

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 15

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Ward: Out of Borough

App No.: 160712 (West Berkshire Council ref 16/00710/FULEXT)

Address: Land at Junction Of Mill Lane Bath Road Calcot Reading Berkshire

Proposal: Full planning application for the erection of 45 dwellings (including affordable housing) with public open space, hard and soft landscaping and creation of a new vehicular access from The Chase with associated pedestrian improvements.

Applicant: Bellway Homes (Thames Valley) Ltd

Date received: 5<sup>th</sup> April (by West Berkshire Council)

Major Application: West Berkshire 13 week target decision date: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016

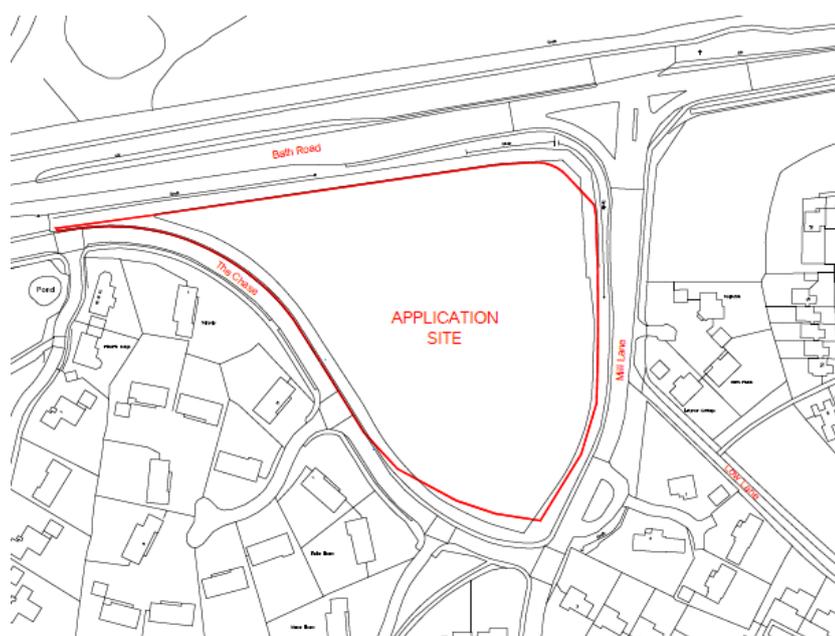
### RECOMMENDATION:

That West Berkshire Council be informed that Reading Borough Council raise NO OBJECTION to the proposal.

That West Berkshire Council is sent a copy of this report for their information and use.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council have been consulted by West Berkshire Council on an application for development of 45 dwellings on a site at the junction of Bath Road and Mill Lane in Calcot, some 500m west of the Reading Borough boundary. The site is currently undeveloped, and is not identified in West Berkshire's existing or emerging development plans.



Site Location Plan

## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for a development of 45 dwellings on previously

undeveloped land. These consist of 27 houses (4 x 2-bed, 12 x 3-bed and 11 x 4-bed) and 18 apartments (2 x 1-bed and 16 x 2-bed).

- 2.2 Vehicular access would be taken from The Chase, a residential road to the south of Bath Road.

### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant planning history on this site dealt with by Reading Borough Council.

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 WBC has carried out its own consultations. RBC's consultation responses are outlined below

#### 4.2 RBC Transport Development Control:

The proposed development consists of a residential development for 45 new dwellings and creation of a new vehicular access from The Chase in the form of a priority junction. These comments relate to the effects of the development within the Borough of Reading, as the administrative boundary is located 450m west of the proposed development. They do not relate to the design of the accesses proposed as this will be for West Berkshire as the Highways Authority to determine.

The site itself is located to the south of the A4 Bath Road. The eastern boundary of the site is adjacent to Mill Lane and the southern boundary is adjacent to The Chase. Mill Lane meets the A4 Bath Road to the north of the site at a signalised priority junction.

No assessment has been submitted regarding the distribution of trips into Reading Borough Council's administrative area. However, it is calculated that this site would likely generate 25 vehicle trips in the AM Peak and 25 vehicle trips in the PM Peak equating to 220 daily vehicle trips. Whilst a significant number of these vehicular trips will be travelling on to this authority's network, it is unlikely that the proposal would result in a material impact on the safety and efficiency of the local highway network given the small increase in peak hour movements.

It should be noted that the A4 Bath Road / Mill Lane and the Horgarth Ave / A4 Bath Rd signalised junctions has been assessed as part of planning application for the proposed development of a Lidl food retail store on the A4 Bath Road and has been confirmed as being within capacity. The proposal equates to approximately one additional vehicular trip every three minutes; therefore, the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the operation of this junction or a severe impact the Borough's highway network.

Please therefore advise West Berkshire Council that we have no objections to the proposal.

#### 4.3 RBC Trees and Landscape:

The mature and informal tree cover to the north of the site is highly significant in views from the Bath Road and will play an important part in screening the development from the highway. The tree cover currently in this area is informal with mixed ages and species of trees. There is a

shrubby, naturalised understorey. Similar tree screening is mirrored on the opposite side of the highway and along this stretch of the Bath Road giving it a verdant semi-rural character. We would like to see the tree cover in this area retained where possible without becoming too thinned out or formally landscaped in keeping with the surrounding street scene of Bath Road.

We would support every effort to protect and retain the key trees along the northern boundary where at all possible with the root protection areas offset to take into account the adjacent public highway.

## 5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Guidance  
National Planning Policy Framework

West Berkshire Local Development Framework  
West Berkshire Core Strategy (adopted 2012)  
Saved Policies from the West Berkshire Local Plan 1991-2006

## 6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues of potential significance to RBC are in terms of transport, impact on local infrastructure and visual effects.

### (i) Transport Implications

6.2 As set out in paragraph 4.2, Transport Development Control have considered the proposal and consider that there are unlikely to be significant effects on the highway network within Reading Borough. Therefore, no objection on these grounds is necessary.

### (ii) Social and community infrastructure

6.3 The proximity of the development to the Borough boundary means that it is possible that there may be some use of health and/or education facilities in Reading as a result of this development, although the closest primary schools are in West Berkshire. However, West Berkshire currently operates the Community Infrastructure Levy. General contributions towards primary and secondary education and towards healthcare are listed on the Regulation 123 list, i.e. the schemes towards which CIL contributes. These will therefore be covered by CIL rather than Section 106, and there are no specific contributions to be sought from this scheme towards infrastructure provision in Reading. However, it is worth commenting to West Berkshire Council that there are substantial cross-boundary demands on local infrastructure, and emphasising the importance of joint working on identifying infrastructure pressures in the local area and directing new provision accordingly.

6.4 In terms of open space, the site includes 0.31 ha of open space to serve the development, to comply with West Berkshire's policy requirements. The site is around 500m from the Kennet Meadows, and is some distance from the nearest substantial public open space in Reading Borough (some 1300m from Prospect Park). It is not therefore considered that there will be any significant impact on Reading's open spaces.

(iii) Visual impact

6.5 The A4 corridor in this area is characterised by trees and hedgerows on either side of the road, and this site is currently fringed with trees to the north and the east, the directions of most relevance to Reading. These trees would be retained in the proposal.

6.6 The comments from the Council's Trees and Landscape team support the retention of the trees and vegetation on the boundary to the north. This should be communicated to West Berkshire Council.

**7. CONCLUSION**

7.1 As there are not expected to be any significant impacts on RBC in terms of transport or retail, it is recommended that RBC raise no objections to this proposal.

Case Officer: Mark Worringham

# Planning Layout

