

Collingtree Development

Vistry and Parish Councils Monthly Catch Up – 13th July 2023

Attendees

Michael Campbell	-	Chair, East Hunsbury PC
Ken Hodgson	-	Cllr, East Hunsbury PC
Sharon Collins	-	Cllr, Collingtree PC
Chris Wilson	-	Cllr, Collingtree PC
Paul Carvey	-	Senior Project Manager, Vistry

It became very apparent from the outset of the meeting that there is a lot of confusion / misinformation within the local communities in relation to what the most recent Planning Submission, reference WNN/2023/0611, currently being consulted upon actually relates to.

This confusion has led to speculation in relation to means of access into the development and it is therefore felt it would be of benefit if a couple of matters relating to the access points are addressed before each of the Applications / Variations submitted over the last 12 months or so are described.

1- Access from Windingbrook Lane and Rowtree Road

Vistry is not looking to construct any further vehicular access points into the development to those already consented at Outline Approval stage, the Approved Plans for which can be provided if required. The status of these junctions is as follows:

- from Windingbrook Lane, (already constructed); and
- from Rowtree Road opposite Lichfield Drive (still to be constructed)

2- The strip of land between Collingcroft Close and Swallow Close

In response to questions raised via both email direct and within the comments to the most recent Application to vary Condition 13 it can be confirmed that there is no intention to provide a permanent access into the Development via the strip of land between Collingcroft Close and Swallow Close.

Planning permission has neither been sought, nor refused to facilitate permanent access via this land however **Vistry reserve the right to use the strip of land as a temporary construction access** should the need arise although at the current time there is no intention to do so.

In the extremely unlikely event that Vistry did wish to use this route as a temporary construction access then in the 1st instance the Parish Councils would be notified by Vistry prior to a formal request being submitted to West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) to Discharge Condition 10 of the Outline Planning Approval, now referenced WNN/2023/0026 (see explanation later in these Notes why this reference has changed) which requires a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be submitted for each Phase of development which would consider such matters as:

- a) Management of traffic and routing
 - b) Location of access points
 - c) Measures to control dust
 - d) Location and size of compounds
 - e) The location and form of temporary buildings, adverts and hoardings
 - f) Details for safe storage of any fuels, oils and lubricants
- etc

Once again it must be reiterated that using this strip of land as a potential construction access is not a preferred option and at the current time it is not envisaged this will change.

The general description of the scheme as detailed at Outline Approval stage is as follows:

Northampton South Sustainable Urban Extension to comprise up to 1000 dwellings, a mixed use local centre, a site for a primary school, green infrastructure including formal and informal open space, reconfiguration and extension of Collingtree Park Golf Course, demolition of all existing buildings and structures within the site, new vehicular accesses off Windingbrook Lane and Rowtree Road, car parking, sustainable drainage systems (including flood risk betterment) and infrastructure(including highway improvements) all matters reserved except access etc.

This description is used for each subsequent request for a Planning Application / Variation of Condition relating to the scheme as is the normally accepted protocol however this has potentially led to the confusion which has recently arisen in relation to the Application to vary Condition 13 referenced WNN/2023/0611.

Before this and the other most recent Applications / Approvals are detailed it is felt to be beneficial to explain why the Outline Planning Approval reference detailing the Conditions has changed from N/2013/1035 to WNN/2023/0026.

WNN/2023/0026

In January 2023 an Application was made to vary Condition 14 (part) of the Outline Planning Approval referenced N/2013/1035. This Variation has the above planning reference and sought to negate the obligation to very slightly widen a couple of sections of kerb line at the existing roundabout at the junction of Windingbrook Lane, Rowtree Road and Butts Road.

The rationale behind this request was that the improvements sought would offer negligible, if any improvements considering the amount of inconvenience caused to road users and the risk to construction workers during the construction phase.

Following consultation by WNC it was agreed that the Variation was accepted and the Decision Notice was issued. Because this was a Condition of the original Outline Planning Permission, the Conditions had to be copied into the new Decision Notice, if still applicable, with the exception of Condition 14 (part) that could now be omitted.

The Decision Notice for WNN/2023/0026 therefore includes **ALL** of the applicable Conditions from the original Approval.

