

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10 MARCH 2021

Councillors Present: Alan Law (Chairman), Tony Linden, Royce Longton, Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro (Vice-Chairman), Geoff Mayes, Graham Pask, Jo Stewart and Keith Woodhams

Also Present: Sharon Armour (Solicitor), Jessica Bailiss (Policy Officer (Executive Support)), Michael Butler (Principal Planning Officer), Stephen Chard (Principal Policy Officer), Gareth Dowding (Principal Engineer) and Simon Till (Principal Planning Officer)

PART I

37. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jo Stewart declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(1) but reported that, as her interest was a personal or an other registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, she determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

39. Schedule of Planning Applications

(1) Application No. & Parish: 20/02861/FUL - Land at 18 Sandhills Way, Calcot

(Councillor Jo Stewart declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4(1) by virtue of the fact that she knew one of the objectors. Councillor Stewart had not been in contact with this person regarding the application and had not predetermined the application. As her interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, she determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 20/02861/FUL in respect of the demolition of a 2 storey side extension and erection of an attached dwelling to form 2 no 3 bed dwellings, with associated access and additional parking, cycle stores and refuse.

Mr Michael Butler introduced the report and highlighted the key points:

- Officers were recommending approval of the application and in excess of 10 objections had been received.
- Mr Butler referred to the update sheet regarding number 18 Sandhills Way and clarified that the floor plans showed six bedrooms rather than four. This was because it was a small House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO). This was considered a permitted development. Officers had taken this point into consideration when considering the parking spaces required.
- If the application was approved a condition would be included that removed future permitted development rights.
- Regarding the planning history, in the original outline permission relating to the whole of Fords Farm Estate in 1976, no permitted development rights were removed in relation to hard standing within front gardens. Therefore if the application was

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refused, the owners of the properties in question could convert to hard standing without liaising with the Planning Authority.

- There had been 27 contributors to the application, all of which objected to the application. Holybrook Parish Council strongly objected to the application. The West Berkshire Council Highways Department had not raised any objection to the application and considered that sufficient parking was proposed for the site.
- On balance in terms of character and appearance whilst Officers considered that there would be a degree of harm caused if the application was approved, the harm was not significant enough to merit a recommendation for refusal. Separation distances to other dwellings in the area were considered acceptable and would not have an impact on amenity. Regarding number 16 Sandhill Way, there would be a degree of impact on this property from the additional parking however with proposed additional landscaping, which formed part of conditions for the application, on balance this was deemed acceptable by Officers.
- Parking was the most contentious element of the application. The parking proposed met the Council's standards on parking (Policy P1) and this was detailed in section 6.13 of the report.
- Mr Butler reported that there had been one further objection to the application and this was detailed along with the Officer's response in the update sheet. The update sheet also contained a further condition recommended by Officers, concerning landscaping.
- Mr Butler concluded that Officers were making a balanced recommendation for approval of the application. The application had positives and negatives however, in technical terms there was no reason for the application to be refused.

Removal of Speaking Rights

As resolved at the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29 April 2020, public speaking rights were removed for virtual Council meetings. This right was replaced with the ability to make written submissions. This decision was made in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

The above changes to speaking rights were subsequently amended at the Council meeting on 10 September 2020. It was agreed that parties making written submissions in relation to a planning application would be invited to attend the Remote Meeting of the Planning Committee to answer any questions that Members of the Committee might wish to ask in order to seek clarification on any part of their statement.

In accordance with the Extraordinary Council resolution, written submissions relating to this application were received from Mrs Claire Tull, Mrs Mary Bedwell, Mr Andrew Lenaghan, Mr Charles Croal, Mr Brian Baker and Mr Simon Collar, Parish Council representatives, and Peter and Sue Stagg, Ian Savill, Robin Rimmington and Julius Stephens, objectors.

