

PLANNING REF : 241861
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Sideways
: Sideways Church Lane, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berkshire
: RG7 1HD
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Darrell E A Lias
DATE SUBMITTED : 30/12/2024

COMMENTS:

OBJECTION TO APPLICATION 241861

This application has been re-opened for comments after the addition of 11 documents to the original. The 21-day consultation window is hugely compromised by the Christmas and New Year period and not least by the lack of visibility of the Portal of 'Response To Shinfield Parish Council Consultation Comments V3' until December 15/16th.

Some challenging comments in the original consultation have been addressed, which should be encouraging.

Unfortunately, others have been noted but have been deferred to follow-up planning stages where public scrutiny is less focussed e.g. unilateral delay in agreed triggers with no public consultation.

A plethora of comments have been summarily dismissed, primarily but not exclusively, the extensive objection by Shinfield Parish Council.

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KEY CHANGES PRIOR TO THE CURRENT CONSULTATION

The Northern parcel of land was refused by WBC and has subsequently been sold at auction by the developers. There is a statement that the use of this land for a future expansion to a two-form entry school was always in doubt due to the lapsing of the time period for its purchase, however this stretches credulity had it been acquired with the Southern parcel as intended in the original agreement.

This pre-emptive action has effectively broken the legal commitments entered into by the signing of the South of M4 SDL: Deed of Planning Obligation in relation to development at Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross (application references 0/2013/0346 and F/2013/0347) on 22nd July 2014.

There is a reference made that the right to acquire this plot expired after two years, but this was specifically about fixing the purchase price and the rights of acquisition extended to the tenth anniversary, as did the Southern parcel of land. This is a betrayal of the residents in the South of M4 SDL and of Swallowfield residents whose nearest schools are in Shinfield parish.

Despite the approval of 1808 dwellings since 2013* (992 in Spencers Wood, 693 in Three Mile Cross and 123 in Swallowfield) against the original 900 target agreed within the South of M4 SDL (N.B. this is

over +100% overbuild of the original target), the construction of the 1 to 3 form entry Spencers Wood Primary School has not materialised and now that the Northern parcel of land has been lost, the originally intended outcome has been lost. *The 272 dwellings at Mitford Fields pre-date this but were explicitly included in the SDL tally.

To put this in context, it should also be noted that house building with the South of M4 SDL is far from complete:

Firstly, the 191 dwellings at North of Arborfield Road are now in the formal Planning Approval process (242484).

Secondly, the two prospective sites on Hyde End Road, totalling 175 dwellings within the 2024 LPU submission, but now quoted by the developers as "up to 200" are due for application in early 2025.

These two developments are closest to the existing Shinfield Primary Schools, potentially blocking more places for residents in Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross and Swallowfield.

Indeed, the 148 dwellings proposed, and previously refused, for north of Church Lane, have now gone to appeal (Appeal ref: 3354607 (Application: 233038)). Whilst the outcome of that decision will not be known until later in 2025, if approved it will add to the existing education places issue and have a direct impact on the Spencers Wood Primary School.

Finally, there are 500 dwellings proposed (Screening Applications 241261 / 214514) at Body's Farm south of Spencers Wood which the developers (Richborough) continue to pursue. The plans include relocation of Lambs Lane Primary School to a new two-form entry Primary School, but even if eventually successful, the overall nett provision of Primary School Places will be neutral.

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P5937J3010 SPENCERS WOOD DRAINAGE REPORT REV 03 AND DRAINAGE OVERVIEW
NOTE

This includes the statement (item 6.1.2) "It is assumed that the surface water runoff from the site currently discharges into the sewers in the street or infiltrates into the ground."

It could be read into this that the author has never been to the site to see the drainage ditches alongside Hyde End Lane (eastern boundary) and Ryeish Lane (northern boundary of the two parcel site) when heavy rain overflows the ditches as surface water run-off from the site

exceeds the their permeability capacity and floods the roads. This is not least because the site surface level is up to 1.5 metres above the roads.

There is anecdotal evidence that gardens to the west of the site are occasionally flooded in times of heavy and persistent rain. No mention is made of this in either document.

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P5937J3010 - SPENCERS WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL - TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL NOTE 20-09-24

The document states (item 2.3 and 2.5) that Fullbrook Avenue is a

mph zone but that is not correct - there were/are developer 10mph signs, but it has never been 20mph and there are no signs to this effect anywhere along its length.

