

To Councillors on the Western Area Planning Committee (WAPC)
For the meeting on 14th October 2020.

Submission by Cold Ash Parish Council

18/01657COND1: Land Adjacent to Summerfield

In the view of Cold Ash Parish Council (CAPC), the 'Discharge of Conditions' you are being asked to consider is legally questionable and flies in the face of the decision the WAPC took on 20th May 2020 and the timing seems inappropriate. Both the Reserved Matters and Discharge of Conditions are now the subject of Appeals with the Planning Inspectorate (APP/W0340/W/20/3257645 and APP/W0340/W/20/3256565).

The most notable condition to be discharged is Condition 11. Access. West Berkshire Planning Officers had vigorously denied that Access was still an issue, verbally and also in writing. In the advice to Councillors for the meeting on 20th May 2020, the Planning Officer wrote the following:

6.33. In relation to objectors concerns that the proposed vehicular access arrangements are still for consideration as part of this Reserved Matters application, officers consider access was a matter approved at the Outline Stage under application reference 16/02529/OUTD dated 24 October 2017. The finer details of access relating to surfacing and construction detail are secured via planning conditions (no's 8 and 11). In other words, access is not consideration as part this Reserved Matters application

Now, Councillors are being asked to agree 'Access'.

If Access really 'was a matter approved' on 24th October 2017, why is Access now 'a matter **to be** approved'? Answer, it never was approved. At this current meeting, Councillors are being asked to agree to something that has never been agreed, on the basis of council officers' reports that appear to be economical with the facts.

This is important because the Developer's preferred Access arrangements would destroy an 'Important', Historic and 'Protected Hedgerow', which is actually owned by West Berkshire, who are also the Custodians of Protection of the hedgerow.

In conclusion, CAPC can do no better than quote our now Ward Councillor, Hilary Cole, to Councillors and witnessed by Bernard Clark, at the site visit for the discharge of conditions on 25th October 2018. **"I don't see the point of approving conditions, when we don't know what houses will be built."**

This is echoed in the minutes of the WAPC meeting of the 31st October 2018, in which Hilary Cole seconded a motion to defer, until Reserved Matters had been agreed.

This seemed like a wise observation then, and if anything, circumstances make it even more obviously sensible now. So CAPC ask for this application to be denied or deferred.