

NORTH WHITELEY DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Thursday, 15 February 2024

Attendance:

Councillors

Cllr Achwal V (Winchester City Council) (Chairperson)

Cllr Achwal S, Winchester City Council
Cllr Chamberlain, Winchester City Council
Cllr Small, Winchester City Council
Cllr Pearson, Winchester City Council
Cllr Wallace, Winchester City Council
Cllr Woodward, Hampshire County Council

Cllr Lumby, Hampshire County Council
Cllr Pretty, Eastleigh Borough Council
Cllr Evans, Whiteley Town Council
Cllr Cooper, Botley Parish Council
Cllr Bodger, Curdridge Parish Council

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Burton (Fareham Borough Council)

Other members in attendance:

Cllr(s) Porter and Tod

[Video recording of the meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were noted as above.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

No disclosures of interests were made.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were made.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

Philip Gibbs addressed the forum and expressed concern about inconsistent and unclear road signage in the development area affecting safety. He highlighted the need for road adoption by the County Council and sought the forum's assistance plan for road adoption and rectification of signage issues to ensure compliance and safety.

Jeff Davis of Tetra Tech responded and advised of the following

1. That roads were planned for adoption under Section 38 of the Highways Act, but this process would be delayed due to ongoing construction activities and the need for these activities to decrease before the local authority considers adoption.
2. He clarified that current speed limit signs, particularly those indicating speeds other than 30 mph, were not part of the final design intended for adoption. These signs were temporarily installed to control speeds amidst construction.

He agreed to conduct a review of the temporary speed limit signs, especially where 10 mph signs may have been incorrectly placed by developers or not removed after the completion of nearby construction work.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON THE 11 DECEMBER 2023**

That following a question, the Chair advised that she had received an update from officers regarding outstanding items on the previous minutes and she would update members accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 11 December 2023 be approved and adopted.

6. **DEVELOPER AND IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER UPDATE INCLUDING AN UPDATE REGARDING BUS SERVICE AND WHITELEY WAY ROADWORKS**

Jeff Davis (Tetra Tech) provided the forum with a presentation which had been made available on the council's website. ([available here](#)) The presentation covered a range of issues, which included the following:

1. Overview - Highways
2. Phase 1 Bluebell Way Area
3. Strategic Cycleway: Footpath 9
4. Phase 2 - Off-Site Whiteley Way
5. Phase 3 - Station Hill - Whiteley Way / Curbridge Way to Whiteley Way
6. Open Space – Delivery Update
7. Bus Service

In addition, he advised of the following specific points.

1. Phase 1 Bus Service commenced on 9th Jan 2023. Currently the contract is out to tender as the initial tendering process did not succeed. This time the tender is for a longer period. The current bus service contract has been extended to 30 June 2024 but faced viability issues, with an average of 3 passengers per journey as of Feb 2024.
2. Further traffic management is under consideration.
3. The Southern Local Centre contract was nearing agreement, with discussions ongoing with the Winchester City Council Planning team.

4. Footpath 9 Phase 1 s278 legal agreement agreed in principle but still not complete as additional work required for equestrian visibility. Construction delayed to spring 2024.
5. Footpath 9 Phase 2 being designed with planning application to follow summer 2024.
6. The works to off-site Whiteley Way to commence 11th March 2024 . communications for advance warnings about construction starting were planned. Target completion by late 2025/early 2026.
7. Whiteley Way and Curbridge Way opened to through traffic on 14th Sept 2023, with traffic management measures implemented.
8. Detailed planning permission had been granted for 3102 houses, with a significant number already started or occupied.
9. Open space development updates include completed allotments and LEAP areas, with ongoing landscape works.

Members asked several questions and made comments regarding the following:

1. Concerns were raised about the lack of directional signage at the mini roundabout on Whiteley Way, particularly signs directing to Tesco and other local amenities.
2. Regarding the four-year extension of bus services, a question was asked about whether the bus company had considered adjusting the timetable to align with school opening hours to facilitate use by students and parents.
3. An update was requested on the provision of bus shelters within the area.
4. Regarding the development of the play area, it was asked about the legal formalities pending completion and whether the council could assist in expediting these processes.
5. The necessity for post boxes in North Whiteley was highlighted, especially in Whiteley Meadows and Curbridge Meadows, due to the area's growing population.
6. The importance of aligning bus schedules with train times at Swanwick and Botley stations was emphasised to improve connectivity and usability.
7. Issues were raised regarding parking problems at the Test Rd and Avon Rd junction, including near-miss accidents and obstructions caused by vehicles parking on footpaths.
8. A suggestion was made to consider extending bus routes through Hedge End to Eastleigh, to enhance viability by increasing usage through improved access to Whiteley's amenities.
9. Concerns were raised regarding parking issues on Brunel Way.

These points were responded to by Jeff Davis, and Hilary Oliver accordingly.

