



**Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/W/23/3333685**

**Land adjacent to Colney Heath Football Club, Colney Heath, St Albans**

**Note of reasons for adjournment of inquiry  
following discussions on 26 April 2024**

1. The accompanied site visit took place between 17.00 and 19.00 hours on 24 April, immediately following the first two days of the inquiry. At this visit it became apparent that there were discrepancies between the drawing showing the proposed access to the site and features on the ground.
2. In preparation for the site visit the Appellant's highway witness had been asked to mark out the inner and outer points of the proposed 2m footway adjacent to the south-eastern side of the site. He indicated that the inner edge would be hard up against the fence line. This was not where other parties (including myself) had expected it to be positioned, as the plan shows a verge. It had been assumed that the footway would align with the existing kerb line between the car park and the verge for much of its length.
3. This discrepancy was discussed when the inquiry resumed on 25 April. It appears to have arisen because the existing fence line does not align with Tarmac's land ownership. Nevertheless, it was agreed by the main and R6 parties that correcting the plan would not amount to a substantive change in the proposal and therefore it would be appropriate for me to accept an amended plan. However, it was agreed that the implications of such an amended plan justified consultation, not only with the highway authority, but with all interested parties due to its implications on the space within the car park and the loss of the verge.
4. Following this there was discussion about other illustrative plans within the Design and Access Statement which, although not to be determined as part of this outline application, provide the public with an understanding of what the development might comprise. These plans indicated the retention of a verge alongside the footway; it was therefore agreed that the Concept Masterplan should also be amended and form part of the re-consultation. Concerns were raised also about land ownership and the position of boundaries, which were not clear from the information presented to date.
5. It was therefore agreed that the Appellant would prepare a package of amended plans which clearly show the extent of Tarmac's land ownership, the red line boundary of the appeal site, the position of the boundary fence and the precise location of the proposed footways and access. These drawings should show dimensions to ensure clarity. A package of plans was presented to the inquiry for discussion on 26 April.

6. At the inquiry it was agreed that whilst the land ownership plans were informative, it would only be necessary to publish two plans for the purposes of the consultation, namely e) the Proposed Site Access and f) the Concept Masterplan. Minor amendments to these plans were agreed and have been subsequently incorporated in the plans listed below, all of which have been uploaded to the inquiry website:
  - a) C304-00075-1: Wider Site Ownership Plan
  - b) C304-00075-2: Access Way Ownership Plan
  - c) C304-00075-3: Wider Site Ownership with Application Red Line Overlay
  - d) C304-00075-4: Access Way Ownership Plan with Application Red Line Overlay
  - e) Proposed Site Access - Drg No: 23356-04 Rev I
  - f) Concept Masterplan – Drg No: 3001 Rev F
7. The Council presented a draft letter setting out the reasons for the additional consultation and inviting comments solely on the issue of the amended access. Subject the final sentence of the letter being amended to ensure the restricted scope of the consultation was clear, it was agreed by all parties.
8. The Council will undertake a focussed consultation on the Proposed Site Access and Concept Masterplan drawings referred to above. The deadline for comments on the amendments will be 28 May. The main parties will be provided with an opportunity to respond to those comments by 11 June and the Appellant will then provide final comments by 18 June. The parties will then need to consider what, if any, amendments are required to existing evidence, or if they wish to submit additional evidence to the inquiry. At this time, it is not possible to predict whether any such changes are likely to be substantive, or to agree an appropriate timescale for additional material to be presented.
9. There was then a discussion about when the inquiry could resume. However, the earliest date in July which I could offer was not possible, as it coincided a key witness's other commitments. It was accepted that other participants are also likely to be absent during the July and August holiday period. Consequently, it was not possible to agree a date for any resumption. Instead, it was agreed that as soon as possible the main parties will inform the case officer at PINS of alternative dates between July and October when they could be available. I agreed to do the same, with a view to finding a mutually agreed date for the inquiry to resume.

*Sheila Holden*

INSPECTOR  
28 April 2024