

From: Greenham Parish Council
Sent: 15/06/2018 16:40:13
To: Planapps
Cc: Tony Vickers
Subject: 18/00764/OUTMAJ – SANDLEFORD STRATEGIC HOUSING SITE

Attachments: Sandleford 764 final.docx; ATT00001.txt

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Hello

Please find comments attached . from Greenham Parish Council regarding the Sandleford Strategic Housing Site

Please let us know if you require any further information at all
Kind regards

Lisa Blake
Clerk
GPC

18/00764/OUTMAJ – SANDLEFORD STRATEGIC HOUSING SITE

Greenham Parish Council Response

Greenham Parish Council (GPC) considered this planning application at its meeting on 13 June. We were disappointed that there is no reference to the fact that most of the dwellings and all the country park are not in Newbury but in Greenham.

General

We are not at this stage responding to 18/00828/OUTMAJ (Sandleford West) because it lies entirely outside our parish boundary. However we have made comments relating to the overall access issues, construction haul routes and in particular the spine road through the site which apply to the whole strategic site.

We also note that at Core Strategy stage the site was said to be able to accommodate “up to 2000” homes and the Planning Authority has assumed that this number would be delivered by 2036, with half occupied by 2026. We now see that even with a significant extension to the west (outside Greenham parish) only a maximum of 1500 is envisaged and that the Applicants are unlikely to deliver even half this number by 2026. We believe this undermines the case for this site to remain such a key part of the Local Development Plan, which has consistently been opposed by this Council. We therefore continue to oppose this development in principle.

We are not satisfied that the submission of two separate outline planning applications with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on matters relating to the overall site complies with the DPD that requires a single overarching outline application. It would seem that the MoU allows scope for continuing disagreement between the two applicants to the detriment of both Newbury and Greenham residents and also the District Development Plan. However our comments are made on the assumption that the Planning Authority differs from us in its views on the matter.

Our conclusion is that at this stage we object on the grounds of insufficient information, specifically concerning the results of traffic modelling. Since this is an outline application with all matters reserved except access, this information is crucial. We understand that results should be available in early July, therefore we may give the application further consideration when we have had the opportunity to study them.

We have the following further comments.

- **Public footpath GREE/9.** This crosses the site from Warren Road in the west to A339 in the east. In general, we welcome its retention and improvement. The rural nature of this route should be preserved as far as possible.
 - Making the route a shared-use foot/cycle-way is supported. However the surface should not be tarmac, as this will destroy the ‘rural feel’: a bound gravel surface similar to that of the towing path to the canal would seem appropriate.

- Where it reaches the A339 there is no safe, convenient crossing and no link to the rights of way network on the east and south sides of this extremely busy main road, towards Greenham and Newtown Commons. We note that the Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) indicates a proposed link on two alternative routes:

- Along the west side of A339 as far as Swan roundabout;

- Along and outside the southern boundary fence of St Gabriels School to join with GREE/10/1 where it enters the Greenham Common in Bunkers Farm.

- We support the proposal of the Mid & West Berkshire Local Access Forum (the LAF) for a 'toucan' style light-controlled crossing immediately north/west of the Swan roundabout, enabling users to cross where traffic is slower and there is a ready-made raised central shelter. We request that Highways incorporate a new 2m wide footway from this crossing west to the extreme south east boundary of the site, from where GREE/9 would follow a *diverted* route from the easternmost re-entrant of its current route. This is the 'desire line' for anyone wishing to continue eastwards to link with rights of way east and south of the site.

- The eastern section of GREE/9 should be retained as a landscape feature, because it forms part of the Sandford Priory historic landscape although it no longer performs a useful function as a footpath. Although route 'ii' above would be ideal for access to Greenham Common and would use the whole of GREE/9, we believe it is highly unlikely that permission would be granted by landowners, in which case it would force users to make the most unpleasant journey along 800m of footway beside speeding traffic, in either direction.

- **New road junction serving Highwood Copse school, HWRC and Sandford.** We note that this junction is already part of the consented 17/03434/COMIND and that 18/00764/OUTMAJ includes a road linking to it (and thus to A339) as well as funding to enable it to be fully implemented. We also note that it is the responsibility of the Highway Authority to deliver it and that the assumption is that it will be in place for use by Sandford traffic from September 2021.

- We strongly support the inclusion of this A339 access road, which must have a light-controlled right turn from the site southbound. Ideally it should also have a right-turn *into* the site at this point from the north, since Highwood School is for the use *not* of Sandford families but for children from all over south Newbury & Greenham. It should not be necessary for these children to be driven to school via Sandford estate roads or via the Swan roundabout: at peak morning rush-hour 'school run' vehicles will thereby be adding to the congestion along the northbound lane into Newbury along the A339.

- This junction's traffic light system also needs a pedestrian phase, because children from Greenham east of A339 will need to cross on foot at this point to get to and from school.

- Although we realise that the Sandleford country park is largely justified as a means of relieving the pressure on wildlife on Greenham and Crookham Commons, we are sure that many Sandleford residents will wish to visit these commons, which are very different to that of the country park. They should be provided with a well signed route using quiet residential streets eastwards from this junction along Deadmans Lane, otherwise they will use their cars. The LAF suggests a good route which we support.

- This junction is so crucial to alleviating congestion at the two Monks Lane roundabouts caused by peak-time traffic from Sandleford that we believe there must a condition attached to any outline planning consent that requires it to be fully operational before 50 new dwellings are occupied in the northern first phase of Sandleford.

