

Minutes of the meeting of Hungerford 2036 project team held on Thursday 10th June 2021
virtually on Zoom at 5.00pm

Present – Chris Scorey (CS), Tony Drewer-Trump (Co-chair), Cllr John Downe (Co-chair), Town Clerk, Chris Bowden (CB) (Navigus Planning)
Callan Powers (CP), Mark Pettit and Samantha Ross of Fowler Architecture and Planning (FA),
Apologies: Cllr Ellie Yakar-Wells, Denise Gaines

The Clerk advised the meeting was being recorded. The minutes will be made public.

CP shared his screen to show a power point presentation for HUN15 and commented as follows;

“We are Fowler Architecture & Planning representing Denford Park pastures east in the promotion of the land at Folly Dog Field for allocation within the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan. We have set out a proposal for a well-designed place that would provide a good number of much needed homes to support the NDP’s aim of ensuring that new housing in Hungerford meets the needs of current and future generations, in a way which complements the character of the town and countryside surrounding it.

We have received advice from Will Harley of WH Landscapes in formulation of a Landscape & Visual Appraisal including a landscape mitigation strategy for the land at Folly Dog Field. Following the recent site assessments, we have taken the step of reducing the land being promoted in the current site selection exercise to the land behind the garden centre. Following the line of the rear gardens of the properties at Cottrell Close this area alongside an access drive, to be taken along the side of the garden centre, amounts to approx. 1.6 hectares of land. This land effectively rounds off the existing developments in this part of town.

We are proposing that this land is capable of accommodating 55 units of housing in a sustainable manner in order to support the aims of sustainable development and the objectives of the Hungerford NDP. The landscape and visual appraisal was compiled using a established methodology for landscape analyses which takes in to account policy informed by the West Berks Core Strategy and the AONB management plan. The report is informed by a desk-based study and field work to form a full appreciation of landscape value and quality of the site as well as key viewpoints from public locations.

These are located between 60 and 730m from the site.

The LVA finds a moderate level of effect from developing the site and that can be effectively mitigated through trees, hedgerows and copse planting. The report makes a second recommendation for the planting required to achieve an effective mitigation strategy. In addition to landscape mitigation, planting would have a positive outcome on biodiversity as well as ensuring that the site functions as a liveable hospitable place. Following this process, we are producing an indicative site layout mitigation plan demonstrating how the 55 units of housing could be accommodated on site with the inclusion of the mitigation measures recommended and some public open space.

55 units on this land can deliver significant public benefits by substantially adding to the housing supply for Hungerford and meeting the local plan requirement figure as currently drafted. The housing mix accords with the recommended in the merging West Berks local plan review including houses and flats and will range between 1 and 4 bedroom homes. 40% of housing will be affordable as required nationally with a mixture of tenure throughout the site, The site is to be accessed by an access road along the side of the garden centre however housing is to begin at the rear of the

garden centre site. This access may require a repositioning of the reduced speed limit on the way into Hungerford from the east. The site will be walkable and will include the provision of public open space. The site has good pedestrian connectivity with the town centre with a footway linking it to the e area of Hungerford.

We think Folly Dog Field would represent a logical extension to the town of Hungerford. The rounding off this area would be a suitable means of providing a good number of new homes of different types of tenures without increasing significantly the visual spread into the AONB. To ensure the proposed new homes will be environmentally sustainable, all new homes would be designed to have high energy efficiency ratings as would be required by building regulations and as required by energy policy SP5 of the emerging WBC plan review.

We are using measures such as mechanical ventilation systems, air source heat pumps, renewable energy sources. There will be covered and secure cycle storage and parking as well as electric vehicle charging points. The wider site as previously submitted as part of this site promotion process remains deliverable and stands capable of increasing Hungerford's housing capacity should the identified needs of Hungerford change in the coming years.'

Questions:

Can FA clarify the speed limit? – With the new access coming into the site as proposed it may require the 30mph speed limit to be moved.

I can't see the restraint area for the pipeline. - There are 2 pipelines not shown on the plan. FA are very conscious of the restraint and will work around it. It was agreed FA will add it to the plan for the public consultation as the public are aware of its existence.

The visual impact report has been received just before this meeting so has yet to be read. Can you summarise? FA advised it looks at the site from Hungerford Common and other angles and it assesses the landscape value of the site as high. The impact will be moderate without mitigation and minor to moderate with mitigation. Some existing vegetation between the garden centre and the site. Most hedging is new planting apart from the western boundary with Cottrell Close.

Has pedestrian access through Cottrell Close been investigated to avoid walking along the main road? FA have not looked at it in detail. There may be scope through the open space and down through Cottrell Close.

Are there any opportunities for less sensitive parts of the site to have community/amenity use (i.e., allotments)? FA have not looked at this in detail but are open to considering those uses if there is a need locally, but it would restrict the number of houses. JD pointed out he was looking at outside the red line. FA said there may be scope outside the red line, and they could explore this further.

When were viewpoints 7 and 8 taken from the Common? It was visited in April 2021 when the leaf cover had not fully emerged. It was noted it isn't showing the extremes of no leaves or full leaf.

CS declared an interest as a trustee of the landholder (of the Common) from where the views were taken.

CB advised we should consult with AONB on the landscape impact assessment. It would be helpful if allotments or play areas can be shown for the public consultations.

JD advised we are hoping to commence consultations on 30th June with some public exhibitions of potential development sites. H2036 will be seeking residents' feedback against some consultation

questions, and this will go on-line also. We will be looking for their input over the summer and if we need further sessions, we will organise them.

ACTION: FA to update the map with the pipeline. A revised site plan is needed by next week.

FA commented that this site is much reduced to what was put forward initially and assessed at the HELAA stage. Will we show the red line around the smaller site or larger site? H2036 will show the larger site but in notable points explain the indicative layout has been informed by further landscape work done subsequently.

FA clarified that the landscape appraisal doesn't provide the detail of the number of houses.

ACTION: FA will provide bullet points which will give a succinct overview of the number of units, proposed housing mix, size of site i.e. site concept and what they are proposing.

Meeting closed 5.30pm





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FOWLER
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING
 10 High Street
 Poole
 Wiltshire
 BA15 5AT
 01202 543444
 info@fowler.co.uk