

THATCHAM AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
23 JUNE 2004
AT FRANK HUTCHINGS MEMORIAL HALL

Councillors: Keith Woodhams (*Chairman*) (P), J.C.G. Brooks (AP), Owen Jeffery (P), Bob Judge (AP), Mrs Irene Neill (P), Graham Pask (AP), Alexander Payton (P), Terry Port (P), Paul Pritchard (*Vice-Chairman*) (P), Quentin Webb (P)

Substitutes: Mrs Mollie Lock (SP), Chris Webber (SP)

Also present: Dave Pearson, Katherine Goodchild, Sarah Clarke, Gareth Dowding, and Moira Fraser

PART I

15. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for the inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Bob Judge, Jeff Brooks and Graham Pask.

Councillor Mollie Lock substituted for Councillor Bob Judge.

Councillor Chris Webber substituted for Councillor Graham Pask.

16. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2004 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

Item 8, First Paragraph, Page 5

Should read:

(Councillors Mrs Irene Neill, Graham Pask and Quentin Webb declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 6(1) by virtue of the fact that their fellow Councillor Chris Webber was employed by the Applicant, District Developments. Councillor Owen Jeffery declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 6(1) by virtue of the fact that he was personally acquainted with Sheila Ellison, the Mayor of Thatcham. Councillors Neill, Pask, Webb and Jeffery therefore left the meeting and did not take part in discussions or vote on this item.)

Item 9, Second Last Paragraph, Page 10

Delete:

Councillor Graham Pask, substituting for the Ward Member Alexander Payton, in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

Replace with:

Councillor Graham Pask in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

Item 13, Second Last Paragraph, Page 16

Delete:

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enclosed

Should Read:

Councillor Terry Port in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the point that it was important that when the bridge becomes fully operational, the crossing should be closed to pedestrians.

Item 8, Second Paragraph, Page 5

Should read:

(Councillors Terry Port and Alexander Payton declared a personal interest in Agenda 6(1) by virtue of the fact that they associated with Mrs Sheila Ellison, Mayor of Thatcham, in their capacity as Thatcham Town Councillors. Councillors Port and Payton therefore remained in the meeting and took part in discussions and voted on this item.)

Item 9, Paragraph 3, Page 10

Delete:

Ward Members Councillor Alexander Payton and Councillor Paul Pritchard

Should Read:

In accordance with the Council's Constitution objector, Ms Carol Ducroq and the applicant Mr Andrew Plumridge addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Councillor Chris Webber declared an interest in Agenda Item (8), and reported that, as his interest was personal and prejudicial, he would be leaving the meeting during the course of consideration of the matter.

Councillor Keith Woodhams declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(1), but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial, he was permitted to take part in the debate but would not vote on the matter.

Members reported that they had been lobbied extensively on Planning Application 04/00276/OUTMAJ, land to the side and rear of 21 Henwick Lane, Thatcham.

Dave Pearson reported that as he was acquainted with the landowner of the land to the rear of the Bridleway and Va Hale, Doctors Lane, Hermitage, he would be leaving the meeting during the course of consideration of applications 03/00506/OUT (Item 4(3)) and 04/00757/FUL (Item 4(6))

18. APPLICATION NO. 04/00809/FUL - SHALFORD LAKES, SHALFORD HILL, ALDERMASTON

The report (Agenda Item 4(7)) concerning Planning Application 04/00809/FUL relating to the extension to an existing fishing hut to provide additional covered area with veranda was withdrawn from the agenda by the applicant subsequent to its publication.

19. APPLICATION NO. 04/00945/OUT - MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AWE, ALDERMASTON

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(9)) concerning Circular 18/84 Notice of Proposed Development for proposed laser research facility (outline).

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In accordance with the Council's Constitution Mrs Evelyn Parker of the Nuclear Awareness Group, Ms Sian Jones of the Aldermaston Women's Peace group, Ms Juliet McBride of the Nuclear Information Service, Mr Martin Lloyd, objector and Mr Jonathan Brown, Dr Chris Edwards and Dr Daryl Landeg applicants addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

The Nuclear Advisory Group in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- They were a local organisation who wanted the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to resite the development to reduce the risk to the public. They had identified three alternative sites.
- They were concerned about the radioactive discharge emitted during the operational and construction phases of the development and raised concerns about the possible contamination of groundwater due to legacy contamination in the soil on this part of the site.
- They were concerned that trade waste would flow into the Silchester Sewerage Works and from there it would end up in the Silchester Brook and Fawley Brook.
- They were concerned about the visual impact the development would have as well as the negative impact it would have on residential amenity.
- They felt that there was an increased risk of a terrorist attack due to the development being sited so close to the A34.

The Aldermaston Women's Peace Group in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- They urged Members to act locally but think globally about the impact the development would have environmentally and socially.
- They felt that Members had not been supplied with all the relevant facts relating to the proposal. They felt that the MoD had provided insufficient information regarding the future decommissioning of the building as well the impact the development would have on contamination of the environment.
- They were concerned that the development would set a precedent for future development on the site.
- They felt that the application was in breach of Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as the Test Ban Treaty.
- They requested that Members use the powers granted to them under Circular 18/84 to refer the application back to the originating department in order to generate a public enquiry.

The Nuclear Information Service in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- This Notification of Proposed Development (NOPD) did not provide any clearer environmental information than the last one.
- The original Notification had indicated that the proposed building would be 100m in length, 40m in width and 26m in height. The dimensions mentioned in this NOPD were for a building of 110m x 60m x 26m which they felt represented a significant increase on the original application.

