

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the
Planning and Highways Committee
held on Tuesday 13th February 2024 at 19:00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Simon Pike (Chairman)
 Councillors Jay Lunn, Tom McCann, Justin Pemberton and Val Watts

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk)
 4 members of public

PH/2024/012 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
 There were no apologies for absence.

PH/2024/013 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 Councillor Pemberton declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 4 (app 1) (PH/2024/015(1)) as a member of West Berkshire Council's Eastern Area Planning Committee.

PH/2024/014 MINUTES
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2024, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

PH/2024/015 PLANNING APPLICATIONS
 Committee considered the following planning applications:
4 members of public left the meeting at various stages during this agenda item:

Plan No.	Ward	Application No.	Location:	Proposal:
1	Thatcham West	24/00042/FULMAJ	Hambridge Lake Hambridge Road	Construction of 5 holiday chalets and clubhouse with access from Hambridge Road, parking, footpaths, fishing stations, bin / cycle stores and landscaping. RESOLVED: OBJECTⁱ
<i>Having declared an interest, Councillor Pemberton abstained from voting on the above application</i>				
2	Thatcham West	23/02624/HOUSE	3 Loundyes Close	Take down the side buildings, rebuild full height side and rear extension from SIPS with matching bricks to the front ground floor, and Hardie VL cladding to the rear and first floor. RESOLVED: OBJECT on grounds of overdevelopment, particularly in regard to extending to the boundary of neighbouring property at number 5, and lack of subserviency of extension

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PH/2024/015 PLANNING APPLICATIONS continued

Plan No.	Ward	Application No.	Location:	Proposal:
3	Thatcham Central	23/02807/FUL	28 Victor Road	<p>Construction of new 2 storey, 2-bedroom dwelling to the side of no. 28 Victor Road. Subdivision of plot by timber fencing, formation of new parking areas and dropped kerbs.</p> <p>RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION subject to careful consideration of overlooking of neighbouring properties and no concerns from Highways</p>
4	Thatcham Central	23/02954/LBC & 23/02953/FUL	18-21 Church Gate	<p>Internal and external alterations to The Grange including demolition of existing lean-to and installation of access ramp, installation of new railings onto existing boundary wall and retrospective works comprising erection of fencing, replacement timber staircase and timber infills at The Granary.</p> <p>RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION but high weight should be given to any concerns raised by Heritage</p>
5	Thatcham Central	24/00084/HOUSE	19 Hussars Drive	<p>Retrospective – application for a loft conversion including installation of 2 no. roof-lights to the front elevation & 4 no. roof-lights to the rear elevation, to form additional habitable space.</p> <p>RESOLVED: NO OBJECTION subject to consideration of overlooking of properties to the rear</p>

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PH/2024/015 PLANNING APPLICATIONS continued

Plan No.	Ward	Application No.	Location:	Proposal:
6	Midgham Adjacent Parish	23/02965/FULMAJ	Land East of Goddards Road and 2 Gables Way	<p>The proposed Development is a Logistics Hub comprising a three-storey block of approximately 7,800 square metres Gross Internal Area (GIA) accommodating offices, laboratories and associated ancillary uses; a yard; a garage and storage building; a single-storey gatehouse; and associated internal access roads, car and cycle parking, landscaping, lighting, drainage and boundary treatments.</p> <p>RESOLVED: SUPPORT the principle of the development but noting the comments of Midgham Parish Council, and suggest that the applicant considers reducing the height of the development, in particular the portico on top, and also subject to sufficient EV charging points. Thatcham Town Council would also like to request that the roof space be used for solar panels</p>

PH/2024/016

DECISION NOTICES

Members noted planning decisions published since the last meeting of this Committee.

PH/2024/017

WEST BERKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

At the last meeting (PH/2024/006b), Committee was advised that the West Berkshire Local Plan Inspector had published the report 'IN6: INSPECTOR'S MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS AND WRITTEN STATEMENTS' and the Chairman, Councillor Pike, had extracted the pertinent matters. Subsequently, at a meeting of Full Council on 29th January 2024 (FULL/2024/09), Council delegated authority to this Committee to prepare responses for submission in line with deadlines, being 16th February 2024 for matters 1 to 3, and 22nd March 2024 for matters 4 to 13. The Chairman presented a draft response to matters 1 to 3.