Parish Council Representation

The written submission of Mrs Claire Tull, Mrs Mary Bedwell, Mr Andrew Lenaghan, Mr Charles Croal, Mr Brian Baker and Mr Simon Collard, was read out by the Clerk to the Committee as follows:

- The proposed development should be REFUSED.
- A shortfall of one parking space is a shortfall and reason enough for refusal. Parking provision, as cited in West Berkshire Council: Housing Site Allocations DPD (2006-2026) states that, in the Eastern Urban area, a three bedroom house should have two spaces '(as a minimum)';

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- The parking plan states 'do not scale', so how can a desktop assessment be made on a plan not to scale? The application should be refused until the plans can be proved and verified. The Parish Council has completed a measurement of the parking entrance and questions the dimensions given. This application seems to rest entirely on the 'parking plan' which we refute. There is not enough room to enable the manoeuvres required to use the three spaces shown let alone the four actually required. Plus, the spaces are not allocated. Due to the difficult nature of the parking design, it will lead to disputes in the future.
- This application was previously refused: 'the layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards...this could result in on street parking in the vicinity, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic'. This fact has not changed. Therefore, the refusal must be upheld.
- There is no right of way to the new property. Existing owners have easement rights over the forecourt but this would not automatically extend to the new property. The garage owners have financial responsibility for the maintenance of the forecourt. It would be irresponsible to not refuse this application until rights of way and compensation for damage caused to the forecourt during construction, has been agreed.
- Officers accept that 'harm' will be caused to No 16. A reason for refusal. Especially noise and light pollution at night by parking cars so close to this resident's window is unacceptable. 'Planting' is not a viable or appropriate measure to excuse and ignore policy and poor design. The harm caused to residents' health and wellbeing cannot be ignored.
- Reliance on cycle racks in order to pass a design that lacks appropriate parking provision is inconsistent with design guidance and building standards. The proposed location of the cycle racks is wholly inappropriate. There is no external front to back access and, therefore, necessitates bikes (6 shown) being carried through the house. The 'new' house is of small proportions, making this almost impossible and more so with a car parked as close to the property as shown on the proposed plan.
- The planning conditions as proposed in the EAPC reports are unworkable and do not go far enough to protect existing residents and the local environment.
- It is absolutely not necessary to inflict another house in this cramped space to assist in fulfilling the housing quota. There are plenty of other applications in the Eastern Area with 199 already under construction in Holybrook Parish.
- In summary, there is tangible and reasonable doubt regarding the robustness of the parking provision, access and turning space and, subsequently, harm will be caused to existing residents. The application must be refused.

Member Questions to the Parish Council:

Councillor Graham Pask raised a question for Mrs Claire Tull. He noted that the Parish Council had made a statement that existing owners did not have easement rights over the forecourt. Councillor Pask stated that he had visited the site as he had been confused by the comments regarding the issue. He was therefore acutely aware of the layout and queried why the Parish Council had made this statement. Mrs Tull referred to the communal garage area of Ford's Farm and stated that the actual access was under the deeds of one property. Mrs Tull queried if it could be assumed if the easements rights for the area through the garages held by the current occupiers of number 18, would automatically be conferred to any new residents. The Parish Council were concerned that this was the only access and would be used by construction vehicles if the application was approved. This could obstruct access to the garages and also damage the forecourt concrete.

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Councillor Pask stated that his understanding was that that the last house on Wheatlands Close, which backed onto the site, was the owner of the access and he queried if this was correct. Mrs Tull believed this to be correct and that they were responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the forecourt area.

Councillor Alan Law asked Officers if access over an easement was a private matter rather than a planning matter. Mr Butler confirmed civil access rights were not planning matters. The Committee was looking at material planning considerations in assessing the application. It was not for the Committee to consider any future legal private access rights or ownership rights. These issues were matters for the developer to resolve. Legal Officer, Sharon Armour, confirmed that she had nothing further to add to Mr Butler's comments.