- We believe that the A339 access and *not* the Monks Lane or Warren Road access points should be used for all construction vehicles from the outset, for both the Bloor site and Sandleford West. This will minimise the number of HGVs using Monks Lane and Andover Road. Therefore we would wish to see it completed before 2021, ideally before any work begins on dwellings. There may need to be restrictions on HGVs during school start and finish times. However by having on-site concrete production this need not be a problem. All construction traffic not originating in Newbury should use A339 south and not go through the town centre.

- **Greenham Business Park and A339 traffic.** This Council is concerned that the understandable desire of the Planning Authority, expressed by Paul Goddard in his response to this application on behalf of Highways, to divert as much non-Newbury traffic from Basingstoke onto the bypass as possible, will impact on the Local Development Order (LDO) for Greenham Business Park (GBP). The lack of any bus priority lane on A339 between the Bear Lane and Swan roundabouts will cause all buses to be caught up in peak-hour congestion and remove any incentive for commuters to use them.

- Consequently we would like the Council to consider reallocating road space on the A339 throughout this stretch. To avoid undermining the laudable aims of the GBP LDO, we would like to see bus priority lanes on as much as possible of this road when making the traffic flow improvements in mitigation of Sandleford's impacts on the highway network. This need not obviate the aim of diverting cars, vans and HGVs onto the bypass where these are not destined for Newbury. We propose the following bus-only (plus taxi and motorbike) lanes, for peak hours only, in order of priority:

- Swan roundabout northbound to HWRC deceleration lane;
- Burger King roundabout southbound to Pinchington Lane;
- The remainder of the Bear Lane to Swan roundabout stretch in both directions.
- To reinforce the incentive for mode switch for commuters from Basingstoke direction, we suggest that consideration is given to requiring GBP to provide space for a Park & Ride. The buses taking GBP employees living in Newbury to and from work could take commuters into Newbury on their return journey morning and evening. The service could be funded by both this Sandleford development and GBP.
- The above two proposals would only work if taken together. They should have priority over any right-turn just for St Gabriels School: the school has a fleet of minibuses which could use the bus lane.
- **Spine Road.** We are pleased that the spine road linking the A339 and A343 via the community centre is now designed to better discourage 'rat running', keep speeds low (20mph?) and enable buses to serve the whole estate.
 - However we would like to be assured that bus stops will be located conveniently close to social and elderly care housing, where most bus users will live. Unless the bus service is well supported and designed to suit the demographics of bus users, it will not contribute significantly to reducing congestion at the Monks Lane exits which is where local commuter and shopper journeys will tend to be made by private car.
 - We would also like to see measures to eliminate through vehicular traffic along this road other than by buses and emergency vehicles. Transponder activated bollards or gates should be considered near the local centre, such as were installed on the former MOD estate development in Thatcham. This would reduce the traffic volume on Warren Road.
- **Allotments.** Greenham parish has no allotments and has long been seeking to secure land for them. The entire country park area is in Greenham (not Newbury) and we are confident that Sandleford could and should be able to spare the land needed. We have met with Bloors and discussed a potentially suitable site behind the HWRC. These allotments would be available to other residents of Greenham, who currently have to apply for plots in Newbury and are only eligible for any that are surplus to Newbury's own requirements. Therefore they will need access off the road linking A339 with Sandleford, as will the country park management area shown on the submitted plans. They will also need some parking.
- **Newbury Town Council comments.** We support the comments 1-6 and 9-12 in the Newbury Town Council submission of 15th May.

- We wish to add, in relation to their '4)' (**Monks Lane new roundabout**) that we object to the use of a roundabout here, because it destroys a 200m section of well used cycleway. Pupils living in Greenham at Park House will be affected by this, as will residents of Sandleford itself. In their response to the 2015 hybrid planning application, local cycling campaign group SPOKES quoted the advice in the Welsh Government design guidelines: "**Conventional roundabouts often pose the greatest risk to cyclists**". Instead we would like to see a light-controlled junction here, with a forward stop line for cyclists.
- Again relating to cyclists' needs, the Applicants have not taken account of the **latest review of the local cycle route network**, agreed by the West Berkshire Council Cycle Forum in 2017. The implementation of this is due to start very soon, with new signs specifically intended to guide cyclists onto safer and more convenient routes between the main employment areas (including Hambridge Lane, in Greenham, via Newbury Racecourse) and Sandleford Park. We would expect this application to contribute funds towards these network improvements. Transport Policy can advise.
- **Traffic assumptions.** While we await the results of Bloor's modelling, we would agree with objectors to the current proposals that the assumptions made about future commuting patterns are outdated and will tend to under-estimate peak time traffic flows.
 - With the recent and continuing loss of commercial employment floorspace and forecast improvements in rail services, a smaller proportion of working age residents of Sandleford will find jobs in the local area. The majority will *not* work locally and will therefore wish to use the Andover Road and A339 access points as they will travel to and from work by car and wish to avoid Newbury town centre. Therefore the predictions of traffic distribution (2-3% for Warren Road and 11-14% for A339) are far too low.
 - The use of Falkland and St Johns Wards travel to work census data from 2001 (or even 2011) is not justifiable. These wards consist of very different Super Output Areas (SOAs): those for the northern parts of the wards are much closer to the town centre and not at all representative of Sandleford. They have a much a higher proportion of commuter journeys on foot, by bike and/or by train than the SOAs nearer Monks Lane and in Wash Common, which are twice the distance.
 - Unless there is a major improvement in local bus services serving Newbury station at peak hours, commuters will be forced to use their cars, even if they wish to use public transport. The journey on foot or by bike between Sandleford and the station – let alone the town centre and main employment areas beyond – is just too far for all but the most fit and determined, given the long hill leading back home in the evening. Full use of facilities for electric bikes should be provided by the Sandleford

developers, including charging points at the rail station and additional secure bike storage.

