



# Banwell Parish Council

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**MEETING:** Wolvershill Development Working Group.

**DATE & TIME:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm.

**LOCATION:** Banwell Youth & Community Centre.

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors Paul Blatchford (Chairman), Simon Arlidge (Vice-Chairman), Simon Arlidge, Matthew Thomson and 7 members of the community.

**Also present:** Liz Shayler (Clerk) and Amy Symonds (Environment and Biodiversity Officer).

Cllr Blatchford welcomed everybody.

**WLG26/24 To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Paul Harding, Nick Manley and Steve Voller.

**WLG27/24 To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item**

No declarations of interest were received.

**WLG28/24 To agree the minutes from the Wolvershill Development Working Group on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 (pages 1 & 2):**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the Wolvershill Liaison Group held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

**The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)**

The minutes of the meeting will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**WLG29/24 To note the following jottings / minutes from the Wolvershill Liaison Group.**

- i) **19<sup>th</sup> September, jottings from the unexpected informal Liaison Group meeting.**
- ii) **24<sup>th</sup> September Wolvershill Liaison Group.**
- iii) **27<sup>th</sup> September Wolvershill Liaison Group.**

**WLG30/24 Exploring the masterplan and the developers' suggestions.**

- i) **Access and Movement**
- ii) **Development Areas**
- iii) **Local Centre and Facilities**
- iv) **Green and blue infrastructure.**

The Clerk gave a brief overview of the process including the background of the allocation of this site. The meeting was told that it was an early opportunity to look and comment on the Master Plan and new North Somerset supplementary planning document in relation to the new Wolvershill Local Plan strategic site.

Notes from the meeting will be sent on to the Parish Council, North Somerset and any developers. These will be used to form part of the Parish Councils formal response.

There was a presentation on some initial thoughts around the local centre, access & movement, green and blue infrastructure and the development areas.

Those attending separated into four groups and then considered each of the slides above in more detail. Feedback was collected by post it note. Attendees raised the following.

i) **Access and movement.**

There was unanimous concern about the proposal to close Wolverhill Road M5 Bridge for several reasons, including:

- The impact on neighbouring communities and the road infrastructure, particularly at the already congested Helicopter Museum roundabout and the A370.
- The inability to access facilities in Worle.
- The reduction in entry and exit points for over 2,800 properties in the new settlement.
- The potential increase in rat-running along Riverside.
- How access is going to be maintained for the businesses at Ivy House Farm and Gobbles Farm.

It was generally agreed that the settlement should first be designed to handle current traffic flow, ensuring it can accommodate necessary vehicles. At a later stage—when active travel routes are fully connected, more people are using bicycles, and bus services are frequent—the bridge could be considered for closure

Other feedback included

- The importance of having road infrastructure in place before construction begins to prevent unnecessary disruption to current residents.
- The need for limited speed restrictions on all roads and lanes.
- Concerns about the potential closure of Silvermoor Lane, which may cut off some properties from accessing Banwell or the new development.
- Ensuring that any new exits from Summer Lane are not located directly opposite existing properties.
- Importance of a good public transport network.

Although not entirely part of this process, it was considered important to open the link road between Parklands and Mead Fields and conduct further traffic modelling to ensure it functions as predicted before deciding on any road closures.

ii) **Development Area**

- Ensure that buffer zones are established between new developments and existing properties, with a minimum requirement to prevent overlooking.
- Concerns were raised about both water drainage and wastewater management. Specifically, certain low-lying areas in the development are prone to waterlogging, and existing drainage systems have already reached capacity, resulting in flooding during heavy rainfall. It was emphasised that flood and surface water runoff channels need to be established and enhanced early in the development process to protect both new and existing properties. Additionally, careful consideration must be given to how wastewater will be managed to prevent further strain on the system and avoid potential future flooding issues.
- The visual impact of the development should be considered, including the use of materials and building heights that are in harmony with existing properties (e.g., Silvermoor Lane does not have red brick buildings).
- Questions were raised regarding the phasing of the development, with hopes that affordable housing would be integrated within the general development and that employment and retail outlets would be developed simultaneously, allowing residents immediate access to services.
- Concerns were expressed about the attenuation ponds, particularly how they will be maintained and whether they could potentially flood, impacting adjacent properties over time.
- The need for screening (trees and hedges) ahead of development was emphasised to mitigate noise and light pollution, particularly on the moor and for nearby existing properties.
- The importance of green design (trees / greenery on streets) and mitigating against light pollution was stressed.
- There were concerns that, although bat corridors are designed to be 30m wide, development within 100m-150m would undermine the effectiveness of the dark corridor.

- Emphasised the importance of green design features, such as gardens large enough to grow plants, tree-lined roads, and cycleways, to encourage active travel throughout the development.
- Super high-speed Wi-Fi is essential for all residents and public buildings, and the development should be built to high sustainability standards, such as Passivhaus.
- The aesthetic appeal and durability of construction materials, especially for significant buildings, were deemed important. Materials should look good over time and require minimal maintenance (e.g., some buildings on the runway already appear rundown).
- Concerns were raised about how wastewater will be managed, particularly since the drainage system has already reached capacity and flooding occurs during torrential rain.