Councillor Tony Linden was unsure if the matter of easement was relevant as the dwelling was a HMO for up to six bedrooms across two separate houses. Secondly Councillor Linden asked if the garages were currently used for car parking or general storage. Councillor Law stated that the matter of the easement had already been dealt with and it was not a planning matter. Councillor Linden's question regarding the use of the garages was however relevant. Mrs Tull referred briefly to the easement and stated that there would be multiple vehicle access in and out of a very narrow entrance that was 2.5m from the pavement to the post. It was not possible to get two cars parked side by side and a third car in this space. Regarding the garages Mrs Tull stated that she did not have personal knowledge on this matter but the indication was that the garages were used for parking.

Objectors' Representations:

The written submission of Peter and Sue Stagg, Ian Savill, Robin Rimmington and Julius Stephens was read out by the Clerk to the Committee as follows:

- Julius Stephens

The application should be refused. The access width is 2.6m not 2.8m as the highways officer asserts. Confusion reigns as to why, in accordance with policy P1, the 2 new dwellings do not have the required 4 parking spaces – only 3 are provided. The CMS condition should be agreed and sorted out prior to any planning permission as the development in question is not just a small job.

- Ian Savill

Still worried about the apparent erroneous conclusions of the highways officer in recommending the application for approval, on the basis that there will be a reduced shortfall of one space as opposed to two spaces. A site visit should have been undertaken by the highways officer as well, covid notwithstanding. The garden spaces do not meet the minimum requirements in addition as they are below the required 100m² – shortfall of 30m². Finally the introduction of these parking spaces in this green alleyway will be detrimental to the appearance and character of the vicinity. The application should be rejected.

- Robin Rimmington

The area is attractive and adds to amenity. The inclusion of the parking spaces will add to noise and disturbance. In addition further pollution will be caused from exhaust fumes. There are safety issues in relation to pedestrian/vehicle conflict in addition to be taken into account. The Committee should note that if the proposal is approved a carless

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walkway will be changed into a car way. This will be a profound and irreversible change and will cause both emotional and environmental harm. Please refuse the application.

- Peter and Sue Stagg

The objectors do not agree with nor understand the underlying logic of the highways officer in firstly recommending the previous application for refusal but now changing this one to approval. It does not appear to be consistent. If the application is approved, it will inevitably increase parking pressures off site on the adjoining highways. If the application is approved, the condition relating to CMS should be approved before any permission is granted. There are many issues to be resolved in the CMS. How can the garage forecourt area be permitted for use for large construction vehicles etc? There is not enough space on the application site for the turning of parked vehicles – it would need to be on adjoining private land if so. The application should be refused as before.

Member Questions to the Objectors:

Councillor Stewart stated that she was familiar with the area and the garages. There had been comments made about communal parking in the vicinity and Councillor Stewart was interested to know what residents' experience was of this. Councillor Stewart also asked objectors for an account of their personal views regarding the impact the development would have on parking in the area.

Mr Stephens stated that the issue of parking was the biggest concern as there was the potential for additional vehicles that could not be accommodated on the site. He added that it was constantly alleged by the applicant that there was plenty of room for parking elsewhere. Mr Stephens had lived in the area for 36 years and it was known by local people that this was not the case. Mr Stephens reported that there were four communal parking areas and referred to the comment by the applicant that most houses had private driveways. Mr Stephens had carried out his own count on parking and of the 42 residences, there were only four private driveways. Therefore the view that the development would not cause an impact on road parking was erroneous in Mr Stephens view. He was disappointed that the Highways Officer had not made an attempt to investigate the matter further as part of the previous or current application for the site. In answer to Councillor Stewart's question, those who lived in the area knew that parking was already tight.

Mr Savill echoed the points raised by Mr Stephens and stated that parking in the area was a nightmare. Fortunately a number of residents who lived on Sandhills Way did not own cars. Mr Savill's neighbours did not have cars but he stressed that if they did the parking situation would be a lot worse and this was indicative of what would happen if the application was approved. Currently only two of the owners of the HMO had cars. Mr Savill felt that the risk regarding parking could not be stressed enough. Councillor Law asked where Mr Savill lived and Mr Savill confirmed that he lived at number 10 Sandhills Way.

