

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the
Planning and Highways Committee
held on Tuesday 25th April 2023 at 7pm
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Simon Pike (Chairman)
 Councillors Richard Crumly, Mark Lillycrop, David Lister and
 Keith Woodhams

In attendance: Trudy Blackney (Deputy Town Clerk)
 1 member of the press (Newbury Weekly News) (remotely - via Zoom)

PH/2023/064 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
 There were no apologies for absence received.

PH/2023/065 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 Councillors Pike, Lillycrop and Woodhams declared non-pecuniary
 interests in agenda item8(3) Planning Applications – 23/00817/FUL &
 23/00818/LBC The English Barn, as the applicant was known to them as
 a Liberal Democrat candidate in the imminent local council election.

PH/2023/066 MINUTES
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th April 2023, having been
 previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed as an
 accurate record.

PH/2023/067 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING
 Members noted that an update from the Inspector regarding the ongoing
 Lawrences Lane Inquiry APP/W0340/W/22/3292211 - 21/02112/FUL,
 Land at Lawrences Lane, Thatcham had been received. It advised final
 documentation from West Berkshire Council and the appellants had been
 received and a decision would be made in due course.

PH/2023/068 APPEAL APP/W0340/D23/3316594 THE LODGE, CROOKHAM
HOUSE, CROOKHAM HILL
 Members noted an appeal to the Secretary of State under Section 78 of
 the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against the decision of West
 Berkshire Council to refuse planning permission for the following
 application:
Site address: The Lodge, Crookham House, Crookham Hill, Crookham
 Common, Thatcham, West Berkshire, RG19 8DG
Proposal: Proposed extension to existing dwelling
Application reference: 22/02461/HOUSE
Appellant's name: Mr and Mrs Ian White
Appeal reference: APP/W0340/D/23/3316594
Appeal start date: 5th April 2023
 The appeal would be determined on the basis of written representations
 and would proceed under the Householder Appeals Service and there
 was no further opportunity to submit comments. Members were advised
 that, when considered by Committee at its meeting on the 1st November
 2022 (PH/2022/138(3)), members raised No Objections.

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PH/2023/069 NOTICE OF SUBMISSION OF THE WEST BERKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2022-2039 TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE (31 MARCH 2023)

Members noted that West Berkshire Council had submitted the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and discussed the process. Councillor Pike advised that an email received directing people to the website to review the documents which had been submitted by West Berkshire Council that some had not been available for the consultation, being the two appendices to the Icen report and that he would be bringing this to the attention to the person acting on behalf of the Inspector.

PH/2023/070 GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT FUND APPLICATION

Members were advised that the Great Western Railway had opened bidding for its Customer and Community Improvement Fund for the next financial year 2023/24, with a deadline of Thursday 25th May 2023. Members discussed possible applications for submission. Councillor Pike suggested resubmitting the previous year's bid for the Wayfinding Project from the Station to the Town Centre and Colthrop Estate. Due to the previous year's tight deadline the bid had been unsuccessful, however, it was felt the project had merit and costs could be developed further to resubmit a stronger bid. Councillor Pike advised he would develop the bid to bring back at the next meeting for the Committee to consider. to develop and refine last year's proposal and bring back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED

PH/2023/071 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members considered the following planning applications:

Plan No.	Ward	Application No.	Location:	Proposal:
1.	Thatcham Colthrop & Crookham	23/00683/HOUSE	8 Bolingbroke Way	Two-storey side extension and demolish garage RESOLVED: OBJECT on the following grounds ¹
2.	Thatcham Central	23/00653/HOUSE	11 Mallards Reach	Loft conversion with the addition of three rooflights to the rear roof slope and four rooflights to the front roof slope. RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS

¹ Thatcham Town Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- (i) The Council is unable to establish from the drawings provided the total number of bedrooms proposed for the property, and therefore whether the parking allocated is sufficient according to West Berkshire Council's parking policy.
- (ii) That the orange notice has not been displayed in a publicly accessible location.

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PH/2023/071 PLANNING APPLICATIONS continued

Plan No.	Ward	Application No.	Location:	Proposal:
2.	Thatcham Central	23/00653/HOUSE	11 Mallards Reach	Loft conversion with the addition of three rooflights to the rear roof slope and four rooflights to the front roof slope. RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS
3.	Thatcham North-East	23/00817/FUL 23/00818/LBC	The English Barn Chapel Street	Conversion of agricultural barn into residential accommodation. RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS on condition ²
4.	Thatcham North-East	23/00848/FUL	16 Chapel Street	Prior approval is sought to demolish No. 16 Chapel Street, end of terrace, two storey dwelling (following 23/00436/DEMO in which notice was given that prior approval is required). RESOLVED: OBJECT on the following grounds ³
5.	Thatcham West	23/00753/HOUSE	26 Roman Way	Side and Rear extension and alterations. RESOLVED: NO OBJECTIONS

² Thatcham Town Council has no objection in principle to the conversion to residential accommodation, however, considers the wall to the front boundary of the property at 2m high blocks the visually sensitive site in the centre of the town and requests the wall is not solid but has ironwork which matches the boundary to the property on the opposite side of the access road and to the side of the property.

