

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
SWALLOWFIELD PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 3rd APRIL 2017 IN
THE ROSE ROOM, SWALLOWFIELD PARISH HALL,
SWALLOWFIELD STREET, SWALLOWFIELD AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr. J. Anderson (Chairman) Cllr. R. McDonald Cllr. P. Sampson

In attendance: Liz Halson, Clerk

Members of the public: 4

483 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. G. Collender, Cllr. W. Dance, Cllr. C. Morrissey, Cllr. R. Norris, Cllr. J. Sant,
Cllr. J. Wheelwright

484 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

485 QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

485.1 16/02989/OUT

485.1.1 Resident – the planning application will be considered by Hart District Council Planning Committee on 12th April 2017. It is important that individuals continue to submit their comments on the inaccuracies of the officer and developers Highways reports, even though the council are writing a letter.

Cllr. Anderson – it is also important that residents attend the meeting to show the strength of feeling and to support the individual who will speak in objection.

486 CURRENT APPLICATIONS

486.1 16/02989/OUT - Land at Odiham Road, Riseley, Reading, Berkshire
Outline application for the development of up to 83 residential dwellings including 33 'social rented' units, vehicular access from Odiham Road, public open space, ancillary works and associated infrastructure on land off Odiham Road, Riseley. All matters reserved except for access.

It was agreed that in Mrs McKeown's absence, the residents' nominated speaker, Mr Goldsmith should be asked to register to speak as an objector so that the slot was not lost since this is allocated on a first come, first served basis. If available, Mrs McKeown could speak in his place.

Cllr. Anderson presented the draft letter and Cllr. Sampson ran through some additional points which he felt could be made.

It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the draft letter with the amendments proposed by Cllr. Sampson be sent to Hart District Council. ¹ See attached.

¹ Clerk to send amended letter to Hart immediately after the meeting

Cllr. McDonald thanked Cllrs. Anderson and Norris and Mr Ed Handley for all their hard work to produce the letter.

486.2 1170705 – Land at Wyvols Field, RG7 1RT

Outline planning permission for the erection of a residential development up to 65 dwellings to include open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure (access to be considered) (all other matters reserved).

After discussion it was agreed that the points made in the fourth paragraph were the most critical and these would be highlighted by a red box on the final copy.

It was **PROPOSED** and seconded that the council approve the draft leaflet circulated by Cllr. Anderson for distribution to residents in Swallowfield. All in favour. ²

It was agreed that the leaflet would be published on the website and on the Parish Council Facebook page. ³

[The meeting closed at 3:25pm]

² Clerk to print leaflets, MM to arrange team of people to distribute

³ Clerk

Planning application 16/02989/OUT - Land at Odiham Road, Riseley

You have recently added a report from your Highways Department to the documents for the above outline planning application. We appreciate your allowing further comments from both residents and affected Parish Councils in response to this document. As all matters are reserved apart from access, the Highways comments are very important.

As an affected Parish Council, we wish to reaffirm our **strong opposition** to this development on our boundary with Heckfield and urge Hart District Council to reject the application. This letter is supplementary to our previously submitted objection comments which still stand. This proposed development conflicts with planning policy RUR2, as it is not within an existing built-up settlement and is not directly adjoined to any settlement in Hart District. Furthermore, the location is totally unsustainable especially if the approved conversion of Riseley Business Park into residential apartments is factored in and other developments within Wokingham District are taken into account. The site is a very long way from most essential amenities and areas identified for housing in the Wokingham Borough local plan. Hence there are no local infrastructure enhancements planned and extensive car use will be an absolute necessity as is the case for all existing residents of Riseley.

We are aware the Chair of Heckfield Parish Council and Riseley residents have already submitted comments to you about the Highways report. The Parish Council supports these comments on the report which call into question the analysis and conclusions.

The Parish Council is surprised that there is no comment from Hampshire County Council on the Transport Plan, they being the Highways Authority. Their input is necessary to gain an authoritative view of the traffic situation in the wider area around the proposed development. Their analysis also needs to take into account the situation in this area of Berkshire. **We feel this is an omission from the Highways report and should be rectified, to get a fuller picture of the impacts of the development on roads and traffic.**

The Parish Council would now like to comment upon what it considers to be significant inconsistencies and flaws in the report, as itemised below.