Councillor Pask referred to the garages and queried if these were allocated to individual houses and further queried if they were used for parking. Councillor Pask was mindful that local planning policies did not include garages as parking spaces. He queried how the garages were accessed and who owned them. Councillor Pask noted that some of the garages backed onto back gardens and he queried if this was how some of them were accessed. Councillor Law stated that the pertinent question was whether the garages were allocated to houses. Mr Stephens stated that all 16 garages were allocated to individual houses. Regarding whether the garages were used for parking, Mr Stephens stated that use was mixed between parking and storage.

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Mr Savill referred to the communal parking spaces and stated these were free for anyone to use on a first come first serve basis. Councillor Law stated that when he had visited the site he had noted that a number of these spaces had been available. Mr Savill stated that this would be very different if the area was visited at the weekend or in the evening, when all spaces were normally taken.

Mr Rimmington stated he believed a large proportion of residents used garages for car parking because the parking situation in the area was often virtually impossible particularly at weekends.

Ward Member Representation:

Councillor Richard Somner in addressing the Committee raised the following points:

- He was disappointed with the recommendation by Officers. Residents and the Parish Council had raised some very valid points, which in his view should overturn the recommendation of approval.
- He thanked the Chairman for noting at the outset that the number of bedrooms was incorrect and this was highly relevant to discussions taking place.
- In Councillor Somner's view the application was inappropriate and was not in-keeping with Sandhills Way, which was essentially a walkway with the exception of the site in question.
- Councillor Somner had noted examples cited of designs in the wider area as a means of acceptance of the proposal and Councillor Somner felt that this was flawed. The area included a varied housing mix from flats to six bedroom houses.
- Councillor Somner questioned the access provision proposed and whether this was suitable. If more than one car was parked at the new house there could potentially be no access to the original house unless the pavement was used, which did not have a dropped kerb.
- Councillor Somner highlighted the issue of access to the rear gardens through the house. Everything needed at the rear of the property would have to be carried through the house, which in his view was not acceptable.
- Parking was the largest issue with the application. Parking and access could very easily be blocked and if the garage owners used their spaces then neither owners of the new house nor existing house would be able to use their spaces as set out in the plan.
- From the plans presented on the website it could be seen that there was a red line that extended from the property to the road through the garage block and there were clarifying statements within documents that this was not owned by the property and was only to indicate access. It would be standard on the estate for the owners of the garages to have an allocation outside of this. Councillor Somner lived on the estate and he used a garage block and he had a space outside his property and a space opposite.
- Councillor Somner was concerned regarding space to accommodate construction traffic. This would add further to concerns regarding parking and also turning. The forecourt was eight garages long and included a pavement on a blind corner, which in Councillor Somner's view was not acceptable for use for turning and was an accident waiting to happen.
- Councillor Somner was concerned regarding enforcement in relation to parking and driving on the pavement, which could lead to residents having to take evasive

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action, which was not acceptable. He queried who would carry out enforcement as it would not be West Berkshire Council Officers and therefore would have to be Thames Valley Police. Councillor Somner did not feel it was acceptable to approve an application that would generate police involvement.

- There was no need for the extra house. Holybrook Parish Council had referred to 199 houses currently under development and the proposal did not sufficiently count towards this number in Councillor Somner's view.
- In the time Councillor Somner had lived in Calcot a number of developments have been approved and one more would not help the quota for the area.
- Councillor Somner noted that the Officer recommendation was on balance, however in his opinion it was not on balance and it was not a balanced application. Approval of the application would not help the residents that already lived in the area.

Member Questions to the Ward Member:

There were no questions for the Ward Member.

