

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 7pm at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood

PRESENT: Cllr Gareth DeBoos (Chairman)
Cllr Rae Frederick (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Luke Dadford
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Michael Thierry
Cllr Becci Windsor (*from 7.04pm*)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Christopher Wilkins, Town Clerk
Mrs Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
District Cllr Jeremy Heron
District Cllr Nigel Linford

ABSENT: Cllr Ingrid De Bruyn
Cllr Glenys Turner

C/7099 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 3 members of the public present interested in agenda item 6 (planning applications for land at Moortown Lane and adjacent to Crow Lane).

C/7100 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Turner.

C/7101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

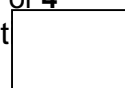
Cllr Thierry declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of Hampshire County Council, which has an interest in land off Moortown Lane as a landowner.

C/7102 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/7103 RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Briers presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th February 2024.



RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th February 2024 be received.

**C/7104
PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd February 2024.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd February 2024 be received.

**C/7105
POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Kelleher presented the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 21st February 2024.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 21st February 2024 be received.

**C/7106
PLANNING APPLICATIONS 21/11723 LAND AT MOORTOWN LANE AND 23/10707 OPEN SPACE ADJACENT TO CROW LANE**

Draft responses to the two planning applications had been prepared in advance of the meeting (*Annex A*). The main application for land off Moortown Lane was originally registered at the beginning of 2022 and the Council had submitted a comprehensive objection in April 2022. Amended plans had recently been submitted, but the Council continues to have a number of concerns.

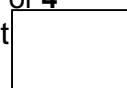
Cllr Windsor joined the meeting at 7.04pm

Cllr Day had prepared the draft response to 21/11723, mindful of how NFDC's Planning Committee has approached determination of applications in the past, and focussing on the key issues and fundamental concerns. The response reflects the views of councillors and residents who have made comments on the NFDC planning portal. He thanked the Deputy Town Clerk and Cllrs G and M DeBoos for their input. A number of documents and comments from statutory consultees are outstanding and it is uncertain if the application will be ready for consideration by NFDC Planning Committee in April. Regardless of this, the Town Council had been requested to submit its observations now.

The main concerns include site access; delivery of highway improvement work; walking and cycling links; design and layout; on-site ANRG; drainage; and non-compliance with various policies in the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (RNP). It was noted that the Examiner's final report had now been received and recommends minimal changes. Therefore the RNP should hold significant weight in the planning process.

It is acknowledged the site has been allocated in the Local Plan and that there is a housing shortage, but the current application is unacceptable on many grounds.

Members welcomed the draft responses and praised those involved in their preparation.



There was a discussion about the procedure for involvement of town and parish councils at NFDC Planning Committee meetings, and it was suggested that an extension of time should be requested to allow representatives to speak for longer than 3 minutes.

A recorded vote was requested; all Members present voted to approve the draft responses, without change.

RESOLVED: That the draft responses to planning applications 21/11723 and 23/10707 be approved for submission to New Forest District Council.

C/7107

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Members considered the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council (May 2024 – May 2025) (*Annex B*).

RESOLVED: That the schedule of meetings be approved.

ACTION N Vodden

C/7108

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Cllr Swyer presented the notes of the Communications Plan Task and Finish Group meeting held on 6th February 2024 (*Annex C*).

Members considered the Communications Plan objectives (*Annex D*). Cllr Swyer thanked the Town Clerk and Cllr M DeBoos for their input to this document.

The T&F Group is following a structured process, and it was felt important to get input from other councillors before going further and considering a draft Communications Plan.

It was proposed that an item be included on every committee agenda to consider which 'business as usual' items might require proactive communication.

RESOLVED: 1) That the notes of the Communications Plan Task and Finish Group meeting held on 6th February 2024 be received; and
2) That the Communications Plan objectives be approved.

ACTION C Wilkins

C/7109

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AT LONG LANE

The Town Clerk reported that the issue with the water supply had been resolved, avoiding additional expense. The new three-phase electricity supply is awaiting installation; a generator may be required in the interim as commencement of internal works is imminent and the building needs to be dried out.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk's verbal report be received.

C/7110

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED

As it had been expected this might be a long meeting, a report had been prepared in lieu of verbal updates on this occasion (*Annex E*).

C/7111
REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County and District Cllr Thierry had submitted a written report (*Annex F*).

District Cllr Heron reported that NFDC had set the Council Tax for 2024/25 at £199.79 for a Band D property; a 2.99% increase on the previous year. The full Council Tax, including HCC, RTC, Police and Fire authority contributions, amounts to £2,194.30. for a Band D property.

C/7112
REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS

Annex E refers. It was noted that the next meeting of the Business Community Network had been changed to Wednesday 15th May.

C/7113
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The following meeting dates were noted:

Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 1 st March 2024
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 6 th March 2024
Staffing	7.00pm	Wednesday 13 th March 2024
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 20 th March 2024
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 27 th March 2024

C/7114
EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (*Confidential minutes - Annex G*).

C/7115
COMMUNITY AWARDS

Members considered nominations and arrangements for presentation of Community Awards recommended by the Working Party (*Confidential Annex H*).

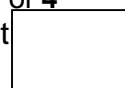
RESOLVED: That the nominations and arrangements be approved.

ACTION

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.22pm.

