



Minutes of a meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council held on Tuesday 23rd September 2025 at 7.30pm at Great Shefford Sports & Social Club¹

Present: Councillor Piers Storey (Chairman)
Councillors Steve Bullock, Tony Coard, Jessica Copcutt, Louisa Freeman
and Carol Turner

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Parish Clerk)
Developer and Land Owner of proposed development
31 members of public

2025-09/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Miranda Armstrong.

2025-09/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests from Councillors.

2025-09/21 PLANNING APPLICATION 25/01800/FULMAJ – LAND TO THE WEST OF SPRING MEADOWS

This additional meeting had been called to consider the developer's responses to matters put to them following the Parish Council meeting on 16th September 2025.

The developer talked through his responses to the matters raised at the last meeting, as shown in Appendix I to these Minutes.

The developer answered further questions as they arose during the meeting.

RESOLVED to refer the further matters set out in Appendix II to these Minutes to the developer for response, and to request from West Berkshire Council an extension to the Parish Council's deadline to respond to the planning application, currently 25th September 2025, to allow the developer's responses to be considered and for the Parish Council to confirm its response to the application at its next scheduled meeting on 6th October 2025.

The Chairman thanked residents for attending and thanked the developer for responding to residents' questions and queries and for his continued engagement.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

¹ In the absence of alternative venue availability this meeting was held at Great Shefford Sports & Social Club but no alcohol or drinks were served for the duration of the meeting

Appendix I to Minutes of meeting held on 23rd September 2025

Developer's response to the matters raised at a meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council on 16th September 2025:

The proposed development, as you are aware, has been included in the Local Plan Review and many of the points raised will have been considered prior to its inclusion in this plan.

Highway Safety in Spring Meadows:

- As with all new developments there will be an increase in traffic post development. We have had an independent consultant (Condon Drew Associates) produce a Transport Statement. In the production of this they have looked at present and predicted vehicle movements. Their figures calculate the average daily two-way vehicle trips from this proposal to be 87 across a 12hr day. Highways West Berkshire have responded to this saying *"The figures may be slightly on the low side for such a rural location; however, this scale of development was considered as part of the Local Plan Review when the allocated housing sites were considered, and it was deemed an acceptable level"*.
- Construction Traffic: Part of our works going forward will be to produce a Construction Method Statement which will identify potential hazards and procedures to ensure safe working. This exercise will mainly look at activities on site as our ability to control activities off site is more challenging. We will however look at other potential hazards such as how we can best manage any vehicle movements to and from the site passing the Primary School.
- I did visit yesterday and noted at 3pm there were 4 cars outside the Spring Meadows school gate, this rose over the following 20mins to 12 cars, by 3.27pm all cars had gone. All children were accompanied by adults and there were no busses or larger vehicles collecting children.
- The road was not blocked at any stage.
- There appears to be is a 30min period in the afternoon and presumably similar period in the morning which will need to be looked at and see how best to manage any construction traffic should it be necessary to pass the school within these times.
- Should this be the case my initial thoughts would be:
- Look at the possibility of more collections of children from the main school entrance where there is more provisions of parking/fenced off area and a turning circle. I believe this was originally designed for collection of the children and the additional gate on Spring Meadows was added during Covid.
- Any vehicles collecting from the Spring Meadows gate to park on the school side of road rather than opposite so that no crossing of road is required.
- Additional signage erected to warn any passing traffic of the location of the school.

Alternative Construction Access:

- I have looked again at the existing track to the north of the site to see its potential as an alternative point of access. This track joins the A338 where there is a 40mph speed limit and visibility to the south is limited to 20-25m. The visibility requirement for an A road is 100m. I personally think this point of access is not suitable for construction traffic and is more likely to cause accidents than using the existing Spring Meadows exit to the A338.

Here there is a 30mph speed limit on the A338 and correct visibility in both directions. I am happy to discuss further with highways however if we could find a solution to the school drop off and collection times this point of access would be preferred.

Drainage and Sewage Capacity:

- I have been in communication with Thames Water Developer Services, and they have confirmed their network has sufficient capacity for disposal of foul water and the supply of clean water. The Sewage Treatment plant at East Shefford will receive and treat the wastewater from this site.

Site Elevation and Privacy:

- The proposed properties at the entrance to the site have been designed to sit lower than the existing ground level to prevent overbearing at this point. Other properties are set further away from the existing Spring Meadows properties and will be screened with new planting. We are happy to look at specific areas of concern and add additional plant screening if necessary.

