



**SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD AT SPEEN PAVILION SPEEN RECREATION GROUND ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024 STARTING AT 7PM**

<b>Parish Councillors present</b>	Alan Booth, Antony Amirtharaj, Shalini Philip & Sasikumar Sadagopan
<b>In Attendance</b>	2 members of the public.
<b>Clerk &amp; RFO</b>	Becki Hannington

Resolution	Item	Action
	<p>1. <b>Apologies</b> – Cllr Winton</p> <p>2. <b>Declaration of Interests</b> - to declare any financial, personal and/or prejudicial interests and their nature in relation to items on the agenda.  None declared.</p> <p>3. <b>Open Session</b> - to receive any questions from Members of the Public in attendance.</p> <p>Estate Manager from Sutton Estates &amp; their designer were present to discuss application 24/01677/FULMAJ (item 5.5 on agenda).</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Move item 5.5. up to be discussed during the open session.</p> <p><b>Proposer:</b> Cllr Booth  <b>Secunder:</b> Cllr Amirtharaj            All in favour.</p> <p>Sutton Estates Estate Manager &amp; their designer gave a synopsis of the plans and design and then answered questions from the Cllr's present.</p> <p>Sutton Estates advise that Shepherds Farm comes out of B4000, and for the last 20 yrs been hub of the Sutton Estates forestry operation. The current buildings are not fit for any use, so they are looking at an idea for an adventure play scheme as the woodland areas are heavily used by members of the public. Whilst the buildings are not listed, WBC view them as heritage assets, so Sutton Estates have found that trying to do anything with them has proved quite tricky. Sutton Estates feel the adventure play scheme will provide a good income stream outside of the usual forestry/sporting ventures and provide more leisure facilities within the area. They advised on future plans for short term holiday lets from some redundant farm buildings and that they are trying to make us of the redundant buildings to give them a new purpose.</p> <p>Sutton Estates advised that a Café will be onsite for the general public to use, get a coffee and go on woodland walk.</p> <p>Cllr Booth asked how the scheme would impact on the traffic in the area and what the access pans were. Sutton Estates advised that the timing for adventure play will be outside of rush hour (open after 10:30am and mostly used outside of peak times and on weekends) with an approx. 5pm close (later during school holidays). There will be a quieter flow in weekday, middle of the day traffic when the scheme is most likely to be in use. The Shepherds Farm entrance would not be used, the access would be via an entrance further along which is a big wide entrance.</p>	

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Sutton Estates also stated that the track is very long and would hold a lot of traffic without spilling into the road.

Cllr Booth also asked about carparking facilities onsite and Sutton Estates advised that there is an extremely large area which comes off of the main access to use for carparking (existing forestry carpark) and that there is overflow parking off the track as you come in on the right-hand side. They said there will be no issue with the number of parking spaces for the site. They have engaged with a traffic/parking consultant, and they are confident that they can get right splays and widen the track to make it appropriate.

Cllr Philip asked if the scheme would decrease the woodland space open to the public. Sutton Estates advised that the woodlands are not currently open to the public but is used anyway (there are currently no footpaths through there), but there is a general agreement for permissive right of way. As the site is close to recreation ground, they do find lot of people walking there, but there is space to create nice off-road walks/cycle tracks and open things up a bit. They will ensure that this is managed in the safest way so routes not around any heavy machinery etc. Sutton Estates stated that the adventure playground will be a fenced off area that customers can choose to go and play in but access to woodland will still be retained.

Sutton Estates designer shared ideas of design concepts. This will not be 'plastic fantastic' and will be about physical, natural play. Climbing nets, slides and a more traditional style of play.

Cllr Amirtharaj asked if the scheme would create employment opportunity and Sutton Estates answered that it would.

Cllr Amirtharaj asked if the scheme would be applicable to CiL. Sutton Estates advised they do not believe this will be liable for CiL but were awaiting confirmation.

Cllr Booth asked on the anticipated timescales for the project. Sutton Estates advised that if planning permission is given, there will be about 2 months of work before commencement and an approximate build time of 12 months. There may be intricacies with the play barn which may cause delays, but they estimate 12-14 months from start to finish. Although this is a major planning application it is not major install works.

Cllr Amirtharaj advised he felt highways may bring a concern, but Sutton Estates feel that this has been exasperated recently with increased traffic through the village due to M4 works and the scheme would not negatively impact on the traffic through the village.

