

## Notes from the North of Horsham development Parish Liaison Meeting

held online on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10am

Planning application:- DC/16/1677 – Development on land north of Horsham

**Purpose of the meeting:-** to be updated on and to discuss the development north of Horsham as outlined in agreed Planning Application DC/16/1677. The planning consent is for housing (up to 2,750 dwellings), a business park (up to 46,450 m<sup>2</sup>), retail, community centre, leisure facilities, education facilities, public open space, landscaping and related infrastructure and has reserved matters except for access.

### **In attendance**

Cllr Gary Adams – Rusper Parish Council

Georgette Ayling – Head at Bohunt School

Cllr Andrew Baldwin – Horsham District Councillor and West Sussex County Councillor

Katy Bennett – Legal and General (L&G)

Cllr Alan Britten – North Horsham Parish Councillor (Horsham District Councillor) **Chairman of the meeting.**

Cllr Karen Burgess – North Horsham Parish Councillor and Horsham District Council Chairman

Rosemary Couchman – Horsham Churches Together (HCT)

Cllr Richie Gatt – Rusper Parish Council

Bernadette Gledhill – Principal Engineer, Highway Agreements, West Sussex County Council (WSCC)

Joy Gough – North Horsham Community Land Trust Chairman and North Horsham Parish Councillor

Jason Hawkes – Principal Planning Officer, Horsham District Council (HDC)

Cllr Tony Hogben – Horsham District councillor

Laurie Holt – resident

Ian Humble – Cala Homes

Brian Johnson - Langhurstwood Road Residents Association

Alex Jones – Barton Willmore

Andrew McPhillips (AM) – Legal and General

Cllr Richard Millington – North Horsham Parish Council

Hannah Nicholson – Project Manager, Department of Education

Cllr David Searle – North Horsham Parish Council

Louise Shaw – Clerk to Warnham Parish Council

Cllr Alex Shine – North Horsham Parish Council

Cllr John Smithurst – North Horsham Parish Council

Karen Summers – Project Director, Capital Group, Department of Education

Cllr Ray Turner – North Horsham Parish Council

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

Cllr Britten welcomed those in attendance.

Apologies were received from Revd. Richard Coldicott (St Mark's Church) and Fr. Russell Stagg (All Saints Church), Cllr Donald Mahon (North Horsham Parish Council), Neil Hughes (Network Rail) and Simon Clavell Bate (West Sussex CCG).

## **2. Notes from the previous meeting.**

The notes from the previous meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 had been circulated with the agenda.

## **3. Chairman's Update**

Whilst the West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group's (WSCCG) representative had sent his apologies, he had advised that the north Horsham site remains part of the WSCCG's planning and there is a GP service that is keen to run services there. Jason Hawkes, Horsham District Council (HDC) confirmed that discussions are in their early stages, but that provision of health facilities is supported through the Section 106 agreement and that HDC was looking forward to moving ahead positively on this aspect of the development.

## **4. Update on the development**

Andrew McPhillips (AM) from Legal and General (L&G) reported that current works on Rusper Road (south) from the Lemmington Way roundabout to the A264 and work on the A264 are on track for completion at the end of April 2021. Work will then commence north of the A264 when the new road, bunding work and drainage will continue until September 2021. L&G is working alongside West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to ensure that the necessary permissions are in place to allow the work to be undertaken as efficiently as possible and with minimum disruption. Discussions on the 278 Agreement required for the Highway works was ongoing between L&G and WSCC, but it was considered these were routine exchanges and no delays were foreseen.

The footbridge across the A264 will go straight to design following recent consent (DC/20/2509) as it is hoped to have it completed by the end of the year to coincide with the opening of the Bohunt School. The footbridge forms an important part of the pedestrian and cycle links to the school from Horsham. The Parish Council had raised several concerns in respect of the bridge including that the design should deter acts of vandalism, especially throwing objects from the bridge onto the traffic below. AM noted that the design of the bridge will have to be built to national standards.

Planning application DC/20/2047 for erection of 193 residential dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and open space on land west of Rusper Road, north of the A264 submitted by Cala Homes had been consented and work will start in July 2021. Prior to work starting there will be some ecology work undertaken. Cllr Hogben expressed disappointment that he and his fellow Ward Councillors weren't given the opportunity to comment on this application as he had concerns regarding the level of parking. Jason Hawkes explained that the application was agreed under the scheme of delegation and as it met all of the planning standards did not need to go to committee. He did however, express regret that Ward Councillors were not informed and would rectify that in the future. There was general concern that parking on the development was at a bare minimum, especially when car ownership in this part of the country is higher than the national average and the area is relatively rural and away from Horsham centre.

It was observed that there were 409 parking spaces allowed on the development in accordance with county standards. The garages on site measure 6m x 3m which gives sufficient room for most cars to be parked within their garage and there were a large number of car ports to encourage people to park on their drives.

At this stage it is unclear which roads will be adopted by WSCC Highways, however, it has been proposed that speed limits within the site will be 30mph on primary and secondary streets and 20mph on tertiary streets. There is a process which has to be followed to adopt a

speed limit, so whilst those are the proposals, there may be other factors which mean the final speeds could be different.

Two bus stops are planned to allow those living on the site to access bus services, these will be near the village centre and in the first stage will be near to the bus turning point as the bus route will be extended in stages.

Consideration has been given to lighting on the development as a whole as care has to be taken not to interfere with natural habitats and the ecology of the area. It was noted that the Rusper Neighbourhood Plan which contains a night sky policy is near to being adopted. To reflect the location and associated policies, lighting has been considered with sensitivity to try to reduce light pollution as much as is practical.

Tracking models to ensure that large vehicles including fire appliances, buses, removal lorries and refuse trucks can move freely along the streets and have sufficient turning opportunities have been carried out and the planners are confident that all requirements can be met.

Mindful of the need for affordable housing and suitable homes for senior members of the community, L&G is looking to build some affordable units and retirement homes in Phase 1 with the hope that a planning application is submitted in the next few months. It is hoped that building would start in the autumn. Discussions are currently ongoing with 'Inspired Living' which is a L&G company specialising in sheltered housing. There are 800 homes planned in the first phase of the development.

## **5. Update on Highways projects**

These were included in item 4.

## **6. L&G application for 197 homes.**

A second planning application submitted by L&G for 197 residential units, single story garages, car and cycle parking, new landscaping, drainage and access in the area west of Rusper Road north of the A264 is going through the planning process at the moment. The development has 12.6% affordable housing split between apartments and houses. There are 403 parking spaces, some on individual housing plots and some "on street" in laybys. There is scope for additional parking on secondary streets. The site is bounded by trees and the planners had to balance the need for parking with the need to maintain existing trees. They also had to consider the sustainability of the site and encourage greater use of public transport or walking/cycling etc as part of the golden thread of 'sustainability' running through the National Planning Policy Framework.

All residential units have smart charging points for electric cars and there are additional communal charging points. There will be cycle parking and 100 new semi mature trees will be planted on the development. There is also an informal play area in a central area of the site to encourage places where residents can meet and establish a community. The street lighting plan takes into consideration the need to approach lighting in a sensitive way and is suitable to avoid light pollution to the surrounding rural landscape.

Tracking models have been used to ensure that large vehicles can access all properties. It was confirmed that the model was undertaken when cars were parked on the road to cater for a worst scenario situation. It was observed that there had been a change in behaviour since March 2020 with far more home deliveries. It was noted that this can cause issues, especially in smaller roads where there is nowhere for the vans/ delivery trucks to park safely. It was hoped that consideration had been made within the modelling for larger vehicles as well as parked cars.

Provision has been made for fire hydrants and there has been a dialogue with the fire service as part of the planning process. It was noted there was an error in one of the legends in the Design and Access Statement which will be corrected. It is hoped that work will start in 2022.

## **7. Questions for the developer.**

*Who is likely to be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of landscaped and open spaces generally on the new development north of Horsham, also for street furniture and bus shelters?*

The S106 agreement sets out the arrangements for management of the green spaces and communal areas through management estate companies. It is possible that there could be three companies, taking individual responsibility for residential areas, commercial areas and mixed areas. Maintenance of the green areas and possibly other services will be funded from a charge levied on each property on site.

All primary roads will be adopted, therefore the street furniture (except bus shelters) will also be adopted by either WSCC or HDC. WSCC do not adopt bus shelters so that could be down to the management company, Parish Council or an advertising company, dependant on how each option may fit in with the overall development.

*Could the development be given a name to engender a sense of identity?*

AM is working with a marketing company on a name for the development and they will be finalising the branding within the next 6 to 8 weeks. When agreed, a website will be developed.

*Are there ways to support better communications?*

This question originated because a resident who gave feedback via a consultation did not receive any acknowledgement. This has now been rectified. There was secondary concern when information regarding works that would affect a large number of people wasn't notified to them. This was due to a set of specific circumstances that would be unlikely to be replicated in the future. L&G has looked at their internal communications and how they interact with HDC and WSCC and made improvements. They also issue community updates and stakeholder updates. They are mindful that they have to be proactive when work has a major impact on residents and are continually looking at ways to improve their communication strategy.

