

## **West Area Planning Committee - 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

### **18/01657/COND1 - Land Adjacent to Summerfield**

A representation submitted by residents.

To ask the Planning Inspectorate to discharge the conditions adopted when the Outline Planning Permission was granted, regardless of whether the houses themselves are accepted or refused, makes no sense and serves no desirable purpose. The rationale for having conditions is to protect. Discharging the conditions would remove the possibility of protecting the site and could conceivably result in inappropriate development.

On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the WAPC voted 7 councillors to 2, to reject the proposed houses citing the following grounds:

- i) inappropriate height and mass,
- ii) lack of sympathy to neighbouring low-rise properties,
- iii) discord with the existing fabric of housing,
- iv) urbanisation of the eastern gateway to the village of Cold Ash.

To ensure that whatever is built on this sensitive site is sustainable, it is essential that a set of plans formulated for an inappropriate housing development are NOT adopted through the back door.

In the situation where the conditions are discharged, but the houses are refused, the critical evaluation of any future planning application is potentially compromised and undermined by a set of discharged conditions that are inconsistent with the then proposed houses.

It is only when both the conditions and the houses themselves are considered together that officers and members can be expected to make an informed and measured assessment.

Consider the following scenario. Reserved Matters are refused by the Planning Inspectorate, the Outline Planning Permission expires on the 24th October 2020, and the developer is required to submit a FULL application. Such an application may well include a single-access driveway and low-rise dwellings. Being required to reduce the height and mass of the housing, it is also likely that the footprint of the houses and the site layout will change. Provision of bungalows or split-level dwellings might, for example, require entirely different footprints. Given the very real prospect of such material changes, the Construction Method Statement (Condition 7), Vehicle Parking & Turning provisions (Condition 10), Access Details (Condition 11), in addition to the External Materials Schedule (Condition 4) and Cycle Storage (Condition 12) might also be subject to change. Similarly, a change to the houses may precipitate a change to the soft and hard landscaping design and provisions (Conditions 8 and 15).

An almost identical attempt was made by this same developer to push through the conditions attached to the then refused Reserved Matters plans (18/01977/REM) at the WAPC on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018. Again, a split-decision was proposed, however, members quickly recognised the incongruity and resolved that the Head of Development and Planning be authorised to defer the application until the Reserved Matters had been agreed. The motion was proposed by Councillor Paul Bryant, and seconded by Councillor Hilary Cole.

Residents once again respectfully ask members to exercise caution and sensibility, and reject the proposed discharge of the conditions, or any part of them.