

18/502190/EIHYB – NW Sittingbourne; Planning Committee on 4th March 2021, Item 2.1.

Cllr Dendor Questions and officer responses.

Schools drop-off and pick up

I was pleased that Persimmon some time ago accepted my suggestions that no vehicle access be allowed into the schools from Grovehurst Road. However, that means that buses/cars dropping-off/picking-up will be pushed onto the Spine Road and Bramblefield Lane.

Whilst I understand that it is only outline permission being discussed for the central part of the development, outline does involve highways, access issues. I am concerned about the provision of space on the spine road by the schools for buses and cars (lay-bys?) to drop-off/pick-up and also the issue of buses not being allowed onto Bramblefield Lane. Although one could say this would be a matter for KCC when building the schools, I think a definite commitment should be made at this stage to provide the necessary space. As I understand, prohibiting buses onto Bramblefield lane would be a later issue through JTB?

I understand why this aspect is of concern locally, but this is a detailed matter to be resolved at the reserved matters stage when full details of the relevant part of the Spine Road and of the land for the schools is submitted to the Council for approval. Local residents would be consulted on the reserved matters application(s) at that time.

Yes, potential restrictions on an existing public road would be a matter to be resolved through a Traffic Regulation Order and that process would involve the Joint Transport Board.

Also, I have received a suggestion from resident(s) on Bramblefield Lane that I think merits consideration. The suggestion is that a single lane one-way through road be provided from Bramblefield Lane to the spine road. There are currently problems with lack of a turning circle at the end of Bramblefield Lane necessitating larger traffic, such as refuse trucks and delivery vehicles having to reverse down the Lane and out into Grovehurst Road which is rather dangerous, and cars having to use private driveways to turn around. This will be exacerbated by some parents using the Lane, as I have no doubt they will, to drop-off/pick-up pupils for the two schools. Providing a one-way lane out to the spine road would give vehicles an alternative way out of the lane. I don't know if this has ever been brought up before but it seems quite logical to me.

This proposal is not part of the current application, which falls to be determined based on the information submitted, which has been amended following input from officers and colleagues at KCC Highways and Transportation, who consider that the proposed highway arrangements are acceptable and will not give rise to unacceptable impacts. Bramblefield Lane will remain a cul-de-sac, though there will continue to be a cycle and pedestrian link to land to the west, including to the new development. As noted above, the detailed application(s) for the Spine Road and the

schools site will, in due course, be subject to public consultation. In addition, they will be scrutinised by SBC and KCC officers to ensure that appropriate highway and parking arrangements are in place, though there is likely to be an onus on encouraging non-car travel modes.

Unfortunately, as the application is not expected to exacerbate existing issues with Bramblefield Lane it does not present an opportunity to address any existing deficiencies with the existing road layout.

It is also worth noting that, as set out on page 58 of the agenda, this development will benefit from excellent opportunities for use of public transport and non-car travel modes generally (including cycle and footpaths within the site and the provision of enhancements to off-site routes). Among other things, Members will have noted the developer contributions to be paid for improvements to Kemsley Halt (to encourage rail travel) and to support bus usage. A bus route will be provided along the spine road.

Charging Points

Referring to 2.24 "With regard to the five flat blocks, in each case a communal EV 'charging post' is proposed." - am I correct in saying this is just five points for 35 flats?

Or am I misunderstanding meaning of "communal EV charging post"?

Attention is drawn to condition (19B) on pages 75 and 76 of the agenda. Full details of the electric vehicle charging points for Phase 1 South will need to be submitted in order to comply with the condition and this will determine the number of EV charging points to be provided for the apartments (and not the information on the plan to which you refer).

Grampian Conditions

I am a bit confused (aren't we all!) on which Grampian conditions are affecting the development - M2 Junction 5, and Grovehurst/A249 Junction, and Bobbing/A249 junction - all of them? And timings/approval of the developments on all three of them.

I stand to be corrected but I thought M2 Junction 5 had already been fully approved and is just waiting to start, but not sure of the other two.

The delivery of the improvements to M2 J5 is a matter that Highways England are pursuing and while the outcome of the recent public inquiry is awaited, I understand HE anticipate that construction will start later this year. However, condition (19C) on page 81 does restrict the number of dwellings to be occupied on this development (to the first 91 dwellings) until such time as the improvements at M2 J5 are open to traffic.

Condition (19C) also specifies that no more than 91 dwellings can be occupied until the improvements to the Grovehurst Road junction of the A249 are open to traffic.

Members will note, as set out on page 63 of the agenda, that this development will contribute £3.6 million towards the cost of these improvements.

With regard to the Bobbing junction of the A249, this development will facilitate the upgrade of the junction to improve capacity and safety. See conditions (20C) and (21C), on page 81 of the agenda. The respective triggers are no more than 100 dwellings shall be occupied until the interim scheme has been constructed and no more than 450 dwellings shall be occupied until the full scheme has been built.

For completeness, Members will note that further off-site highway improvements will be delivered in the Bobbing area, at the junction of Sonora Way and the Staplehurst Link Road, and these are part of the planning approval previously given to Redrow for 155 dwellings in the south-west corner of this Local Plan allocation: see paragraph 8.11.8 (on page 57) of the agenda.

Waste Water Discharge

Referring to 7.3 re Southern Water:-

“The wastewater discharged from the proposed development will be drained to Southern Water’s Sittingbourne Wastewater Treatment Works. The works currently does not have the capacity to accommodate flows from the proposed development. Where development has been identified and allocated for future development by the Local Planning Authority, Southern Water will attempt to ensure capacity is available to serve these developments. Should planning approval be granted then Southern Water recognises its obligations under the new charging regime to provide capacity in the existing sewerage system to accommodate the needs of the proposed development. Any such network reinforcement will be part funded through the New Infrastructure Charge with the remainder funded through Southern Water’s Capital Works programme. [Rather than being matters to be dealt with as part of any planning approval that the Local Planning Authority may grant.]

I would welcome your comments re their statement

"The works currently does not have the capacity to accommodate flows from the proposed development" and " will attempt to ensure capacity is available"

This is rather worrying that there is no guarantee that capacity will be made available?

Attention is drawn to condition (31C), on page 83, which deals with foul drainage. In addition, Members will note that the delivery of off-site drainage infrastructure is a matter to be dealt with under other legislation, outside the planning process. The following extract from Southern Water’s consultation response dated 27th February 2020 is pertinent:

“Should planning approval be granted then Southern Water recognises its obligations under the new charging regime to provide capacity in the existing sewerage system to accommodate the needs of the proposed development. Any

such network reinforcement will be part funded through the New Infrastructure Charge with the remainder funded through Southern Water's Capital Works programme. Southern Water and the Developer will need to work together in order to review if the delivery of our network reinforcement aligns with the proposed occupation of the development, as it will take time to design and deliver any such reinforcement."

JRW – 2/3/2021