WNN/2023/0611

The above is also a request to vary a Condition of the original Approval, but this time Condition 13, with the exception of Item 1 of that Condition.

The full description can be found on the Planning section of the WNC website in the Stantec letter dated 27th June 2023 referenced 3322-10562/NTN/JPH/KS, identified as 'Application Correspondence' but for ease a shortened version will be detailed below as applicable.

Extracts of the Stantec Letter will be in blue italics for ease. The formal description of the Variation is as follows:

On behalf of the Vistry Group (referred to as Vistry), we write to seek from West Northamptonshire Council (referred to as WNC) a Section 73 Variation from Condition 13 Items 2, 3 and 4 of the planning conditions for the Collingtree Development - that the specific obligations to provide off-site walking and cycling measures be amended in order to provide more appropriate improvements to the current walking and cycling infrastructure in the local area and address the needs of the existing / future local population, reflecting changes in development and infrastructure in the area since agreement was given in 2014.

The Consent identified the following footway and cycle track obligations around East Hunsbury in Condition 13:

"13) No dwelling shall be occupied until details of the precise location and engineering and construction details of the following walking and cycling measures have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works have been carried out in accordance with the approved details:

- 2 No. pedestrian / cycle connections to existing bridleway KG2
- Provision of on-road advisory cycle lane on Hilldrop Rd ...and Penvale Rd
- Upgrade of existing footway in the southern verge of Mereway between the junction with Penvale Road and the A45 Queen Eleanor Roundabout
- 2 No. controlled pedestrian crossings on Rowtree Rd (the second of which is to be delivered at the start of Phase 2)."

Alternatives to Items 2, 3 and 4, for which this Section 73 Variation is being sought, are set out below.

Item 1 - 2 No. Pedestrian / Cycle Connections to Existing Bridleway KG2

Both access points onto bridleway KG2 are being provided as part of Phase 1 as shown on the approved drawings for the Phase 1 reserved matters application (planning ref: N/2017/1566) and are being delivered as agreed with West Northamptonshire Council.

Vistry does not seek to amend Item 1 of Condition 13.

Item 2 - Provision of On-Road Advisory Cycle Lane on Hilldrop Road (to be delivered at the start of Phase 2) and Penvale Road

The above Condition 13 Item 2 requirement for providing the on-road cycle lanes on Hilldrop Road and Penvale Road is duplicated within the Section 106 Agreement for the Collingtree Development, dated 22nd December 2015.

As Vistry will make suitable contributions for these Condition 13 Item 2 works under the Section 106, Vistry therefore seeks to be relieved of Condition 13 Item 2.

Item 3 - Upgrade of Existing Footway in the Southern Verge of Mereway Between the Junction with Penvale Road and the A45 Queen Eleanor Roundabout

The existing Mereway path currently has an effective width of around 1.0m. Due to its low usage, the verge has over-grown the margins of the path

When this detritus is cleared away,the general existing overall path width is around 1.6m. The adjoining footway in the eastern verge of the northern section of Penvale Road between Hardwick Road and Mereway is similarly affected.

The works associated with the opening of the Wootton Hall Park School have significantly changed the road layout along Mereway

Work should therefore be focused on the path to the west of the Fire Station Access and along Penvale Road.

Further, to deliver the original aspiration of increasing the width of the Mereway path to the indicative 1.8m width would require:

- the closure of the path during the works; - for the construction period of around two weeks*
- the closure of one lane of Mereway to provide the necessary safe working area for the operatives; and the construction vehicles to be parked on Mereway.....*

This is far from ideal as Mereway is a much-used strategic route around Northampton, provides the high-speed access for the full range of emergency vehicles, and any obstruction to Mereway already causes back-ups through the A45 QE Roundabout and on to the main carriageway of the A45.

This detriment caused by the works has to be considered in the context of the insignificant benefit of a further 200mm of path width for pedestrians,

As discussed and agreed with the West Northamptonshire Council Highways Team, Vistry proposes to restore the original maximum widths of these two existing footways, which would respond in full to the original aspiration for improved pedestrian connectivity where needed along Mereway.