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- The existing trees that would be used to screen the development were only 10m tall and therefore incapable of adequately screening a 26m high building.
- They were concerned about the impact the development would have on the value of surrounding properties.
- They felt that the human rights of the vulnerable residents of Old Stock Cross Farm Caravan Site, situated about 200m from the development, would be impinged upon.
- At the last Sub-Committee meeting, where this proposal was discussed, Members had requested that the applicants consider submerging the building further into the ground. The applicant had turned the suggestion down on the basis of cost. The NIS was concerned that there might be more sinister reasons for the applicants' reluctance to submerge the building into the ground.
- There was a possible risk of flooding due to groundwater.
- They felt that the increased number of traffic movements generated during the construction phase would increase the risk of an accident along this stretch of the A34.
- They were concerned about the impact the noise created during the 18 month construction phase would have on local residents, especially the vulnerable residents of Old Stocks Farm Caravan Site.

Mr Lloyd in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- He was a concerned local resident and a physicist.
- He felt that there was an increased environmental risk associated with the development.
- He was concerned that the equipment in the laser research facility would be under the control of smart devices and there was insufficient information available regarding the functional safety level of the facility. He therefore felt that an open technical enquiry should be held to consider the hidden risks associated with the modes of failure for the elaborate control system

Messrs Brown, Edwards and Landeg in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- AWE Plc felt that a more modern building would improve the visual impact of the development. In addition it would provide a more attractive workplace for employees.
- The development was in keeping with the overall development of the site.
- The development would take place on a brownfield site and the proposal would replace existing buildings of similar dimensions.
- They acknowledged that there would be an increase in traffic movements during the construction phase but they did not anticipate that the facility would result in a significant increase in staffing levels and there would therefore not be an increase in traffic movements in the long term.
- They explained that although the construction phase would increase noise levels this would occur during normal construction hours.
- The Environment Agency had stated that all radioactive discharges would be covered by the Agency's Radioactive Substances Act Authorisation and decommissioning was subject to regulation by independent bodies.

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- AWE had a good track record in relation to environmental matters.
- The modern facility would be better able to deal with potential hazards associated with the high voltage laser beams.
- The position of the laser research facility had been selected as AWE intended to allow limited access to visitors from universities and other scientists.
- There was nothing sinister about construction taking place beneath the building, there would still be normal foundations consistent with the super structure.

The Legal Officer reminded Members that the Sub-Committee could elect to raise no objections to the proposal, object to the proposal or not respond but where strong objections were received West Berkshire Council should bring them to the notice of the MoD to consider them in their entirety. This route had been taken following application 03/02313/OUT. There was no guarantee that a refusal by the Council to comment on the application, would lead to a public enquiry.

In discussing this application Members noted that the Parish Council had not objected to the proposal. They noted that there would be no long term increase in traffic generated by the development. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that a building of the proposed scale would have a significant visual impact but that a more modern building would improve the aesthetics of the site. Members were disappointed that the laser research facility was not going to be set back further on the site and that the height would not be lowered by excavation. Members noted with sympathy many of the objections that were raised but explained that many of the objections were related to the nature and use of the site as well as health and safety issues, which were not material planning issues. The Sub-Committee requested that all the objections should be brought to the attention of the MoD.

Planning Officers explained that Members could object to the appearance, massing and landscaping of the development when the reserved matters were discussed.

RESOLVED that the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to raise no objections to the Notice of Proposed Development and that the following conditions be attached to the NOPD:

- (1) No development shall be commenced until:
 - (a) A desktop study has been carried out which shall include the identification of previous site uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and other relevant information. And using this information, a diagrammatical representation (Conceptual Model) for the site of all potential contaminant sources, pathways and receptors has been produced.
 - (b) A site investigation has been designed for the site using the information obtained from the desktop study and any diagrammatical representations (Conceptual Model). This should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to that investigation being carried out on the site. The investigation must be comprehensive enough to enable:

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- a risk assessment to be undertaken relating to groundwater and surface waters associated on and off the site that may be affected;
 - refinement of the Conceptual Model;
 - the development of a Method Statement detailing the remediation requirements.
- (c) The site investigation has been undertaken in accordance with details approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and a risk assessment has been undertaken.
- (d) A Method Statement detailing the remediation requirements, including measures to minimise the impact on ground and surface waters, using the information obtained from the Site Investigation has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This should be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to that remediation being carried out on the site.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed site investigations and remediation will not cause pollution of controlled waters.

- (2) No soakaways shall be constructed such that they penetrate the water table and they shall not in any event, exceed 2 metres in depth below existing ground level.

Reason: To prevent pollution of groundwater.

- (3) No soakaways shall be constructed in contaminated ground.

Reason: To prevent pollution of groundwater.

Additional EA advice:

De-watering operations should not draw contaminated water from the adjacent Special Site at A12Q1 towards the new facility.

There are three closed landfill sites in close proximity to AWE, as such, the EA advises the applicant to either:

- (1) ensure the building is designed and constructed to prevent the entry of any migrating landfill gas, or
- (2) commission a landfill gas risk assessment from a special consultant. Based on this assessment, there may be a need to incorporate certain precautionary measures into the design of the building.

Informative:

- (1) The applicant is advised to carry out an assessment of those buildings to be demolished to establish whether bats or nesting birds are present. If found to be present, the new facilities could include provision for these species. In addition, if roosting bats are found to be present within the existing tree to be felled, a bat mitigation plan should be submitted for approval prior to works commencing on site.