Member Questions to Officers:

Councillor Pask stated that very often within the planning history section of a planning report Members learned why a previous application had been refused however, Councillor Pask stated that he could not find this detail. A previous application had been submitted for the site and refused in September 2020. Councillor Pask asked what had changed between the previous and current application. Mr Butler apologised that this information had not been made clear within the report. Mr Butler stated that he had not dealt with the previous application but his understanding was that it was an identical application apart from the fact that there were no on-site parking spaces provided for the new dwelling. With regards to planning policy P1, the Highways Officer had recommended refusal of the previous application, with the sole reason for refusal being parking.

Councillor Pask emphasised that parking had been the sole reason for refusal of the previous application. He noted that the fact that garden sizes were below the recommended minimum standard had not been included. Mr Butler clarified that there had only been one reason for refusal, which was parking.

Councillor Alan Macro referred to comments regarding the hard standing and that if it was pervious it did not require planning permission. He noted from the drawing of the site that block paving was being used and he queried if this was considered to be pervious. Mr Butler confirmed that block paving was considered pervious. If it was impermeable then only five square metres were permitted. In the case of the current application it was considered permitted development.

Councillor Stewart commented that there seemed to be some differing of opinion between Officers and the Parish Council regarding the size of the access into the proposed development and she asked for this to be clarified by Officers. Councillor Law added that the explanation given was that the measurement had been made by scaling up from the drawings and that a Highways Officer had not visited the site. Councillor Law noted however, that Mr Gareth Dowding had visited the site earlier in the day and asked if he had measured the access. Mr Dowding confirmed that he had not measured the access. The Highways Service had taken a measurement from the plan and had asked for a condition to be added that ensured correct dimensions were recorded before development was able to begin.

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Councillor Law noted Mr Dowding's response and asked him to clarify that if the measurements from the applicant were incorrect then they would not be able to proceed with the application if it was approved. Mr Dowding confirmed that if the condition could not be met due to an error on the applicant's part then this was correct.

Councillor Pask referred to the photo that had been shown of the access. He referred to condition four which stated that 'The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the approved vehicle parking and turning spaces for the existing dwelling and new dwelling hereby approved on the site have been completed in accordance with the approved plans'. Councillor Pask asked Mr Dowding how vehicles were expected to turn in the very restricted area or if there was an expectation to reverse. A car could be turned around between the garages but this was very tight. Councillor Pask asked if there should be a provision on site for cars to be able to turn around so that they could travel front ways in and front ways out. Councillor Law understood that the Highways Department had always been against reversing out onto a main thoroughfare.

In response to Councillor Law and Councillor Pask, Mr Dowding confirmed that the Highways Department was against reversing out of an access onto a road however, the road in question was not a classified road and therefore it was permitted. He suspected that condition four had been used as a standard condition and therefore the turning element had not been removed. It would not be unreasonable for someone to reverse from the garages. When visiting the site Mr Dowding reported that he had turned a five metre long car within the garage forecourt area. He had needed to undertake a five point turn but it was possible. It was also possible to reverse the length of the garages and up to 25 metres was deemed acceptable for reversing by emergency services. There was also the option of using spare spaces within the communal parking. Parking would be possible within the frontage area of the development but there would not be room for turning.

Councillor Stewart referred to a question that had been raised by the Parish Council regarding whether there were restrictions or regulations around the size of parking spaces. Comments had been made that the two parking spaces alongside each other would not be large enough to enable users to open their car doors. Mr Dowding reported that standard parking spaces were 2.4m by 4.8m and ideally 2.5m by 5m as cars were generally getting larger. The standard parking space of 2.4m by 4.8m was sufficient to enable a car door to be opened and condition four clearly stated that the applicant had to provide a plan with accurate dimensions for standard sized car parking spaces, which could then be assessed by Officers. Councillor Stewart asked if the plan referred to by Mr Dowding had been provided and Mr Dowding confirmed that it was required as part of the conditions if the application was approved, but he was not aware if this had yet been submitted by the applicant. Mr Butler clarified that the plan was included on the tracking plan shown as part of his presentation and accepted by Officers.

