**WATLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**Notes of the meeting with Archstone/Bloor Homes on 22nd January 2018.**

Present:

Jonathan Porter (Archstone), David Joseph (Bloor Homes), James Bonner (Barton Wilmore), Jacques Toerien (Barton Wilmore)

Watlington Parish Council: Tom Bindoff, Ian Hill, Terry Jackson, Matt Reid, Tony Williamson

WNDP Coordination Group: Gill Bindoff, Pauline Harvey, Keith Jackson, Tony Powell, Peter Richardson

The purpose of the meeting was to give the Parish Council and the WNDP Coordination Group the opportunity to see draft amendments to the plans for WNDP Site A between Britwell Road and Cuxham Road. Amendments are being made to take into account comments on planning application P17/S3231/O from OCC, SODC, the Parish Council and the WNDP team. The meeting was held ‘without prejudice’ to future decisions on the planning application and there were opportunities to ask questions and make comments.

1. **Update on progress of the WNDP:**
	1. The SODC consultation on the submitted Plan is nearing the end. The closing time/date is 12 midnight on Sunday 28th January.
	2. No information has been received about comments on the Plan. It is expected that these will be published by SODC following the close of the consultation.
	3. Andrew Ashcroft has been appointed by SODC to examine the Plan. He has already visited Watlington and has had the opportunity to see the WNDP documents.
	4. There is no information at this stage about whether the Examiner will decide to hold a hearing in public. This will be determined at a later stage.
	5. It is hoped to be able to hold the Referendum in April or May.
	6. A Drop-In event is being held in Watlington on 3rd February 2018 to present the content of the Watlington Traffic Management Plan prepared by Mode Transport Planning and to bring local residents up to date with progress towards the re-alignment of the B4009.
2. **Key points considered in developing amended planning proposals:**
	1. Highways issues raised by Oxfordshire County Council
	2. Location of a green space/ recreation area on the side of the main route through the development (the re-aligned B4009) which was opposite to the main areas of housing
	3. The absence of a green space near the centre of the development
	4. The proximity of new housing to the main route through the development
	5. Noise and disturbance issues raised by businesses on the Cuxham Road Industrial Estate.
3. **Highways:**
	1. Initial advice from OCC had changed. It is no longer proposed to provide vehicular access to the site from the roundabout on Cuxham Road. This route will provide access to the proposed employment provision on the site but not to any housing. It will be used as a cycling and pedestrian route into the town.
	2. Proposed works at Pyrton Lane and at Britwell Road near The Goggs have now been deleted in accordance with revised OCC advice.
	3. The design of the junction with Britwell Road has been changed to a ‘T’ junction. This is a temporary design to be used until the full route of the re-aligned B4009 is in place. At that stage the design of the Britwell Road junction will revert to the original design which will take through traffic away from the town centre.
	4. The route of the re-aligned B4009 is now closer to the Britwell boundary. A provisional, indicative, route will be confirmed by Friday 26th January for inclusion in the information to be provided at the WNDP Traffic Drop-In event on 3rd February.
	5. Archstone/Bloor confirmed their intention to enter into a legal agreement to safeguard land for the re-aligned route. Details of this agreement are not finalised. Agreement between all the developers of sites along the route needs to be achieved. Representatives of Archstone/Bloor were not able to attend the meeting of the other developers involved which was held at the Beechcroft offices in Wallingford before Christmas. It was noted that this formal agreement is a very important step towards achieving the re-aligned route for the B4009 which Watlington needs.
	6. The current proposal for the main route through the development ( to become the re-aligned B4009) is as follows:
4. The carriageway = 6.75m
5. An off-road shared cycleway/pedestrian path = 3m
6. Verges between the carriageway and cycleway and between the cycleway and private driveways = 3m
7. Including private driveways and front gardens the new homes will be 15m from the passing traffic. Only two plots will be 11m away and the houses are side on to the road.
8. The driveways for the homes will not access the main route directly but will be via link roads constructed as shared surface streets.
	1. The traffic consultants working with each of the developers had met Jason Sherwood (OCC Locality, Infrastructure and Road Agreements Manager) at County Hall on Friday 19th January. Max Thurgood (Clarke Bond) had attended for Archstone/Bloor. Parameters for the design of the re-aligned B4009 had been discussed and broadly agreed. JS had emphasised the need to make proper provision for future traffic requirements along the new route. JS had been shown the proposed detail in the draft amended plan for Site A and had indicated broad approval. Details of the agreed parameters are needed for the Traffic Drop-In at Watlington on 3rd February. Chris Carter (Aecom) will be asked by the WNDP team to provide this information in time to include it in the presentation.
9. **Green Spaces:**
	1. The area between the main carriageway and the Britwell boundary is reduced from the previous proposals but includes a larger area of tree planting
	2. A new green space is proposed near the centre of the development which will include equipped play areas for toddlers and older children.
	3. The play area for toddlers near the boundary with the Industrial estate is retained.
	4. Landscape buffer planting along the field boundary = a minimum of 10m wide.
	5. Landscape buffer planting along the boundary with Windmill Piece = 5m wide.
	6. Corridors for wildlife have been provided, including retaining the feeding areas for bats.
	7. It was noted that a mature hedgerow is on the site identified as WAT 11 on earlier versions of the WNDP. This should be retained if possible.
10. **Housing:**
	1. It was noted that the number of new dwellings is retained at 183. The figure of 183 is within the allowed 5% variation of the Oxfordshire SHMA mix which SODC use as a guide. The SODC Core Strategy provides for a density of 25 dwellings per hectare but the emerging SODC Local Plan increases this figure to 30.
	2. The WNDP has an indicative number of 140 dwellings on the site. Watlington Parish Council considers that this is a more appropriate level of development of the site and made an objection to the planning application on this basis. Objections to the proposal to provide 183 dwellings on the site were restated at the meeting.
	3. It was noted that the figure of 140 was arrived at via reference to the landscape impact assessment carried out for SODC in August 2015 which recommended a maximum of 65 dwellings on a reduced area of the site. Consideration of the scale of development on the site in relation to the town had also been important factor in reaching the indicative figure in the WNDP.
	4. The proposed housing mix is similar to that previously proposed. 40% of the dwellings will be for ‘affordable’ housing – 73 homes in all. SODC has asked for the ‘affordable’ homes to be as follows:

