

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning and Community Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 1 February 2022 at 7:45 pm**

**Present:** *Councillors: P. Wicks (Chairman); D. Bragg; J. Cheng; C. Jewell; S. Rahmouni; J. Sartorel; R. Skegg; B. Soane;*

**Officers present:** *M. Filmore, Committee Officer;*

**Also present:** *Councillors: N. Al Sanjari; K. Baker; T. McCann  
47 members of the public*

71. After opening the meeting the Chairman proposed, seconded by Councillor Bragg, that under Standing Order 13 a) v) the order of business set out in the agenda be altered to move item 11, Wokingham Borough Council – Active Travel Fund, forward for discussion after item 3, Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 4 January 2022. Following a vote it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the order of business be altered in line with Standing Order 13 a) v), for reasons of urgency, to bring forward agenda item 11 forward for discussion.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

72. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M. Nagra, and Kevin Murray (Deputy Town Clerk).

73. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

74. **MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 JANUARY 2022**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 4 January 2022 be approved and be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

75. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND**

Due to the high number of members of public in attendance, the Chairman recommended that the Committee suspend Standing Order 37 b), which limits public participation in the discussion of an item 15 minutes, and increase the limit to 30 minutes. Councillor Cheng proposed, seconded by Councillor Bragg, and following a vote it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That Standing Order 37 b) be suspended, and that public participation in the discussion of this item be instead limited to 30 minutes.

Voting: For: 6 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Councillor Baker spoke, declaring that he was speaking on behalf of Conservative Borough Councillors and not as Mayor of Wokingham. Councillor Baker advised that Wokingham Borough Officers had not consulted with Borough Councillors prior to issuing this consultation, which he noted was disrespectful to both Councillors and to the public who had elected them.

Councillor Baker advised that he strongly objected to the scheme's proposal to introduce a one way system on Woodlands Avenue. He stated that the section of road is one of the busiest in Woodley, and acts as an arterial road into the precinct. He noted that the Waitrose Car Park was not referenced in the consultation and that the proposals would make it more difficult to access the car park, impacting Woodley businesses at a time when, following the Covid pandemic, they need business. He noted that the consultation contained no details of any alternative routes, with the proposals impacting those who live on the section of road in question as well as creating significant increased traffic on other roads, especially Antrim Road.

Members of the public in attendance spoke to raise their objections to the proposals. Residents raised a concern as to whether Wokingham Borough Council had conducted a cost analysis into the proposal and, if so, how and when this took place, and when will it be made public. Residents also queried whether an analysis of traffic levels, including the number of cyclists, had taken place and again, if so, when this information would be made available. There were also concerns raised about how the one way system would be policed.

Residents also noted that there had been a lack of consultation prior to the proposals being made public, specifically with those who would be most affected such as the residents of Woodlands Avenue. It was highlighted that residents of Woodlands Avenue would face significant access issues, which would cause particular difficulty to disabled residents who may need convenient access. There are many elderly and disabled residents in this road and the scheme would see reduced access and remove the ability to park outside houses. This would further cause difficulties for delivery vehicles and other emergency and utility vehicles and potential diversions for buses.

Residents noted that a member of the public had been in contact with Wokingham Borough Council regarding this matter. Wokingham Borough Council had identified that additional traffic would likely be directed down Antrim Road, but that they would wait to see the effects of this before considering whether any measures would be needed to mitigate this. Residents felt this was not appropriate and that a plan should be made now. The member of the public, who spoke at the meeting, noted that a safety audit had not been included in the consultation and that, after analysing freely available road safety data, they had identified that there had been no accidents on this stretch of road for the past 22 years. The individual also noted that Wokingham Borough Council had highlighted public comments on safety and speeding which had been made during a previous consultation on the scheme as evidence for proposing to reduce the speed limit to 20 mph, but that no specific data had been reviewed. It was also noted that previous consultations had made no mention of a one way system being introduced.

Residents also noted that the proposed one way system could cause significant access issues for emergency services; such as emergency first responders, ambulance and fire services. Two emergency first responders attending the meeting gave the example that their navigational systems, whilst directing them to the vicinity of specific address, can sometimes lead them to overshoot an address, and then having to negotiate the one way system would add significant time to them being able to get to an emergency. One also identified that a significant medical emergency may require multiple vehicles to attend, and the proposal would create major access issues for these services. It was estimated this could increase journey times by up to 10 minutes.