APPROVED
27th March 2024

TOWN MAYOR



21/11723 – Strategic Site 13 - LAND OFF MOORTOWN LANE, RINGWOOD

Hybrid planning application comprising a total of 443 dwellings: Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except access) for residential development of up to 293 dwellings, public open space, ANRG, SuDS, Landscaping, other supporting Infrastructure associated with the development; Full permission for 150 dwellings with means of access from Moortown Lane, associated parking, ANRG, open space, landscaping, and SuDS, other supporting Infrastructure associated with the development. This application is subject to an Environmental Assessment and affects Public Rights of Way.

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL DRAFT RESPONSE**Summary**

This is Ringwood Town Council's further response to planning application 21/11723, to be considered and agreed by Full Council on 28 February 2024.

It follows the Council's original response from April 2022, a copy of which is attached for ease of reference.

We have considered the amended plans and further documents, note the amendments and that the Ringwood Neighborhood Plan is currently undergoing examination and should accordingly be given weight.

We remain of the (strong) view that the application should be refused (R4). We have not had sight of the Officer's report and note that responses from several statutory consultees are outstanding. We therefore reserve the right to make further comments in respect of any additional information received relating to this application.

Given the vast number of documents relating to this application, we have endeavored to address only our principal concerns and not matters of detail. We will be represented at the NFDC Planning Committee when the application is considered and invite members to ask questions to clarify any matter not specifically addressed.

Vehicular Site Access

The issue of site access is not a reserved matter.

The proposal is contrary to the policy set out for SS13 in the Local Plan, specifically because the only access will be from Moortown Lane – as the name suggests, a lane along which two Heavy Goods Vehicles cannot pass. At the Public Inquiry into the current Local Plan, the Inspector was specifically invited to exclude an access into this site from the north-west corner but declined to do so.

The land in question is under the control of HCC and designated as an employment site although no application has been forthcoming. It appears that the applicant has failed to reach any agreement with HCC that would allow construction of this access, let alone any access onto Crow Lane.

The argument will no doubt be that the application should not be refused "simply because" the applicant has failed to secure these agreements but the outcome will be that all vehicular traffic will need to access and egress the site via Moortown Lane.

This is a fundamental issue. It is unrealistic to suppose that all residents living on this site will walk or cycle to take their children to school or to do their shopping.

The proposed “improvements” to the junction with Christchurch Road and elsewhere could only be “secured” by a financial contribution under a s.106 agreement but that does by no means guarantee they will be delivered. For example, when consent was granted for the Lidl store on Forest Gate Business Park, this included a s.106 agreement for a contribution towards a pedestrian crossing. It transpired that the contribution was woefully inadequate and no controlled crossing was ever built (let alone a “Toucan crossing” as is now proposed). There are similar examples relating to the Beaumont Park estate, with two key footpaths as yet undelivered.

Further, previous applications have demonstrated that “improvements” to other junctions are not practically feasible.

If consent is granted, we would request a condition that ALL proposed highway improvements be implemented before occupation of ANY proposed dwelling.

Pedestrian and cycle access

Again, the applicant has failed to secure the necessary consents to ensure compliance with policy requirements to (for example) provide reasonably accessible links to local schools (Poulner Infant and Junior Schools in particular) but also to local shops – e.g. Lidl on Forest Gate Business Park.

The proposals for the junction with and then crossings across Christchurch Road are simply not practical nor achievable.

Other pedestrian routes from the north and east of the site are not properly defined.

Policy R1 (Clause D) of the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan states: “The harmful effects of traffic congestion, especially traffic with an origin and destination outside the town centre, will be tackled through the promotion of other means of moving about the town including the delivery of effective walking and cycling measures to better connect the new communities at Moortown Lane and Hightown Road.”

There is no clear means by which this policy will be met; there is no connection from the north of the site to Wellworthy Way and the proposed connection to Christchurch Road to the South of the site does not appear to be suitable for walking or cycling and requires crossing the increasingly busy Christchurch Road.

Housing

We echo (without repeating) the observations of officers that whilst the commitment to 50% affordable housing is welcomed, the proposed mix of housing, both affordable and otherwise, is not policy compliant.

The proportion of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings for the first phase is 40% (60 of the 150 dwellings). This is not in accordance with Policy R5 of the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (RNP), which states that the figure is greater than 50% of schemes of five or more dwellings.

There are no First Homes proposed in Phase 1, contrary to Policy R6 of the emerging RNP, which requires that a minimum of 25% of new affordable homes shall be provided as First Homes.

Policy R11 of the emerging RNP requires that “wherever feasible, all buildings should be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m²/year. Whilst we are encouraged by the potential for inclusion of PV panels we note there is no definite commitment at this stage to comply with this requirement.

Design Issues

The Town Council’s view is that the proposed development (particularly regarding the detailed application) is unacceptable. We refer here to the observations of the Urban Design Officer regarding numerous aspects not least “street scenes”, the density of the proposals which are far too high for an “urban edge development” which has hitherto been Green Belt land.

There is a great deal wrong with the proposals but to cite but one example, please consider the western edge of the proposed development. The existing dwellings (which are quite substantial properties that, thanks to the topography sit considerably lower than the ground level of the development site). They would not only be overlooked by the proposed housing but the proposed style of houses along this edge would be entirely out of keeping with the immediate locality. There appears to have been no consideration of how existing power cables will be accessed nor the effect on drainage.