### iii) **Local Centre and Facilities**

- There was agreement that a learning/health hub is essential, especially since capacity in Banwell has been reached. It was felt that a GP surgery should be part of this hub, along with spaces for antenatal classes, diabetes clinics, exercise classes for over 50s, chair yoga, and similar activities. Suggestions included a small self-service library, café, gaming centre, or shared office space as part of the learning side.
- A community hub should include a space that can be hired for Village Hall-type activities (e.g., parties, knitting / craft groups, Mens Breakfast, badminton, table tennis, squash, basketball, etc.). While sports should be encouraged, they should not take precedence over community activities. Careful design is necessary to allow simultaneous activities while managing noise levels.
- There should be provision for Men's/Ladies' Shed initiatives at either hub.
- The importance of a pedestrianised local centre with the capacity for a farmers' or community market was highlighted. The market could include stalls for allotment holders and local businesses, and cars should be discouraged in this area to support outdoor seating for pubs, restaurants, and coffee shops.
- Emphasis was placed on providing parking near the centre to attract people to use the facilities and accommodate those with mobility issues who may still need to drive, regardless of distance.
- Concern was raised that given the centre will accommodate three hubs, retail space, shared office space and residential buildings that parking needs to be carefully designed and allocated.
- Visual impact from the current village should be considered, especially as the new development will be near the crown of the hill, ensuring no overlooking for adjacent properties.
- Super high-speed Wi-Fi should be available for all residents and public buildings, with a focus on sustainability, such as meeting Passivhaus standards.
- It was suggested that publicly available amenities could include an EV charging point, a soft play area, space for a mobile library (if one is not included within the local centre), all-weather pitches (for tennis, netball, basketball, etc.), and baby-changing and toilet facilities.
- Concerns were raised about cutting off Worle from the development, as it would restrict access to the nearest large supermarket, Children's Centre, 24-hour pharmacy, library, and other facilities at the campus, which will not be available in the new settlement.
- It is important to consider the phasing of facilities, ensuring they are not left until last, leaving residents without places to shop, socialise, or play—similar to the situation with the Mead Fields development.
- The importance of including a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was acknowledged, but it should be carefully designed and managed to prevent antisocial behaviour (e.g., located on school property and accessed with permission or more centralised within the development).
- A skatepark could be considered, but it must be designed and located thoughtfully to minimise antisocial behaviour.
- Initiatives to encourage the uptake of retail and employment opportunities should be explored.
- Consultation with young people was suggested to gather their input on what they would like from the new development.

iv) **Green and Blue Infrastructure.**

- There was discussion about the necessity of additional football pitches within the development, given the proximity of two large football clubs. It was suggested that other sports, such as tennis, netball, or basketball, might be more appropriate to diversify the recreational offerings. Concerns were raised regarding the proposed location, within the strategic green gap, of new pitches, including the potential impact of floodlighting on the dark corridor, the encouragement of antisocial behaviour, and insufficient vehicular access and parking capacity, particularly along Wolvershill Road. If football pitches are included in the new development, it was suggested that Banwell FC be approached to manage a second site.
- Concern was raised regarding whether current allotment holders south of the bypass would still have access to their plots.
- There were concerns about the creation of public rights of way and bridleways, which could lead to trespassing on neighbouring private land or within the conservation area.
- The creation of a nature reserve, community farm, and the protection of historic hedgerows and trees were identified as priorities.
- The inclusion of natural paths, particularly in the strategic green gap, was suggested for activities such as trail running and walking, with the possibility of integrating trim trail activities or exercise stations.
- Concern was expressed about protecting current wildlife and improving their habitats (e.g., freshwater mussels, kingfishers, and otters found in the Banwell River and surrounding rhynes).
- It was proposed that provisions be made for wildlife boxes (e.g., for owls, swifts, swallows, and bats), hedgehog homes and runs, and wildflowers, particularly given the local beekeepers and those on the current allotments.
- It was suggested that green spaces be designated early in the development. Given the time it takes for trees and shrubs to mature, these should be planted before construction begins to reduce the impact of the construction process.
- Concerns were raised about the long-term maintenance of play areas, green spaces, and attenuation ponds once developers have left. In particular, questions were raised about who would be legally responsible for maintaining the biodiversity net gain.
- Concerns were also raised about how conservation areas would be protected from public access.
- Three allotment sites have been identified, and the importance of protecting these spaces, even if initial uptake is low, was emphasised. The creation of community allotments, such as one near the new school for educational use and one south of the bypass for current Banwell residents, was suggested.
- Careful design of open spaces and play areas is needed to prevent antisocial behaviour and ensure easy access for emergency services.
- The importance of maintaining and improving the current bridleway network was highlighted.

Feedback from the session will inform ongoing work on the Wolvershill proposals to feed into the Supplementary Planning Document and Master Plan preparation.

WLG32/24 **Date of next meeting – TBD.**