



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 14 March 2024 @ 18:45

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr G Bridgman (Chairman), Cllr S Hill, Cllr M Lock, Cllr A Richardson, Cllr J Wells.

Officers of the Council:

L Hannawin, S Taylor

Public/Press:

One member of the public attended and no members of the press.

Part I

23/0154 Public Questions

None.

23/0155 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Butler and Cllr Morsley.

23/0156 To receive any declarations of interest

To receive from Members at this point or at any point during the meeting, in respect of any items included on the agenda, disclosure of any interests in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and gifts and hospitality in line with Government legislation.

None.

23/0157 Minutes of Last Meeting

To receive and APPROVE the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Thursday 22 February 2024.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Thursday 22 February 2024 were received with no amendments and **approved** unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

23/0158 Items to be taken into private session

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

None.

23/0159 Current Projects

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

a. Tower House Farm

Cllr Bridgman reported that now the planning application 23/02548/FULMAJ has been approved for the retaining wall it is expected that TA Fisher will drop their appeal for the previous proposal for the wall. There has been no update on the pre planning application for the reserved land.

b. Mortimer to Burghfield Footpath/Cycleway

Cllr Bridgman stated that an update had been given at the Finance and General Purposes meeting on the 7 March and the additional budget requirements, for the next phase of work, is on the agenda for the full Council meeting on 14 March.

23/0160 Schedule of Planning Applications

To receive and note the following applications:

23/02038/HOUSE: 9 Windmill Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3RN

Erection of 4no. 3 bed dwelling houses.

SMPC Comments:

The recent comments of WBC Highways regarding what is said to be compliance with P1 are noted but the Committee wishes to point out what appears to be a lacuna in the policy relating to parking and thus a policy question, and also a specific question for Highways on their response.

If an existing property has the benefit of parking in accordance with P1, but then transfers that parking area to a developer to form part of a new adjacent development site - such that the new site has parking spaces in accordance with P1 but having lost its parking, the donor property no longer complies with P1 - how does WBC treat the loss of parking from the donor property?

In the instant case the applicant says: *"The new plans show 9 car parking spaces to the new development and also a space to No.9 Windmill road. By providing this additional space to No.9, in effect a tenth space is being provided so the net effect is the same as what is being asked for and a betterment is created given the existing dwelling has no parking at all. We believe that this is actually a better solution to just providing 10 spaces to the new development. Any future owner of No.9 in all likelihood is going to own a car and if we did not provide off street parking then they would be parking on the street (as in all probability the previous owner was). We believe that this is actually a better balance overall because looking at census data only 8% of households locally have 3 cars or vans whereas statistically 38% of homes locally have only 1 car or van. So, this is more likely to provide a better balance to the scheme as a whole and the surrounding area."*

(First, of course, the applicant appears to be seeking to re-write P1 by reference to statistics. The Committee suggests that P1 should be strictly adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances - as allowed for in the policy - which doesn't appear to be the case here. The applicant has chosen to put four houses on this site whereas they could easily put (eg) three and increase the space available for parking.)

The applicant can't have it both ways. Either the tenth space is for No 9, in which case the new development has nine spaces and fails to comply with P1, or the new development has ten spaces and complies, but No 9 has no parking (and if it does have parking it should have at least two spaces for compliance with P1). On this point, it is disingenuous when the applicant says that No 9 didn't have any parking – it benefitted from off-road parking on a field large enough for (now) four houses!

As for Highways, they seem to have ignored that according to the statement from the applicant, one space is for No 9, leaving nine, not ten, for the development – how do Highways say this complies with P1?

Finally, the Committee remains concerned that there is insufficient visibility splay. The Committee would suggest reducing the height of the hedge and seeks clarification on the continuation of visibility if permission is granted.

#Cllr Bridgman moved agenda item 23/0162 West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022 – 2039 to be taken next.

23/0162 West Berkshire Local Plan review 2022 - 2039

To consider and resolve the comments to be submitted on the Local Plan to the inspectorate on Matters 4 – 13.