As such, Vistry seeks that this Condition 13 Item 3 be changed to the following: - Restore the path widths in i) the southern verge of Mereway between Penvale Road and the Fire Station Access, and ii) in the eastern verge of Penvale Road between Hardwick Road and Mereway, to their full existing widths and benefits by clearing away the detritus on either side of the paths, and cleaning the paths of the mud and silt, and restoring the grass on either side of these paths to stabilise the verge and minimise future ingress of detritus.

Item 4 - 2 No. Controlled Pedestrian Crossings on Rowtree Road (the second of which is to be delivered at the start of Phase 2)

As the locations for these two controlled pedestrian crossings were not stipulated at the time of the planning consent, Vistry seeks to deliver these where they would prove to be most beneficial for the existing and future community.

It is proposed that the first of these two pedestrian crossings to be delivered during Phase 1 be provided on the Wooldale Road approach of the Rowtree Rd / London Road / A45 Off-Slip / Wooldale Road Roundabout.....

This responds to recent local residents' requests for improved facilities along the walking route from the Collingtree Development and East Hunsbury area to Caroline Chisholm School, especially at the Wooldale Road arm of this junction. The initial design work has identified that a controlled crossing cannot be provided here to standard. As such, it has been agreed with the West Northamptonshire Council Highways Team that an uncontrolled crossing be provided. As such, Vistry seeks that this Condition 13 Item 4 be changed to the following: - 1 No. uncontrolled crossing on Wooldale Road shown on plan 28015 / 016 / 016 Revision E to be provided during Phase 1, and 1 No. controlled pedestrian crossing on Rowtree Road to be delivered at the start of Phase 2.

In relation to comments received from a member of the public, as viewable on the planning portal, the rationale for providing a cycleway, which was not originally indicated on the Approved Drawing as per the original Approval, is to negate the need for cyclists to go through the roundabout in order to access either the Toby Carvery, the fuel station or the link into Saffron Close.

This amendment was brought about following comments received from WNC driven by changes to Highway Standards, the need to improve safety to all highway users and finally to comply with the emerging requirements of WNC.

The Approved Drawing as per Condition 14 of the original Approval is materially the same other than changes brought about by the above.

A comment was also made in relation to Vistry being asked to resurface the local roads in the vicinity of the Development due to the damage perceived to be caused by construction vehicles visiting the site.

It can be advised that no such obligation has been placed on Vistry in this regard.

WNN/2022/0370 – Phase 2a Infrastructure

This Application was approved and relates to the provision of infrastructure required to service both the residential and mixed use element of the scheme. It includes roads, drainage, including the diversion of the drain which carries water from the M1 and the balancing ponds required to ensure that any water from the development flowing into Wootton Brook does so at a suitable rate.

All of these works, with the exception of the drainage outfalls, lie outside of Flood Zone 3.

WNN/2022/0806 – Phase 2a Residential Development

This Application was approved for 425 dwellings consisting of a mix of dwelling types / styles with a range of between 2 and 5 bedrooms.

There are also Affordable Dwellings within this phase of development.

DETAILS FOR ALL PLANNING APPLICATIONS / VARIATIONS CAN BE VIEWED ON THE WNC PLANNING PORTAL BY TYPING IN THE PLANNING REFERENCE NUMBER

Remaining Applications in accordance with the Original Approval

The following Applications will be made in due course:

- Remainder of infrastructure to connect from Phase 2a into Rowtree Road including the golf course reconfiguration and extension
- The primary infrastructure through the remaining residential parcel
- The remaining residential parcel consisting of circa 226 dwellings, ensuring the maximum of 1000 dwellings is not exceeded
- The Community Facility and Sports pitches

The Local Centre will be developed by a 3rd party commercial operator

Construction Update

It is envisaged construction of the infrastructure as detailed within WNN/2022/0370 will commence later this year, although the actual date for commencement is still to be confirmed.

The construction of the dwellings will follow accordingly.

Contact Details

It is appreciated that there is a huge amount of information relating to the development and the information can either be very difficult to find or misinterpreted therefore should any member of the public or interested 3rd party have any questions or wish to discuss any matter relating to the development, excluding customer plot specific questions, please make contact via email using the following address;

collingtreegeneralenquiries@vistry.co.uk

Paul Carvey

Senior Project Manager