Sutton Estates stated that the biggest consideration is AONB, but It is a large woodland area that will stay woodland and not lose any views. The neighbouring resident is an employer in Shepherds Farm and there are no further neighbouring properties until you get further into Stockcross so they do not feel this will be an issue.

Cllr Booth asked about access for non-car drivers. Sutton Estates advised that the footpath runs north of woodland which will drop down into the café. Bus stops have not considered, but this is something which they could give thought to however, they felt users would generally be parents of small children who would attend via car.

All Cllrs feel this is positive application which they would be in support of but Cllr Amirtharaj was concerned about the highways consultation and the impact of the



traffic through the Stockcross village. Cllr Amirtharaj advised he will look to call in the application if it feels a further discussion is warranted should the application be refused by the case officer so that the application can be put before the committee.

**Proposal:** To submit comments of support to WBC for the ecological impact and employment opportunities created but to note the concerns from highways regarding the potential of increased traffic and request consideration for a bus stop to give access to non-car users.

**Proposer:** Cllr Sadagopan  
**Seconder:** Cllr Philip  
All in favour.

4. **Proposal:** to approve the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee meeting held on 12-06-24 (draft).

**Proposer:** Cllr Booth  
**Seconder:** Cllr Sadagopan  
All in favour.

5. **Planning Application(s)** – to consider the following applications and agree comments to be submitted to West Berkshire Council:

5.1 **24/01273/FUL** – The Watermill Theatre, Bagnor, Newbury, RG20 8AE

Cllr Booth stated he felt that any points installed for carbon reduction where everyone comes by car is a positive thing and would encourage more use of electric vehicles. All Cllrs agreed that this will be a positive change to reduce the carbon footprint.

Cllr Philip questioned if these plans would reduce the amount of parking present at the theatre. It was confirmed that this would not be the case and Cllr Booth advised that the installation is small and will not be a detriment to the riverside there.

**Proposal:** To submit comments of support to WBC for the impact this would have on the reduction of carbon emissions.

**Proposer:** Cllr Booth  
**Seconder:** Cllr Amirtharaj  
All in favour.

5.2 **24/01524/FULMAJ** – The Old Laundry, Stockcross, Newbury, RG20 8JP

Cllr Booth advised that he knows the site intimately, which was originally part of the Deanwood House Estate. The stables will be visible people for living in the house and neighbours. There is a small wooden stable which has been there for 30+ years which they have replaced with a more modern stable and are looking to add a hard standing area track down to where the stables will be.

Cllr Sadagopan raised the issue of business use in the change of use of the site. Cllr Booth advised that the dwelling is for domestic use and the owners who own their own livestock, and not for any commercial use for a riding school etc. The residents have discussed this application during their meetings and no objections have been raised by any neighbouring properties.

Cllr Amirtharaj advised that he will speak to case officer to see if there will be