20. APPLICATION NO. 04/01114/OUT - PAICES HILL, ALDERMASTON

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(10)) concerning a 100% affordable, key worker, local affordable housing development (101 houses and 136 flats maisonettes)

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Mr Clive Vare Parish Representative, addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mr Vare in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- The Parish Council objected to the application.
- Although the Parish Council welcomed the provision of affordable housing they felt that the 100% affordable housing allocation would not support a balanced community.
- They felt that the proposed development was not sustainable as it lacked public transport links and was removed from shops and other amenities. There was also no footpath link to the villages of Aldermaston or Tadley.
- The proposed development was outside the settlement boundary of Aldermaston.
- The application was contrary to policy.
- This stretch of road had already experienced a number of major and minor traffic incidents and the Parish Council was concerned that the development would further exacerbate the situation. It would also increase congestion problems in Aldermaston.

In discussing this application Members noted that the site was outside a settlement boundary and was not one of the sites specifically allocated for residential development in the Local Plan. A development of this scale would have an adverse impact on local health and education provision. The site was not well-related to either Aldermaston or Tadley and there were inadequate public transport links.

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

- (1) West Berkshire has sufficient land to meet its housing requirements as specified in strategic and local policies in accordance with RPG9, Policies H2 and BU3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006, Policies H1, H2 and H4 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan (Deposit Draft Incorporating Proposed Modifications) March 2004 and with Policies OVS.1, HSG.1, and HSG.5 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 which direct housing development to specified sites and settlements within their identified boundaries within the context of an overall strategy that seeks to restrain levels of growth and safeguard Berkshire's environment. The release of the application site for development would therefore undermine and be in conflict with the proper function of the statutory Development Plan for West Berkshire, as prepared in accordance with PPGs 1 and 12, and the relevant policies on its overall strategy, on housing provision and location of housing development. Moreover, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that there are any sufficient material considerations that would justify setting aside the policies of the statutory Development Plan to allow such a large scale housing development on an undeveloped site

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outside the settlement boundary and which would also conflict with Policies C1 and C2 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006, Policies DP1 and DP6 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan (Deposit Draft Incorporating Proposed Modifications) March 2004 and Policy ENV.18 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006, which seek to strictly control the use of land and the scale of development in the countryside.

- (2) The site lies an unsustainable location, detached from existing residential areas and a significant distance from local facilities at the settlements of Aldermaston and Tadley, with very limited facilities available for encouraging travel by other modes to the private motor vehicle. Furthermore, the provision of a single form of housing in a location such as this would not contribute to the creation of mixed and balanced communities as advocated by Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. The proposal is also contrary to advice contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 and Policies OS1 and LD1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006; Policies DP1, H3 and T1 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan (Deposit Draft Incorporating Proposed Modifications) March 2004; and Policy OSV.1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006, which seek to direct development to sustainable locations.
- (3) The development will have a cumulative impact on road safety and/or the local transport infrastructure as set out in Policy OVS.3 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006. The applicant has failed to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that appropriate measures have been/will be taken to mitigate that impact, contrary to Policy TRANS.4 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.
- (4) The proposed development does not make provision for acceptable access road links to the surrounding road network, contrary to Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.
- (5) Visibility at the proposed access would be sub-standard and this would be a hazard to road users, contrary to Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.
- (6) The proposed development does not comply with the Local Highway Authority's standards in respect of road design, contrary to Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.
- (7) The layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of motor vehicle parking and this could result in on street parking, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, contrary to Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.
- (8) In the absence of the completion of a Section 106 Planning Obligation to secure sufficient obligations to deal with all the infrastructure, services and amenities made necessary by the development to ensure the proper planning of the area, the proposal would be contrary to the advice contained within

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Circular 01/97 'Planning Obligations'; Policies LD6 and LD8 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006; Policy DP4 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan (Deposit Draft Incorporating Proposed Modifications) March 2004; and Policies OVS.3, OVS.3A and TRANS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (9) The site lies outside the settlements of Aldermaston and Tadley and abuts open countryside, but is surrounded by large scale industrial and commercial sites between the two settlements. These have a semi open appearance with open space between structures, and which are scattered in a haphazard form on the west side of Paices Hill. They are also set back from Paices Hill by 20 to 50m. The development will result in the loss of open land between Youngs Industrial Estate and the garden centre and the loss of on site vegetation if the Indicative Site Layout is representative of how the site might be developed. The proposed development will also result in a significant increase in built form along Paices Hill, right up to the roadside. All sense of openness along this stretch of the road will be lost, resulting in the urbanisation of the area and the adjacent open countryside. It will also create the perception of urban encroachment from Tadley towards Aldermaston. As such, the proposal is contrary to Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 - 'The Countryside- Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development - February 1997, Policy C2 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006, Policy EN1 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan (Deposit Draft Incorporating Proposed Modifications) March 2004; and Policies ENV.18 and OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

21. APPLICATION NO. 04/00506/OUT - LAND TO THE REAR OF BRIDLEWAY AND VA HALE, DOCTORS LANE, HERMITAGE, RG18 9TA

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(3)) concerning a new detached bungalow and double garage.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Sandra Moss, Chris Genge and Ruth Cottingham, objectors and Mr Appleton, the applicant, addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Ms Moss, Mr Genge and Ms Cottingham in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- They felt that the increased traffic movements that the development would generate would cause further damage to the Bridleway. Residents have already had to repair damage and potholes caused by flooding along Doctors Lane.
- They felt that access and egress from the site was a potential highway hazard.
- They were concerned about the negative impact the development would have on the Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- They were concerned that if Members were minded to approve the application it would set a precedent for future development. They felt that another

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application on this agenda 04/00757/FUL illustrated this. They felt that granting this application would have a cumulative effect on the area.