We have little doubt that if the application here was to build a single dwelling (let alone a dozen or so) backing on to the existing properties, considerable concerns would have been raised about “overlooking/loss of privacy” and “loss of amenity”.

There should in our view be a clear “gap” and “green space” between the existing dwellings and any proposed new housing.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that “development that is not well designed should be refused”. The applicant has not submitted a Building for a Healthy Life assessment, as required by Policy R8 of the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council and members of the RNP team have undertaken a BfHL assessment (see attached, which forms part of the Town Council’s response), which indicates the development is not well designed. On that basis, the application should be refused.

“Open Spaces – ANRG etc.”

The Town Council welcomes the exclusion of the “Ten Acre Field” in the applicant’s strategy. However, the proposal to include land adjacent to Crow Lane as part of its proposal is simply wrong (please refer to the Council’s comments on planning application 23/10707) and for the purpose of this application should be ignored. The application is not compliant with policy and for this reason alone should be refused.

Landscaping

Policy R10 of the emerging Ringwood Neighborhood Plan states that “all proposals should protect and maintain trees and hedgerows; provide for the planting of new trees for flood

management and carbon sequestration purposes; and include hedgerows and bulb and wildflower planting where it is compatible with the street scene.”

We note the intention is to maintain most of the hedgerows and to plant new trees, however we would ask for more details of bulb and wildflower planting in the area.

Drainage etc.

The applicant appears not to have considered properly how water currently drains from the site nor the effect of its proposals on adjoining properties. Much further investigation needs to be undertaken in this regard.

Hampshire County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, requested specific information in their original response dated 28/01/2022. They responded further on 20/06/2023 stating that information on infiltration testing and groundwater monitoring to support the drainage strategy had still not been provided. The most recent response dated 05/02/2024 states that this information remains outstanding. Given the increased level of flooding in the area, it is of great concern that the applicant has failed to provide the required information and to demonstrate an adequate drainage strategy for the site.

There is an opportunity to bring back into use the currently redundant Moortown Lane Flood Relief Drain if this development proceeds. We would welcome a conversation with HCC as the Local Lead Flood Authority and the applicant as to how this might be achieved.

Archeaology

It would appear that the site has some archaeological significance but precisely what that might be has not been disclosed. The Town Council requests that there should be fuller disclosure regarding this aspect and appropriate conditions attached to any consent.

Conclusion

The Town Council recognises that, both nationally and locally, there is a housing shortage, particularly for younger people who find it difficult to the point of impossibility to step on to the “housing ladder”.

However, there are yet again so many issues with the present application, both outline and detailed, that we urge that the application be refused and the applicant be in effect invited to go back to the drawing board.

Building for a Healthy Life Assessment

Moortown Lane Planning Application (ref. 21/11723)

DRAFT

V2.21 Feb 2024

Ringwood Town Council &

Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan Design & Heritage Team

Introduction

Following assessment of the Beaumont Park development, the Design & Heritage team has proposed the Building for a Healthy Life assessment tool be used to assess all major applications in Ringwood.

The NPPF (138) says that *“Local planning authorities should ensure that they ... make appropriate use of tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development .. such as **Building for a Healthy Life**. ...In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes... (139) Development that is not well designed should be refused...”*

Submission of the above application provided an opportunity for the team to undertake such an assessment on a *live* application.

The applicant has not submitted a Building for a Healthy Life assessment, despite the tool being referred to within the Design & Access Statement.

Limitations on the initial assessment

The team responsible for the initial assessment includes 3 registered architects & a town planner. The initial assessment was undertaken by 2-3 team members over 5 hours, including time spent on the structure of the report. As such the report below is outline in scope.

Progress of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (RNP)

Following Regulation 16 consultation, an examiner was appointed in November of 2023 and a draft report has been seen by the RNP team with a publication expected imminently.

Update following submission of revised plans

Revised plans were received by NFDC on 23/24 January 2024. Accordingly the initial assessment has been reappraised in light of the revised plans. In recognition of the RNP's progress, a team comprising 3 Cllrs & 2 members of the RNP Design & Heritage Team met to complete the reappraisal. The team had all submitted documents available.

Main Findings

The Moortown Lane scheme

The initial assessment raised significant concerns relating to the proposed overall layout. As these concerns related to fundamental principles, such as prioritising cycle & walking routes, streets dominated by parking or avoiding curvilinear street forms it seemed likely that use of the tool would result in a significant revision to the proposal.

The phase 1 layout failed to integrate green spaces into the street layouts.

It was also noted that the lack of strong concept drawings, street sections & elevations & 3D model imagery may indicate a lack of proper evaluation.

Update

Appraisal of the revised scheme shows many areas of moderate improvement reflected in changes from red to orange.

However, important aspects of the scheme such as street legibility, integration of meaningful green spaces into the phase 1 layout and consideration for active travel road users on the principal routes remain lacking.

One third of the areas of assessment areas remain red and there are no green, which the team felt indicated there was still appreciable room for improvement.

The Building for a Healthy Life tool

The assessment tool effectively prompts and organises assessment of key urban design principles which may otherwise be difficult to undertake, especially for those unfamiliar with such principles. The team therefore recommends a policy requiring use of BfHL.













