

PLANNING COMMITTEE

26th November 2015

THE FOLLOWING ALTERATIONS AND AMENDMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED SINCE THE PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT WAS PRESENTED TO MEMBERS

Queensmere Shopping Centre

Agenda Item 5

Paragraph 2, page 10 of the Committee Agenda, incorrectly reports the changes to the heights of the proposed scheme. It can now be confirmed that the submitted plans, as consulted on, take four stories off the shortest tower and add two stories each to the two tallest towers closest to the round tower.

NO CHANGE TO RECOMMENDATION

Comments have been received from the **Transport and Highways Section** and which are summarised as follows:

Trip Generation

The Council's transport consultant advises that the increase in vehicle trips for pupil travel will be in the range of 80 to 132 (132 assumes that there will be no siblings in the vehicles). There will be a further 6 staff vehicle trips per day.

Highway Safety

The accidents data does suggest is that there is history of accidents in this location and very close attention should be given to how this area of the network operates. The Council's transport consultant advises that when he undertook a site visit on 19/11/15 between 15.05 and 15.45 he observed some very concerning and hazardous crossing movements of the A4 London Road by many, many, children from the school. running across the A4 without looking;

- ignoring the pedestrian crossing phases and running across the road in very short gaps between vehicles in the pedestrian red phase;
- waiting in the middle of the road and not on the staggered crossing island and waiting very close to the edge of the carriageway;
- it felt a very chaotic situation with jostling on the side of the carriageway in the vicinity of the crossing; and
- there was no supervision at the crossing by the school staff.

It is quite obvious that the staggered crossing is not sufficient to accommodate the large volume of pupils wishing to cross at this location at the end of the school day and there was insufficient space on the central island for children to wait meaning that pupils were waiting in the middle of the road. It is clear that the crossing needs to be widened so it stretches the length of the island and made a straight across crossing point and in doing so removing the stagger.

It is proposed that the crossing island be widened such that it can better cope with the numbers of pupils crossing. It is also being recommended that a crossing supervisor be appointed. Without these improvements an objection would be raised on grounds of highway safety. The removal of the staggered crossing would also help with queuing vehicles turning right out of Lascelles Road and proposals to widen the footway/cycle way into the site would help in accommodating the pupil numbers waiting to cross.

Vehicular Access

Improvements are proposed to the existing access serving the northern most car park and which need to provide the necessary pedestrian visibility and set back of gates

Pedestrian Access

The proposed improved pedestrian accesses will need to be protected by extending the existing School Keep Clear Markings across the frontage of the school buildings.

Car Parking

The Council's Transport consultant has advised a number of detailed changes to car parking layout which will require amended plans to be submitted. It is accepted that the proposed increase in staff numbers of 2 no. will result in a slight overspill of parking on street.

Pupil Drop Off

In future pupil drop off will not occur within the school grounds which is welcomed.

Servicing

To be improved via a widening of the existing access to the northern most car park.

Cycle Parking

124 no. uncovered cycle racks are being proposed. The Council's Transport consultant advises that this number is not necessary, but a smaller number of covered quality cycle racks is preferred.

Travel Plan

A school travel plan is required and showers and changing facilities required for staff

Proposed Mitigation

The applicant is to enter into a S106 Agreement which requires a S278 Highways Agreement for the following works:

- Temporary access point (as necessary);
- Installation of bell mouth junction at northern car park access;
- Reinstatement of redundant access points to standard to footway construction (as necessary);
- Installation of street lighting modifications (as necessary);
- Drainage connections (as necessary);
- Dedication as highway maintainable at the public expense, free of charge, of sight line areas (as necessary);
- Changes to road signs (as necessary);
- Construction and dedication as highway maintainable at the public expense, free of charge, the widened footway/cycleway along the A4 London Road/Sussex Place, the land area of which is shown in Drawing No. 8/13/398/ P1 rev. B (as appended to previous S106 agreement);
- Widen the existing signal controlled toucan crossing of A4 London Road to the west of the junction with Lascelles Road. to circa 8m in width using the length of the existing island;
- Amendments to tactile paving at the A4 London Road crossing point;
- Removal of two trees on the northern boundary of the site that fall within the widened footway/cycleway;
- Installation of safety railing or knee railing on approach to/from the A4 London Road crossing on the southern side of the carriageway only;
- Dig out the footway adjacent the carriageway and re-provide the verge on sections either side of the existing crossing on the southern side of the carriageway only;

