



22/01021/RES | Reserved matters application for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (pursuant to outline permission 20/00004/OUT) for the erection of 110 dwellings | Land To East Of Station Road Oakley Hampshire

Oakley & Deane Parish Council Planning Committee met to discuss the amended plans for this reserved matters application and all Members objected.

The Members agree that some of the issues raised in the Council's first response (dated 27th May on the Planning Portal) have been addressed, there still remain many concerns with the reserved matters application.

The Committee welcomes the link road, and the confirmation of hedgehog highways, However, will refer the Borough Council back to the original response that raise concerns, most of which are shown below. In particular, around highway safety on Station Road and the railway bridge, and the swept path analysis for large vehicles as it looks some of the manoeuvres would impact footpaths. Affordable houses should be distributed more evenly in the site and bungalows would be better situated nearer the village centre and footpath 9b to allow for easier access to the village amenities.

From a Sustainable view, the Parish Council are pleased to see electric vehicle charging points available but could go further and offer to more dwellings but note that the site still uses gas.

In addition to the below the Parish Council objects to the design on the flats which look like very large houses and does not fit with the character of surrounding buildings. A block with 2 front doors (ie to look like a semi-detached house) would be in broad conformity with the surrounding buildings (Oakley Village Design Statement – Buildings and Spaces). It also isn't clear if there are enough parking spaces to accommodate the 12 flats suggested. Distributing the flats blocks within the development may help an issue with the number of parking spaces. The Committee would also like to see the current footpath in Church Acre (runs parallel to footpath 9b) extended into the new site for safe pedestrian access to the centre of the village. The Committee supports the suggestion made by the Ramblers Association for include a footpath connection on the south west corner to Station Road. It would allow a safer walking route along a small part of Station Road.

Highways & Transport

Although the appeal inspector may have dismissed the highways comments previously submitted by the residents and the Parish Council when considering the outline application for the principle of up to 110 homes, and the existing access road between Station Road and Canterbury Gardens; we believe the highways report from Parish Council is still extremely valid, for example safety regarding:

- Issues on station road and bridge
- Pedestrian access
- Potential accident risk on B3400

Interestingly HCC Highways comment on this for the outline application, in their letter dated 1 April 2020 ref 6/3/1/402:

"The introduction of a footpath that will direct residents west onto Station Road where there is no dedicated footway and where the visibility over the bridge is sub-standard is not acceptable. A stage 1/ 2 RSA for the neighbouring S278 works on Station Road identified that the footway abruptly stopping onto Station Road would be problem that may lead to increased conflict/collision."

HCC clearly identified that visibility over the bridge is not acceptable and the impact this may have on pedestrians yet proposes no suitable alternative to use this bridge. This route is the most direct route to community facilities north of the railway line, and even if the footpath is not put in place, it is likely desire lines will appear in the field as this more direct route is used.

As the Highways Authority, Hampshire County Council has a duty of care to the residents of Oakley and the surrounding area, to provide safe highways for use by all. We agree with HCC that this access approach may lead to increased conflict or collision. We do not wish there to be a road traffic collision before changes are made to highways to improve safety. Despite receiving an appeal win, the applicants should also consider the highways report and this statement, responding to the community views and evolving their proposals to try to resolve the issues.

Whatever scheme HCC is proposing to mitigate these dangers (based on a transport contribution) must be designed and delivered in place ideally prior to commencement of development, however at the latest prior to occupation of any properties on this development. This is a matter of public safety. This scheme should also include safe footpath access to the community facilities north of the railway. As was suggested in the Hampshire Highway Authority - Agency Agreement Response to 17/02874/OUT dated 18 Jan 18. The third party land referred to, is this site. This further development is this application.

“8. From an accessibility perspective the extension of this footway further along Station Road would be highly desirable to connect with the community facilities, etc., located to the north of the Railway Line.

9. Although the absence of this pedestrian connection is regrettable, given a. that the development of this side is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan; and b. the presence of the alternative pedestrian route via Oakley Footpath 9b, the B3400, etc., the HDMT is unable to conclude that this deficiency would be so significant as to warrant the refusal of this planning application.

10. The provision of the proposed footway may also enable the possible extension of this facility in the future (e.g. in the event of further development which involves the third party land, etc.). “

Regarding point 9 of that response, given this site was not in the neighbourhood plan and is closer to the bridge, i.e., further from footpath 9b, we do believe it warrants a deficiency that is significant, hence it's mention here.

Road Surfacing

Within the development all roads should be designed and constructed to an adoptable standard. Driveways are typically the areas next to houses where vehicles are parked for specific properties - not roads which vehicles travel along to get to other properties. The use of “private drives” shared by multiple properties should be removed. These are shown in light brown on the hierarchy and movement plan. The surface treatments used also affect waste collections as waste collection vehicles will not typically leave tarmac surfaces.

