**APPENDIX 1.**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held at 7:30 pm on Monday 6th November 2023, in the Council Chamber, Newbury Town Council, Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury.**

**Present:** Councillors Phil Barnett, Vera Barnett, Nigel Foot, Jayne French-Drayton (substitute) David Harman, Roger Hunneman, Pam Lusby-Taylor (substitute), David Marsh, Vaughan Miller, Andy Moore (Chairman) and Tony Vickers.

**In Attendance**

Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive Officer

1. **Apologies**

Apologies received from Councillors Sam Dibas, Jo Day and Ian Jee.

1. **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

The CEO declared that Councillors Phil Barnett, Nigel Foot, David Marsh and Tony Vickers are also Members of West Berkshire Council, which is declared as a general interest on their behalf and a dispensation is in place to allow them to partake in discussions relating to West Berkshire Council business.

Councillor Tony Vickers declared an interest in item 7, West Berkshire Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan, as he was a member of the Public Access Forum.

1. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee held on Monday 9th October 2023**

Minute No. 63. Sandleford Park East was amended to read:

• Water: progressing arrangements with ~~SSE~~ Thames Water.

**Proposed:** Councillor David Harman,

**Seconded:** Councillor Vaughan Miller

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2023, as amended above, be approved and signed by the Chairperson.

1. **Actions from previous meetings**
2. The CEO reported that all the consultation responses made at the last meeting had been sent to the Planning authority.
3. The Section 215 list was sent to the planning authority for action. A Letter was sent to the owner of 41, Cheap street, but no reply received.
4. The CEO wrote to WBC re Echo Circle, no response received.
5. The CEO wrote to WBC re cancellation of WAP and received the following response:

*The meeting was cancelled in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman because there was a single item for the agenda, late highways comments having been received regarding the above application. The application remains under consideration at this present time.*

*In the normal course of business it is inevitable that some items will not be able to be brought forward to the agenda, and while officers do their best to ensure that the items are confirmed by the time that the site visit invitations are sent out, sometimes matters beyond our control intervene to impose delays.*

1. The Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group planned for 26th October had been deferred until 8th November.
2. **Questions from members of the public**

There were no questions or petitions from members of the public.

1. **Members’ Questions and Petitions**

Question received from Councillor Meg Thomas:

*I've been contacted by two families in Villiers Walk. RG146SJ. This was walk has no allocated parking spaces and therefore they have to park on the road, Villiers Way. The number of houses that use the road for parking, means that parking is extremely limited, which is problematic especially when considering the supermarket shop, elderly relatives and young children.*

*Last year two of the parking spaces were taken away due to the owners of 16, Villiers Way extending their drop curb. The residents could not stop this happening as they were only aware when the work started, having not been consulted. Similarly, yesterday work men turned up to take yet another of the parking spaces for the bus stop (which has been there for years without any problems).*

*The estate was not built taking into consideration the numbers of cars that would be on the roads today. Within Wash Common there are several walks which do not have drives and cannot change their front gardens into drives. Every walk way apart from Villiers Walk has additional parking facilities to allow the residents to park safely. They feel that the council is not taking this into consideration when they are taking parking spaces away on the road. There are 5, 3-bedroom houses that have to use the road for parking. They have garages in a block around the corner but these are too small to fit modern cars into and it is a decent walk from the homes which is not practical.*

*So my question is two pronged:*

1. *If the Town Council could ask the W Berks Council Officers to ensure that the residents of Villiers Walk are consulted when changes to parking are planned and*
2. *that there is allocated parking for these residents?*

The Chairman requested the CEO to refer this matter to the Highways Authority.

1. **Planning Application** [**23/02094**](http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=23/02094/FULMAJ) **- The Mall, The Kennet Centre Newbury, for Lochailort Newbury Ltd.**

The Chairman invited Hugo Haig, Managing Director and Sarah Ballantyne-Way, Planning Director, from Lochailort to address the meeting.

Mr Haig told the meeting that all elements of the Kennet Centre redevelopment had been agreed with the planning authority, except for the height of the proposed development. He then answered members’ questions regarding the proportion of residential development, the mix of housing to be provided and the economics of the proposed development.

Mr. David Peacock made a presentation on behalf of the Newbury Society. He told the meeting that the Society was not opposed to the redevelopment of the Kennet Centre but that they did oppose the scale and mass of this proposal. He pointed out that within a conservation area new development should “ … preserve and enhance the conservation area”. He also referred to historic England guidance which said that meaningful public benefits would be needed in order to outweigh any potential damage caused to a conservation area.

The Society queried the number of parking spaces to be provided, having regard to the increased number of residential units in the proposed redevelopment.

Doctor Peacock said that the Society had organised a petition which had already collected 992 signatures although he was unable to give any information regarding the demographics of these signatories.

Mr. Anthony Pick, Chairman of the Council’s Heritage Working Group, presented the recommendations of the Working Group.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Jayne French-Drayton

**Resolved:** that the Council objects to the proposed re-development on the following grounds:

1. It is out of scale with the character and scale of the Newbury Town Centre Conservation area.

2. It does not preserve or enhance the listed buildings in its vicinity

3. It fails to meet the criteria required regarding public benefits ( see Historic England guidance)

1. **West Berkshire Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

Ms. Elaine Cox, Senior Rights of Way Officer, West Berkshire Council, presented the WBC consultation on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan. She told the meeting that the draft Improvement Plan set out actions and targets for WBC. The Council also hoped to harness community efforts to achieve these actions and targets. It was intended to work more closely with other WBC teams and with parish councils throughout the district.

The Committee agreed that this matter should be put on the agenda for a future meeting for members to identify potential and existing public rights of way and actions which might be taken to enhance these.

Members were invited to respond individually to the consultation if they so wished. The meeting thanked Miss Cox for the useful and informative presentation.

1. **Schedule of Planning Applications**

Resolved that the responses recorded at Appendix 1.2 to these minutes be submitted to the Planning Authority.

1. **Update from The** **Western Area Planning Committee**

There was no meeting of WAP since the last meeting of the committee.

1. **The Town Centre (Masterplan) Steering Group**

The meeting received a report from Councillor Andy Moore, Chairman of the Steering group, on the meeting that took place on 30th October 2023.

Councillor Moore said that the Steering Group was focusing on plans for improving the area around the Wharf. This included negotiations around land transfers to Newbury Town Council. This would require West Berkshire council to bring the land to a standard suitable for transfer before the Town Council assumed this responsibility. The CEO was requested to seek compensation towards the longer-term maintenance.

Pedestrianisation of the town centre was also discussed and the District Council is encouraging public engagement in this matter.

1. **Review of Key Performance Indicators for the Planning and Highways Committee**

The meeting noted the KPI’s for the Committee.

1. **Town Council Strategy 2024-2028**

This matter was deferred to the December meeting of the committee.

1. **Planning & Highways Committee Budget 2024-25**

The Committee received a draft budget, based on income and expenditure for 2023-24.

**Proposed:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor David Marsh

**Resolved:** To recommend the Committee’s budget to the Policy and Resources for inclusion in the 2024-25 budget.

1. **Forward Work Programme for Planning & Highways Committee**

Minute No. 79: Public Rights of Way: on for future reference.

Minute No. 84: Town Council Strategy 2024-2028- for meeting on 4th December.

**There being no other business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed**

**at 9.54 pm**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Chairman