Other design related aspects such as material choice, detailing & use of renewables (which also raised concern) are more easily identified.

The team is hopeful the local authority will undertake a thorough BfHL assessment of the Moortown Lane scheme.

Update

The team was able to track areas of improvement and identify further ones using the framework so continue to feel this is a valuable tool. Nevertheless, we would still like to see this tool being explicitly used by the applicant and local authority.

Assessment Summary

INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS	DISTINCTIVE PLACES	STREETS FOR ALL
Natural connections	 Making the most of what's there	 Healthy Streets 
Walking, cycling and public transport	 A memorable character	 Cycle and car parking 
Facilities and services	 Well defined streets and spaces	 Green and blue infrastructure 
Homes for everyone	 Easy to find your way around	 Back of pavement, front of home 

INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS

Natural Connections



On the assumption that the wider scheme is implemented, provision is made for connections (and future connections) including traffic, pedestrian and cycle links to the areas around the site. Pedestrian connections to the existing POS to the south of Moortown Lane are included.



Street patterns have been revised to provide more direct and less curvilinear routes through the site.



Cycle / pedestrian routes through the Green Infrastructure respond better to desire lines through the site. However, there are more opportunities to provide permeability through the wider site to the west (Willow Drive).



Landscaping strategy seeks to enhance and replant hedgerows and incorporates a biodiversity net gain within the design.



Walking, Cycling and Public Transport



Retains existing footpath and provides additional link through to opposite sports pitches. Routes for cyclists and pedestrians are indicated through to the Castleman Trailway / Crow Arch Lane with dedicated off road cycle and footpath through the green infrastructure from the south-west boundary of the site.



Pedestrian link would be provided to Christchurch Road and nearest bus routes.



It is understood that the road design plans for a potential future bus route through the site.

Street layout is focused on highways engineered design with large corner radii. This does not prioritise pedestrian users and can create undesirable situations by encouraging cars to turn more quickly while pedestrians navigate wider or convoluted crossing points.



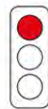
The principle street does not indicate any protected cycleway or prioritisation of cyclists at junctions and parking layout may lead to dangerous maneuvers onto key shared routes.



Pedestrian and cycle routes through the site are more direct however opportunities for improved connectivity still exist.



Facilities and Services



Incorporates formal and informal recreation space (POS, LAP/ LEAP/ ANGR/MUGA, walking and cycle routes / dog agility area), however ANGR is on a remote parcel of land. There is no direct access from the site to this area. The wider open spaces are also segregated from the built development, rather than being integrated through within Phase 1.



Pocket park areas (in future phases) would enjoy a good degree of passive surveillance, well overlooked. But lacking for the LEAP and NEAP proposed as part of Phase 1.



This is a major housing development which does not incorporate any community facilities, such as a small convenience shop. The wider walkability and cyclability of routes to existing key facilities should be further explored as connecting roads / paths do not provide safe and accessible options for all.

Homes for everyone



Affordable housing appears to be distributed in poorer quality settings within the development, with none provided on the edges fronting the surrounding G.I or internal green open space.



The mix and range of housing would appear to meet with Local Plan Requirements. However, the Town is in need of smaller homes (1 bed and 2 bed units) and the proportion of these could be increased.

Phase	Address type	Typing	Rooms	Net GFA	Total No of Units
Phase 1	2-Bed Detached	2-Bed Detached	2-Bed	100	10
	3-Bed Detached	3-Bed Detached	3-Bed	150	15
	4-Bed Detached	4-Bed Detached	4-Bed	200	20
	5-Bed Detached	5-Bed Detached	5-Bed	250	25
	6-Bed Detached	6-Bed Detached	6-Bed	300	30
	7-Bed Detached	7-Bed Detached	7-Bed	350	35
	8-Bed Detached	8-Bed Detached	8-Bed	400	40
	9-Bed Detached	9-Bed Detached	9-Bed	450	45
	10-Bed Detached	10-Bed Detached	10-Bed	500	50
	11-Bed Detached	11-Bed Detached	11-Bed	550	55
Phase 2	1-Bed Flat	1-Bed Flat	1-Bed	50	50
	2-Bed Flat	2-Bed Flat	2-Bed	100	100
	3-Bed Flat	3-Bed Flat	3-Bed	150	150
	4-Bed Flat	4-Bed Flat	4-Bed	200	200
	5-Bed Flat	5-Bed Flat	5-Bed	250	250
	6-Bed Flat	6-Bed Flat	6-Bed	300	300
	7-Bed Flat	7-Bed Flat	7-Bed	350	350
	8-Bed Flat	8-Bed Flat	8-Bed	400	400
	9-Bed Flat	9-Bed Flat	9-Bed	450	450
	10-Bed Flat	10-Bed Flat	10-Bed	500	500

Distinctive Places

Making the most of what's there



The design background references positive local characteristics however the integration of these in the final design is variable.

The scale relationship of the development to that surrounding is not clearly demonstrated of note with the existing properties to the west.