- They felt that there would be a negative impact on the privacy and amenity of the adjoining dwellings.
- They felt that the development was for the purpose of financial gain and that if Members were minded to approve the application it would reduce the value of their properties.
- They were concerned that, although the application was for outline permission to erect a bungalow, at the reserved matters stage the application would be for a house.

Mr Appleton in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- He pointed out that only one of the residents of Doctors Lane had objected to the application.
- He had consulted Planning Officers on the application.
- The dwelling would be sited away from the boundary with Beech Drive and screening would be planted which would reduce the impact of overlooking of the neighbours' property and swimming pool.
- Doctors Lane was in a poor state of repair following the construction of a large house that was currently being built in the Lane. A letter had been received from the developer promising to re-instate parts of the Lane that had been damaged during construction.
- There were a number of local examples where infilling of back gardens had been permitted.
- He had lived in the Lane for the past 20 years and he intended to live in the bungalow once it had been built. It was therefore important to him that the bungalow was in keeping with the surrounding area.

Members had noted the tranquillity of the setting at the recent site visit. In discussing the application Members noted the Parish Council's concerns regarding setting a precedent for other properties to develop their rear gardens. Although Members were unhappy about the principle of developing this site they felt that there were no material planning grounds on which they could refuse it. It was the aspiration of the Sub-Committee, that if planning permission was granted on the adjoining Hilliers site, the applicant reconsider the position of the access to the bungalow.

RESOLVED that the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The development permitted shall be begun on or before whichever is the later of the following dates:
 - (a) five years from the date of this decision, or
 - (b) the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter approved.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and

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OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 should it not be started within a reasonable time.

- (2) Samples of the materials to be used in the proposed development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development starts. This condition shall apply irrespective of any indications as to the details that may have been submitted with the application, and shall where necessary include the submission of samples of glass, plastic and mortar materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (3) Details of floor levels in relation to existing and proposed ground levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory relationship between the proposed building and the adjacent land in accordance with Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (4) Irrespective of the provisions of the current Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 or any subsequent revision, no additions or extensions to the dwelling shall be built or ancillary buildings or structures erected within the curtilage, unless permission has been granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for the purpose.

Reason: To prevent the over-development of the site and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policies EN1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 -2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (5) The development shall be landscaped in accordance with a scheme which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before development commences and shall ensure:-
 - (a) the retention of selected existing trees and shrubs on the site;
 - (b) the protection of the selected existing trees and shrubs on the site during the development of the site;
 - (c) the carrying out of any earth moving operations concurrently with the carrying out of the building and other works;
 - (d) completion of the scheme during the planting season next following the completion of the building(s), or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority;

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- (e) the maintenance of the landscaped areas for a period of five years or until established, whichever may be the longer. Any trees or shrubs removed, or which in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, are dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting, shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of a similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping which will in due course improve the quality of the development and soften its impact on the area in accordance with the objectives of policy OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and policy OVS2 (a & b) and OVS 3 (b) of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (6) No trade, business or commercial use of any kind shall be carried out from the garages approved in this scheme.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to accord with policies LD3 and EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (7) Irrespective of the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, the garage on the site shall not be used for any purpose other than as garage accommodation, unless permission has been granted by the Local Planning Authority as a result of an application being submitted for that purpose.

Reason: In order to provide satisfactory parking on site in accordance with Policy T6 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and Policies OVS2 and TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (8) The hours of work for all contractors (and sub-contractors) for the duration of the site development, shall unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority be limited to; 7.30 am to 6.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays, 7.30 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays, and NO work shall be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of surrounding residents in accordance with Policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and Policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (9) The total gross floor space of the bungalow permitted by this decision shall not exceed the footprint of the bungalow as indicated on drawing number CS/MA.1/02 measured in metres squared.

Reason: In order to protect the character of the area and the amenity of the adjoining land users in accordance with policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

- (10) The dwelling shall not be taken into use until space for vehicle parking and turning has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s). This area shall, thereafter, be kept available for parking and turning (of private motor cars and/or light goods vehicles) at all times.

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Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce roadside parking which would be a danger to other road users and to ensure vehicles enter and leave the highway in forward gear in accordance with Policy TRANS 1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

(11) The access road shall have a minimum width of 3.75 metres.

Reason: In the interest of road safety in accordance with Policy OVS 2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

(12) The dwelling permitted by this decision shall only be a single storey height building.

Reason. In order to protect the character of the area and the amenity of the adjoining land users in accordance with policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

(13) Full details of the siting, design and external appearance of the building(s) and other works, the means of access, and the landscaping of the site, the ('reserved matters') shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning with the date of this permission, and shall be approved by the Local Planning Authority before any building or other operations start on site. This condition shall apply irrespective of any indications as to the reserved matters which have been given in the submitted application.