Hilary Oliver, Implementation Officer, Winchester City Council, addressed the forum and provided updates on the following which included responses to several questions received from residents (full details of the questions from residents are attached to these minutes)

1. Confirmation from Hampshire County Council on the anticipated planning application for the secondary school, construction was planned to start in 2025 and complete in 2027.
2. Progress on the Southern Local Centre, with contracts expected to be signed soon, and a planning application to follow. The Northern Local Centre was progressing, and discussions were ongoing about a community centre in the north, with a temporary solution being explored.
3. Updates on Play Areas, with Play Area 2 opening shortly and Play Area 1 to follow.
4. A second entrance to Hangmans Copse was expected to be completed this year.
5. Queries about parking issues, specifically the need for double yellow lines at the flats opposite Redpoll Way, were under consideration.
6. Discussions on finishing streetlights on the cycleway to Botley Station were ongoing.
7. Sports pitches and allotments off Tortoiseshell Close were expected to be completed by mid-year, with works starting in April and May, respectively.
8. A clean-up operation was planned to address debris and metal left in the area, with specific attention to Monks Brook Road.
9. Questions about retail development timing and additional parking at Whiteley Leisure Centre were addressed.
10. The situation on Test Road and Avon Road was being actively managed.
11. Updates on footpath developments around Whiteley Way and Segensworth roundabout were provided, including adjustments to speed limits and ongoing negotiations with Network Rail.

Members asked several questions and made comments regarding the following:

1. Further information was sought regarding the development and opening schedule of a second primary school in North Whiteley.
2. A question was raised about the status of a new telephone mast that had been installed, but not yet activated and it was advised that it was anticipated that the mast will go live at the end of March/early April.
3. That following a question from a member of the public, it was felt that an opportunity had been missed to provide a safe connection to Burr ridge Scout hut.
4. Regarding the completion works required for the cycle path along Botley Road, officers were asked to request that these works be undertaken during the night.

These points were responded to by Hilary Oliver accordingly who advised that further responses would be provided to the forum following the meeting.

7. **FUTURE OF THE FORUM (VERBAL UPDATE)**

Councillor Martin Tod, Leader of the Council, introduced the agenda item concerning the future of the North Whiteley Forum. He outlined the current status of Winchester City Council's support and hosting of the Forum, including the

annual appointment and confirmation of terms of reference through the Cabinet. Councillor Tod highlighted the evolving context that necessitates a revision of these terms, especially considering the significant changes in the representation and needs of the Whiteley Town Council and the broader North Whiteley development area. He felt that the residents of North Whiteley should have a more significant say in these discussions.

He sought feedback from forum members on various aspects, including the proposal for the Town Council to host the forum, the format of future meetings, meeting frequency, and the composition of the forum's membership to better reflect the resident population of North Whiteley. Councillor Tod also raised questions about the broader implications for planning and stakeholder involvement, given the development's current status and the need to ensure that the voices of North Whiteley's residents were adequately represented in future discussions and decisions.

Members raised questions and made comments which could be summarised as:

1. That areas such as Hedge End, Fair Oak and Botley were impacted by the traffic implications of the North Whiteley development, and so representation on any future forum was suggested to safeguard the interests of affected residents.
2. The necessity for continued participation by at least one representative from Curbridge was requested, given the area's proximity to North Whiteley. Additionally, the valuable support provided by Winchester officers was acknowledged, with a request for their ongoing involvement to ensure the development's positive progress.
3. Botley Parish Council expressed support for maintaining a place at the forum, highlighting concerns about the bypass delays and the potential for Botley to become a destination for North Whiteley residents.
4. A recommendation was made to extend the forum's current operations for an additional 6 to 8 months, citing the ongoing development and the critical role of Winchester officers in managing the consortium effectively.
5. The unique position of Whiteley, straddling Fareham and Winchester boroughs, was discussed, with emphasis on the shared interests and interdependencies, such as medical facilities and main access points. The possibility of a separate or joint forum to address wider Whiteley issues was suggested.
6. A proposal was made for a more focused forum specifically for North Whiteley, aimed at fostering real engagement with residents and ensuring the integration of new and existing communities.
7. Concern was raised to guard against the forum becoming a "talking shop", and whether its current membership and geographic focus were adequately aligned with the interests and needs of the community it served.
8. Questions were raised about the possibility of restructuring the forum to ensure more focused and genuine engagement with the community, highlighting the need for real interaction and engagement.
9. A draft term of reference was mentioned as a proposed step forward, indicating ongoing progress in addressing community issues, including discussions with Hampshire County Council about traffic management concerns.

10. The necessity of holding meetings in person was underscored as the preferred approach to facilitate better engagement and integration of residents within the Whiteley community.

Councillor Tod acknowledged the useful contributions made, and summarised the discussion as follows.

1. He recognised the necessity for continued dialogue, highlighting the critical nature of discussions on the various influences affecting North Whiteley and the broader community's well-being.
2. It was agreed that a discussion involving the relevant councils would be initiated to explore effective ways to support and enhance the North Whiteley community.
3. Further discussion regarding the future of the forum would continue, ensuring that the needs and concerns of the North Whiteley residents were adequately met. Any discussions of the way forward, particularly concerning the future of the North Whiteley Forum hosted and managed by the town council, must involve a plan that meets with the collective agreement and satisfaction of all parties involved.
4. He acknowledged the importance of addressing the challenges faced by communities that straddle borders, with a commitment to continue discussions on how best to manage these unique community dynamics.
5. A proposal was made to report the next steps to a future meeting of the Winchester City Council Cabinet.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.25 pm

Chairperson