Flood Alleviation Scheme:

- We have undertaken a Flood Risk assessment for the site (Flood Zone 1, an area with low probability of flooding). A small portion of the site overlaps with potential surface water flooding, this area in the northeast corner of the site will not be developed. The groundwater flooding the surface in this area is 'low risk'.

Ground Water Capacity:

- We have had a full drainage strategy designed to deal with all surface water from any new properties, hard standing, roads, etc. This surface water will be contained in underground storage below parts of the site and then disperses at a controlled rate back into the ground. This design ensures there will be no increase in surface run off water due to the construction of the proposed dwellings.

Impact on Wildlife:

- All Ecology have undertaken an Ecological Impact Assessment for this proposed development. The site was visited on 12th November 2024 and surveyed in accordance with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 Habitat survey. This provided an inventory of the basic habitat types present and identifies any areas of greater potential. This report is attached and covers the present ecological features including sites, fauna and wildlife along with and proposed works which will provide mitigation and compensation.

Construction Impact on School:

- As with all construction sites we will need to consider neighbouring properties whilst construction is being undertake. These measures will include things such as working hours, noise reduction, dust suppression, onsite parking etc. The school building itself is completely screened from the proposed construction site by existing properties in Spring Meadows and is located approx. 80m from the site boundary. The school playing field is the only location from where the site is visible. There will be security fencing along this boundary.

Emergency Escape Route:

- The existing locked gate in the corner of the playing field has been noted. The design layout provides a new footpath to join the proposed development to the existing footpath to the west of the site (opposite corner to existing gate location). We can move the existing gateway to this location once construction is completed, if required, on the agreement that it remains chained and locked and only used as an emergency escape route.

Additional points:

- The internal road layout has been designed to include a swept path analysis to allow a Refuse Collection Vehicle or similar full access to the properties. Should it become apparent fire regulations require additional facilities these will be added.
- We have not seen any documentation showing the football field was part of any Section 106 agreement. The original agreement on this land was only between West Shefford Farms Ltd (the landowner) and Trustees of the West Shefford Football Club. The club ceased playing over 20yrs ago and as stated in agreement the land was returned to agriculture at that point.
- There was an agreement between West Shefford Farms Ltd and Great Shefford Parish Council on 12th July 1994 regarding The Recreation Area by the Village Hall.
- Highway Maintenance: This is an issue on all roads especially where there are motorway connections in the vicinity. The average daily movements of all motor vehicles along the A338 past Spring Meadows has been calculated at 3,031. The proposed development will add approximately 87 vehicles to this number.

Appendix II to Minutes of meeting held on 23rd September 2025

Response to the developer's responses to the matters raised at the meeting on 16th September 2025 and other matters raised during this meeting:

Highway Safety in Spring Meadows

Thank you for directing us to Section 5 of the Transport Report for details of how the transport data for Spring Meadows was compiled. Please could this be reassessed to ensure the data more accurately reflects current and expected traffic movements in Spring Meadows, as it is believed the current figures may underrepresent reality.

Alternative Construction Access

As highlighted at last night's meeting, residents expressed a strong desire to try and identify an alternative access route to the proposed development, both during construction and for permanent site access thereafter.

We request further exploration into the feasibility of using the existing track to the north of the proposed development site, as well as other potential land options for providing access.

Drainage and Sewage Capacity

Residents and the Parish Council would appreciate sight of the drainage and sewage calculations, including details of how these were prepared and by whom.

We would be grateful for sight of written confirmation from Thames Water that drainage capacity has been assessed and confirmation of how this will be managed.

Given the area's history of flooding, please could the assessment area for surface water run-off be extended to include land beyond the proposed development site.

Please confirm the maintenance requirements and responsibilities for the underground drainage infrastructure.

It was also noted that serious sewage issues experienced by several residents as recently as last year are not referenced in the drainage report. Residents feel this is a significant omission, and we request this be addressed in the reporting, including proposed mitigation measures.

Site Elevation and Privacy

Residents have requested a reassessment of the site layout to address privacy and overlooking concerns.

Thank you for confirming that privacy screens would be erected between the site and the school playing field during construction, and that access to the existing emergency escape route will be retained.

Other Matters

You also indicated you would be happy to share the Architect's report regarding the emergency vehicle turning point's compliance with guidelines, and we would be grateful to receive this.

We will likely direct the question regarding a restrictive covenant on the land to West Berkshire Council; however, if you have any additional feedback on this matter, it would be welcome. We understand the covenant is set out in Section 7 of the original planning permission for the site.

Similarly, we will follow up with West Berkshire Council regarding assessment of school vehicle movements.