A memorable character



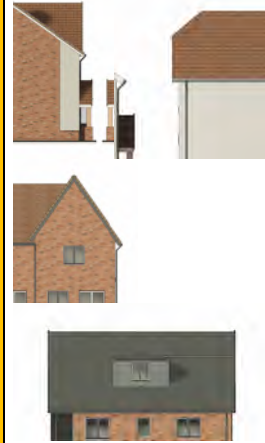
The design seeks to reflect local vernacular in building design and materials palette, subject to agreement of high quality / natural materials. It also incorporates focal point buildings at key positions.



The high degree of variety in the building design, number of different housing types does not create cohesion or clearly identifiable streets / character areas or a sense of place.



Some of the detailing of the buildings is not reflective of local vernacular.



Well defined streets



Active frontages have been provided.

Building lines lack strength and continuity particularly along the primary route and there are a number of large gaps in the streetscene.



Easy to find your way around



The highway design is more direct with hierarchy differentiation between primary and secondary routes. However the scheme does not demonstrate how it will incorporate navigable features for those with visual, mobility or other limitations.



Focal points are incorporated within the design, however elements of the building design (variety of typologies and variable building lines) do not create clear street identity.



DRAFT

Streets for All

Healthy Streets



Street design is principally focused on vehicles and parking which does not prioritise the pedestrian, or cyclist experience.

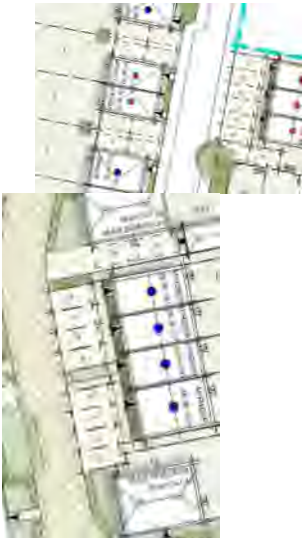







Although green pockets are provided on key corners and new buildings benefit from modest front garden areas, there is little public landscaping throughout the built-up areas of the development. Occasional, informal spaces and facilities / street furniture is limited and some areas of landscaping are nominal, such that they may be prone to damage and future loss.



Cycle and Car Parking



<p>Rear parking courts are used to reduce the dominance of parking on the street environment. There are however areas where there is reliance on tandem parking and parking arrangements which could pose additional hazards for other users.</p>	
<p>Cycle parking is provided.</p>	
<p>The design is not clear on how it will anticipate or design out anti-social car parking.</p>	
<p>Electric vehicle charging units will be supplied with each new property with on-plot parking and ducting supplied for future installation in more remote parking spaces.</p>	
<p>Green and Blue Infrastructure </p>	
<p>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems have been incorporated into the design.</p>	

<p>Comprehensive landscape strategy has been submitted which incorporates a range of habitats and reflects biodiversity net gain being sought.</p>	
<p>The majority of green spaces on site are segregated from the built development with limited positive integration although this this appears to be improved in future phases.</p>	
<p>There are some small areas of land around the development offer limited value and can be prone to neglect.</p>	
<p>Back of pavement front of home</p>	
<p>Modest defensible space provided at the front of properties which could be reinforced by stronger boundary treatments.</p>	



23/10707 Open Space adjacent to Crow Lane

The change of use of agricultural land to publicly accessible open space to facilitate Alternative Natural Recreational Green Space ('ANRG'), with associated landscaping, footways and access points

Ringwood Town Council recommends Refusal (4)

The application is contrived. It is an artificial device to increase the number of houses and housing density within Strategic Site 13 (SS13).

Loss of Green Belt and Agricultural Land

The development is inappropriate and would lead to a loss of Green Belt and further loss of agricultural land, in addition to that already allocated for SS13.

Road Safety

The proposed location of the crossing in Crow Lane is not safe. Although on paper the road appears to be fairly straight, there is a curve in the road and visibility for and of pedestrians would be compromised.

The creation of an access to Crow Lane at this point would encourage pedestrians/cyclists to take this route to walk/cycle to Crow Farm Shop; a route that would not be safe without improvements unlikely to be achievable in this narrow road.

The road regularly floods at this location, meaning access to the site would be compromised at certain times of the year (see below).

Flood Risk

There is considerable concern about the impact the proposal would have on an area already susceptible to flooding.

Crow Lane regularly floods after heavy rainfall and is impassable as a result at least twice a year. The photograph below shows flood water running into the application site and at the proposed location of the road crossing and access into the site.



The proposed site adjoins Crow Stream on the east side where it too bursts its banks a few times a year with implications for site drainage. It is important to ensure that no more water goes into the Stream as it cannot cope.

The Council and its Flood Wardens have a great deal of knowledge regarding the flooding and drainage in this area, having undertaken works to re-gravel and widen Crow Stream (downstream of the application site), and keeping it regularly maintained, to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding in the area.

It is highly probable that the developers do not understand the dynamics of the local drainage relevant to the site development. They need to take a catchment view of the system in order to understand the causes of existing flooding to address the issue through mitigation so that the situation is not worsened.