	<p>grounds to refuse (change of use, loss of agricultural land, AONB) and if so, request to call in the application to be discussed at the committee.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To submit comments of support to WBC</p> <p><b>Proposer:</b> Cllr Booth <b>Secunder:</b> Cllr Sadagopan All in favour.</p> <p>5.3 <b>24/01527/HOUSE – 4 DeMontfort Road, Speen, Newbury, RG14 1TA</b></p> <p>Cllrs agreed that this appears to be a standard application for extension however they were concerned that the extension would decrease the boundary to the right hand side of the property and may encroach on the neighbouring dwelling. They also echoed the concerns raised by Highways that this extension will result in the loss of the car parking space.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To submit comments of objections to WBC on the basis that this application will decrease of the boundary to the right-hand side and encroach on the neighbouring property and the loss of a carparking space.</p> <p><b>Proposer:</b> Cllr Booth <b>Secunder:</b> Cllr Philip All in favour.</p> <p>5.4 <b>24/01706/HOUSE – 29 Groveland Road, Speen, Newbury, RG14 1<sup>ST</sup></b></p> <p>All Cllr's felt that this was a very straightforward application and that heat pumps very low noise now and well installed, therefore they see no ground for objection to this application.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To submit comments of no objections to WBC.</p> <p><b>Proposer:</b> Cllr Booth <b>Secunder:</b> Cllr Philip All in favour.</p> <p>5.5 <b>24/01677/FULMAJ – Land Rear of Shepherds Farm, Wickham Road.</b></p> <p>All Councillors felt that the presentation given by Sutton Estates was good and comprehensive and they were happy to support.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To submit comments of support to WBC for the ecological impact and employment opportunities created but to note the concerns from highways regarding the potential of increased traffic and request consideration for a bus stop to give access to non-car users.</p> <p><b>Proposer:</b> Cllr Booth <b>Secunder:</b> Cllr Philip All in favour.</p> <p>6. <b>Planning Decision(s) – for information only.</b></p> <p>All planning decisions received from WBC were duly noted by all members of the committee.</p> <p>7. <b>Highways Matters</b></p> <p>7.1 <b>Community Speed Watch Update, B4000 Stockcross – Update from Clerk</b></p> <p>The Clerk advised that the residents of Stockcross had been in touch with the WBC Road Traffic Safety Team and has a group of volunteers together to get started with a community speed watch group who had their first outing on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August at 7pm. They counted almost 300 vehicles in 30 mins, 20 – 30 who were well in the excess of the speed limit.</p>	
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The residents are looking to seek compensation for the traffic that has been inflicted by the M4 roadworks but are unsure from who and by what means. The Clerk advised that compensation from National Highways is only available to homeowners when the value of their property has decreased because of pollution or disturbance from the use of a new or altered road. Homeowners can only claim because of noise, vibration, smells, fumes, smoke, artificial lighting or solid or liquid discharge from their property. Increased traffic through the village due to roadworks on the M4 would not meet these criteria.

Another Stockcross resident has advised that Highways England have confirmed that the roadworks were completed on 23<sup>rd</sup> August and have requested them to make representations to stop diverting along the B4000 and use the official A4 route.

The residents feel that there should have been a sign indicating 'No M4 Traffic' along the B4000 which was done along the A338 turning off into the village of Hungerford Newtown.

The residents advised the Clerk that the issue is still ongoing now that the M4 works have been completed although there has been a slight decrease in activity this is now allowing those coming through the village to travel even faster. They are struggling to get enough volunteers to cover the date collection for the speed watch meaning that soon they will only be able to collect data at the weekends. The Clerk asked if any Cllrs living in the Stockcross area were able to assist in collecting the date for the CSW and Cllr Booth advised he may be able to assist. Clerk to contact the CSW and advise to contact Cllr Booth to see if he is able to support with the collection of data.

Residents advised that Two sessions were monitoring traffic incoming from Wickham, one from Newbury and one exiting towards Newbury. Each taken within 100metres of the 30mph signs and the total number of vehicles, nearly 2 per minute, with a top of 54mph!

Cllr Amirtharaj requested the Clerk to write to WBC to advise on issue and see if they are able to offer any support (cc Cllr Amirtharaj) and request to make representations to Highways England to change Google Maps to stop diverting traffic through the B4000.

## 7.2 **Speen Lane Speeding – Update from Clerk**

The Clerk advised that a resident from Speen Lane had been in touch to advise that there is an issue with speeding cars down Speen Lane with one near miss where an elderly resident was almost knocked over. The Clerk advised the resident that the first port of call would be looking to round up a group of volunteers to get a community speed watch group set up, as the collection of data is always the first step and that this date can then be reviewed by TVP to see if traffic calming measure would be warranted (if so, they would be implemented WBC). The Clerk advised the resident that they would have SPC's full support with this.

The Clerk advised she spoke to WBC in regard to the possibility of siting a temporary SID in the lane but was advised this would not be possible at this time due to shortages within the Road Traffic Safety department at WBC.

WBC did share the annual average data for Speen Lane suggesting that the majority of drivers are keeping to the posted speed limit with an all-day average

of

20mph. The Clerk shared this date with the resident and also informed them that if the near miss was due to speeding the resident can contact TVP directly to request support and provided the resident with the email address to contact TVP.



	<p><b>8. Matters for information only arising after preparation of this Agenda which the Chair agrees to take as urgent.</b></p> <p>None to discuss.</p> <p><b>9. Date of the next meeting</b> – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024.</p> <p><b>The Chair closed the meeting closed at 20:11</b></p>	
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<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Name (print):</b>  <b>Position:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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