12 - one bed maisonettes

14 - two bed apartments

30 – two bed houses

16 – three bed houses

1. - four bed house
	1. The majority of houses will be two storey with a reduced number (18 reduced from 36) of 2.5 storey.
	2. The provision of bungalows has increased to 2.
	3. Bloor Homes has developed a new range of house types which would be used on the site. The materials proposed for Watlington are likely to remain the same in keeping with the contextual analysis carried out earlier in the planning application process.
2. **Internal roads and infrastructure:**
	1. Internal roads will be 6m wide and will have a shared surface for vehicles and pedestrians. They will include some pinch points to limit vehicle speeds.
	2. Roads and hard landscaping on the higher level of the site will be use permeable materials to meet sustainable drainage requirements.
	3. The elevation of the row of maisonettes/flats along the boundary with the Industrial estate has been altered in line with the requirements of the SODC planning officer and environmental health officers. Objections regarding noise issues made by businesses located on the Industrial estate have also been taken into account. Windows and glass bricks have been added to the design in order to improve provision of natural light into the kitchen and bathroom areas.
	4. An acoustic fence is also required along this boundary to further reduce the impact of noise on residents of Site A and to improve existing conditions for residents of Windmill Piece.
	5. Cables to provide charging points for electric vehicles will be available at each dwelling but the charging points themselves will not be provided as they are sometimes specific to individual makes of vehicle.
	6. Fast internet services to each dwelling will be provided via a contract with Virgin Broadband.
	7. Close board fencing is likely to be installed between houses/gardens but public facing areas will have walls as boundaries. It was confirmed that the Watlington Design Guide would be taken into account regarding the boundary types characteristic of the town.
	8. Houses without garages would be provided with two parking spaces each.
	9. Visitor parking is provided for and will be detailed on the confirmed amended plans. Concerns were repeated from previous meetings that there is a need for generous provision for additional parking spaces to avoid anti-social parking on amenity areas etc.
	10. Action has been taken to ensure that the volume of water draining onto the neighbouring property at Watlington Mill will remain at the same level as at present – neither more nor less.
	11. One holding pond for drainage is now in the plan as opposed to two smaller ponds on the earlier application.
3. **Timescales:**
	1. The amended planning application is likely to be submitted to SODC towards the end of February.
	2. Archstone/Bloor Homes will return to Watlington to present the final amendments to the parish council.
	3. Section 106 payments will be negotiated with SODC following planning permission.
	4. Infrastructure on the site will commence about 6 months after all outstanding matters are agreed with SODC.
	5. House building is likely to follow six months later. The first homes will be occupied in 2019/2020.

The meeting closed with thanks to the Archstone/Bloor Homes team for coming to present the draft amendments to the planning application for Site A. The Watlington representatives appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the proposed changes. It was generally agreed that the amended plans provide a significantly improved design for the development .

Notes taken by TB.

24.01.18