Footpaths

Additional improvements should be sought to the surrounding footpaths (such as 9b) as suggested by point 71 in the appeal decision. As an illustrative example this could go towards making those more wheelchair accessible given the requirement of condition 9 to provide 15% accessible and adaptable homes. This will allow safer access to Andover Road and the local shops in the existing village centre.

Parking (car & bicycle) & Car Club

The Parish Council would like a list to be provided showing the number of parking spaces (car & bicycle) on a per plot basis and the total number of visitor bays.

It's not easy to determine on plans that all plots meet the Parking SPD requirements as partial numbers should be rounded up per plot. Residential parking standards should be rural requirements as outside settlement boundary, with between 20% & 50% unallocated, this means 1 bed 1.25 spaces, 2-3 bed 2.25 spaces, 4+ bed 3.25 spaces. Cycle Long Term 1 bed 1 space, 2-3 bed 2 spaces, 4+ bed 3 spaces. Communal cycle 1.0. space. Design and Sustainability SPD section 7 should also be considered when designing the parking arrangements.

The single car club bay seems insignificant - on what basis has this been calculated as a suitable transport plan for 110 homes? We do hope this isn't an attempt to avoid the correct parking requirements for the development. Point 102 of the appeal notice states that the electric car club "*may only constitute a single parking space within the development, Therefore, only limited weight can be attached to this benefit.*"

Garage Sizes and Retention as Garages

The requirements here should match the latter part of Condition 18 on APP/H1705/W/15/3005729 for the same reasons outlined in that appeal notice and to ensure Parking SPD is maintained long term, to avoid parking issues: "*Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall take place until full details of the proposed garages have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall include the provision of minimum clear openings of 2.3m (for single garage doors), 5m (for double garage doors) between the frames of the garage doors and minimum internal dimensions of 3m by 6m (single garages) and 6m by 6m (double garages) as measured internally between the supporting walls, with a headroom clearance of at least 2.3m. Thereafter, the garages shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and permanently retained for the purposes of the parking of vehicles and cycles.*"

Refuse

Parish Council would like to request a plan showing distance for residents and refuse collection workers to be able to provide accurate feedback against policies. Residents should be able to take bins a short distance as part of BDBC kerbside collection.

Housing Layout & Affordable Housing

Gardens & Distance between Houses

To allow us to review compliance with policies, would like information on garden area (square metres), and garden lengths - ideally plans marking the required distance between properties. Area calculations should exclude refuse storage areas and sheds.

Bungalows

Some bungalows have been redistributed in the site but feel that more should be closer to the centre of the village for safe and easy access to amenities.

Northernmost part of Site

The northernmost part of the site should be redesigned to provide more active frontage facing outward and protected garden areas within. (Design & Sustainability SPD SS5). The current gardens for the houses in the north also have inappropriate boundary materials for such an exposed area when compared to other areas. Hampshire Constabulary go into more detail on these matters in their letter of 23rd January 2020 and 12th October 2022 commenting on the outline application.

Flats in the northernmost part of the site have no per flat garden space. The pandemic has taught us that this private outdoor space is important. This area should be redesigned so each flat has access to their own private outdoor space.

Affordable Housing & First Homes

The affordable housing also needs to be much more distributed throughout the development to promote a more cohesive community.

First Homes should be accounted for in the affordable housing mix per the BDBC First Home Interim Policy Statement December 2021. The mix should be 25% first homes, 53% social rent, 22% shared ownership / other intermediate products (point 11). The size mix should comply with point 13. First Homes on this development should have the 6 weeks priority given to those who have a local connection to the parish as per the table in point 16. Although the appeal to outline planning was granted before the cut off date, it would not make sense to miss out on this opportunity to provide this long-term affordable home ownership product in Oakley, given the extensive layout changes that should be required anyway.

Drainage

Could the southernmost drainage be redesigned to drain into the large pond instead? This would leave the land in the southwest available for community use. Alternatively, could the drainage pond be moved into the southeastern segment, again leaving the land available for other community use. More detail on this proposed use is included below.

Sustainable Development

Solar Panels / PV

Why do only some plots include PV panels? Plot layouts should be redesigned to have better orientation for PV panels, and this should be included on all properties. Oddly some properties that are orientated correctly don't have PV installed.

Electric Vehicle Charging

Condition 9 of the outline planning application states:

"Applications for the approval of reserved matters shall be accompanied by a scheme for the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure for both unallocated and allocated parking spaces. The development shall then proceed in full accordance with the approved scheme."

The number of electric charging points have been increased but would welcome this being available to more of the dwellings.

Water Recycling

This is covered in the Village Design statement under Development Guidelines - Buildings & Spaces - the recycling of rainwater, the recycling of 'grey' water.

