DOCUMENTS FOR SCANNING

- ☐ Decision Notice
- ☐ Application Form
- ☐ Officer Report
- ☐ Conditions
- ☐ Plans
- ☑ Other
- ☐ Confidential

APPLICATION NUMBER: 0/2000/1864

SITE ADDRESS:

1864

48631

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Email. Anna.Cronin@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 11 October 2001
My ref. AC/SB/O/2000/1864
Your ref.

Mr G Nicholls
23 Tyler Drive
ARBORFIELD
Berkshire

Environmental Services Department
Planning Services
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Dear Mr Nicholls

BADGERS MOUNT DEVELOPMENT AND FOOTPATH TO ARBORFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Thank you for your e-mail to Jane Earl on 28 September which has been forwarded to me for a co-ordinated response from the relevant Council departments.

Badgers Mount, Arborfield

As part of the planning conditions for the above development a landscaping scheme for the whole of the development was approved. The planting in the public open space area was very minimal with the majority being laid to grass.

The area where the open space is now located was formerly used as a landfill site and I believe that the planting would have been limited in this area to prevent any breach in the cap to the landfill by tree roots etc. The planning conditions strictly dictated the remediation of the landfill area and its future monitoring.

Therefore I can confirm that the landscaping planting plan has been implemented.

The open space land is still currently owned by Persimmon Homes. An agreement was signed at the time of the planning permission which agreed that the land would be transferred to the District Council. The agreement also determined how this would take place:

In summary:

- The landscape works would be undertaken in accordance with the planning permission.
- Once these had been completed Persimmon Homes needed to inform the District Council.
- The District Council would confirm that the works had been completed satisfactorily prior to a 24 months maintenance period commencing. (The maintenance period is when the developers maintain the open space - cut grass, prune shrubs and trees etc in order to let it get established).
- At the end of this period the site is inspected again by the District Council to ensure that any problems are rectified eg. dead plants replaced.
- Transfer of the land to the District Council takes place.

The agreement requires a number of payments to be made to the District Council at the time of the transfer. These include a maintenance sum to assist with the future maintenance of the open space and a capital sum for the provision of a play area.

Mr G Nicholls

11 October 2001

Current situation

The District Council contacted Persimmon Homes a number of times when the development was first completed to initiate the above process. Eventually site visits took place to inspect the landscaping works. Despite the planting being complete a number of works were still outstanding. This included works to the woodland areas and to the ditches surrounding the site. The outstanding works were agreed and Persimmons undertook to contact the Council once they were completed so that a completion certificate could be issued and the maintenance period commenced.

Despite a number of reminders these outstanding works have not yet been undertaken for a number of reasons including a change in personnel, problems with contractors etc. Lisa Jarvis in the Council's Leisure Department spoke to them again on 3 October and has been told the work has been ordered and will be undertaken shortly.

We are conscious that these delays also prevent the installation of the play area. We have investigated, but have been advised by our Legal Services Department that we need to wait until all the land has been transferred to the District Council before the play area can be installed. I can confirm that the funding for the play area has not yet been received by the District Council.

We are committed to keeping up the pressure on Persimmons, and hope the matter will be resolved as soon as possible. If you have any further queries regarding this please contact Lisa Jarvis on (0118) 974 6255.

Arborfield Junior School

I have been advised by Wendy Smith, Home to School Transport officer in the Education Department, that until the summer of 2000, the Garrison organised a bus for pupils attending the Arborfield schools and Farley Hill. This arrangement had been set up by the former Berkshire County Council. Parents paid a nominal amount and the contract was heavily subsidised by Wokingham District Council (WDC). No subsidy was provided by the Garrison.

In 2000 the operator terminated the contract and a new contract was investigated by the Garrison. The cost was much higher and the Garrison asked WDC to increase the subsidy provided.

This arrangement was outside the remit of the Council's home to school transport policy and therefore the subsidy was not increased. The Garrison therefore cancelled the contract and it ended in July 2000.

The criteria for entitlement to free school transport is that the child must live more than two miles safe walking distance from the designated school (for under 8's) and more than three miles safe walking distance from the designated school (for 8 - 16 year olds). The Education Department wrote to the parents concerned at the time inviting them to apply for school transport if they felt they were eligible, or to appeal for transport if they felt that there were special circumstances to be taken into consideration.

The Council has limited funds available to support non-commercial bus services, and this is fully committed. We do not have any spare funding to support additional services. The Council has already had to find funding to provide Arborfield with a regular bus to Reading and Wokingham (the Thames Travel 144) since the Tillingbourne bus company folded without warning on

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19 March 2001. Without the Council's financial support there would be no buses at all in Arborfield village or the Garrison.