Reason: The application is not accompanied by sufficient details of the reserved matters to enable the Local Planning Authority to give proper consideration to those matters in accordance with Policies LD3, EN1 and H5 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and Policies HSG4 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

22. APPLICATION NO. 04/00757/FUL - LAND TO THE REAR OF TILE BARN AND CORNISH COTTAGE, PRIORS COURT ROAD, HERMITAGE, THATCHAM, RG18 9TG

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(6)) concerning a detached dwelling with a detached garage.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Ruth Cottingham, Chris Genge and Sandra Moss, objectors and Stephen Wrezenski agent addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Ms Cottingham, Mr Genge and Ms Moss in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- They were concerned about the precedent that would be set for other properties to develop their rear gardens.
- They were concerned about the noise and disturbance that the proposal would generate.
- They felt that the development would result in a loss of residential amenity to the adjoining properties. They felt that the impact would be reduced if the application was for the erection of a bungalow and not a two-storey dwelling.

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- The felt that the application was of an inappropriate design and appearance as the surrounding properties were single storey dwellings.
- The driveway would result in a loss of privacy to the adjoining properties.
- They were concerned about the additional traffic the development would generate.
- They were concerned about the cumulative effect of infill housing on these sites.
- They noted that the Parish Council had objected to the proposal.
- They were concerned about the impact the development would have on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). They felt that this was a substantial development that would have an urbanising effect in a tranquil setting.
- They felt that the application was not in keeping with the street scene and it would dominate the landscape.

Mr Wrezenski in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- The application was for a detached two-storey dwelling that would be accessed from Priors Court Road.
- The plot had a central hollow that would be reinstated to its natural level and the dwelling would be set centrally on the site.
- The plot was larger than the adjoining properties.
- The plot was well screened on all boundaries with neighbouring properties.
- He had consulted both Planning and Highways' Officers on the application.
- The materials to be used in the proposed development would be of a high quality.
- The application was for a well proportioned building that was of a suitable scale and in keeping with the street scene and was also in accordance with policy and guidelines.

In discussing this application Members noted the Parish Council's objections on the grounds that the development would be overbearing in terms of the amenities of the neighbouring properties. Members were informed that a typical two-storey development was 9m high and the height of the proposed dwelling was 7.5m. It was the aspiration of the Sub-Committee, that if planning permission was granted on the adjoining Hilliers site, the applicant reconsider the position of the access to the development. Members felt that there were insufficient planning grounds on which they could refuse the application.

RESOLVED that the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The development shall be started within five years from the date of this permission and implemented strictly in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 should it not be started within a reasonable time.

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- (2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with drawing title number(s) 53813:1, 53813:2, 53813:3, 53813:4, 53813:5 and 53813:6, received on 31st March 2004, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted details assessed against Policies LD3 and C7 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and OVS2 and ENV2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

- (3) Samples of the materials to be used in the proposed development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development starts. This condition shall apply irrespective of any indications as to the details that may have been submitted with the application, and shall where necessary include the submission of samples of glass, plastic and mortar materials. The development shall thereafter be constructed using the approved materials.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (4) Irrespective of the provisions of the current Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 or any subsequent revision, no additions or extensions to the dwelling shall be built or ancillary buildings or structures erected within the curtilage, unless permission has been granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for the purpose.

Reason: To prevent the over-development of the site and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policies EN1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 -2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (5) No trade, business or commercial use of any kind shall be carried out from the garages approved in this scheme.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to accord with policies LD3 and EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006 , and policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (6) Irrespective of the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, the garage on the site shall not be used for any purpose other than as garage accommodation, unless permission has been granted by the Local Planning Authority as a result of an application being submitted for that purpose.

Reason: In order to provide satisfactory parking on site in accordance with Policy T6 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and Policies OVS2 and TRANS1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

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- (7) The hours of work for all contractors (and sub-contractors) for the duration of the site development, shall unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority be limited to; 7.30 am to 6.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays, 7.30 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays, and NO work shall be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of surrounding residents in accordance with Policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and Policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (8) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved landscaping scheme (drawing number 53813:3 received 31st March 2004) as follows:
- (a) the retention of selected existing trees and shrubs on site, as specified on the approved plan;
 - (b) the protection of the selected existing trees and shrubs on the site during the development of the site;
 - (c) the carrying out of any earth moving operations concurrently with the carrying out of the building and other works;
 - (d) completion of the scheme during the planting season next following the completion of the building(s), or such other date as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
 - (e) the maintenance of the landscaped areas for a period of five years or until established, whichever may be the longer. Any trees or shrubs removed, or which in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, are dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting, shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of a similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping which will in due course improve the environmental quality of the development and soften its impact on the area in accordance with the objectives of policy OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and policy OVS2 (a & b) and OVS 3 (b) of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (9) A scheme of fencing and other means of enclosure to be erected on the site, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before building or other operations start and no building(s) shall be occupied before the fencing and other means of enclosure have been constructed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The fencing and other means of enclosure are essential elements of the detailed design of this development and the application is not accompanied by sufficient details to enable the Local Planning Authority to give proper consideration to these matters in accordance with Policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 to 2006, and Policies OVS2 and ENV30 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006.

- (10) The new detached garage shall be used only as an integral part of the existing dwelling, and for residential purposes incidental

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to the enjoyment of the occupiers of that dwelling. It shall not be used as a separate dwelling unit, and no separate curtilage shall be created.