A comment was also made regarding the potential for the proposal to devalue houses in the area, and whether any consideration had been made to this and compensating those households, or providing a rates reduction.

A number of residents highlighted that the number of cyclists they see on this route is minimal. Some of these, identifying themselves as cyclists, said they cycled this route regularly and never felt unsafe so questioned why there was the need for such a significant change to the Woodland Avenue road system when it was not unsafe.

One resident asked those in attendance whether anybody supported the cycle route, and the one response made by another resident was that, whilst there are bits of the scheme that are good, they did not support the one way system on Woodlands Avenue.

Residents noted there is existing infrastructure for cyclists that could be upgraded in Woodley to replace this proposal and maintain safe cycling at a lesser cost without the associated upheaval and one way system. A concern was also raised regarding the safety of stepped cycles routes which could cause a hazards for pedestrians, especially the elderly and disabled.

Borough Councillor Shirley Boyt spoke to encourage all residents to engage and respond to the consultation, noting that this was by no means a done deal. She also encouraged those responding to also provide views on the rest of the scheme as, whilst clearly the one way system was not appropriate, other sections of the route have issues too which need to be raised, such as the narrowing of the road at certain junctions, and the loss of parking bays. It was noted that the loss of parking bays further along the route may make it more difficult to access the playing fields and dissuade persons to use them.

Councillor Al-Sanjari asked again whether Wokingham Borough Council officers had met with Borough Councillors, and both Councillor Baker and Councillor Soane confirmed they hadn't. Councillor Al-Sanjari asked if this was normal, and Councillor Soane stated it was not. Councillor Baker stated he was trying to find out why this had not happened. Councillor Al-Sanjari also questioned whether any consultation had taken place with disability groups or schools within the vicinity of the proposals.

The Chairman confirmed that the Town Council had only been made aware of the consultation at the same time as members of the public, just before it went live. He advised that the Town Council had written to Wokingham Borough Council's Lead Member for Highways who had apologised that no prior communication had taken place.

Members noted that they supported all the concerns and objections raised by residents, and thanked everyone for attending and those who spoke on the matter. It was noted that the number of people attending showed the strength of feeling regarding the issue. Members noted that, whilst they are in support of improving cycle routes in Woodley, the proposal for the one way section on Woodlands Avenue was not appropriate and should be objected to. They also noted a very significant concern over the lack of consultation on this matter.

A suggestion was made that Members would like an appropriate Wokingham Borough Council representative to attend a future Planning & Community Committee Meeting to hear the views of Members and residents on this matter.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To submit the Town Council's objections to Wokingham Borough Council regarding the proposal to create a one way system on Woodlands Avenue, specifically stating the Town Council's support of the residents comments and highlighting significant concern over the lack of prior consultation and communication.

- ◆ To invite a Wokingham Borough Council representative to attend a future Planning & Community Committee Meeting to hear views from Members and the public on this matter.

The Chairman reminded all in attendance of the importance of responding directly to Wokingham Borough Council to provide their own individual views regarding the consultation. He then invited those who did not wish to stay for the rest of the meeting to leave. There was a short recession as people exited, with three members of the public remaining.

76. **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To forward comments to the planning authority as detailed in **Appendix A**.

77. **PLANNING DECISIONS**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note information on decision notices received from the planning authority since the last meeting, as given in the agenda.

78. **PLANNING APPEALS**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the following appeal decision:
 

Application:	211199
Location:	26 Hudson Road, Woodley, RG5 4EW
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a first floor side extensions including insertion of 4 no. roof lights. (Woodley Town Council did not object to the proposal)
Details:	Appeal against refusal of planning permission.
Decision:	The appeal was allowed and planning permission was granted.

79. **EXISTING LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE NOTIFICATION**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note application 220010:
 

Location:	15 Hudson Road, Woodley, RG5 4EN
Proposal:	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the erection of a single storey rear extension and relocation and extensions of the detached garage to form a garage/ancillary outbuilding.

80. **TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS**  
**Applications for works to trees**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note application 214181:
 

Location:	TPO 0025/1971, AREA 1: 2 Wildwood Close, Woodley, RG5 3BY.
Proposal:	T1, Ash – Pollard by 5-6 metres. T3, Oak – Remove epicormic growth on stem up to the first main fork and reduce the canopy by 2-3 metres to previous pruning points.
- ◆ To note application 214172:
 

Location:	TPO 0003/1951: 85 Nightingale Road, Woodley, RG5 3LY
Proposal:	T1 Silver Birch – Crown reduction of 5m.