You point out the potential increase in children in the area, and in fact the Council has made additional developments in the area dependent on developer contributions towards public transport improvements. We hope to take this opportunity to improve the current bus service and would consider timing additional journeys to help children travelling between the Garrison and the schools.

Even with services in place, there is a severe shortage of bus drivers in the south-east of England and particularly in this area. This means that bus companies can be reluctant to take on additional work.

Footpath 14

Footpath 14 (part) was legally extinguished on 9 December 1959 under the Town & Country Planning Act 1947 and in accordance with the legislation laid down in that Act. At that time Arborfield Parish Council, would have been aware that the development of the area was to take place but raised no objection to the extinguishment of part of Footpath 14 or to seek a diversion to Link Way. Thus the footpath is a "dead end".

There is no duty on the Highway Authority to reinstate a footpath that has been legally extinguished. We will, however, be continuing to seek a permissive path to form a through route from some point along the existing Footpath 14 to School Road to a point somewhere in the location of Wood Lane. This will improve the Public Rights of Way network within the District, linking the parishes of Swallowfield, Finchampstead, Barkham and Arborfield, so that local people who enjoy walking the countryside will be able to use a circular network of paths, bridleways and byways. If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact Graham Barnwell in the Highways Department on (0118) 974 6333.

Safe Routes to School

In October 2000 Wokingham District Council committed £82,000 towards works to introduce a safer routes to schools scheme for The Coombes, Arborfield & Newland and Barkham schools.

The measures for the scheme were introduced after consultation with residents and parents and were designed using feedback from parents and pupils of both schools. The scheme has recently been completed and will continue to be monitored. If you require any further information regarding this scheme, please contact Kate Fuller on (0118) 974 6304.

I hope this helps to answer your questions, and to reassure you that these are all issues which the Council is taking seriously.

Yours sincerely



ANNA CRONIN
Head of Planning & Transportation

REPLY REQUIRED 12/10 4863/

Sandra Bayden

From: Anna Cronin
Sent: 01 October 2001 11:24
To: Sandra Bayden
Subject: FW: Badgers Mount Devlopment and Footpath to Arborfield Junior school

There's a host of issues in this email, some of which are planning and some aren't. Could you coordinate a reply please. Mike Evans, Roland and Tom will either have contributions or be able to tell you who is involved. Thanks.

Anna
-----Original Message-----
From: Jane Earl
Sent: 28 September 2001 11:36
To: Anna Cronin; Wendy Smith
Subject: FW: Badgers Mount Devlopment and Footpath to Arborfield Junior school

Please deal with the issues raised and reply directly to Mr Nicholls.

Many thanks.

Jane Earl
-----Original Message-----
From: Gary Nicholls [SMTP:nichollsgary@hotmail.com]
Sent: 28 September 2001 09:19
To: jane.earl@wokingham.gov.uk
Subject: Badgers Mount Devlopment and Footpath to Arborfield Junior school

For the attention of Jane Earl.

Please could you direct the issues below to the appropriate officer.

My name is Gary Nicholls I am a resident at Badgers Mount , 23 Tyler Drive Arborfield, and am also a Govenor at the Arborfield Junior school. I have a couple of issues I would like dealt with please.

1. Relating to Badgers Mount the sum of £50,000 was given to WDC by Persimmon homes for the erection of a childrens play area. We were told quite specifically by Persimmon that this was included in the development plan and would be completed after the site was finished and landscaping complete. The site has long been finished but still no play area. My questions are . Has the landscaping finished? When will the Play area be complete? Is there any reason why WDC should be holding this money back.

2. As a parent and Govenor at the Arborfield Junior school I am alarmed at the recent actions taken by WDC to "solve" the school transport problem. With the increase in potential children going to both the Coombes and Junior school via the new housing developments in Arborfield, the BUS service has been cut , parking restrictions applied to the surrounding area , How should parents get their children to school safely? To promote"Green" issues we have tried to encourage Walking , however from Tyler Drive this takes some 35 to 40 minutes due to the indirect way in which the route has to take.

Are any arrangements being made to provide a bus service?

There is a footpath (14) from Langley Common Road direct to the school which is unusable to it being overgrown and terminates at the Link. I understand that an a joining landowner has erected something blocking access to the **public** footpath.

Clearly parents and children should have "Safe" routes to school , this has not been provided by WDC. What actions are being taken to resolve this issue now and for the future when these schools will have a higher intake?

I look forward to your replies,

Many thanks

Gary Nicholls

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