

INSPECTOR'S PRE-CONFERENCE NOTE
for Case Management Conference on Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 10.00

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/W/22/3312261

Erection of 32 dwellings including affordable housing, parking, and landscaping. Access via Regis Manor Road at Land to the rear of The Hollies Nursing Home, Reading Road, Burghfield Common RG7 3LZ

1. The case management conference will be led by the Inquiry Inspector, William Cooper, a Chartered Landscape Architect and Planning Inspector. The conference agenda and etiquette guide are attached as separate documents.
2. The purpose of the conference is for the Inspector to give clear indication as to the ongoing management of the case and presentation of evidence, so that the forthcoming Inquiry is conducted efficiently and effectively. At the conference, there will be no discussion of the merits of the case, nor will the Inspector hear evidence of the respective cases. Also, we will need to discuss the format of the Inquiry and any implications that may have. Following the close of this conference, the Inspector will issue a summary of the outcome of our discussion.

Main Issues

3. Based on the material currently submitted, the Inspector anticipates that the Main Issues are likely to relate to:
 - 1) The effect of the proposal on the safety of future residents of the proposed development, and the wider public, with regard to the proximity of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) site at Burghfield;
 - 2) The effect of the proposal on the future capability and capacity of AWE Burghfield to operate effectively;
 - 3) The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with particular reference to local tree cover; and
 - 4) Whether the proposal would make adequate provision for affordable housing.

4. Among other things, the requirements of relevant development plan policies will be considered in relation to the main issues.
5. Also, where parties have referred to Three Mile Cross appeal decision (Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/22/3304042), it would be helpful for them to be as clear as possible about what they consider to be comparable and/or different about the current case.

Other Matters

6. Based on the material currently submitted, the Inspector anticipates that Other Matters are likely to include the following local residents' concerns, which go beyond the reasons for refusal: construction stage safety/management and impact on roadway; effect on neighbours' living conditions in terms of noise (e.g. from a bin store) and privacy; highway safety (e.g. from footpath access onto Reading Road); strain on local health facilities (e.g. doctors and dentists); wildlife; light pollution.
7. Also, the Inquiry will look at benefits of the proposed development, including contribution to housing land supply, to be weighed in the planning balance.

Dealing with the Evidence, Inquiry Programme and Format

8. The Inquiry is scheduled to open at 10.00am on Tuesday 6 June 2023 at the Council Chamber, West Berkshire Council Offices, Market Street Newbury RG14 5LD.
9. The Inquiry will focus on areas where there is disagreement. With that in mind, the case management conference will explore how best to hear the evidence, so that the Inquiry is conducted as efficiently as possible.
10. It is important for parties to communicate effectively with one another, to help maximise focus on the issues relevant for consideration at the Inquiry. This should be an on-going conversation.
11. The initial time estimate was for the Inquiry to sit for four days. In the light of the subsequent confirmation of Rule 6 parties, and based on the material currently submitted, the Inspector would appreciate parties' views at the conference on the feasibility of the following potential revised timetable approach:

Week 1: In-Person Inquiry at the Council Chamber: Potential main timetable elements (draft for discussion)			
Day 1: Tues 6 June	Day 2: Wed 7 June	Day 3: Thurs 8 June	Day 4: Fri 8 June
(Morning) Session 1a	(Morning) Session 2a	(Morning) Session 3a	(Morning) Session 4a
Introduction and Openings Interested Parties	Evidence and Examination of the first Rule 6 Party's witnesses on Main Issues 1 and 2	Evidence and Examination of Appellant's witnesses on Main Issues 1 and 2	Round table discussion of Other Matters and Planning Balance
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
(Afternoon) Session 1b	(Afternoon) Session 2b	(Afternoon) Session 3b	(Afternoon) Session 4b
Evidence and Examination of the Council's witnesses on Main Issues 1 and 2	Evidence and Examination of the second Rule 6 Party's witnesses on Main Issues 1 and 2	Round table discussions on Main Issues 3 and 4 (inc Planning Obligation) Site Visit	Conditions Costs Closing Statements

Week 2: Reserve Days for online Virtual Sessions as a contingency to cover Sessions 3b-4b, in case, for example, the earlier group of sessions over-run into Friday 8 June (draft for discussion)	
Day 5: Tues 13 June	Day 6: Wed 14 June
Morning	Morning
Reserve	Reserve
Lunch	Lunch
Afternoon	Afternoon
Reserve	Reserve

12. For the round table discussions, the Inspector would lead those sessions informed by relevant proofs and statements.

13. The below Annex sets out the preferred format and content of proofs and other material, which should be observed.

William Cooper INSPECTOR

20 April 2023

ANNEX: Content and Format of Proofs and Appendices

Content

Proofs of evidence **should**:

- focus on the main issues identified, in particular on areas of disagreement;
- be proportionate to the number and complexity of issues and matters that the witness is addressing;
- be concise, precise, relevant and contain facts and expert opinion deriving from witnesses' own professional expertise and experience, and/or local knowledge;
- be prepared with a clear structure that identifies and addresses the main issues within the witness's field of knowledge and avoids repetition;
- focus on what is really necessary to make the case and avoid including unnecessary material, or duplicating material in other documents or another witness's evidence;
- where data is referred to, include that data, and outline any relevant assessment methodology and the assumptions used to support the arguments (unless this material has been previously agreed and is included as part of the statement of common ground).

Proofs **should not**:

- duplicate information already included in other Inquiry material, such as site description, planning history and the relevant planning policy;
- recite the text of policies referred to elsewhere: the proofs need only identify the relevant policy numbers, with extracts being provided as core documents. Only policies which are needed to understand the argument being put forward and are fundamental to an appraisal of the proposals' merits need be referred to.

Format of the proofs and appendices:

- Proofs to be no longer than 3000 words if possible. Where proofs are longer than 1500 words, summaries are to be submitted.
- Proofs are to be spiral bound or bound in such a way as to be easily opened and read. • Front covers to proofs and appendices are to be clearly titled, with the name of the witness on the cover.
- Pages and paragraphs should be numbered.
- Appendices are to be bound separately.
- Appendices are to be indexed using **projecting tabs**, labelled and **paginated**.