Councillor Law referred to a question raised by the objector Mr Stephens regarding the number of driveways. Mr Stephens had highlighted that the applicant had stated that there were lots of driveways however he had only counted four. Councillor Law concurred with this as during his visit to the site he had not seen many driveways and he asked for Mr Dowding's view on this. Mr Dowding stated that he did not have a view on the matter as the application site had been viewed alone to assess whether it met requirements in terms of access and parking, regardless of whether it had a driveway. Mr Dowding felt that what other properties had in terms of driveways was not relevant to the application.

Councillor Law disagreed with Mr Dowding's view as effort was made to ensure standards were maintained and that certain elements of a development did not stand out

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in a negative manner. This related to ensuring developments fitted in with the overall amenity of an area. Councillor Law understood that the application had to be judged on its own merits however, he felt that as the proposal formed part of a very small number of driveways then it was different from the general tone of the estate.

Councillor Law noted that when the existing house was built in the 1970s there was no withdrawal of permitted development rights. As far as he understood someone could turn a piece of grass at the front of their property into hard standing under permitted development rights. Mr Butler confirmed that this was correct. Councillor Law noted from looking at pictures of the area that many properties only had pedestrian access and separate garages. The development if approved would turn a pedestrian way into a car way and Councillor Law queried if this was allowed under permitted development rights and planning policy.

In response to Councillor Law's question Mr Butler reported that he had viewed the detailed planning history for the site and there were three conditions on the original outline permission which related to permitted development rights including; garage accommodation including that garages must remain for car parking; no extensions or buildings within the curtilage and finally there was a slightly unusual condition which restricted fencing, walls and planting within curtilages along the footway. Mr Butler highlighted however that the wording did not include hard standing, which he felt was unusual. If hard standing had been controlled by the condition the recommendation from Officers might have been refusal of the application.

Finally Councillor Law referred to the two parking spaces which could be created under permitted development rights and could only be accessed via the new housing proposed. Councillor Law commented that the advice was always that planning remained with a property rather than with a resident and therefore in theory the property could be owned by someone else in the future who might not be willing to give access to the parking proposed. Mr Butler confirmed that this was a possibility and he presented a slide from his presentation, which showed the red line location plan. Mr Butler explained that because the application site included both dwellings the plan would be conditioned. If there were future breaches of conditions through property rights this would breach the planning permission and enforcement action could be taken. Initially, because both dwellings would be owned by the developer, then easement rights would be applied.

Debate:

Councillor Pask stated that when he read the agenda the previous week he had felt that it was innocuous. It was only once all the comments were received from local residents and the Parish Council he had felt there might be more to the proposal. He had visited the site and stated that it was one of those applications where a site visit was extremely helpful. Councillor Pask felt that a desktop exercise to work out parking arrangements for this type of application was inadequate.

In Councillor Pask's view the area had originally been designed to minimise the impact of cars, which he felt was quite innovative for the time it was built during the 1970s. Councillor Pask was not confusing access rights, which were not a planning matter and was endeavouring to look at the application in pure planning terms. Councillor Pask reported that when walking down Sandhills Way the houses were fairly identical and were pleasant to look at. Number 18 Sandhills Way had already been extended however his personal view was that putting a separate house in its place was a step too far. Councillor Pask stated that the Committee was often advised that it should not go against a technical appraisal from the professional Highways Service, which he normally accepted however, he felt uneasy about the application and in his view it was contrived in terms of parking.

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Councillor Pask was saddened that refusal reasons had not included inadequate garden space, which was 30% lower than the standard expected.

There was a seven year housing land supply and Councillor Pask did not therefore feel that this could be used as a reason for appeal. Councillor Pask challenged the contrived nature of the parking and wanted to hear other Members' views on this. In his view it was inadequate. When the current Local Plan had been created it had been agreed that garages should not be considered as parking provision and he was not trying to increase parking provision for existing houses however, challenged the tick box exercise approach that had been taken to considering the parking provision for the current application.