1. The Highways report is inaccurate and overly optimistic. It is based on assumptions, traffic models and calculations from the developer's own transport statement, which compares the impact with "similar developments" without saying when or where these are. The similar developments referred to may have been in different regions and many of the underlying conditions may well have been quite different. **Any comparisons stated as justification in this report need to be quantified, qualified and referenced, not simply stated and accepted as proof positive for this site.**
2. The traffic survey was done during the 3rd week in June 2016. This was school half term week. It is also in the pre exams "study leave" period when most GCSE/A level students do not go to school on a daily basis. This gives rise to a traffic count which is substantially lower than the normal daily situation on the road. The morning rush hour traffic volumes are likely to have been around 30% lower when the survey was done. **The survey does not reflect normal traffic volumes and hence the results are compromised and meaningless.**
3. In relation to traffic queues mornings and evenings on the B3349 Link Road from Heckfield attempting to access the roundabout at the end of the A33 Swallowfield bypass, the report states that the roundabout and roads are under capacity. **This**

is incorrect and inconsistent, as elsewhere it refers to the roads being over capacity.

4. The traffic queues along the road from the A33 roundabout to the Wellington Country Park and along the B3349 back towards Hook during peak am and pm periods are unacceptable and already result in traffic diverting past the entrance to the proposed development and passing through the centre of the village either in the hope of jumping the queue at the road intersection nearest the A33 roundabout or to use the B3349 towards the M4 junction 11 instead of using the A33 bypass. If correctly measured at normal usage times (not school holidays), the queuing times recorded evidence this.

The report grossly underestimates the queuing time at 7 minutes in peak periods whereas actual queuing times are approximately twice this. Residents recorded actual queuing times of up to 15 minutes over a period of 7 days commencing 23rd March 2017. The results are appended to this letter and a dash-cam video record is available on request to prove the point.

This council is also concerned that an increase in traffic due to this development will add to already significant air pollution from stop start vehicle movements.

5. ***The residents' survey also showed that in part due to the queuing at the eastern arm of the roundabout up to the Wellington Country Park roundabout approximately 45% of traffic diverts up the Odiham Road past the entrance to the proposed development – as many as 53 cars in the space of 10 minutes.***
6. The modelling does not take into account the other developments already approved and underway in the Wokingham Borough area, let alone the others in the current local plan. Analysis conducted for the local plan will not have considered this and other developments that fall outside the scope of the adopted plans. The impact of other approved (planned or otherwise) and planned developments in the area must be modelled in order to assess the overall effect. It is not sufficient to consider just the incremental effect of this single development on existing traffic flows. Traffic flows need to be considered in the wider context of the local plan. **All increased traffic loads in the vicinity need including to give a complete and accurate calculation for traffic movements affecting the site.**
7. It is the case these days that in a large proportion of households both partners work and young adults of working age often live with their parents. It can therefore be expected that there will be significant numbers leaving for work/returning home when the roads are at their most busy yet the report states that the development will only result in around one car per hour joining the queue to the bypass which we believe is an underestimate. **This pattern of road usage will also lead to queuing into and out of the single road access to this development.**

8. The report refers to the benefits of car sharing but research shows this is so insignificant that it can be ignored for practical purposes. Examination of the quoted car sharing websites shows that the Berkshire site requires a £5 payment before finding out if there are any applicable shares. The Hampshire site is free but if you search for Riseley to Reading or Riseley to Basingstoke station there are zero shares available. **The report does not quantify the effect but relies on it being sufficient to justify its conclusion.**
9. The report states that the access onto Odiham Road from the site is acceptable but ignores existing driver behaviour along this section of Odiham Road. Thames Valley Police regularly speed check this area with reports publicly available which show that drivers entering Riseley along Odiham Road do not slow down at the 30mph signs. **The access to the site is liable to cause concern to TVP with increased risk of incidents.**
10. Rail connectivity. The report clearly states that the nearest stations are reachable by bus or private vehicle. **This is inaccurate; there are no bus services from Riseley to either Mortimer or Basingstoke stations.**
11. Pedestrian mobility and accessibility. The report claims that there are no essential facilities within walking distance of the development. **The proposed development would likely appeal to a different demographic; young families with children who would naturally be drawn to the facilities available at Riseley Recreation ground (tennis club, play facilities for all ages, sports pitches, tea room and orchard).**
12. Traffic flows are critical, and there is a tipping point where a few extra vehicles dramatically reduce the traffic flow. Maximum capacity of a road occurs at around 16 mph – that's the speed where traffic can flow consistently and vehicles can filter in easily: Below that speed the traffic drops into stop/start mode which wastes a huge amount of time. From recorded and witnessed observations, the queues on the B3349 are in stop start mode for around 90 minutes every morning and evening at the peak rush hour times. **A properly commissioned and conducted road traffic survey, at 'normal (not school holiday) period and during peak rush hour times am and pm will evidence the heavy load on the roads in the vicinity of this proposed site.**

Conclusion

In summary, Swallowfield Parish Council challenges the findings and conclusions of this Highways report and the developer's own analysis and considers that a more scientific and rigorous analysis would lead to very different conclusions.