It does nothing to address the single convoluted entrance (c.f. the suggested one-way loop with IN and OUT connections to Fullbrook Avenue, and despite Chris Howard expressly requesting a swept path analysis for a refuse vehicle entering and leaving the site in forward gear, the current swept path drawing on the front page, continues to show for a refuse vehicle having to reverse into the site (this is similarly shown in Appendix D). Admittedly, Figure 4.2 does include a small diagram of a Refuse Vehicle performing a reversing manoeuvre within the kidney shaped area of the site. Item 3.1 states that the development could be extended to two form entry in the future, which the disposal of the Northern land parcel has now prevented.

It shows staff cycle park (10 spaces) as covered, but not the two areas for pupil cycles/scooters (72 spaces). This needs to be addressed - but in the Highways section of the Consultation Responses there is a commitment to do this.

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ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

This document merely states that future discussions with contractors will follow the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), and particularly Action 6.5, but there is no addressing of specific issues raised in the Shinfield Parish Council objection, although the provision of EV charging is confirmed elsewhere.

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CONSULTATION RESPONSES ACTION LOG

The Consultation Responses Action Log provides some useful information, but a lot of "deferred until detailed application" and "expect to be covered in Conditions" notes.

The WBC Landscape input has creative suggestions e.g SUD's and rainwater usage, but these are in most part dismissed, which is extremely disappointing.

The first comment on the gap between the eastern boundary and the Hyde End Lane footpath has been answered as if it were the western boundary adjacent the residential development.

In the WBC Highways section, it is very pleasing that the issue of covering the 72 children's cycle/scooter parking has been raised and a commitment to provide this has been given.

In the WBC Drainage section, it is disconcerting that the comments on the discrepancy between run-off rates are unanswered.

In the RFBR section, it is disappointing that no reference has been made to access to the north side of the building e.g. embedded fire road from Staff Parking spaces 12 and 13 across the play area adjacent to the building. This would give secure Blue Light vehicular access in an emergency.

The Thames Valley Police comments are wholeheartedly supported in

this objection.

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1201 SWP_RSS_00_GF_DR_A_1201_D08 PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Site Roof Plan now shows all roof areas as "Single Ply Membrane Roof" - and no explanation of practical measures for reducing sound echoing into the rooms beneath in deluge rain conditions similar to those experienced in the locality during 2024. This is not a new phenomena and has been at least an annual event since at least October 2000.

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RESPONSE TO SHINFIELD PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION COMMENTS V3

This entire response is based on ignoring the history of the failure to meet agreed trigger points that were legally signed off in South of M4 SDL: Deed of Planning Obligation in relation to development at Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross (application references 0/2013/0346 and F/2013/0347) on 22nd July 2014.

The justification appears to be because remedying these omissions would potentially disadvantage schools that were expanded in other areas, whilst the South of M4 SDL was being deprived of infrastructure to which it was promised. This over a period when the actual dwelling numbers have doubled against the 2014 target and yet the continued failure to support the South of M4 SDL is seen as a success. This is a total disservice to the residents.

The 'Wokingham Borough Council Primary School Places Strategy 2018 to 2028' recognised the issues in Shinfield, but six years later the position remains unaddressed.

Regarding the two SEN classrooms, clarified as 14 ambulant SEND children (ASD/SEMH), conversations with current SEN teachers at several locations have confirmed that whilst integration of SEN pupils with the general school population is encouraged; the ASD/SEMH mixing can be catastrophic due to their challenging needs/behaviours and they confirmed that it makes no sense to have the two SEN resource rooms and the two SEN Therapy/MI rooms on the first floor well away from the SEN classrooms and requiring the use of stairs plus corridors past classrooms.

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In summary, this objection is against the application as presented and the decision within it to return the Northern parcel of the site to the developers. It is my belief that the proposal is in dereliction of legal commitments made regarding the South of M4 SDL. Whilst it does cover the option to build a one-for entry Primary School, it is couched in such a way that the school may never materialise and the children of Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross and Swallowfield will continue to be disadvantaged through lack of local choice, tortuous journeys to distant schools and the penalties that imposes in terms of life opportunities in after-school activities both local and distal.