
Warwick District Council Proposed Development Review Forum

15 October 2012

Item 1- Lower Heathcote, Warwick – Proposed mixed use development comprising housing, primary school, local centre, Park & Ride and employment uses

Chairman: Gary Stephens

Presenting item: Tony Bateman (Pegasus Planning)

Question and Answer Session

Question: Travel times from Warwick Gates to Leamington are a serious issue and dualling part of the road will not solve matters. There are local concerns relating to density and lack of amenities and services. The 5 year land supply issue is questioned. Why is all this development proposed to the south of Leamington? (Cllr Ann Mellor)

Answer: The impact of housing on services will be the same wherever it is proposed in the District. We have tried to make clear which parts of the development are included within the Local Plan Preferred Options, and these sites are considered to be the best to deliver housing in the District. The housing figures quoted were from a recent report presented to Planning Committee by officers. To deal with the transport implications, we have been working with the WCC Paramics model and have also carried out modelling work on junctions. The planned improvements and signalisation of junctions should ease capacity issues. WCC have required that the section of road be duelled to avoid prejudicing future improvement works in the immediate area.

Question: Why is development proposed on the flood plain? (Cllr Bob Dhillon)

Answer: There is no development proposed on the flood plain. Only public open space is planned adjacent to the watercourse to the south.

Question: The provision of a primary school will please residents of Warwick Gates. Where will contributions towards secondary school provision be allocated? Access to Champion School is via Whitnash where there is limited road capacity and limited cycle routes, whereas Myton School will have different issues. (Cllr Judy Falp)

Answer: We would like WCC to decide where this would be best spent.

Question: Is the housing proposed instead of or in addition to the Preferred Options in the Local Plan? (Cllr Richard Brookes)

Answer: Two sites are within the Preferred Options, one is not. We consider the site which is not a Preferred Option would be preferable to develop than other Preferred Options within the Green Belt.

Question: Europa Way is a flood risk zone. The NPPF guides development away from such areas and requires development to take into account climate change and implications for flooding elsewhere. What alleviation is proposed to limit run-off? (Cllr Linda Bromley)

Answer: No building is proposed within the Flood Zone. As agreed with the Environment Agency, it is proposed to limit run off rates to the Greenfield rate and will seek to provide a betterment. Surface water can be stored within the drainage infrastructure on throughout the site and within built in storage capacity.

Question: Will the traffic signals link to the Sainsbury's and Morrison's junctions? (Cllr Alan Boad)

Answer: The purpose of the Paramics model being used is to take into account the wider implications of the development for other junctions, so this will be taken into account, as well as the implications for the phasing of development.

Question: Will the open space at the south of the site be transferred to WDC? (Cllr Alan Boad)

We will offer the space to WDC and the local Parish Council. If this offer is not taken up then a management company would be appointed to run the space.

Question: Will there be any contribution made towards the operation of the Park & Ride? (Cllr Alan Boad)

We will ensure there is suitable bus penetration through the site and it is intended to implement a bus loop with stops linked to the school and employment sites.

Question: Which sites are in the Local Plan Preferred Options? (Cllr Ann Mellor)

Answer: The areas of land to the north-east and the north-west.

Question: Will the houses front the main routes through the site or back onto them? (Cllr George Illingworth)

Answer: In terms of urban design it is better for the houses to front the road. This can be achieved by accessing the houses off private drives accessed off the main road. There will be a 40mph speed limit and sufficient parking for houses to ensure the main routes through is not blocked. This will be essential in order for the bus routes to operate adequately.

Question: What will be the density of the housing development? (Cllr Linda Bromley)

Answer: About 30 dwellings per hectare.

Question: The allocation of land within the site is questioned, with new employment uses adjacent to existing ones at the Technology Park and Warwick Gates. There are many distribution uses nearby. There is concern that employment uses are proposed next to housing, and there may be a need for more green space. What are you doing to address the issue of heavy traffic on the proposed housing? (Cllr Copping)

Answer: The proposed employment uses are B1a (offices) and B1b (research and development) uses, not B2 (general industrial). We would be willing to remove the proposed employment land if that is what is wanted. It is noted that there is not a high demand for employment land generally, so that is why the proposed employment land is located adjacent to the existing areas adjacent where there is high demand.