Reason: The creation of a separate unit of accommodation is inappropriate for the site, and would be detrimental to the amenities of the area and therefore would be contrary to the provisions of Policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and Policy OVS.2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (11) Details of floor levels in relation to existing and proposed ground levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences, and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory relationship between the proposed building and the adjacent land in accordance with Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (12) No development of the site shall commence until the access(s) has/have been constructed in accordance with the approved drawing(s) and in compliance with the requirements of the Highway Authority for work carried out within the public highway.

Reason: In the interest of road safety in accordance with Policy OVS 2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006

- (13) No dwelling shall be taken into use until all the visibility splays shown on the approved drawing(s) have been provided. Those areas shall, thereafter, be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 0.6 metres above carriageway level.

Reason: In the interest of road safety in accordance with Policy OVS 2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

- (14) No dwelling shall be taken into use until space for vehicle parking and turning has been provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s). This area shall, thereafter, be kept available for parking and turning (of private motor cars and/or light goods vehicles) at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce roadside parking which would be a danger to other road users and to ensure vehicles enter and leave the highway in forward gear in accordance with Policy TRANS 1 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006.

23. APPLICATION NO. 04/00276/OUTMAJ - LAND TO THE SIDE AND REAR OF 21 HENWICK LANE, THATCHAM

(Councillor Keith Woodhams declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4(1) by virtue of the fact that he was a West Berkshire Council appointed representative

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on Henwick Worthy Joint Management Committee. Councillor Woodhams remained in the chair, participated in discussions but did not vote on this item.)

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning outline permission to build 10 dwellings.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution John Chandler, Mr and Mrs T. Davies, Mr Cooper and Julie Gunning objectors and Chris Owens, agent addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mr Chandler, Mr and Mrs Davies, Mr Cooper and Ms Gunning in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- They were concerned about the proximity of the development to an agricultural holding. They questioned whether purchasers of the proposed dwellings would be informed that the development was sited near a pig farm. They requested guidance on the impact the development would have on the pig farm if the pig farmer considered organic farming.
- They felt that this was not a brownfield site as the Officer's report suggested as it had only ever been used for agricultural purposes.
- They contended that the archaeological field evaluation was not designed to find anything and that previous searches were not consulted to establish the archaeological interest of the site.
- They felt that the design of the proposed development was of a poor standard and would result in a loss of privacy to the adjoining properties.
- They felt that the development would result in the loss of a green space and trees, which would consequently result in a change of character to this area of Thatcham. The change in character would result in a loss of residential amenity for the neighbouring properties.
- They felt that the entrance to the new road would be too close to Roman Way which would increase congestion and road safety risks.
- They felt that the proposal did not comply with PPG3.

Mr Owens in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- A thorough archaeological field evaluation, by a professional archaeological firm, had taken place and nothing of particular merit had been found.
- The site was a brownfield site within the settlement boundary of Thatcham.
- Although the density of the development fell below the requirement of 30-50 dwellings per hectare as stated in PPG 3 the density of 22 dwellings per hectare had taken into account the character of the surrounding area.
- There were numerous existing examples of housing developments adjacent to agricultural enterprises.
- The entrance which had been designed by highway consultants had been approved by Highways Officers and exceeded West Berkshire Council's standards.

Planning Officers explained that the impact of the development on organic farming was not a material planning consideration. The Sub-Committee were also informed that financial contributions as per the S106 agreements were calculated using a specific formula to mitigate the harm caused by the development. Officers asked the Sub-Committee to note that a revised condition as proposed on

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the update sheet, relating to enclosure of the site could be used to mitigate concerns relating to security. Officers further explained that although the development did not meet the minimum garden depth requirement the garden sizes were in keeping with other properties in the area. The Sub-Committee noted that although the development did not meet the minimum density required in PPG3 the density was in the Officer's opinion to be in keeping with the surrounding area and there was a caveat to the policy which stated that the density of a development should not compromise the character of an area.

Highways Officers noted that the access, which had been designed by a highways consultant, complied with both West Berkshire Council and Central Government Standards.

In discussing this application Members noted that the proposed development fell within the settlement boundary of Thatcham. The Sub-Committee were concerned about the density of the development bearing in mind the unique character and nature of the area. Members felt that the development would have a detrimental impact on the 27 adjacent properties in respect of a loss of visual amenity. Members also felt that the gardens did not meet the minimum requirement as set out in West Berkshire Council's Policy.

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

- (1) The proposal for 10 no. dwellings results in a density which is too high when considered against the existing character of the surrounding area and the current open undeveloped character of the site as it stands. As a result the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact on the character and amenities of the area. As such the proposed development is contrary to the guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 - 'Housing' which states that local planning authorities and developers should think imaginatively about designs and layouts which make more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. In addition the proposal is contrary to Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan which seeks to ensure that development proposals do not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the environment and Policy EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan which seeks to ensure that development is appropriate in scale, form, impact, character and siting to its location. Furthermore the scheme is contrary to Policy HSG4 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 which seeks to ensure, inter alia that the proposal is appropriate in design, form, character and siting to its location and will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environmental qualities of the area and is capable of supporting a satisfactory level of residential amenity and Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 which seeks to ensure that development proposals achieve a high standard of design which respects the character and appearance of the area.
- (2) The proposed siting and layout of the development shown to achieve 10 no. dwellings would result in an unacceptable impact on the visual amenity of existing neighbouring dwellings. As such the application is contrary to Policy LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan which seeks to ensure that development proposals do not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the environment and Policy EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan which seeks to ensure that development is appropriate in scale, form, impact, character

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and siting to its location. Furthermore the scheme is contrary to Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 which seeks to ensure that development proposals achieve a high standard of design which respects the character and appearance of the area.

