



CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL

PLANNING ADVISER'S REPORT

CC/22/01485/OUTEIA - Case Officer: Steve Harris

Vistry Group and Miller Homes

Land To The West Of Centurion Way; Land At Bishop Luffa School; Land At And Adjoining Westgate And; Land To The North-east Of Old Broyle Road And St Pauls Road

Outline planning application with all matters except Access reserved for the second phase of development of the West of Chichester Strategic Development Location (SDL) for 850 homes and employment land with vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Westgate and via phase 1, extensions to approved phase 1 community facility and primary school, informal and formal open space (including northern Country Park), playing pitches and associated landscaping, utilities and drainage infrastructure. Associated demolition of existing agricultural buildings on site. Closure of Clay Lane vehicular access.

<https://publicaccess.chichester.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=RD5XQTERHEL00>

Key issues:

- This is an outline application to determine the acceptability in principle of the proposed development of "phase 2" of the West of Chichester Major Development Area.
- Details of the Southern Access Route (SAR) are proposed. The developers have sought advice from the Local Highway Authority, WSCC, and have proposed WSCC's preferred option for connecting the SAR.
- The mini roundabout at the southern end of Sherbourne Road is proposed to be removed, and Sherborne Road given direct priority access to the A259 college roundabout. The accesses west (onto the SAR) and east to Westgate, which formerly came off the mini roundabout, will be staggered and replaced with junctions onto Sherborne Road.
- A 3m+ footpath is provided on the northern side of the SAR and on the southern side a 2m footpath and separate 3.2m cycle path is proposed. These link to crossings over the SAR, Sherborne Road and Westgate.
- The western part of Westgate, which serves a small number of dwellings, is proposed to be disconnected from the main part of the street which continues east of Sherborne Road. The western part of Westgate would join the SAR via a junction which prioritises the SAR and its serving southern footpath and cycle path.
- A new Bishop Luffa access roundabout on the SAR is proposed at the point of exit from the foot/cycle bridge over the railway. However, this means that students may be tempted to cross the SAR unsafely, close to the new roundabout, rather than walking to either of the closest crossings.
- A shared surface crossing is proposed to provide continuity for Centurion Way across the SAR. This is just over 100m from the exit of the rail bridge and the new roundabout. The existing bridge directs users back on themselves to bring them out at its current exit point. A reconfiguration of the bridge could provide two continuous slopes, for those travelling both west and east, which would bring its western exit (or access) point close to the Centurion Way crossing. The eastern exit would also then be a safer distance from the roundabout. However, the bridge is outside of the site

area and the developer's control and the works would result in the loss of a group of trees. Such works may be negotiable between Network Rail, WSCC and CDC. Alternatively, re-siting the roundabout could be considered.

- Aside from access, all other matters (scale, appearance, layout, and landscaping) are reserved, to be determined through a future detailed "reserved matters" application. The parameters of this are set out within the submitted masterplan, showing indicative layout, land use areas, density, building heights (in storeys, not detailed measurements) and main vehicular routes within the site and connections to its surroundings.
- The nature of the proposal, including sports provision and industrial buildings for employment units in the south, 850 dwellings, of which 30% (255 units) would be affordable, and a northern country park, largely accord with the principles indicated both within the previous overall masterplan set out during the phase 1 planning process, and within the specific allocation of this area of land in the Local Plan for such development.
- The specific site areas allocated for industrial use have been amended, with some swapped with landscaped open space areas and some with housing. The result is that there is an area of landscape and ecology sandwiched between industrial units, rather than as was originally envisaged, sited adjacent to the phase 1 country park, where it would better provide a larger, better connected area for wildlife. Swapping what was to be housing adjacent to this area for industrial use also reduces the recreational utility of the landscaped area and being significantly less visible and less well used for leisure purposes by adjacent residents, it risks becoming an area attracting anti-social behaviour, as well as the consequent risk of development pressure to infill the land with more industrial units to resolve this issue.
- A detailed Transport Assessment calculates that the impact on junctions within the city would be negligible, and impacts on the A27 would be within the range of 3.2%-4.1% (total phase 1 + phase 2 impact) at peak flow times at the Fishbourne roundabout. The developer concludes this would be within the range of usual daily fluctuations and therefore not material. However, traffic flow along the A27 at peak times is already slow, and an additional 4.1% increase in evening peak flow would meaningfully contribute to traffic delays which residents already find unacceptable. A 5.5% increase at Northgate gyratory is also of concern.

Recommendation: No objection in principle to the development which is supported by the relevant land use allocation within the adopted Local Plan and largely accords with the previous overall West of Chichester Masterplan. However, objection is raised on a number of points of concern which should be addressed fully prior to any grant of permission:

- **The siting of the Bishop Luffa access roundabout at the point of exit from the foot/cycle bridge over the railway will encourage dangerous crossing of the SAR by students, as the crossings are some distance in the opposite direction to the school access. Consideration should be given to moving the roundabout and putting in a crossing at the foot of the bridge to maximise safety for students. Alternatively, negotiation could be undertaken between Network Rail, WSCC and CDC to reconfigure the northern side of the bridge. The existing bridge directs users back on themselves to bring them out at its current exit point. A reconfiguration of the bridge could provide two continuous slopes, for those**

travelling both west and east, which would bring its western exit (or access) point close to the Centurion Way crossing, although this would result in the loss of a group of trees. The eastern exit would also be a safer distance from the roundabout.

- The siting and extent of the industrial areas into the land around the ancient woodland is of concern; it creates a linear area of landscape and ecology sandwiched between industrial units, rather than as was originally envisaged, a larger area directly connecting (for wildlife) to the phase 1 country park. The development to the north of this countryside was originally envisaged to be residential, swapping the adjacent land use to industrial reduces the practicality of accessibility, desirability of recreational use of the area. It being significantly less visible and less well used for leisure purposes by adjacent residents, increases its risk of being used for anti-social behaviour, as well as the consequent risk of development pressure to infill.
- Traffic flow along the A27 at peak times is already slow, as is traffic flow within the city centre at times. Although the Transport Assessment concludes that impacts are acceptable, the predicted 4.1% increase in evening peak flow traffic every day at the Fishbourne roundabout and a 5.5% increase at Northgate gyratory would meaningfully contribute to traffic delays which residents already find unacceptable.