

From: Matthew Shepherd <Matthew.Shepherd@westberks.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 Sep 2024 12:02:24
To: dmsimport@westberks.gov.uk
Cc:
Subject: FW: 23/02094/FULMAJ Kennet Shopping Centre, Newbury
Attachments: FW: Eagle Quarter II: Highways and Active Travel Response - 23/02094/FULMAJ The Mall The Kennet Centre Newbury RG14 5EN

From: Paul Goddard <Paul.Goddard@westberks.gov.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 3:17 PM
To: Matthew Shepherd <Matthew.Shepherd@westberks.gov.uk>
Subject: 23/02094/FULMAJ Kennet Shopping Centre, Newbury

Hi Matthew, thank you for your emails including the one attached.

I am liaising with all parties regarding the traffic modelling, and I hope that the modelling can take place soon.

I will be provide comments on all other aspects in due course including on pedestrian and cycle routes. But unfortunately, there does still seem to be more significant issues to resolve at this stage.

I am sorry, but I am really disappointed regarding the latest response attached. I was hoping for something new, but unfortunately it is basically saying exactly the same as previous responses. Therefore, there should be no surprise that what I am about to say will also be similar to what I've also said before.

Taking some lines from the response submitted attached with my further responses in bold:

— The site is located in a highly sustainable location. The site is very well located to local services and facilities, and the level of existing pedestrian/cycle/public transport infrastructure provides a realistic opportunity for future residents to undertake most local journeys via sustainable transport modes. Residents of the site will not, therefore, be reliant on private car to access essential goods and services, which will in turn facilitate reduced car ownership.

— The development incorporates considerable sustainability elements which most other town centre residential developments do not include. On-site amenities for residents include residents' lounges, workspaces, leisure and gym facilities, extensive cycle parking, 3 car club spaces, electric vehicle charging points, roof terraces, and other ancillary facilities. While town centre facilities are accessible generally, they cannot be compared to having facilities directly on a site and specifically available to residents. As stated above, residents will not be reliant on private car to access services, which will in turn facilitate reduced car ownership.

— Census data supports the concept of low car ownership within Newbury town centre. Census data indicates local car ownership levels of 0.63 cars/vans per household in 2011 and 0.68 cars/vans per household in 2021 (provisional estimate). This sets a clear precedent that a significant proportion of existing residents can live without owning a private vehicle and can access key services and facilities via other means of transport, most likely by walking, cycling or using public transport. This further supports the argument for reduced car ownership.

As I have said a number of times now, the car parking standards have already accounted for these items, which is why zone 1 in the town centre is the lowest car parking standard where this site is situated. I am sorry, but it's not acceptable to double count these factors again, otherwise every other development would do so.

— Parking survey results demonstrate that the existing Kennet Centre MSCP (415 spaces) operates with sufficient spare capacity.

I agree, and I used the survey data to calculate the car parking requirement as per my previous responses. As stated previously, from the survey data, the previous scheme was considered to have sufficient car parking, while this scheme with 59 more flats and 100 less car parking spaces does not.

— The scheme has reduced the amount of commercial/office floorspace currently at the Kennet Centre by 66%. This reduces the parking demand for existing commercial/office uses.

As mentioned previously, I disagree that reducing the amount of commercial floor area will significantly reduce car parking demand. People visiting Newbury town centre do not just use the Kennet Centre MSCP to visit a particular retail unit contained within it. They will park in the MSCP to visit the whole of the town centre, particularly with people travelling from the south or southern parts of Newbury.

— There is a lack of opportunity for on-street parking in the area due to parking controls. Parking that cannot be contained within the site will be limited as residents of the site will not be eligible for residential parking permits for the surrounding highway network. The development would therefore not have an adverse impact on the on-street parking that surrounds the site as residents would not be eligible for a local parking permit and would therefore not be able to park within circa 1km of the site.

I am sorry, but this is not correct. Between 18:00 and 08:00 there are on street places available within several locations within a few hundred metres of the site. I perhaps also could mention that I have 19 years of experience in living 1.0 km from a town centre.

— There is existing capacity within other town centre car parks to cater for any overspill parking i.e. Parkway, Northbrook and the new Newbury Station Car Park. Residents can choose to pay to park in these car parks.

If I allowed every developer to make this argument, sooner or later any town centre car parking capacity would be gone, and I would be concerned that this be affect the future vitality of the town centre.

— Future residents will be made aware that there is no allocated parking prior to renting the property. This will encourage a higher proportion of residents who do not require a private vehicle to rent a plot within the proposed development.

— Residents would be charged the prevailing going rate to park within the MSCP or undercroft car park. There would be no discount available to residents.

This was always anticipated, and it is common for parking to not be allocated. There is a charge of just £2.00 for car parking from 18:00 to 08:00. I do not consider this to have much if any impact on the overall assessment of this proposal.

— The proposed land uses would each have different trip profiles which results in the demand for parking varying throughout the day. The required level of car parking is available at the times of day when residents require it i.e. the parking demand for commercial is limited overnight when demand for residential car parking is at its highest.

— Dual use of the MSCP by residents and non-residents is supported by WBC, with commercial mainly by day and residential mainly by overnight. With the parking provision unallocated and WIE18916-115-090224-HighwaysResponse 3 available on a first come first served basis this would enable the dual use of the MSCP by residents and non-residents (as accepted for the Market Street scheme).

I have said many times now that I support dual use car parking with commercial mainly by day and residential mainly by overnight. From this I have made calculations accordingly from the car parking surveys submitted. As stated previously, from the survey data, the previous scheme was considered to have sufficient car parking, while this scheme with 59 more flats and 100 less car parking spaces does not.