- (3) The amount of garden area for the proposed dwellings is insufficient in size and depth and would not be consistent with the Local Authority's standards for private amenity space resulting in garden space which would not be of a size that would serve its purpose as useful amenity space to future occupiers.. The scheme is therefore contrary to Policy HSG4 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 which seeks to ensure, inter alia, that development is capable of supporting a satisfactory level of residential amenity. In addition the scheme is contrary to the advice given in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 which states that all new development must respect the existing character of the area and therefore seeks a minimum of at least 70 square metres of garden area is provided for one or two bedrooomed properties and at least 100 square metres for properties with 3 or more bedrooms.

24. APPLICATION NO. 04/00388 - BROADWOOD LODGE, SOUTHEND ROAD, SOUTH END, BRADFIELD, READING

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) concerning an extension to a double garage to provide a workshop.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Andrew House, Parish Representative and Ron Henwood, applicant addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mr House in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- The Parish Council supported the application.
- They felt that the original house had to be extended on numerous occasions due to its original size in order to modernise it.
- The dwelling was well screened although there was a post and rail fence along the western boundary and as the planting was sparser in this area the development would be more visible from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Planning Officers felt that the design of the application was acceptable.
- They noted that the application was contrary to policy but felt that in this instance common sense should prevail.

Mr Henwood in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- He had lived in the property for the past twenty years and had extended the property to meet the changing needs of his family. All the extensions had been in keeping with the original dwelling.
- The extension was necessary to provide space for his hobby of restoring cars.
- The size of the plot had been increased by 0.1 hectare.
- In 5-7 years the wooded area would fully screen the existing property as well as the proposed extension.

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- He did not consider the proposal to be harmful to the AONB.

In discussing this application Members noted that although the proposal was contrary to policy they felt that the site was large enough to accommodate the extension. They felt that the extension would not result in a massive bulk and that the building was adequately screened.

Planning Officers reminded Members that if they were minded to grant the application it would be considered to be contrary to policy and would therefore need to be referenced up to the Planning and Development Committee.

Councillors Keith Woodhams and Quentin Webb, who were Members of the Planning and Development Committee, elected not to vote on this item and informed the Sub-Committee that they would consider the application on the facts placed before them at the next Planning and Development Meeting.

RESOLVED that the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The development shall be started within five years from the date of this permission and implemented strictly in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the desirability of the development against Policies LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 should it not be started within a reasonable time.

- (2) The materials to be used in the development shall match those on the existing development to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity in accordance with Policies OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

- (3) No development or other operations shall commence on site until a scheme for the landscaping of the western boundary of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities an implementation programme and details of written specifications including cultivation and other operations involving tree, shrub and grass establishment. The scheme shall ensure;

- (a) Completion of the approved landscape scheme within the first planting season following completion of development.
 - (b) Any trees shrubs or plants that die, become seriously damaged or die within five years of this development shall be replaced in the following year by plants of the same size and species.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping in accordance with the objectives of policy OS1 and LD3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and policy OVS2 (a & b) and OVS 3 (b) of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006.

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RESOLVED that as the recommendation was contrary to policy the application be referenced up to the Planning and Development Committee. The next meeting was due to be held on the 21 July 2004.

25. **APPLICATION NO. 04/00615 - OAKLANDS, ALDWORTH ROAD, UPPER BASILDON, READING**

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(4)) concerning alterations and extensions to reconstruct an existing chalet bungalow and a new detached garage.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Mr John Short, Parish Representative and Mr Dennis McCoy, agent addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mr Short in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- He noted that the footprint for the proposed garage and the existing garage was similar.
- Rounding off the external walls of the existing development would result in an increase in the floor area of the property. The Parish Council felt that there would be an 86% increase in the size of the footprint.
- The Parish Council noted that the existing dwelling was a bungalow and that the proposal contained a two-storey element in the central section. This would mean that there would be an overall increase in size in excess of 100% on the existing dwelling.
- The amended drawings showed an amended façade but did not address the Parish Council's objections relating to height and bulk. The proposed structure would result in an overbearing building that was not in keeping with its surroundings.
- The Parish Council were not convinced that the height of the roof had been reduced.

Mr McCoy in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- The proposal included an extension to the road junction.
- The amended application pulled the building line back in line with the neighbouring property.
- The application had been modified following consultation with West Berkshire Council Officers.
- The amended plans pulled the building a further 1m away from the boundary line.
- The height had been reduced to one and a half storeys.
- A precedent had been set by the approved extension to Fair Oaks.
- The window that would overlook the neighbouring property appeared larger on the plan than it would be in reality. In addition it would be a bathroom window and would be made of obscured glass.
- The erection of the garage would not result in any trees being displaced.

In discussing this application Members noted that the application fell within the settlement boundary of Upper Basildon. They acknowledged that the applicant

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had met with Officers to discuss ways to address the objections raised relating to the previous application. Members however felt that the building was still overbearing in terms of its height, bulk and scale to the neighbouring property.