Actual traffic flows need to be measured at more representative times, seasonally and at various times during the day since peak levels are very much greater than the average. A recognised traffic model should then be used, taking the actual measures as a datum and combining this with the effects of new and planned development over a wider area.

We believe that a proper analysis requires the engagement of and collaboration between both Highways Authorities – Hampshire County Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

Attachment: Residents Traffic Survey Results

Residents Traffic Survey Results over a period of 7 days commencing 23rd March 2017

In-car camera traffic survey relating to Hart Planning Application 16/02989/OUT

Date	Location Start	Start Time	Location Finish	Finish Time	Duration (mins.secs)	Video clips
23/03/17	Wellington Park	07.46.27	A33 Riseley	07.57.10	10.43	
23/03/17	Riseley	08.09.50	B3349/3MileX	08.38.14	28.24	04,05,06
23/03/17	Wellington Park	16.35.19	A33 Riseley	16.41.12	5.53	7
23/03/17	Wellington Park	17.25.53	A33 Riseley	17.34.12	8.19	08,09
24/03/17	Wellington Park	07.36.12	A33 Riseley	07.43.19	7.07	10
24/03/17	Wellington Park	16.17.08	A33 Riseley	16.22.54	5.46	11
27/03/17	Wellington Park	07.07.45	A33 Riseley	07.14.04	6.19	12
27/03/17	Wellington Park	07.30.56	A33 Riseley	07.43.40	12.44	13,14
27/03/17	Wellington Park	07.47.00	A33 Riseley	08.00.34	13.34	15,16
26/03/17	Basingstoke Rd	08.03.55	B3349	08.08.13	4.18	17
27/03/17	Wellington Park	07.33.35	A33 Riseley	07.45.00	11.25	18,19
28/03/17	Wellington Park	17.01.17	A33 Riseley	17.07.00	6.1	20
28/03/17	Wellington Park	17.10.40	Vehicle Count	17.20.40	10	21
29/03/17	Wellington Park	07.30.44	A33 Riseley	07.46.32	15.48	23,24
29/03/17	Wellington Park	07.56.11	A33 Riseley	08.03.20	7.09	25,26
30/03/17	Tea Room	07.23.13	Vehicle Count	07.38.13	15	27,28
30/03/17	Wellington Park	07.38.13	A33 Riseley	07.47.56	9.43	28,29
30/03/17	Wellington Park	07.54.41	A33 Riseley	08.04.50	10.09	30,31
30/03/17	Wellington Park	08.13.51	A33 Riseley	08.22.30	8.39	32,33
30/03/17	Wellington Park	16.44.21	A33 Riseley	16.52.48	8.27	34
30/03/17	Wellington Park	17.26.43	A33 Riseley	17.31.51	5.08	35

Notes:

Wellington Park is the roundabout on the B3349 at the entry to the Country Park

A33 Riseley is the roundabout on the A33 at Riseley

Distance between above roundabouts is 650m=710yds=0.4miles.

B3349/3MileX is the traffic lights at A33 junction with B3349 at Three Mile Cross

The Vehicle Count at Wellington Park is westbound B3349 v. northbound Odiham Rd traffic

72 vehicles travelled up the B3349, 53 travelled along Odiham Rd. in 10 minutes

The Vehicle Count at the Tea Room is northbound Odiham Rd traffic

128 vehicles were counted in 15

minutes

WYVOLS FIELD – RESUBMITTED OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR 65 DWELLINGS

Richborough Estates has **resubmitted** its planning application for this site. There is no material difference in the detail proposals **BUT** the accompanying planning statement challenges WBCs reasons for refusal based primarily on a recent appeal decision granting permission on a site in Charvil (also in Wokingham Borough).

Put simply, the argument is that WBC has not identified sufficient housing land to enable it to meet its housing requirement over the next 5 years. In such circumstances, countryside and other local planning policies can be accorded much lower weight or even ignored. Currently Central Government has a policy that, all things being equal, there is a general presumption in favour of development.

The housing land supply issue is not something that residents or the Parish Council has any control over and hence this is something that only WBC has the necessary information, knowledge and expertise to defend. That being said, the views of local residents are very important within the planning process and this flyer outlines the opinions and areas of concern **held by the Parish Council**. You might want to incorporate these along with any other views you would like to express in a response to Wokingham Borough.