Specific issues with regard to the application are as follow:

1. We need to be sure the infiltration tests are made in February when the water table is highest. Under SUDS rules the bottom of the drainage cages need to be at least a metre above the ground water level. Evidence shows that, in the flood season, this might be difficult to achieve.
2. "Gentle relevelling of the site" is proposed by the applicant to effect satisfactory drainage. Additional detail is required to assess any unintended consequences.
3. The red line on the plans includes the Stream to the south of the site. We would like to understand what is proposed here.
4. We need assurance that no extra water will get into the Crow Stream as a result of the proposed development.
5. Crow Stream to the south east of the site breaks its banks a few times a year. This will have implications for development in this corner of the site. For example, the footpaths would become impassable.
6. The consequences of the backflow from the Crow Stream into the Crow Lane Ditch (which runs alongside Crow Lane) need to be understood and considered. In flooding events, the water in the Crow Stream at Streets Lane is 2 or 3 feet higher than the pipes on the north side of the wetland which drains the Crow Lane Ditch. The stream water therefore has always backed up into the Crow Lane Ditch. As it is, during flooding events, water will still back up from the Crow Stream into the Crow Lane Ditch which will then always flood. Several remedial actions have been identified to stop the backflow, including removing some flow restrictions in the Crow Lane Ditch. Should permission be granted, this is an opportunity for those measures to be implemented.
7. The Council would appreciate the opportunity to meet with developers to share local knowledge and discuss these concerns.

Should permission be granted, an enforceable condition (financial penalty?) should be imposed to ensure all the agreed flood mitigation measures are implemented prior to completion of the development of SS13.

Rights of Way

The Council notes the updated response from HCC Countryside Service and supports the proposed improvements to Footpath 45 and the Castleman Trailway, as well as the replacement footbridge on Footpath 41a.

Biodiversity

No biodiversity study has been provided with the application – this should be requested.

Viability

It is noted that a Financial Viability Assessment has already been submitted by the applicant in relation to 21/11723. There are concerns the additional costs to create this ANRG will impact further on the proposed development and affordable housing provision.

**RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS
MARCH 2024 - MAY 2025**

Note:- RLOS 1st Wed, PTE 1st Fri, P+F 3rd Wed (or 4th where 5 Wed's in the month), FC last Wed.
Staffing committee twice a year (Sept and March usually, plus as required).

MARCH 2024		
1	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
6	Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm
13	Staffing	7.00pm
20	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
27	Full Council	7.00pm
APRIL 2024		
3	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
5	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
17	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
24	Full Council	7.00pm
MAY 2024		
1	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7:00pm
3	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
15	ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY	7.00pm
22	Policy and Finance	7.00pm
29	ANNUAL (COUNCIL) MEETING	7.00pm
JUNE 2024		
5	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
7	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
19	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
26	Full Council	7.00pm
JULY 2024		
3	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
5	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
24	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
31	Full Council	7.00pm
AUGUST 2024		
2	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
SEPTEMBER 2024		
4	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7:00pm
6	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
11	Staffing	7.00pm
18	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
25	Full Council	7.00pm
OCTOBER 2024		
2	Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm
4	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
23	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
30	Full Council	7.00pm

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NOVEMBER 2024		
1	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
6	Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm
20	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
27	Full Council	7.00pm
DECEMBER 2024		
4	Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00 pm
6	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
11	Policy and Finance	7.00pm
18	Full Council	7.00pm
JANUARY 2025		
8	Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm
10	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
22	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
29	Full Council	7.00pm
FEBRUARY 2025		
5	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
7	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
19	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
26	Full Council	7.00pm
MARCH 2025		
5	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
7	Planning, Town and Environment	10.00am
12	Staffing	7.00pm
19	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
26	Full Council	7.00pm
APRIL 2025		
2	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	7.00pm
4	Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am
23	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
30	Full Council	7.00pm
MAY 2025		
2	Planning, Town and Environment	7.00pm
7	Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces	10.00am
14	ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY	7.00pm
21	Policy & Finance	7.00pm
28	ANNUAL (COUNCIL) MEETING	7.00pm

For further information, please contact 01425 473883 or email us at:
town.council@ringwood.gov.uk

Communications Plan Task & Finish Group

Notes of meeting held on Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 2pm in Teams

Present: Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Rae Frederick
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr James Swyer (Chairman)
Cllr Glenys Turner

In attendance: Christopher Wilkins – Town Clerk
Jo Hurd – Deputy Town Clerk
Charmaine Bennett – Clubhouse & Events Manager

Absent: None

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members were present.
It was noted that Cllr Turner had joined the Group since the last meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

3. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 were approved.

4. SWOT ANALYSIS (STEP 3)

The revised SWOT analysis (*Annex A*) was approved.

5. PLAN OBJECTIVES (STEP 4)

A draft outline plan had been prepared for objectives (*Annex B*). It was noted that objectives fell into two main categories; those linked to the Council Strategy (time limited) and 'business as usual' (ongoing).

It was agreed to remove the 'business as usual' items from the plan and instead recommend that an item be included on every committee/working party agenda to consider which, of the issues discussed at each meeting, require proactive communication. This would give Members oversight of communications and make it clear to officers what should be communicated, but not necessarily dictating how. The officer clerking the meeting would be able to prompt the questions in the objectives plan (what is the message, who are we trying to engage etc.).

Cllr DeBoos had prepared draft objectives for some of the items linked to the Strategy. These were discussed and it was agreed the plan should be populated with this information and members of the Group given the opportunity to build the content.

ACTION: Cllr DeBoos to populate outline plan and send to the Deputy Town Clerk for circulation to all members of the Group via Sharepoint.

All members of the Group to review and build on outline plan by 19 February, to enable a draft objectives plan to be circulated with the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 28 February.