RESOLVED

to approve the draft response to matters 1 to 3 as presented, and approve its submission.

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PH/2024/018

PLANNING MATTERS

There were no planning matters arising since publication of the agenda.

PH/2024/019

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT / HIGHWAYS / ROAD SAFETY MATTERS

a) Closure of Thatcham Level Crossing

West Berkshire Council had advised that Thatcham Level Crossing would be closed between 00:55hrs on 20th February 2024 and 05:00hrs on 21st February 2024, between its junctions with Station Road and Rainsford Farm Mews, to enable Network Rail to carry out maintenance works on the level crossing. An alternative route was via Station Road, Bath Road, Brimpton Road, Crookham Common Road, Crookham Hill and vice versa. Blue light access would not be maintained.

b) Outstanding Highways Matters

There were no updates to report.

c) To receive any Traffic Management / Highways / Road Safety matters arising since publication of the agenda

i. Crookham Hill closure

West Berkshire Council had notified that Crookham Hill would be closed on 19th February 2024, between 09:30hrs and 15:30hrs, from its junction with Chamberhouse Mill Lane to close proximity to the property known as 'The Hay Barn', to enable Volker Highways to carry out permanent carriageway repairs on behalf of West Berkshire Council. A diversion would be signposted on site.

ii. Thatcham Footpath 20A

West Berkshire Council had advised that Thatcham Footpath 20A was currently closed between its junction with Station Road and its junction with Druce Way, to enable Scottish and Southern Power Distribution (SSEPD) to install low voltage cabling, and would reopen on 2nd March 2024. A diversion would be signposted on site.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:25hrs.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

124/00042/FULMAJ – Hambridge Lake objection

Primary reasons for objection:

Thatcham Town Council is concern at potential future change of use, notwithstanding the original intention as stated in the Design & Access Statement.

Thatcham Town Council strongly supports the policy DM2 in the draft Local Plan on Separation of Settlements around Newbury and Thatcham, and the Green Gaps between Thatcham and Newbury proposed in Figure 14 of the Appropriate Countryside Designation Study and shown on the Policies map. Policy DM2 states: "In order to prevent the coalescence of

Newbury and Thatcham and to maintain the separate identity of the distinct settlements around both towns, the following gaps between settlements have been identified and are outlined on the Policies Map:

- a. Land between Newbury and Donnington
- b. Land between Newbury and Enborne Row/Wash Water
- c. Land between Newbury and Thatcham
- d. Land between Thatcham and Cold Ash
- e. Land between Thatcham and Ashmore Green

Development which would detract from the open or rural character of these gaps will not be permitted. In these areas development will only be permitted where it:

- i. Would not diminish the clear physical and visual separation between distinct settlements; and
- ii. Would not compromise the integrity of the gap either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development.”

This proposed development is part of the land in the gap between Newbury and Thatcham. The draft Local Plan is at an advanced stage of preparation, and has already been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. We believe that a Planning Inspector would give Policy DM2 significant weight in any appeal, and West Berkshire Council should therefore give it significant weight in considering this planning application.

Thatcham Town Council believes that any development of the Hambridge Lakes site would compromise the integrity of the gap between Newbury and Thatcham. This integrity is compromised by the physical characteristics of the development, not the use to which it is put (or to which it is claimed it will be put in a planning application).

National Cycle Route NC4 passes along the footway on the east of Hambridge Road and the south of London Road, on the western and northern boundaries of the site. However, the design of the access to the site has not taken account of the need of cyclists to cross its entrance, where they would have priority (including all types of cycle described in Section 5 of DfT Local Transport Note LTN 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design).

In the appeal decision on a previous application in 2019, the Inspector gave significant weight to the impact of that development on users of National Cycle Route NC4. Therefore, this application cannot be approved on the basis of the currently proposed layout of the entrance from Hambridge Road.

However, if West Berkshire Council is minded to approve the application, then Thatcham Town Council requests that West Berkshire Council requires evidence of the viability of the lake as a fishing lake, including water quality under normal and extreme weather conditions, and including sewage.

Thatcham Town Council also requests the following conditions:

- A notwithstanding clause to restrict potential change of use
- That occupancy of the chalets be restricted to the fishing season
- That the Clubhouse remains as a clubhouse and for use only by occupants of the chalets
- That parking permits allocated to the chalets do not exceed the number of people staying on site