The Parish Council's response will concentrate on what planners call the "sustainability" aspects of the development, particularly highlighting those that differentiate this site from developments already allowed on appeal – Beech Hill Road, Stanbury House and now Park Lane in Charvil. Such factors as proximity to district centres, SDLs and areas of employment, fast reliable public transport links, planned infrastructure improvements and maintaining the character of the village are all important considerations.

The other significant reason for refusal which still applies is summarised in the following quote from the previous decision letter from Wokingham Borough:

"By virtue of the significant built form proposed and the resultant removal of an important green buffer and its failure to provide suitable permeable links with Swallowfield Village, the proposal would result in a substantial urbanising effect that fails to enhance the condition, character and features of the surrounding landscape and would be to the significant detriment to the special character and appearance of the site, the adjacent Green Route Enhancement Area, Swallowfield Village and the surrounding countryside contrary to Core Strategy Policies CP3 (General Principles for Development), CPI I (Proposals Outside Development Limits – Including Countryside) and MDD Policies CCO3 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping) and TB21 (Landscape Character)."

In the Parish Council's opinion this new application does not adequately address the other grounds for refusal which include "loss of best and most versatile agricultural land contrary to Core Strategy Policy CPI (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) and the NPPF and failure to provide adequate Public Open Space facilities contrary to Core Strategy Policy CPI (Sustainable Development) and CP3 (General Principles for Development) and MDD Policy TBO8 (Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards for Residential Development)."

Your Parish Council is strongly opposed to the proposed development of Wyvols Field and believes that the character of Swallowfield Village would be changed permanently for the worse. If you share that view we would encourage as many people as possible to respond to this new planning application. **It is important to draw the distinction between this site and the others allowed on appeal. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER** that just because you wrote in to Wokingham Borough last time does **not** mean that your comments will be carried forward to this application. **As well as the above points, you should repeat your previous comments since this will be treated as a fresh application.**

See overleaf for how to respond and a more detailed list of areas of concern

You should respond direct to WBC in one of the following ways:

Email: planning.enquiries@wokingham.gov.uk, copied to Andrew.Chugg@wokingham.gov.uk

Online form: From the www.wokingham.gov.uk home page follow the link to “Planning and building control”, then under the heading “Planning application” follow the link “Comment on planning application”

Post: Planning Department, Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire. RG40 1BN (FAO Andrew Chugg)

Be sure to quote: **Application number:** **170705**
 Site address: **Wyvols Field, Swallowfield, RG7 1RT**

Deadline for receipt of comments is 13th April 2017 but do it now!

Principle Objections of the Parish Council are:

1. Not sustainable
 - a. reliance on cars for almost everything
 - b. distance from supermarkets and retail centres
 - c. distance from meaningful centres of employment
 - d. distance from sports facilities – swimming pool, gym, sports hall
 - e. distance from schools and lack of school places locally.
2. The Beech Hill Road, Stanbury House and Charvil sites allowed on appeal are much closer to existing urban development and new development already in the Borough’s development plan. As such they are (or will be) better served by transport, road and local infrastructure improvements and are closer to essential amenities such as retail centres, schools and areas of employment necessary for a sustainable community. Charvil abuts the well-developed towns of Woodley and Twyford; and the Stanbury House and Beech Hill Road sites adjoin the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location with intense planned development happening nearby. This proposal will seriously disrupt the strategic and structure plans of the Borough.
3. In contrast, the Wyvols Field site is located in a rural area and is a very considerable distance away from any town centre and therefore many of the amenities essential to a sustainable existence. The nearest town centres are Lower Earley, Wokingham and Reading, all around 10km distant.
4. The Local Plan does not include any new housing or allow for additional population in this general area or the Parish as a whole. Consequently the infrastructure will not be forthcoming to support this and other developments in this rural area.
5. Urbanising effect – permanently destroying the valued character of the village
 - a. high housing and population density
 - b. abrupt transition from built form to countryside
 - c. incorporation of a major road (B3349) into settlement whereas settlement currently stands alone in open countryside
 - d. cul-de-sac development.
6. Negates the purpose of adjoining Bellway open space by enclosing it within development
 - a. as a wildlife haven bordering open countryside and a habitat for Great Crested Newts, etc.
 - b. as a way of softening the transition from built form to open countryside.
7. Outside settlement – policy is against residential development in open countryside especially on good quality agricultural land.
8. Flooding – adverse effect on surface and groundwater flows.
9. Unplanned but already permitted new developments yet to be completed will already put a strain on local infrastructure and must be taken into account. These include: The Willows (38 homes under construction); Riseley Business Park (conversion to around 80 apartments) and Land west of Odiham Road (application for 83 homes currently close to being determined by Hart District)
10. Highways – poor visibility of proposed junction for vehicles turning left off the Basingstoke Road into The Street.