There was a question about how to handle people who were not happy with decisions made. This could be reduced by encouraging people to become more engaged in the decision-making process, by making them more aware of items coming up for discussion at meetings. This may lead to an increased number of comments on social media and greater attendance at Council meetings.

It was noted that resources are limited and there is currently no capacity to update the website and/or social media on a daily basis, let alone manage an online conversation. It would not be necessary to change the structure of meetings, but public expectation of participation would need to be managed and time limits respected.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

2pm, Tuesday 5 March in Teams.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.00pm.

RECEIVED
28 February 2024

APPROVED

TOWN MAYOR

WORKING PARTY CHAIRMAN

Ringwood Town Council – Communications SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Effective Event Promotion

- Successful publicising of events and ticket sales.
- Large posters around town for increased visibility.
- Importance of non-digital communications.

Digital Presence

- New RTC website with regular messages received via the contact page.
- Utilisation of Facebook for positive news, especially those shared directly to the Ringwood page.

Media Engagement

- Press releases consistently picked up by local press.
- Articles in R&F News contributing to community engagement.

Face-to-Face Interaction

- Approachable and friendly face-to-face service provided by Information Officers.
- Successful use of the small interview room at Gateway.

Quality of service

- Quick response times.

Weaknesses

No member overview of communications

- Communications doesn't fall under our traditional committee system and, as a result, doesn't feature as an agenda item.
- As a result, officers receive no guidance on what is a communications priority or what they can/can't publicise.

Social Media Underutilisation

- Little use of Instagram and no clear strategy for its use.
- Inconsistency in updating the website and Facebook.
- Lack of clear guidelines on what to share or respond to on Facebook.

Resource and Training Gaps

- Insufficient time, resources, and training for staff.
- Facebook is unmanned at weekends and is reliant on staff working out of hours.

Internal Communication Challenges

- As communication is reactive, there's not currently an established position on certain issues. Having these would help when dealing with resident issues.
- A feedback loop of the issues being brought to Gateway staff might help us to learn what we need to be communicating better.
- Issues with internal communication and engagement, including some councillors being less involved.

No culture of communicating/celebrating the 'everyday'

- The great work our officers do is easily overlooked or seen as 'business as usual'. Most celebration of this work is done by residents highlighting what they have done, but we could do more to be proactive in highlighting it.

Opportunities

Modernisation of Communication

- Adapting to new trends, social media platforms, and communication tools (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram, chat groups).
- Equipment and digital communication (email newsletters etc.) is relatively affordable.
- Email allows targeted communication to different audiences (events etc.).

Community Collaboration

- Exploring dynamic collaborations with other venues in the town (Greyfriars, The Barn, gyms etc.)
- Stronger relationships with other bodies (schools, sports clubs, uniformed groups, other local authorities)

Our physical assets

- Large volume of footfall at the Gateway and Carvers Clubhouse.
- Physical advertising space at both venues that we can utilise.
- Targeted RTC presence at events via event control marquee.

Threats

Public perception of 'the council'

- Most people are unaware as to what each level of council (RTC, NFDC, HCC) is responsible for.
- The Gateway serving as the visible face of 'the council' brings all issues to our door.

Reaching wider demographics

- Current media (digital and print) only reaches a certain demographic.
- Difficult to know how to reach outside of this.

Social media 'noise'/algorithms

- Communication is transient and easily missed.
- Posts are weighted towards paid advertising, something we don't have budget for (and could be perceived as poor use of council revenue).

Engagement overload

- Residents are invited to engage with consultations from HCC, NFDC and other groups.
- Often the progress in delivering outcomes of these is slower than people might expect (e.g. Carvers masterplan requires funding).

Strength of 'competitor' communications

- Other, larger local authorities have resource and staff to deliver a more active communications programme, such as the NFDC email newsletter.
- We could look less active or professional by comparison.

Ringwood Town Council – Communications Plan Task & Finish Group

Objectives for the Communication Plan

Subject Area	What do the communications need to deliver?	Who will they need to engage?	What do we want the audience to do?	How will we know if we've succeeded	When must we do this by?
	<i>(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)</i>	<i>Try to be specific</i>	Awareness: Prompt knowledge, build understanding, gain recognition. Action: Join, visit, sign up to, attend, disseminate, support. Engagement: Create information exchange, attend meetings, volunteer to help	<i>What targets or indicators can show that we have achieved the above?</i>	
Neighbourhood Plan					
Scoping projects (Carvers Masterplan, Grounds building, Thriving Market Place, Open Spaces management Plan)					
Funded projects (Cemetery Memorial Wall, Football facilities)					
Events advance plan					
Linking to local businesses (Business Event, Business Network)					

Major planning applications					
Town Council					
- Community Awards					
- Town Assembly					
Planning, Town & Environment Committee					
- Planning/Tree works comments					
- Licensing					
- Flood Wardens					
- REAL WP					
- Public rights of way					
Policy & Finance Committee					
- Information Service					
- Markets & fairs					
- Grants					
Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee					
- Allotments					
- Clubhouse/Carvers WP					
- Cemetery					
- Events/sub-cttee.					
- Open Spaces					
- Play facilities					
- Tree Warden					
Staffing Committee					
- Recruitment					
Other agencies					

