner are likely to be of public interest West Berkshire wishes to bring to public notice its proposals for the site by means of a more extensive process than the statutory process and by that obtain as wide a public view of the proposals as possible. The consultation is aimed to fulfil both these.

All representations must be received by West Berkshire Council by **5pm on Friday, 15 December 2023**. General comments, or those on matters that are not material to the statutory planning process, can be sent in via email to 4hc@westberks.gov.uk or by letter to Four Houses Corner Consultation, FAO Mr Bill Bagnell, West Berkshire Council, Market Street, Newbury, Berks RG14 5LD.

West Berkshire Council will be holding a public presentation, including a question and answer session in the early evening, on a weekday during the second half of November 2023. The date, time and location of this will to be confirmed with two weeks' notice within the six weeks consultation period and published here.

All the comments that West Berkshire Council receives will be summarised and reported to elected members at the **Eastern Area Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday, 10 January 2024**. Feedback will be used to inform members' decision as to whether the current design proposals are fit for purpose to reopen Four Houses Corner and, if proposals achieve a planning consent, will shape management proposals on how to operate the site.

Attachment: WBC Press Release, 8th November 2024