Councillor Macro was familiar with the site as it previously fell within his ward and he had also visited the site prior to Committee. He was concerned that approval of the application would spoil the character of the area with up to three parked cars on an existing area of lawn. The narrow gap between these spaces would in his view make them unworkable. He felt that inadequate parking provision was a reason on which to refuse permission.

Construction would also be difficult when considering the tight access, i.e. for deliveries and for construction equipment. Such deliveries would cause an obstruction. If the application was approved then a Construction Method Statement would need to be a condition of approval.

Councillor Stewart had lived at the end of a walkway for some years and she personally found it difficult to imagine her front lawn being converted for parking spaces. To do so for this application would have a detrimental impact on neighbours (in particular Nos. 7 and 16 Sandhills Way) i.e. when cars had to be defrosted on a wintry morning. Councillor Stewart made the point that residents purchased their properties in this area so they could enjoy the benefits of living in a car less walkway.

Councillor Tony Linden referred back to Mr Butler's introduction to the application where he stated that this was an on balance recommendation for approval. It could therefore be refused.

Councillor Law in noting Members' views raised the need to consider planning reasons for refusal if such a proposal was to be made.

Councillor Pask proposed refusal of the application for the following reasons:

- It would be detrimental to the street scene and character of the area in making a complete change from the existing walkways and grass lawns to the front of properties.
- Inadequate garden space.
- Inadequate access to the proposed parking area.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Macro.

Following a query from Mr Dowding on the parking reason for refusal, Members clarified that the number of parking spaces proposed within the application was not compliant with Council Policy. In addition the width proposed for the parking spaces was too narrow which would make them cramped and it would only be possible to reverse out of the spaces.

Mr Butler suggested, based on other points raised by Members within the debate, that additional refusal reasons could be overdevelopment and be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties. These two additional reasons for refusal were agreed to by Councillor Pask as proposer and by Councillor Macro as seconder.

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RESOLVED that the Head of Development and Planning be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The new dwelling proposed, in creating two number three bed dwellings does not provide the required 4 on-site parking spaces as identified under policy P1 of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD of 2017 as adopted. This will lead to a cumulative impact upon local on and off street parking pressures in the immediate vicinity of the application site, which will be harmful to local amenity.
2. The creation of one additional dwelling on the application site will involve an overdevelopment of the site, having regard to the poor rear garden space provided for each dwelling being below the required minimum of 100m² as advised in the West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (Part 2: Residential Development), and in addition the introduction of the new dwelling will be harmful to the special nature and character of 10-18 Sandhills Way, so being contrary to the advice in policy CS14 in the West Berkshire Local Plan Core Strategy of 2006 to 2026 and the advice on good design in the NPPF of 2019. It is thus unacceptable.
3. The introduction of the additional parking spaces to the frontage of the application site in the local green walkway will result in vehicles parking, idling and manoeuvring in close proximity to neighbouring dwellings and will therefore be harmful to the outlook, tranquillity and amenity of the occupants of number 16 Sandhills Way adjacent, and other surrounding residential occupants. It is thus not in accordance with policy CS14 in the West Berkshire Local Plan Core Strategy of 2006 to 2026 and the relevant paragraph in policy ADPP1 of the same Plan re the spatial strategy, as well as part 12 of the NPPF 2019, which seeks, inter alia, to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of developments. It is accordingly unacceptable.

INFORMATIVES:

1. This application has been considered by West Berkshire Council, and **REFUSED**.

Should the application be granted on appeal there will be a liability to pay Community Infrastructure Levy to West Berkshire Council on commencement of the development.

This charge would be levied in accordance with the West Berkshire Council CIL Charging Schedule and Section 211 of the Planning Act 2008.

2. In attempting to determine the application in a way that can foster the delivery of sustainable development, the local planning authority has approached this decision in a positive way having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to try to secure high quality appropriate development. In this application whilst there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, the local planning authority has also been unable to find an acceptable solution to the problems with the development so that the development can be said to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.15 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature