

**Notes from the North of Horsham development Parish Liaison Meeting**  
**held online on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 11am**

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 :**

Georgette Ayling - Head at Bohunt School  
Ron Bates (RB)- Horsham Society  
Robert Brown (RBr) - Earles Meadow Conservation Group  
Cllr Alan Britten (AB) - North Horsham Parish and Horsham District - **Chairman of the meeting**  
Rev. Peter Dibden (PB) - Horsham Churches Together (HCT)  
Cllr Nigel Emery (NE) - Horsham District Councillor  
Cllr Ritchie Gatt (RG) - Rusper Parish Council  
Bernadette Gledhill (BG) - Principal Engineer, Highway Agreements, WSCC  
Joy Gough (JG) - North Horsham Community Land Trust Chairman and North Horsham Parish Councillor  
Jason Hawkes (JH) - Principal Planning Officer, Horsham District Council (HDC)  
Brian Johnson (BJ) - Langhurstwood Road Residents Association  
Alex Jones (AJ) - Stantec  
Andrew McPhillips (AM) - L&G  
Sarah Norman (SN) - Clerk to North Horsham Parish Council (Note-Taker)  
Cllr David Searle (DS) - North Horsham Parish Councillor  
Robert Thompson (RT) - L&G

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Cllr Alan Britten, Chairman for the Meeting, welcomed those in attendance.

Apologies were received from North Horsham Parish Councillors Ray Turner and Gema Davidson-Fernandez, and Neil Hughes from Network Rail.

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

The notes from the previous meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 together with report from briefing held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024 had been circulated with the Agenda.

**3. Chairman's Update**

There was no update.

**4. Update on the development**

AM updated where the site currently is, bearing in mind the impact of Water Neutrality on progress. With the first two parcels of land sold previously, which is 390 properties, these have continued to be marketed over the last 18 months, with around 100 occupations to date. Work has now started on RM2 and those units will come forward this year.

The biggest constraint, as is well known, is Water Neutrality, which has been an issue now for 2 years. A solution was acquired at the end of 2023, working with their local housing association partners which will enable the release of the majority of the remaining units in Phase 1. It is planned for this to progress over the next couple of months and will comprise of another 600 units, applications for which will start to come through later this year with the delivery potentially starting in 2025.

It was also reported that applications that have been held at HDC due to Water Neutrality - such as the build to rent and affordable applications - will also hopefully now be released when the Water Neutrality solution comes forward.

Longer term, the development progress will be largely reliant on the Council's SNOW scheme that is coming forward and is anticipated to be released in Autumn 2024.

Therefore, the major works on site over the last 6 to 12 months have been the open space works such as the East/West Greenspace which will be completed in the next month or so, although it was noted that this won't be opened as yet as it is in the middle of a construction site and as a result, the PROW has an agreed closure in place until May 2025.

There have been the Highways works to clear trees from the LILO entrance to what will be the commercial/sports hub part of the site and it is intended to start levelling work on the sports fields in 2024. These highways works are currently paused but will restart in May, for a two week period. Then in July, works will begin on the LILO access and run through to the end of the year and will result in a lane closure on the A264 for this entire period.

An application has been submitted for the first stretch of road in to Phase 2 - Bailey Road extension - and there will be another application for the final section of the road in Phase 1 to connect to the boundary of Phase 3.

When the residual of Phase 1 is released, this will include the community building.

The meeting then opened for questions as follows :-

#### Public Rights of Way (PROW)

RB queried when PROWs will be rerouted and highlighted the links with the Riverside Walk. It was also asked whether there was an opportunity to discuss these well in advance so as to ensure any comments or suggestions can be considered before the start of any work. AM reported that the vast majority of the PROW will be unaffected by the development, with any changes forming part of the works in Phase 2 which is some way off. It was agreed that the Parish Office would liaise to arrange a meeting over the summer between the Horsham Town Community Partnership and L&G for an in person meeting to look at the maps and discuss any changes. It was also noted by AJ that the already approved Sports Hub does include part of this Riverside Walk link.

#### Supermarket/Sports Hub

GA queried the completion dates for these developments. AM advised that the Sports Hub was scheduled to be delivered in two phases; 1 pitch and temporary changing facilities at 650 units with the remainder at 1,500. However, it was now being proposed to deliver the entire site by 1,000 units. In reality with the existing 100 occupations, work was starting to level the sports this summer, build the road infrastructure with a timeline to start the build of the pitches and facilities in 2025. Taking into account another 12 to 18 months for the delivery plus up to another year for grass to establish, we are looking at 2027 for the opening of the Sports Hub.

With regard to the supermarket, this was more outside of L&G's control as the contract with Morrisons was still live. As with others, their application has been held at HDC as there was no Water Neutrality solution but with the release of Phase 1, a solution has now been offered to them and discussions are ongoing so it is assumed that this will now move forward in the next few months but is in their court.

#### Health Centre

DS asked for any update on the provision of a new health centre. AM advised that it was hoped to deliver this on site in 2027. There had been 2 options for the delivery of the health facility; either deliver in Phase 1 or provide a commuted sum for use off site or in the commercial land. Discussions are ongoing with the CCG with the intention to deliver the facility on the eastern side towards the sports land from the commuted sums available. Again water neutrality will potentially impact timings also.

#### Left in Left Out (LILO) access to commercial area

RBr asked whether the LILO would be signal controlled. BG confirmed that the exit onto the A264 would be traffic light controlled. Initially, it would be necessary for those wishing to head west to do a u-turn at the Moorhead roundabout but that eventually, it would be possible to come back through the estate and exit onto the A264 at the new Rusper Road roundabout. AM also advised that there would be further works on the Moorhead roundabout and BG advised that these would be some way off and could potentially include widening of the Moorhead roundabout to increase capacity. RBr expressed concern

for the access to Earles Meadow which was just south of the Moorhead roundabout and BG advised that this roundabout would eventually become traffic light controlled. AM commented that there are not any detailed plans, but AJ offered to provide a copy of the drawing from the outline permissions which will be circulated to the group.

Later in the Meeting, JH spoke on behalf of HDC Planning reiterating the comments about Water Neutrality and the agreements with the housing provider. The meeting was informed that the Water Neutrality Statement for RM7 private rental and affordable housing had been received from Saxon Weald and therefore, the application can now progress and HDC can assess their Statement.

Work is continuing on the SNOWs scheme, but this is a complicated progress and is part of the Local Plan review. It is not anticipated that any applications will be able to use this scheme until much later this year.

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

The Head, Georgette Ayling, updated as follows.

This is the school's 5<sup>th</sup> year and 2<sup>nd</sup> year at the new site. The roll is now just under 1,000 with full capacity (including primary) being 1,620 with the secondary therefore almost at capacity. The first year group (now year 11) have begun the school's first formal examinations which is exciting.

The school has undergone its first OFSTED Inspection, receiving Outstanding for Leadership, Management and Behaviour and Good for Personal Development and Quality of Education which was really pleasing to receive.

The Primary school will start to take pupils from September 2024 with 1 reception class of 30 pupils, and then grow year on year. It is intended to have different start and finish times for the primary and secondary elements of the school.

Every current year group is full to capacity with waiting lists which is great for the schools' reputation.

The main concerns for the school were transport and travel. The current infrastructure designs around the school work when the majority of the pupils live at the new development, but don't work if serving the existing Horsham community. However, currently 700 are leaving on foot or bike across the A264 and 300 by car and it is felt that access to the school does not work for the volume of pedestrian/cycle access. There are particular concerns about south of the new Rusper Road roundabout where the pavement is narrow and less crossing options. The majority of students do use the footbridge but some do still go across the roundabout. There is concern that there is not enough signage to indicate you are approaching a school. The addition of public transport would benefit the situation, although it was noted that the Metrobus service had been delayed until May and will initially be a limited service that goes to and from Horsham Railway Station. The results of the Road Safety Audit were also eagerly anticipated. Finally, GA stated that the school was aware of the incidence of graffiti on the new footbridge and this is being followed up although it may not be all from students.

RG asked if there was any update on the relationship between Bohunt and Rusper Primary School. GA stated that due to their recent OFSTED report, the school would have to become part of an Academy Trust and this would be the Bohunt Education Trust. This would be a long legal process and no transition has yet been completed, but Bohunt is already working with Rusper Primary to support them.

NE agreed with the inadequacy of the pavement width and cycle lines south of the Rusper Road roundabout and in Lemmington Way and he was pushing for HDC to prioritise this.

GA stated that she was aware of the parking of parents elsewhere at school drop and pick up times but unfortunately she has no control over this issue. She continues to lobby parents to use the designated pick up points at the school site.

RB asked if the Safety Audit would be published and BG advised that this is not done automatically. AM highlighted that this is in fact the 4<sup>th</sup> Safety Audit; 1<sup>st</sup> is at planning stage, 2<sup>nd</sup> with designs for adoption, 3<sup>rd</sup> at completion and the 4<sup>th</sup> is 18 months after opening to allow for bedding in etc. It was queried whether the fatality would be considered as part of the audit. BG advised that whilst the audit team would be

aware of this, unless the inquest has concluded and the Coroners verdict published, they will not have any information about the cause of the accident.

#### **6. Update on Health Facilities**

As Simon Clavell-Bate was not present the comments made earlier in the meeting were noted and AM reiterated that conversations regarding the provision of the facility were ongoing.

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

RG reported progress on getting the gateway signs back up at the bottom of Hurst Hill and highlighted the traffic calming as tractors were having trouble getting through the chicane and that a change in priority to those coming up the hill could assist with this.

#### **8. Updates from other organisations**

There were no other updates.

#### **9. Any other comments**

NE asked about any potential reduction in speed limits on the A264 to the west of the development, as residents in that area had been in touch regarding the increased road noise following the ash tree removal. AM reported that in reality any highways works this side would be in Phase 3 and therefore we would be looking at 2029 and as always this would be subject to Water Neutrality. JH reported that some time ago Cllr Andrew Baldwin had asked WSCC Highways to look into resurfacing with a quiet surface but nothing had come from that, but he would ask for an update. It was also noted that the highways work to the west would include a new roundabout at Langhurst Wood Road junction.

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

It had been suggested that the next meeting be a site visit with a tour in the summer when the ground was hopefully a little drier. The next meeting proper would be in the Autumn and GA kindly offered to host this at Bohunt School. .

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.51am.