³ Thatcham Town Council objects to the demolition of No 16 Chapel Street on the following grounds:

- (i) The cultural and historic nature of the property is right on the boundary of the conservation area and forms part of the setting of the boundary of the conservation area.
- (ii) Removing 1/3rd of the terrace of properties removes more than a 1/3rd of the character.
- (iii) The Council has concerns it would be impossible to restore the end wall to maintain the period appearance of the property.
- (iv) The Council regard the chimney to the property as part of the character of the site as well and needs to be retained.

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PH/2023/072

PLANNING MATTERS

a) 22/02945/REG4 – Francis Baily Primary School

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that an update to a planning application previously considered by the Committee on the 31st January 2023 (PH/2023/021(2)) had been received with new information, advising further comment could be made by 5th May 2023. Specifically, the Statement regarding the BREEAM Excellent and Zero Carbon. When previously considered, the Committee resolved to object to the application on the following grounds:

“Thatcham Town Council supports the replacement of the teaching block and the general design of the new building. However, the Council feels that it must object to the application as it stands, as there is insufficient information in the Design and Access Statement and Plan on the zero-carbon performance of the proposed new building. The Schools Output Specification that is referenced in the Design and Access Statement provides guidance on minimizing carbon footprint, but not any specific requirements. The Council would support approval of the application provided that this is subject to a condition that it has a zero-carbon performance in accordance with BREEAM Excellent building standards as described in the Regulation 19 Local Plan for non-residential buildings.”

Committee discussed the document provided ‘Statement regarding the BREEAM Excellent and Zero Carbon’ which indicated that funding provided by the Department for Education had to be based upon a project that showed value for money and did not allow for the additional costs associated with achieving a BREEAM Excellent rating. Committee expressed their disappointment around schools being put in this position when putting planning applications forward for new buildings and noted this was the second time the Town Council had been put in this invidious position. Committee requested that the Clerk write to Laura Farris MP advising of the impossible position the Town Council was being put in when invited to make comment.

RESOLVED

to (i) respond that the additional information had not provided the Town Council with the information it was seeking and therefore with great regret the Town Council had to maintain its original objection to the application, and (ii) that the Clerk to write to Laura Farris MP as outlined above.

b) The Plantation (Piggy Wood)

Councillor Pike advised of another planning application notified via the Town Council’s Hugo Fox Planning Tracker, which had been approved very quickly for tree work by the Tree Officer on The Plantation (Piggy Wood) whereby pruning would take place for large overhanging branches over neighbouring properties.

PH/2023/073

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT / HIGHWAYS / ROAD SAFETY MATTERS

a) Outstanding Highways Matters

- i. The Deputy Town Clerk provided Councillors with an overview of a meeting held with a West Berkshire Council Officer regarding the monitoring of highways matters and the issues experienced by the Town Council when cross referencing issues raised through West Berkshire Council’s ‘report a problem’ page on its website. It was noted that residents should be encouraged to use the ‘report a problem’ page directly as they would be able to monitor their own query rather than using the Town Council as an intermediary.

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PH/2023/073 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT / HIGHWAYS / ROAD SAFETY MATTERS
continued

- ii. Councillors reviewed the outstanding Highways matters report and were advised a new report was being developed for the next meeting of the Committee.

b) Crookham Hill, Thatcham

Members noted that Crookham Hill would be closed on Wednesday 3rd May 2023 between the hours of 9:30 to 15:30. The closure was from its junctions with Chamberhouse Mill Lane and Burys Bank Road. The closure was to enable Volker Highways to carry out highway improvements on behalf of West Berkshire Council. Resident access would be maintained throughout.

c) Footpath THAT/34/1 in Thatcham

Members noted that Footpath THAT/34/1 in Thatcham, would be closed on the 1st May to 1st November 2023, the closure would be between its junction with Lower Way to its junction with Footpath THAT/17/1. The diversion route was expected to be via Lower Way Footpath THAT/17/1, and vice versa. The purpose of the closure was for Persimmon Homes to erect 91 residential dwellings in close proximity. The diversion would be signed on site and blue light access would be permitted.

d) Traffic / highways / road safety matters arising since publication of the agenda.

i. Harts Hill Road

Members noted that Harts Hill Road Bucklebury to Thatcham would be closed from the 27th – 28th April 2023, from the hours of 9:30 – 15:30. The closure was from its junction from Floral Way to Broad Lane. The closure was to enable Volker Highways to carry out re-surface dressing as part of the highway's improvement programme on behalf of West Berkshire Council.

ii. Footpath between Bath Road at the junction with Northfield Road and Paynesdown Road

Councillor Pike advised that the footpath had been closed over the last bank holiday weekend for work on the gas main. As a public highway Councillor Pike notified West Berkshire Council who contacted the gas company to complete immediately and to restore access to the public highway.

iii. Inconsiderate parking – Henwick Lane and surrounding roads

A resident had contacted Councillor Pike to complain about the number of cars parked on Henwick Lane and surrounding roads for a recent event at Henwick Worthy Playing Field, this would normally be reported to the Recreation & Amenities Committee however the next meeting of that Committee had yet to be scheduled and advised that he would take up the scheduling issue with the Joint Management Committee.

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PH/2023/074

DECISION NOTICES

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

PH/2023/075

REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTEES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan Funding Committee & Thatcham Flood Forum

Councillor Lillycrop advised that the North-East Thatcham flood alleviation works were advancing, and that significant funding was in place. The remaining work required West Berkshire Council to select a convenient date for the public consultation for the proposed work at the Memorial Field, Thatcham.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:35pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____