As an example, rainwater collection systems could be incorporated for all plots in the development to reduce the water usage for recreational activities such as gardening. A simple example of this would be water butts, however more complex rainwater collection systems may be suitable, and the applicants should assess this and grey water recycling systems.

Gas

No properties should be fitted with gas boilers or stoves. The current government initiatives are encouraging a switch to heat pumps and away from the use of natural gas as a fuel. It is nonsensical to allow new homes to be built with gas supply given this initiative and other current local, regional and national climate change initiatives.

Bat Boxes/Bricks

Who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and monitoring of these, and will residents require further information on them to maintain their homes?

Recreation / Community Facilities

Community Orchard

The community orchard is not something required in the area. As mentioned, many properties have fruit trees and due to the strong community spirit of the village these are often shared. The Parish Council strongly believe this land could be put to more appropriate use as Allotments. There is already a long waiting list, and this development will place additional pressure on that waiting list. An off-site contribution will not mitigate this as the issue is land supply for allotment plots - not just funding.

Local Area of Play

The local area of play provided in the plans is not of a high quality and will require significant investment before meeting standards for play. If a play area is to be provided it should follow the BDBC Guidance Notes and Standards for the provision of Unsupervised Children's Play Facilities in its design. Its position should also take account of the Design and Sustainability SPD points 4.36 & 4.37, as well as the Green Space Standards in Appendix 4 of the Local Plan. The parish council would not like to see low quality play areas built, as there are significant resources at Beech Park and Kennet Way Park, as well as other areas of the village. Neighbouring residents have questioned the available facilities at Canterbury Gardens being suitable. The current park would be too small to accommodate the

new housing, and although Beech Park is close by residents are reluctant to use it due to the lack of safety accessing Beech Park over the railway bridge.

Kickabout Area

Although the borough has requested there be one, is a Kickabout land area in the south of the development, a good location given that there is a large recreation ground just south of the development, which has an accessible kickabout area already? This land could be put to better use for other community purposes and the Parish Council would like to secure ownership of the land on that basis instead.

Community Involvement and Land for Possible Community Centre

From outline application, statement of community involvement.

"The views of the community are important to Wates. The company embraces community consultation; it is at the heart of their approach to development, not only in the pre-application stage, but for the duration of the project."

Who is Wates Developments leaflet:

"Wates Group is a Construction, Development and Property Services business whose work is guided by the purpose of, together inspiring better ways of creating places and community and the business of tomorrow.

The importance of community and sustainability is at the very core of the business, and we see every development as an opportunity to enhance and improve.

Wates is committed to delivering balanced growth, high-quality design and sustainable communities wherever it develops."

A number of the completed questionnaires from the consultation suggested a new village hall, a bigger doctor's surgery and improved community facilities. These were hardly mentioned in the statement and haven't been represented in the reserved matters application. Wates & Miller Homes now have the opportunity to engage with the community and turn an unwanted housing site pushed through on appeal, into a positive contribution to the community by working with the Parish Council, local community groups and the local doctor's surgery to improve community facilities.

On this basis the Parish Council would like to secure the land in the southwest of the site for community use. This should not affect the housing proposed as no houses are positioned here on the reserved matters plans.

Subject to community engagement, this could be used for a community centre as part of a community hub with Peter Houseman Recreation Ground.

A community centre is different to a village hall in that it is open without someone necessarily booking the hall. This provides an opportunity for facilities such as a locally managed library, historical displays regarding the conservation area and Oakley as a whole, local artwork display and a community meeting place/drop in area for residents (addressing AP002 of the community plan).

This proposed community centre should also include space for a much needed Parish Council office, ensuring its viability and allowing us to better serve the growing community, which this development adds to significantly. It will do this by allowing visitors and deliveries in an appropriate location and providing a fixed space for greater community engagement between Parish, Borough and County councillors and local community groups.

The Oakley Community Association (OCA) constitution already allows for the management of a community facility, the issue has always been finding land for such a proposal. This site provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to secure this for the village, using unallocated space.

The Parish Council have discussed this with the BDBC Connected Communities team, and have viewed similar buildings throughout the Borough to review possible layouts and the concept has gained local support at the Oakley Village Show held in August 2022.

The Parish Council would request the land be secured for such community use at this stage and capped utilities (for later connection) be provided in a suitable location on the site. This utility provision (fibre optic broadband, electricity, water etc) would be more cost effective provided alongside the construction of new homes.

The Village Design statement and Community Plan both mention the need for a larger hall space, as do some of the consultation responses in the outline consultation. A community centre could provide all of these and other benefits with few changes required to the layout and no loss of homes as none are in the space proposed.

As previously mentioned, we would also like to see vehicular access provided to Peter Houseman ground from the new development also as a part of this community hub.

The Parish Council would like to request statutory consultation on any subsequent changes to this reserved matters application and encourage both the applicant and the Borough Council to actively engage with the Parish Council and the local community on all aspects.