— The consented Market Street development achieves a parking ratio of 0.58 spaces per apartment during the daytime and 1.1 spaces per apartment at night. This application achieves a parking ratio of 0.70 spaces per apartment during the daytime and 1.12 spaces at night. This level of parking provision exceeds what was considered acceptable for the Market Street development.

— The precedent for residential development close to the town centre which delivers a lower parking ratio than that provided in the local standards has been set by the Market Street development

— WBC noted in their response to the Market Street application that providing fewer parking spaces would aid in reducing the number of private car trips. “The level of parking proposed also reduces the number of trips by private car to and from the site that would otherwise occur if additional allocated parking was provided. The site is clearly a location where it is possible for people to live, work and enjoy without the need for a private motor vehicle and so to include additional residential parking is unnecessary.” Were residents to be provided with a higher proportion of parking, this may encourage the use of the private car when efforts should be focussed on promoting the uptake of sustainable travel modes, particularly for town centre sites such as this. The same principle should therefore also apply to this application.

— Variable Message Signs in Newbury display the availability of parking spaces, thus providing early information to enable drivers to redirect to a convenient location (should the Kennet Centre MSCP be full). The information displayed is updated automatically.

— A Car Park Management Plan will be implemented to monitor car park usage and ensure that the on-site demand for parking is being met.

— This is an exceptional circumstance site similar to that attributed to the Market Street development.

— The similarities between the proposed development and the Market Street scheme are considerable, particularly in respect of proximity to the train and bus stations, and the fact both have a MSCP on site. In fact, the Kennet Centre scheme has far more on-site facilities than the Market Street scheme. This is not the case for most town centre schemes in Newbury. We consider that a precedent has been set.

Again, as stated previously some of this is factually incorrect. The Market Street residents will have overnight access within the site to 150 car parking spaces that are used by the Council offices by day within the MSCP.

There are 232 flats at Market Street, which have overnight access to 258 car parking spaces. This is a parking ratio of 1.11 spaces per flat that should be available from say 18:00 to 08:00. Then using data from the parking survey submitted, and presented by me previously, the number of parking spaces available for this proposal from 18:00 to 08:00, Thursday to Saturday ranges from 0.72 to 1.09 per flat, with an average of 0.93 spaces on average. Therefore, available projected levels proposed are lower 100% of the time than market Street, for some hours significantly so.

It should also be mentioned that the Market Street development was submitted and approved by the Western Area Planning Committee prior to May 2017, when the parking standards in Policy P1 became fully live. The Market Street development did not set anything, and again I have said this a number of times now .

Again, as mentioned previously, this development is not exceptional based on the term used within Policy P1. This term has so frequently been misinterpreted that it is being deleted in the draft local plan going forward. If this development is exceptional then every other residential development within the town centre and elsewhere since May 2017 could make / could have been allowed the same claim, and then no development would then ever comply with the parking standards that were set. This would be unacceptable, and

Finally at this stage, I am sorry, but I see no purpose whatsoever in having meetings or “dialogue” to say the same things that I have already said over and over again for months in writing including the above. Like many, my time is somewhat limited, and I would not consider it to be time particularly well spent at the public purse. It would seem to me that the only purpose of any meeting or “dialogue” is to be argued with in an attempt to get me to take a different view on this. As stated previously, there is a common misconception that I can allow non-compliance with the Councils car parking standards. But as the Councils highway case officer, I’m obliged to apply the Councils standards, and I’ve not seen any reason for me to attempt to persuade elected members that their standards should not be supported in this case and at this scale.

I also consider it unreasonable to apply such demands and pressure upon this service when there was an agreed scheme last August that had an agreed level of flat to parking ratio. The applicant chose unilaterally to alter this by submitting a different proposal that increased the number of flats by 59 and reduced the number of car parking spaces by 100. What is disappointing in my view is that I am being pressured to agree to this and then discard the Council’s evidence base parking standards in such a way.

If something new is submitted for me to consider that would potentially resolve the above, then I would gladly take a different view and would probably find any meeting useful. But sadly, at the moment, this doesn’t seem to be forthcoming.

Kind Regards

Paul Goddard (he/him)
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The majority of our office based teams are working from home. We are fully enabled to work remotely so this will not impact on our service to our clients or our colleagues. However, we do require that all communications are sent to us electronically by email so that we will be in a position to receive and respond. Thank you for your co-operation.

From: Matthew Shepherd <Matthew.Shepherd@westberks.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 10:15 AM
To: Sarah Ballantyne-Way <Sarah@lochailort-investments.com>
Cc: Paul Goddard <Paul.Goddard@westberks.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Kennet Centre

Hi Sarah,

Thank you for your email. Yes, I had a good break and enjoyed the weather on the most part...

I see you have submitted your response to Paul on the Highways issues. I would suggest that it would be preferable to allow Paul to review the rebuttal and consider our response before any meeting. I have included Paul in this email, but I have not checked if he in fact has any availability today or tomorrow. I can envisage the outcome of a meeting either today or tomorrow being for us to review and comment on your rebutted comments.

I would suggest we wait and review your comments submitted yesterday.

Kind Regards

Matthew Shepherd
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From: Sarah Ballantyne-Way <Sarah@lochailort-investments.com>
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 11:01 AM
To: Matthew Shepherd <Matthew.Shepherd@westberks.gov.uk>
Subject: Kennet Centre

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

Hi Matthew ,

Hope you had a good break and Wales wasn't too rainy!

Can we try and get a catch up with Paul Goddard by Wednesday? I'm on leave then until 5/3.

Many thanks

Sarah

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)