- ◆ To note application 220120:  
Location: TPO 0025/1971, AREA 1: Land north of, Wildwood Close, Woodley, RG5 3BY.  
Proposal: T1, Oak – Fell dead tree, leaving stump approx. 2 metres in height. T2, Oak - Fell leaning tree with damaged stem, leaving stump approx. 1.5 metres in height. T3, Holly - Reduce height by 1.5 metres.

#### 81. **PAVEMENT LICENCE APPLICATION**

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the receipt of the following Pavement Licence Application:  
Site: Greggs - 136-142 Crockhamwell Road Woodley RG5 3JH  
Details: Application for land adjacent to the above for the operation of refreshment facilities  
Operating Times: Mondays to Saturdays 07:00 (7am) to 18:00 (6pm); Sundays 08:00 (8am) to 16:30 (4:30pm).
- ◆ To note that the Town Council's comments were required prior to the meeting, and that concerns regarding early morning noise for residents of the flats above, as well as the siting of the tables and chairs immediately in front of the shop frontage blocking the natural pedestrian walkway and waterproof awning, were submitted to Wokingham Borough Council by the deadline.

#### 82. **TELECOMMUNICATIONS PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION**

Borough Councillor Shirley Boyt highlighted to the Committee that, when the full application for this proposal is received, they may wish to query why there is a need to move the mast a short distance from its' current location when there will be excavation works required to move it which may damage mature trees.

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the communication received from Cornerstone regarding the proposed upgrade of the Vodafone radio base station on Woodlands Avenue.
- ◆ To note that the Town Council's comments were required prior to the meeting, and that no objections were raised.

#### 83. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL DRAFT ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY 2022-26**

Members noted a concern that Wokingham Borough Council's draft Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26 makes reference to strengthening resilience, rather than resolving the issue of poverty. Members also noted that a number of issues appear to have been omitted from the strategy, including reference to supporting families through the provision of free schools meals, including during the school holidays, as well as the cost for families kitting their children out with expensive school uniform.

Members also noted that the consultation again was only issued online, ostracising those without internet capabilities which might more likely include those to which the strategy relates.

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To send specific comments to the Committee Officer in order that a draft response be prepared on behalf of the Town Council to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council regarding the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26

84. **WOKINGHAM LOCAL PLAN – TWYFORD GARDENS**

Members noted the correspondence received from Berkeley Group regarding the proposed development at Twyford Gardens and did not support this.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To respond to the correspondence from Berkeley Group to confirm the Town Council do not support the proposed Twyford Gardens development.

85. **EARLEY STATION FOOTBRIDGE UPDATE**

Members noted the Chairman's report, circulated as part of the agenda, regarding the current state of play with the proposed replacement of Earley Station Footbridge. Following a recent site visit by Committee Members and staff from Wokingham Borough Council, Members noted that the scope of the ramps being proposed to access the bridge were more extensive than appear in the drawings. Both ramps on either side would be 200m in length, and there is only proposed to be a set of stairs on the Woodley side of the bridge. The bridge itself is 130m, meaning someone unable to use stairs would be required to travel over half a kilometre over the bridge.

Members noted that, even if the proposals were to be approved, it could take up to two and a half years to replace the bridge, meaning residents would need to find alternative routes in the interim; this could include accessing alternative stations with new habits potentially remaining when the bridge is finally replaced. Members also felt that the alternative route via the nearby subway is not currently ideal due to graffiti and evidence of drug use.

Members were uncertain whether Wokingham Borough Council had satisfactorily considered alternatives to the replacement of this bridge as, if they had, Members had not seen any alternatives.

Members recommended that the Chairman's report be used as the basis of the Town Council's response to this proposal, with the addition that the Town Council wishes Wokingham to investigate and consider other options and to consult with the Town Council on these.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To submit a response to Wokingham Borough Council using the Chairman's report as the basis, with the addition that the Town Council wishes Wokingham to investigate alternative options and consult with the Town Council on these.

86. **PUBLICATIONS/INFORMATION**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note receipt of the following:
  - CCB Action for All e-Bulletin – January 2022

87. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

88. **PUBLICITY/WEBSITE**

Members requested that officers consider how they may promote Wokingham Borough Council consultations better, including utilising notice boards to inform residents who do not have access to the internet.