In addition the following transport obligations are required:

- Commitment to fund a crossing supervisor to man the A4 London Road toucan crossing point for circa 20 minute period at the beginning and end of the school day. The school may wish to seek a financial contribution from St Bernards as children from this school also use the crossing to access bus and coach services. This person to be appropriately trained, but their role will be to stay on the footway and manage crossing movements of pupils so that they do not enter the crossing at the end of pedestrian phase;
- £3,000 contribution to amendments of School Keep Clear markings on Lascelles Road to be paid on signing of the agreement to allow time to implement prior to first occupation;
- Travel Plan document;
- Provide showers and changing facilities for staff if not already provided;
- Travel Plan monitoring contribution of £6,000 only if not paid from previous S106.

Comments have been received from the Council's **Land Contamination Officer** as follows: Based upon the findings of the Geo-Environmental Desk Study, the following conditions are proposed:

1. *Phase 3 Quantitative Risk Assessment And Site Specific Remediation Strategy*

Development works shall not commence until a quantitative risk assessment has been prepared for the site, based on the findings of the intrusive investigation. The risk assessment shall be prepared in accordance with the Contaminated Land report Model Procedure (CLR11) and Contaminated Land Exposure Assessment (CLEA) framework, and other relevant current guidance. This must first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall as a minimum, contain, but not limited to, details of any additional site investigation undertaken with a full review and update of the preliminary Conceptual Site Model (CSM) (prepared as part of the Phase 1 Desk Study), details of the assessment criteria selected for the risk assessment, their derivation and justification for use in the assessment, the findings of the assessment and recommendations for further works. Should the risk assessment identify the need for remediation, then details of the proposed remediation strategy shall be submitted in writing to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Site Specific Remediation Strategy (SSRS) shall include, as a minimum, but not limited to, details of the precise location of the remediation works and/or monitoring proposed, including earth movements, licensing and regulatory liaison, health, safety and environmental controls, and any validation requirements.

REASON: To ensure that potential risks from land contamination are adequately assessed and remediation works are adequately carried out, to safeguard the environment and to ensure that the development is suitable for the proposed use and in accordance with Policy 8 of the Core Strategy 2008.

2. *Remediation Validation*

No development within or adjacent to any area(s) subject to remediation works carried out pursuant to the Phase 3 Quantitative Risk Assessment and Site Specific Remediation Strategy condition shall be occupied until a full validation report for the purposes of human health protection has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include details of the implementation of the remedial strategy and any contingency plan works approved

pursuant to the Site Specific Remediation Strategy condition above. In the event that gas and/or vapour protection measures are specified by the remedial strategy, the report shall include written confirmation from a Building Control Regulator that all such measures have been implemented.

REASON: To ensure that remediation work is adequately validated and recorded, in the interest of safeguarding public health and in accordance with Policy 8 of the Core Strategy 2008.

3. *Quality Of Imported Fill*

No soils or infill materials (naturally occurring, manufactured or recycled) shall be imported onto the site until it has been satisfactory demonstrated that they present no risk to human health, planting and the environment. Documentary evidence to confirm the origin, supported by appropriate chemical analysis test results (where required), quantities, timing and location of placement of all imported soils and infill materials, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to that import. The import onto the site of material classified as 'waste' is only acceptable with the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that no contaminated material is brought onto site.

A response has been received from the Council's Tree adviser in relation to the proposal to remove 4 no trees, including 2 no. trees which are currently protected under Tree Preservation Order No. 11 of 2006. The tree officer has advised that these are all low category trees that do not add significantly to the amenity value of the area and consent is granted for the removal of these trees.