*Concern regarding how noise from the A264 will affect existing properties on the south side of the A264. What additional noise mitigation is being considered?*

There is no provision in the S106 for work on the south side of the A264 and there is no intention to offer any compensation to existing properties south of the A264.

It was observed that by 2030 all new vehicles offered for sale will be powered by electric, therefore traffic noise will inevitably reduce. The main noise will come from tyres making contact with the road surface and perhaps this is something that WSCC could look at. Unfortunately motorcycle noise will always be in issue as there are no restrictions on the method by which they are powered, nor any deadlines in place for them to attain being powered by electric.

The new roundabout on Rusper Road will be signalised, therefore there should be less noise and better safety along that stretch of the A264.

## **8. Update on the Bohunt School**

The Head of Bohunt School reported that Years 7 and 8 at the Bohunt School are full and that there is a waiting list of pupils waiting to join the school. The lease for the school's temporary accommodation on Hurst Road had been extended to December 2021 and a new year group will be joining the school in September which has been facilitated by the ability to secure the site next to the current building on Hurst Road for 1 term.

Staff and pupils were looking forward to moving to the new site and they have been kept involved with the building of the new school. Students had been invited to sign a joist that will be installed in the building to commemorate those who were the first learners at the school on the new site.

The Bohunt School generally performs well, which has been borne out by 95% of pupils engaging in remote learning during lockdown restrictions brought in by the government as a measure to restrict the spread of Covid 19. This is much higher than the national average. The Head once again invited stakeholders to visit the vibrant school community to see for themselves what the school was about, both at Hurst Road and then again on the new site, so that the difference could be appreciated.

The Project Director, Capital Group, Department of Education, reiterated that the focus for all concerned remains the delivery of the necessary operational facilities to allow the new secondary school to open for pupils in January 2022. It has been unfortunate that some of the delays have been outside the control of all concerned, but the additional facilities that have been secured for one term, should give sufficient time for the new school to open. Securing additional accommodation has had an associated cost, but it was a necessary step to take to ensure that the school's operation wasn't too badly disrupted.

## **9. North Horsham Community Land Trust**

The Chair of the NHCLT advised that several funding opportunities have become available to fund community housing schemes up to the planning stage, to regenerate buildings and to help set up community housing trusts, but at the moment the NHCLT aren't in a position to benefit.

The NHCLT is investigating a small number of sites where there is a possibility of repurposing existing empty buildings to provide affordable rented accommodation. The group continue to get support from Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) and the Sussex Housing Hub and have launched their website [www.northhorshamclt.org](http://www.northhorshamclt.org)

## **10. Questions , comments from Rusper Parish Council**

Questions posed by the Rusper Parish Council representatives had already been covered earlier in the meeting. Appreciation was expressed to NATTA who had made concerted efforts to keep mud off the road up to Rusper, despite some very wet and difficult conditions.

## **11. Updates from other organisations**

There were no updates.

## **12. Any other comments**

There was no news about the commercial properties as yet.

Churches in Horsham are continuing to offer opportunities for worship throughout the pandemic in a variety of ways including online and in person. Churches Together are looking

forward to seeing whether the hybrid approach will continue over the next months / years.

They are working with the school on the new development.

The Chairman of the Horsham Town and Community Partnership wished to confirm that the Riverside Walk will not be routed through built up areas and hoped to work with L&G at the appropriate time for the avoidance of this. Phase 2 of the development will affect the route of the Riverside Walk, but the development of that phase is some way off.

A question was asked regarding proposals for extending the platform at Littlehaven Station.

Neil Hughes (Network Rail) confirmed after the meeting that:-

*“This project is subject to finalised funding. Costs are being reviewed / justified after the Coronavirus outbreak.*

*The proposal is for Littlehaven to receive an extended platform in the down direction (trains from London heading to Horsham).*

*This is to reduce the amount of time the barriers are down on Rusper Road as well as passenger benefits that all carriages will be on the platform. The London bound platform will remain unchanged.*

*The crossing on Parsonage Road will become a full barrier crossing (fully protected and controlled by a signaller). At present the crossing is automatic and works by an approaching train striking a treadle to lower the barriers.*

*A lot of work will be carried out during August 2021 when there are no trains at Horsham so that signalling and track works can be carried out.*

*It is expected that completion of works will be by June 2022 when both crossings will benefit from these safety led improvements.”*

It was suggested that sales and marketing for the houses that are being built in phase 1 will possibly start at the end of 2021.

### **13. Conclusion and date for next meeting**

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.35am and noted that the next meeting would be scheduled for w/c 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 online. The actual date would be circulated in due course.