RESOLVED that the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy be authorised to refuse planning permission for the following reason:

- (1) The property to which the application relates is a chalet style bungalow of one to one and a half storeys in height located within the settlement boundary of Upper Basildon and is set amongst a row of similar properties mainly one to one and a half storeys with a small element of two storeys. The application seeks to increase the current property to form a one and a half storey dwelling with an element of two storeys in the central section. However, the proposed extension of this property would present a half hipped gable end of one and a half storeys on the northwest elevation facing the boundary of the neighbouring property 'Fairoaks'. The northwest elevation is 11 metres in length with the eaves set at 2.3 metres and the ridge height at 7 metres. The north west elevation is set 2 metres of the boundary with the neighbouring chalet style bungalow (Fairoaks) which is set 1 metre off the boundary. This elevation would replace what is currently a single storey garage set 1 metre off the boundary with the neighbouring property 'Fairoaks' running the length of 6.5 metres with a ridge height of 5 metres. The proposed development would therefore be overbearing and create an oppressive environment causing an unacceptable visual impact on the neighbouring property ('Fairoaks'). The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies OVS2 and ENV2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan and Policies LD3 and EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan in that the development proposals give rise to an unacceptable impact on the visual amenity of the area and the neighbouring land uses.

26. APPLICATION NO. 04/00632/HOUSE - 221 LOWER WAY, THATCHAM

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(5)) concerning a two storey extension

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Mrs Giles, applicant addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mrs Giles in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- The street scene along Lower Way already consisted of mixed housing.
- The neighbours had raised no objections.
- The neighbour felt that a side and front extension was preferable to a rear extension.
- A number of large extensions had been permitted along Lower Way.
- No 215 Lower Way was set further forward than the proposed building line for the extension.
- The materials for the proposal had been carefully selected in order to blend in with character of the neighbouring properties. The bricks that had been selected were an exact match for the existing brickwork. The application also included costly elements such as a bay window.

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In discussing this application Members sympathised with the applicant but were concerned about the overall impact on the street scene. They felt that on balance the extension was excessive in size for the site and the extension was set too far forward when compared to the current building line along Lower Way.

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

- (1) The proposed extension would form an incongruous feature, out of character with the existing pair of semi-detached dwellings and the surrounding street scene and, due to the prominent location of the property, significantly detrimental to the visual amenity of the area. The proposed extension would therefore be contrary to policies OVS1, OVS2 and ENV30 of the adopted West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006, OS1, LD3 and EN1 of the adopted Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and DP1 and DP5 of the emerging Berkshire Structure Plan March 2004.

27. APPLICATION NO. 04/00930/FUL - TRACK BETWEEN KIDDINGTON LANE COTTAGE AND B4009, WESTRIDGE GREEN, ALDWORTH ROAD, STREATLEY

(Councillor Chris Webber declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 4(8) by virtue of the fact that he occasionally used the track in his business capacity. Councillor Webber therefore left the meeting, did not take part in discussions or vote on this item.)

The Sub-Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(8)) concerning a change of surface to planning application 03/00350/FUL from white synergy to dense bitumen covered with 10mm alt-y-garn grit stone (tar and chip).

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Mr Rees, applicant addressed the Sub-Committee on the following application.

Mr Rees in addressing the Sub-Committee raised the following points:

- He had spoken to Highways Officers regarding the specifications of the Alt-y-Garn grit stone.
- He had also contacted Rights of Way to try and establish an alternative to the Synergy surface that had been found to be unsuitable.
- He had written to the Council outlining a near miss he had experienced with another vehicle following a puncture which he felt had been caused by the flint from the footpath. He asked the Sub-Committee to note that the family had endured a number of punctures which he felt had been caused by the flint.
- He felt that the dry conditions made using the footpath impractical and dangerous.
- He felt that the choice of a suitable material was very subjective.
- One of the difficulties associated with the choice of material was that it had to adhere to a 1 in 7 gradient.
- The house had not been lived in for 40 years before he purchased the property and he was therefore not in a position to know what the original surface consisted of.

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In discussing this application Members noted the complexity of the choice of materials which had to have a number of properties in order to be both acceptable and sustainable. They sympathised with the applicant's frustration but noted that this was not a unique problem and thought that the applicant should be able to ascertain solutions from similar footpaths in the area.

Highway Officers pointed out that there were other surfaces such as 'Grasscrete' and coloured dressing stones that could be used but this was a complex issue and each surface would have to be considered on its own merit. He was prepared to meet with the applicant to consider options but as this was a footpath and not a highway the applicant would also need to consult with Rights of Way Officers.

Members were concerned about the impact resurfacing would have on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). They had to consider the needs of the applicant whilst maintaining the integrity of a Public Right of Way. Members also queried whether the reference to an ancient track that had been referred to in 03/02653/FUL and 03/00350 had been adequately resolved.

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

- (1) The track is a public footpath (Footpath 14 Aldworth/7 Streatley) located within open countryside in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposal would significantly reduce the recreational potential of the footpath due to its urban nature and appearance and consequent erosion of its character, which would be contrary to the aims of Policy R2 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006 and Policies OVS2 and RL4A of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006, which seek to ensure that the recreational potential of public rights of way are protected or enhanced.
- (2) The site is located in open countryside within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposed surface would result in a highly conspicuous and inappropriate urbanising visual feature, which would have a detrimental impact on the character of this attractive and open area of countryside. As a result the proposal is contrary to the aims of Planning Policy Guidance Note 7: 'The Countryside: Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development', and Policies C7 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 - 2006, and ENV2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 - 2006 (Draft Text - November 2001), which seek to ensure that development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty conserves or enhances the character of the area.

28. APPEAL DECISIONS RELATING TO THATCHAM AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted the outcome of appeal decisions relating to the Thatcham Area and thanked Officers for the work that had been undertaken.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.00pm)

CHAIRMAN

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Date of Signature: