

JANE HANNA WRITES...

Try Homes have submitted a new application for a residential development of 10 houses following the initial refusal of planning by the Vale. The plans can be viewed and comments made on the Vale District Council website, but I would also be happy to receive your comments. Whilst the new proposals include a 10 feet wide strip of land on the south side of Packhorse Lane, it is not clear yet whether this will help deliver the necessary safety measures for Packhorse Lane that the PLAGS action group has been campaigning very hard for over the last year. I have been keeping in close contact with PLAGS and officers at the Vale and County and have been assured that options for delivery of safety measures are being developed to complement the planning application. I hope that an early meeting can bring key parties together to ensure that the most appropriate option is recommended. This might include seeking realignment of the road making use of the land strip and appropriate traffic signals.

Whilst Thames Water have been consulting on detailed plans for a reservoir it is important that the privatised company are kept under pressure to prove need. A survey of residents by the Liberal Democrats found that 73% did not think the reservoir would enhance the local environment and 83% thought that Thames Water should be required to fix their leaks before permission is sought. Thames Water is in fact failing to meet its annual target for leakage reduction for the third year in succession. At the same time they are relying on legislation from the early 1990s to fast track the ordinary planning processes and reduce the power of the Vale to that of consultee.

JANE HANNA District Councillor for Marcham & Shippon)

Dear Editor

Try Homes have put in a second application for 10 dwellings on the Timber Yard site, between the bends in Marcham. (*see plan*)

The application number is MAR/19761/1

Computer number is 07/00186/FUL

I am very concerned about the proposed pavement fronting onto Packhorse Lane. I feel this will create further safety issues on these already dangerous bends. On purely safety grounds for drivers and pedestrians I am concerned that:

1 The planned pavement in front of the dwellings goes nowhere, so why is it there? For what purpose would this be used? Probably cars/delivery vans pulling up onto the pavement to unload causing obstructions for drivers and dangerous visibility problems. Residents from these properties might be encouraged to cross this dangerous road, as the pavement would indicate this as a possible option.

2 Anyone from the proposed new dwellings' pavement, who tries to cross this busy road would be increasing the likelihood of accidents as firstly there is currently **NO PAVEMENT** on the other side of the road to get to (for safety)! And secondly their visibility is severely restricted as they are on the inside of a continuous curve, between two blind bends!

3 The Try Homes site already has access via the "gated community" entrance and the safer option for pedestrians, of Mill Lane. Why is this extra front access even being considered? it seems absolute madness! We surely want to keep people off this dangerous road not encourage them onto it!

4 PLAGS was asking for a pavement – but one that went somewhere and safeguarded users not adding to the problems. This option does nothing to assist current householders who unlike the new development have no other option than to walk on the road.

The deadline date for anyone to write to The Vale, or email them, is **7 March 2007**, so if you share my concerns for all users, then I urge you to write to them as soon as you can. Here's hoping that you can make a difference.

SALLY TIMBERLAKE

March 2007

**Packhorse Lane Action Group for Safety
NEWS UPDATE**

Dear Readers

Temporary Trial of Traffic Lights & Pedestrian Walkway for The Bends in Marcham!!

I am delighted to tell you that Oxfordshire County Council Highways have just proposed that they are looking into installing temporary traffic lights and a temporary pedestrian walkway (with barriers) for the westerly bend in Marcham. This will not happen until after the road works on the A34 have been completed to avoid even more disruption for our road users. This proposal seems a very sensible idea to test out what effect this traffic controlling measure will have on all of us in Marcham and all the users of this section of the A415. The OCC Highways officer, Steve Howell wishes to discuss the detail of this proposal with Marcham Parish Council and PLAGS before anything is installed.

This allows PLAGS and the Parish Council a short space of time to find out, from you, what concerns you might have about this proposal before they meet with OCC Highways. You are asked to contact Linda Martin (Parish Clerk) by telephone, email or by letter outlining your thoughts in writing, **before the 12 March** (so they can be discussed at Parish Council meeting on 14 March).

Linda Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Road, Marcham OX13 6PU
Tel 01865 391833 Email: linmartin90@hotmail.com

PLAGS is fighting for the safety of all users (and this includes vehicles and cyclists as well as pedestrians) of the narrow bend and the cross-road area. Additionally we will fight to protect other roads in Marcham – so that whatever is implemented will not mean Church Street, North Street and Howard Cornish will end up being used as a rat-run to avoid the traffic lights.

No details have been proposed yet, so this is an important opportunity for our concerns to be voiced so that the Parish Council can represent us and possibly find a compromise with the OCC Highways Department who have to consider traffic flow requirements and legislation. Naturally lessons may well be learnt from this trial but it is an exciting and much needed first step to protect all users.

Our thanks go out to our Marcham Parish Councillors, our District Councillor, Jane Hanna, our County Councillor, Iain Brown, and Steve Howell, of OCC Highways and his team for all their hard work in bringing about this trial proposal.

PLAGS

TRY HOMES SITE PLAN SEE COVER

To comment on this plan:

Email: planning.dc@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Address: Vale of White Horse District Council, Abbey House
Abingdon OX14 3JE