89. **ENFORCEMENT ISSUES**

Members noted that, in relation to the enforcement closure notice regarding 307 Headley Road East, this closure had been issued after grass had been cut at the property. However, there were still issues with a number of parked vehicles on this plot of land and this was being pursued.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the information on enforcement issues received from the planning authority, as given in the agenda.

90. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to personal information, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following agenda item.

91. **CITIZENS AWARDS**

Following consideration of each of the nominations it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To award a total of eight Citizens Awards.

The meeting closed at 9:47 pm

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**Observations on the following Planning Applications made at the Planning & Community Committee meeting held on 1 February 2022**

<b>Application No. &amp; Address</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
<b>214173</b> Land adjacent to Sonning Golf Club, Duffield Road/Pound Lane, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6GJ	ADJOINING PARISH CONSULTATION Full application for the proposed development of a specialist dementia residential care home (Use Class C2) with the creation of new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, plus landscaping and associated works.
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered the proposal and recommended that the application be refused. There are significant concerns that the scale of the development would cause a cumulative impact of additional traffic, with the road infrastructure unable to cope with the increased traffic. The Committee also believe there to be insufficient on-site/off-road parking provision for the volume of staff / visitors that will be accessing this site daily.	
<b>214182</b> 10 Warren Road, Woodley, RG5 3AP	Householder application for the proposed erection of two/single storey rear extension, loft conversion, single storey side extension, porch and roof lights to side elevation. Demolition to existing garage.
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered the proposal and recommended that the application be refused on the following grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Out of keeping with neighbouring properties</li> <li>- Out of character with the street scene</li> </ul> The Committee noted and supported the comments from the neighbour at 12 Warren Road.	
<b>220011</b> 94 Colemans Moor Road, Woodley, RG5 4DN	Householder application for the proposed development of a single storey side extension.
<b>Observations:</b> No objections.	
<b>220029</b> 25 Woodlands Avenue, Woodley, RG5 3HN	Householder application for the proposed erection of a pitched roof front canopy, single storey rear extension, to include the insertion of 1no. roof light, loft conversion to create habitable accommodation, including the insertion of 4no. dormers, plus hip to gable roof extension, following demolition of existing outbuilding.
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered the proposal and had no objections on condition that the proposed side windows overlooking 27 Woodlands Avenue are fitted with obscure glass.	
<b>220041</b> 3 Ravensbourne Drive, Woodley, RG5 4LH	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension to create a porch, following demolition of existing porch, plus the insertion of 2 no. rooflights.
<b>Observations:</b> No objections.	



<b>220054</b> 83 Butts Hill Road, Woodley, RG5 4NN	Householder application for the proposed raising of the roof to create habitable accommodation, Juliet balcony insertion, changes to fenestration plus front porch extension and insertion of 8 no. rooflights.
<b>Observations:</b> No objections.	
<b>220078</b> 74 Roslyn Road, Woodley, RG5 3HS	Householder application for the proposed single storey rear extension with 2 rooflights over to replace existing conservatory.
<b>Observations:</b> No objections.	
<b>220108</b> 189 Fairwater Drive, Woodley, RG5 3JQ	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension and steps.
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered the amended proposals for this property and, as with the previous proposals, recommended that the application be refused on the following grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Out of keeping with neighbouring properties</li> <li>- Out of character with the street scene</li> <li>- Could set a precedent</li> </ul>	
<b>220115</b> 53A Rowan Drive, Woodley, RG5 4LN	Householder application for the proposed insertion of a first floor front window.
<b>Observations:</b> No objections.	
<b>220122</b> 24 Redwood Avenue, Woodley, RG5 4DR	Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single storey, part two storey, side/rear extension, plus garage conversion to create habitable accommodation.
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered this application and, whilst they did not have any specific objections, there were concerns regarding whether there would be sufficient on-street / off road parking.	
<b>220133</b> 101 Pound Lane, Sonning, RG4 6GG	ADJOINING PARISH CONSULTATION Outline application for the proposed erection of a 4 storey 70 Bedroom care home with associated parking and servicing following demolition of the existing 2No dwellings and out buildings ( Access, scale, Layout and Design to be considered).
<b>Observations:</b> The Planning & Community Committee considered the proposal and recommended that the application be refused. There are significant concerns that the scale of the development would cause a cumulative impact of additional traffic, with the road infrastructure unable to cope with the increased traffic. The Committee also believe there to be insufficient on-site/off-road parking provision for the volume of staff / visitors that will be accessing this site daily.	