CHANGE TO THE RECOMMENDATION

DELEGATE THE PLANNING APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING MANAGER FOR APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO RESOLVING OUTSTANDING TRANSPORT, HIGHWAY AND DRAINAGE ISSUES, COMPLETION OF A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT FINALISING CONDITIONS AND FINAL DETERMINATION

Letter of support from National farmers' Union has been received on 19th November 2015:

"I write on behalf of the National Farmers Union (NFU) in support of the application submitted by Sirius SBC Renewables LLP to construct a 12 hectare temporary ground mounted solar photo-voltaic installation. The planning sub-committee of the NFU Local Branch at Marlow have considered this application and have confirmed their support for the proposals.

The reasons cited by the committee for supporting the application are as follows:

Site Details

It is understood that the site is currently classified as non-agricultural land and has previously been used as both an extraction site for aggregates and latterly a landfill site. Whilst the site is non- agricultural, the current occupier has been forced to grow a crop on the land to prevent illegal encampments. Yields from the 2014 and 2015 crops indicate the low productivity value of the land; in 2014 the Winter Wheat crop achieved 5.5 tonnes per hectare (compared to the national average of 8.90 tonnes per hectare) and in 2015 the Forage Maize crop achieved 8.0 tonnes per hectare (compared to the national average of over 10.0 tonnes per hectare). It is clear from these yields that this land is not suited to growing high yielding arable crops. It is also understood that due to the design of the solar photo-voltaic installation, it will be possible for the land underneath to be grazed by sheep. This will therefore ensure the land is not lost from agricultural production. In avoiding substantial areas of Best and Most Versatile Land (i.e. Grades 1, 2 and 3a), the application has avoided an impact on the most productive farmland and so is in line with National Planning Policy Framework Guidance on this matter (e.g. NPPF 112).

Furthermore, we have been informed that a native wildflower mix will be sown and managed across the site. This will also be accompanied by bird and bat boxes and deadwood piles. Existing hedges and trees will be retained and where necessary will be supplemented. The combination of all of these measures will enhance the biodiversity value of the site by a significant measure.

It has also been highlighted to us that this installation is intended to remain in place for 25 years. This therefore provides scope for the installation to be removed in the future and the land returned to agricultural production if required.

Farm Diversification

Farm diversification is not a new concept, but in the face of ongoing market volatility, it is increasingly important for farms to be able to diversify to accommodate the significant variations in commodity prices. Farms must have a diverse portfolio of income streams to offset the massive risk of volatility in food commodity prices and the ever present risk of crop loss from extreme weather. To illustrate how volatility has affected the arable sector, I will focus on the variation in wheat prices over the past three years; on 16th November 2012 the Feed Wheat Price was £194/tonne, compared to today's price of £106/tonne , a move of £88/tonne or 45%. With farmers experiencing variations such as these, it is difficult to invest in infrastructure and staff and to sustain a viable business model.

Defra's latest Farm Business Income statistics predict a decline in the profitability of farming across the majority of farming sectors. This is set against an existing very low baseline where average farm profitability is currently projected to remain at £16,000 per business for the next 12 months. Such massive price variation against a low baseline would present an extreme challenge to the liquidity of any enterprise and would be unsupportable unless offset by alternate income streams. We therefore believe that the stability provided by an additional income stream is essential. We have been informed that this installation would provide the farm with a secured and guaranteed income stream for 25 years. The stability this would provide is unquantifiable and could not be achieved through agricultural production. We believe that this could help safeguard the future of the farming business.

NFU Policy

The NFU fully supports the Government's renewable energy targets and we feel that all farmers should have the opportunity to produce clean energy commercially. Planning applications for field-scale solar PV are increasingly common in the south east owing to the optimum levels of solar radiation in the area. Farmers have always produced industrial crops as well as food - for example fibres, biomass fuels, oilseed rape for biodiesel and poppies for pharmaceutical morphine. Renewable energy fits well into this range of non-food products. We are therefore generally comfortable with the use of agricultural land for solar panels on poor quality land, especially as the use is temporary, provides biodiversity benefits and long-term soil condition improvements, and does not preclude the subsequent return of the land to agricultural production.