Ringwood Town Council – Communications Plan Task & Finish Group

Objectives for the Communication Plan

Subject Area	What do the communications need to deliver?	Who will they need to engage?	What do we want the audience to do?	How will we know if we've succeeded	When must we do this by?
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Neighbourhood Plan	Greater awareness of the benefits of the Neighbourhood Plan	All potential voters in the referendum	Vote in the referendum	The turnout and the result at the referendum	The date of the referendum
Scoping projects (Carvers Masterplan, Grounds building, Thriving Market Place, Open Spaces Management Plan)	Increased understanding of the rationale for, status and evolution of each project	Residents, business-owners and potential users of each facility	Provide constructive feedback and be more engaged (attend meetings, submit comments & suggestions, etc.)	The number of comments received and the degree to which these provide ideas for improvements.	Depends on project.
Funded projects (Cemetery Memorial Wall, Football facilities)	Wider appreciation of the nature of each project and interest in its progress.	Residents and potential users.	Comment on the project, spread information about it and prepare to use the new facility.	The number of comments and likes. Early usage of new facilities.	Regularly until the project is complete.

Events advance plan	Increased awareness of upcoming and planned events.	Residents, business-owners, potential attendees and volunteers	Attend events, spread information, volunteer and suggest improvements and/or ideas for new events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Financial outcomes • Volunteer-helper numbers • Likes and shares • Comments received. 	Continuous but prioritised around each event date.
Linking to local businesses (Business Event, Business Network)	Greater awareness of the benefits of doing business in Ringwood and collaborating with other businesses and with us.	Local business-owners	Join Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community, engage with us and sponsor our events and facilities.	Membership of RBC rises. The number of comments received. Sponsorships secured.	Continuous.
Major planning applications	Greater awareness of applications, our influence upon them and the work we and others put in to enhance the town.	Ringwood residents	Comment on applications and support our comments.	Comments received, likes and shares.	The closing date for comments for each application
The “business as usual” items below all have one overarching objective	Wider interest and engagement in our work and understanding of our key decisions.	Ringwood residents	Attend and speak at our meetings. Comment on our business. Stand for election as councillors or apply for job vacancies.	Number of people attending / commenting on decisions. No decisions being reviewed or reversed. No unfilled vacancies.	Continuous
Town Council					
- Community Awards					
- Town Assembly					
Planning, Town & Environment Committee					
- Planning/Tree works comments					
- Licensing					
- Flood Wardens					

- REAL WP					
- Public rights of way					
Policy & Finance Committee					
- Information Service					
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- Open Spaces					
- Play facilities					
- Tree Warden					
Staffing Committee					
- Recruitment					
Other agencies					

TOWN COUNCIL**28th February 2024****Miscellaneous Reports****1. Introduction and reason for report**

- 1.1 The Town Mayor requested that some reports normally given verbally be submitted in writing on this occasion, to save time at the meeting. The reports set out below have been received to date.

2. Town Mayor

- 2.1 Cllr Gareth DeBoos has said “the only item I want to report this month is the opening of the adorable ‘Inn on the Bickerley’ facility at Bickerley Green. It’s a really innovative addition for residents to enjoy.”

3. County and District Councillors

- 3.1 No reports received.

4. Town Councillors

- 4.1 Cllr Frederick reports that the Ringwood and Fordingbridge Business Community Networking with a Purpose met on Tuesday 6th February. There were 80 businesses in attendance and the speaker was Stephen Wyatt who works with Jay Blaze from the Repair Workshop. Adam gave an update on the support STAR (Stronger Together Across Ringwood and Fordingbridge) had received from businesses. There will be an update to the RTC website soon. The next meeting of the Business Community is scheduled for Thursday 16th May.

5. Issues for decision and any recommendations

To note the reports received.

For further information, contact:

Christopher Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

Hampshire County Council

The County Council is preparing to hike its council tax share as it tries to plug a £132m budget black hole.

The authority is proposing increasing its precept charge by 4.99% for an average Band D household for the 2024/25 year - the maximum without putting the choice to voters in a referendum. The short-fall will be met from reserves. Essential services are 'ring-fenced', for example Adult Services, however the council will need to consult on other spending areas which the Council is not obliged to provide.

New Forest District Council

At the full council meeting of New Forest District Council, councillors voted in an increase in council tax per household, on an average Band D property of £199.79.

The rates also includes the council tax residents pay to Hampshire County Council, Ringwood Town Council, Parish Councils, the police and the fire and rescue service.

New Forest District Council keeps 9p from every £1.00 paid in the tax. The money, the council keeps from the tax bill helps to pay for essential services the council provides like supporting people at risk of becoming homeless planning permissions for new and existing properties, waste and recycling collections, caring for the coastline and public open spaces and supporting local businesses.

Ringwood Town Council

I joined Cllr Mrs Mary DeBoos and Cllr Rae Frederick to form a small working party to consider nominations to be recommended to the full council.

Ellingham, Harbridge & Isley Parish Council

I chaired the recent meeting of the Parish Planning Committee.

New Forest National Park Authority

I attended the recent meeting of the Authority Planning Committee.

Councillors' and MP's Surgery

Attended the usual Saturday surgery with fellow councillors, Cllr Mrs Janet Georgiou and Cllr Jeremy Heron and the MP Sir Desmond Swayne TD MP.