Cllr Bridgman welcomed Bob Coe from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to the meeting who would take any comments back to the NPSG meeting taking place on Tuesday (19 March). Cllr Bridgman confirmed that no further comments had been received from Committee members regarding responses to the Inspector's questions - the NPSG will be reviewing their responses for submission at the meeting on Tuesday, and he will then liaise with Sallyann to submit responses by the deadline of 22 March.

23/0161 Applications for Future Consideration

To note any further new applications (to appear on future agendas when relevant, e.g. when orange planning notices have been displayed).

24/00262/HOUSE: 16 The Crescent Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3RU

Single storey rear extension, garage conversion and front extension to garage to provide covered car port with associated fenestration and new chimney flue

24/00296/HOUSE: 17 Stephens Firs Mortimer Reading RG7 3UY

Single storey rear extension with flat roof together with the creation of an enclosed front entrance porch. Side lean-to replaced with a masonry garage block including flat roof.

24/00298/HOUSE: 68 Windmill Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3R

Installation of air source heat pump

24/00395/HOUSE: 5 Briar Lee Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3SA

Side Extension revised from previous approval with Gable roof and Dining area extended by 500mm

23/0162 West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022 – 2039

To consider and resolve the comments to be submitted on the Local Plan to the inspectorate on Matters 4 – 13.

Minuted above.

23/0163 Items for Information Only

a. Decisions received from West Berkshire Council

23/02548/FULMAJ: Land South of Tower Gardens The Street Mortimer Common Reading

Full Planning Application for the construction of a retaining wall and for details of the appearance and landscaping within the southern public open space area pursuant to the Outline Planning Permission 17/03004/OUTMAJ as varied by the S73 Application 19/00981/OUTMAJ Land South Of Tower Gardens The Street Mortimer Common Reading

APPROVED – 6 March 2024

SMPC Comments: Whilst the Committee members have no objections in principle to this amendment and consider that the revised wall and landscaping seem a better solution to that proposed in application 23/00297/RESMAJ, they do wish to raise the following issues:

- The Block Plan - Planting and Seeding drawing (ref. 510 rev H) indicates a 'badger sett' (by a section of the proposed wall below plot no 56) which was not shown on previous layouts - can the applicant clarify the meaning of this and what are the implications of badgers being present for this application and the site generally?
 - What are the proposals for the maintenance of the retaining wall? (Previous applications have referred to details of maintenance issues (generally) being dealt with in information packs (etc) supplied to new occupants, but what are the arrangements and is this happening?)
 - What are the arrangements for maintenance of (a) the public open space, and (b) the SUDS ponds – if there is/are s.106 agreements please supply copies/details (they do not appear to be available via the planning portal).

Finally, as raised in the Committee's comments on application 23/02498/NONMAT and subsequently confirmed by the applicant, we would like to see the link to the future footpath from the south-west corner of the public open space shown on the plans.

b. Update on Four House Corner

Cllr Bridgman clarified the points raised by him on SMPC's behalf at the two WBC Eastern Area Planning Committee meetings on the Four Houses Corner Application (particularly regarding the public consultation and the future management of the site by WBC as landlords). The committee agreed that the points raised represented the views to be advanced.

c. Minor Matters for Information

- The orange site notice tracker document will be changed, with a tab to only show live applications and another tab for historic applications.
- Details of the "Introduction to Planning" training course shall be recirculated.
- WBC will be holding a mini Eastern Area District/Parish Conference on 23 May. Venue to be confirmed.

23/0164 Communications

To identify any items for communicating

No specific items to be communicated.

23/0165 Future Agenda Items.

To identify future agenda items.

- All full Council and Committee meeting agendas should include chairman's comments and policy approvals as a standard item.
- An email had been received from the HMG regarding and Accelerated Planning consultation and would be circulated.

23/0166 Exclusion of Public and Press.

To pass a resolution to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified at 23/0158 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

Not required.

Close

The meeting closed at 19:22.