The NFU is a strong believer that UK farms should be a major player in a shift towards a resilient, low- carbon energy system, especially where this can complement or be undertaken alongside existing farm practice. We take substantial interest in the recent important report launched by the Farm Power coalition, which found there is at least 10GW of untapped solar resource across UK farms, equivalent to more than three times the installed capacity of the proposed new nuclear power plant at Hinkley Point C. If 10 GW of solar power were ground-mounted (half the national ambition for 2020 set by DECC), this would occupy at most 25,000 hectares - just 0.14% of total UK agricultural area (18 million ha) with a negligible impact on national food security.

In considering this application we would encourage Slough Borough Council to take account of the following paragraphs from NPPF:

- *Paragraph 20:* Encourages local authorities to "plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century"; and
- *Paragraph 28:* promotes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses in supporting a prosperous rural economy; and support sustainable rural tourism and leisure development that benefits businesses in rural areas ... which respect the character of the countryside.

In seeking to make this business resilient to future risk we suggest that the proposals are precisely the type of development that National Planning Policy Framework seeks to encourage. We therefore commend this application to Slough Borough Council and hope that it will be given favourable consideration."

NO CHANGE TO RECOMMENDATION

64 Mill Street

Agenda Item 8

The applicant has recently asked for the application to be withdrawn.

WITHDRAWN

There has been letter one objection received on 16 October 2015 from Chalvey Community Forum:

“September Chalvey Community Forum minutes, but would like to highlight in particular two areas of concern.

The first is the current planning application to enlarge Claycots School. This will add a considerable number of new parental drop-offs and pick-ups. The current situation is already causing a lot of problems to residents in the streets adjoining Montem Lane who get blocked in/out by parents leaving their vehicles - sometimes unattended with the engines running - while they escort their children into/collect from school. They also block the main stream of traffic in Montem Lane, creating tail backs into Ledgers Rd & Chalvey Rd.

We understand that these problems arose in the first place because when the school was originally planned Highways were not consulted until the whole set-up was a fait accompli. With the proposed extension, Montem Lane really cannot take any more school traffic. Could Highways please liaise with Planning and try and get a new entrance/exit either onto the A4, or just inside Ledger's Rd with its junction with the A4.

The second issue is the current pavement parking consultation. The plans show that the dangerous bend at the top of The Crescent appears not to have been considered for restrictions. The bend is a very sharp doubling back V. The Crescent is otherwise long and straight, so drivers for whom the bend is not readily apparent tend to drive too fast for a narrow residential street. Even without parked cars on the bend it is dangerous due to its invisibility and lack of warning.

Although we have 24 hour residents' permit parking restrictions, with a daytime free hour for visitors, the bend has a single yellow line during the day, but perversely is a free for all after hours (when darkness doesn't help) and on Sundays. Due to the narrowness of the road, cars park on the pavement around the whole curve of the bend. They cannot be seen by approaching drivers, who are suddenly confronted both by the sharp V and unexpected parked cars. The pavement on the bend is very narrow, causing pedestrians, mums with pushchairs etc to have to walk in the road - also invisible to drivers until the last moment. Cars have often ended up in the garden of the houses directly ahead, on the outside edge of the V when drivers cannot negotiate the turn or have to swerve to avoid hitherto unseen pedestrians.”

Transport & Highways Updated Comments:

The applicant has agreed to fund a crossing improvement at Ledgers Road/A4 Bath Road junction and the provision of a buildout on the south side of Montem Lane on the east side of the access road to Montem Leisure Centre. These two measures will improve the safety of pedestrian accessing the school and are considered suitable mitigation to the proposed development. The total agreed cost of these improvements is £80,000.

NO CHANGE TO RECOMMENDATION