Question: The timing of the consultation seems closely related to the consideration of the Preferred Options. What is the position of the 5 year housing supply? (Cllr Sean Deely)

Answer: We do not have a 5 year supply. The latest figures show there are 1200 dwellings either with planning permission or committed sites. (Gary Stephens)

Question: How many houses are proposed, and how quickly could these be delivered? (Cllr George Illingworth)

Answer: Approximately 1300 dwellings. The site would be sold to developers to construct the scheme. The development easily split into three sites, which could result in three separate developers offering three different products. Typically 50 houses per year are achievable, and if three developers are involved then the site would not be likely to deliver all the dwellings in a 5 year period. However, what is proposed is a comprehensive solution to meeting part of the housing demand.

Question: How will the major road improvements be phased? (Cllr George Illingworth)

Answer: WCC as the Highways Authority will advise of the necessary triggers based on the modelling works that are carried out.

Question: Could the infrastructure improvements be implemented prior to the development being carried out? (Cllr Ann Mellor)

Answer: This would be preferred but the improvements are to be privately funded by the development, therefore it would not be possible.

Question: Has the impact on traffic pinch points in Warwick been considered (Gallows Hill and River Avon Bridge)? (Cllr Linda Bromley)

Answer: The transport modelling exercise has not progressed that far yet but comments are noted.

Question: How will the loss of this grade 2 agricultural land be assessed against the other planning considerations? (Cllr Ray Bullen)

Answer: The NPPF requires the consideration of all matters to be made on balance. It is considered that all the relevant matters can be addressed. The loss of agricultural land is one element of this balancing exercise. The Environmental Statement to be submitted with the application will weigh up these impacts. Housing need will be weighed against the environmental impact of the scheme.

Question: Infrastructure improvements are required before the development commences. (Cllr Bob Dhillon)

Answer: Private developments such as this are reasonably required to provide the infrastructure required by the development. The housing needs to be sold to finance the infrastructure improvements.

Item 2- Warwick Police Station, Warwick – Proposed medical centre

Chairman: Gary Stephens

Presenting item: Geoff Simm (Brackley Investments)

Andy Marshall (Brackley Investments)

Martin Wilson (Thomas Wilson Architects)

Question and Answer Session

Question: The site is opposite the listed Francis Smith building therefore the proposed development will have to meet the same standard. How many parking spaces are proposed? Will there be 24hour dispensing? (Cllr Linda Bromley)

Answer: Currently there are about 38 spaces, whilst 40 are proposed therefore the provision will be similar to the existing. Lack of parking is an issue for the doctor's current practises, therefore the objective will be to maximise parking without extending the current site boundary. A 24 hour pharmacy is not envisaged but this will be discussed with the PCT. The dispensing service will be likely to operate under the same hours as the practise.

Question: A 24 hour pharmacy was refused at Priory Road and Warwick chemists will suffer from any increased competition. (Cllr Bob Dhillon)

Answer: We were not involved in the Priory Road site. Planning Committee would have the option of restricting the opening hours of the proposal. A dispensary is proposed, not a pharmacy selling other retail items. There is no intention to apply for a general A1 retail use. 100 hours contracts are no longer available.

Question: Will the proposal carry out minor operations to alleviate pressure on the hospital, and will there be ambulance parking bays? (Cllr Anne Mellor)

Answer: There will be a minor procedures suite but no general anaesthesia is proposed. The PCT is looking at bringing minor procedures out of hospitals and this development will facilitate that by providing services close to the patient and their GP.

Question: The quality of the design as a medical centre will be of utmost importance. Is this site able to address the mobility issues of its users? (Cllr George Illingworth)

Answer: There are strict guidelines which will be followed for access to and within the site and building. A full topographic survey has yet to be carried out, and this will inform the detailed site design.

Question: The boundary of the site with Priory Park is as currently set out. (Cllr Linda Bromley)

Answer: There are no proposals to extend the current boundary of the site into the Park. When the site was marketed by the Police there was an option to purchase more land within the Park.

Question: Is the proposed parking for customers or staff? How many staff are proposed? (Cllr Dave Bush)

Answer: There will be staff parking for essential users only, with a possibility of barriers within the site to protect this. The number of staff is not currently known, but the shift patterns will be an important aspect of calculating the need. We have considered providing staff with season tickets for public car parks. The management of onsite parking will be considered to prevent users leaving their cars whilst shopping in town.

Question: What will you do to address parking? (Cllr Bob Dhillon)

Answer: We will consider providing a park and ride service for staff or customers to St Mary's Lands. The objective will be to maximise the use of the spaces by customers. Staff will be encouraged to cycle to work by the provision of showers and lockers for instance.