

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON 21 MAY 2020 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.08 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Simon Weeks (Chairman), Chris Bowring (Vice-Chairman), Stephen Conway, Gary Cowan, Carl Doran, Pauline Jorgensen, Abdul Loyes, Andrew Mickleburgh, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

Officers Present

Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager
Mary Severin, Borough Solicitor
Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

Case Officers Present

Adriana Gonzalez
Kayleigh Mansfield
Brian O'Donovan
Baldeep Pulahi
Simon Taylor

111. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

MEMBERS' UPDATE

There are a number of references to the Members' Update within these minutes. The Members' Update was made available to Members prior to the meeting via email, and placed on the website for the public to view. A copy is available on the website.

112. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Gary Cowan declared a prejudicial interest in item number 114, application number 193339, on the basis that he may have made a predetermination with regards to this application. Gary stated that he would take no part in the discussion or vote for this item.

Chris Bowring declared a prejudicial interest in item number 114, application number 193339, on the basis that his wife was a Member of the spa. Chris stated that he would take no part in the discussion or vote for this item.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey declared a prejudicial interest in item number 114, application number 193339, on the basis that she was a Member of the spa. Rachelle stated that she would take no part in the discussion or vote for this item.

113. APPLICATIONS TO BE DEFERRED AND WITHDRAWN ITEMS

No applications were recommended for deferral, or withdrawn.

114. APPLICATION NO.193339 - NIRVANA SPA MOLE ROAD, SINDLESHAM, WOKINGHAM, RG41 5DJ

Councillors Chris Bowring, Gary Cowan and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey declared prejudicial interests relating to this item and took no part in the discussion or vote.

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a two storey detached building to provide 70 no. bedroom hotel accommodation ancillary to spa (Use Class C1) incorporating replacement gym, ancillary facilities and outside swimming pool, with associated car parking and soft landscaping, following demolition of existing 'Pulse 8' gym building.

Applicant: Mr S Barley

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 5 to 42.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Various amendments to conditions 3, 14, 20, 21, 22 and 25;
- A verbal update, not included within the published Members' Update, to state that recommendation A be amended to: A) Completion of a legal agreement within three months, unless a longer date is agreed by the Planning Service Manager and Chairman of Planning Committee, to secure an Employment Skills Plan, and.....

In line with the given deadlines, two public written submissions were received for this item. These submissions were circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submissions as provided can be found below.

Emily Temple Agent, provided the following submission in support of the application.
"Thank you Chairman, and good evening.

The application before you seeks ancillary overnight accommodation to serve the existing Nirvana Spa. The proposal comes as a result of a few factors; 1) combining on site gym facilities with the spa to ensure ongoing viability, as the existing 'Pulse 8' gym membership was not sufficient to sustain the enterprise. 2) Widening the market appeal of the very successful spa, especially the bespoke salt water treatments and rehabilitation programmes, and 3) retain and increase local employment opportunities.

The current proposals are the result of extensive pre-application discussions with planning officers, responding to their advice in both the design and suite of technical and environment reports submitted. This includes replacement gym floor area so there is no net reduction from 'Pulse 8'; a two storey height (plus basement) to better reflect the lower ridge of the existing spa complex, and design detailing such as the arched windows, to reflect existing.

To be clear, this is not a stand-alone 'hotel' development. It is not for independent weddings or conferences, and the proposed floorplans should provide reassurance of this. The existing spa already provides ancillary dining to members, and the proposed café and restaurant are an extension of these facilities for those who book to stay overnight to use the spa facilities.

Parking layouts have been revised to accommodate increased numbers, whilst maintaining safe flow and pedestrian safety around the site. Deliveries are now accessed from an existing entrance off Harrow Way, eliminating turning and waiting in front of

existing residential properties. This, combined with the movement of built development away from the boundary fence, and an enhanced building design when compared with the existing gym, offers an enhancement to local residential amenity.

A suite of technical and environmental reports address a range of policy requirements. A series of conditions as recommended by officers is agreed to, and will ensure the proper management of the site as well as health, safety and residential amenity during the demolition and construction phases. A legal agreement will secure the applicant's commitment to an employment skills plan.

I hope this is reassuring. We trust that the scheme presented reflects officer advice and guidance and addresses development plan policy requirements. It's therefore respectfully requested your officer's recommendation be supported today.
Thank you."

Prue Bray, Ward Member, provided the following statement which sought clarification on aspects of the proposed scheme. "This application is a marked improvement over the previous one which was refused, especially with the reduction in height and the less monolithic design of the building. I see that officers are now satisfied that the application will not result in increased light or noise pollution for residents.

Given the information provided with the application and the changes made in response to the previous refusal, it is hard to see that there are grounds for refusal. However, I would like to raise 3 things.

Condition 17 governs the use of the rooftop garden and makes it clear that it cannot be accessed between 9 pm and 11 am. Is it possible to change the wording of the condition slightly so that it also prevents any lighting being on in the rooftop garden between those times?

There is reference to a Construction Plan. I am fairly confident the plan will not allow construction traffic to use Harrow Way for access, but please could I have reassurance that that lorries will not be parking in Harrow Way either.

Is it possible to get clarification on who will be able to use the gym facilities in the hotel? These are significantly bigger than what was proposed in the last application, when the gym appeared to be only for the use of hotel guests. This report says in paragraph 16 that the gym would not be open to the general public, but that it would be "private member facilities". I have looked at the planning application but I can't find an explanation of what that means. Please could we have some clarity: will local people be able to join that gym and use the facilities, as they did with Pulse8, whose loss is greatly mourned in the community, or will its use be confined to hotel guests and members of Nirvana?"

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Simon Weeks commented that this application was a revised scheme for a previously refused application, and this application sought to address the previous reasons for refusal. Simon queried whether the current access arrangements off of Harrow Way would be maintained under the proposed scheme. Kayleigh Mansfield, case officer, confirmed that the current access arrangements would be maintained, whereby these access point would only be used by staff, delivery vehicles and emergency vehicles.

Stephen Conway commented that he was grateful that condition 17 had been amended, and queried who would be able to use the gym facilities from the local area. Kayleigh Mansfield stated that those who wished to use the gym facilities would be required to join the spa membership, as the gym was exclusive to spa members and hotel users.

Stephen Conway asked for officer comment on the possibility of a terracing effect, compared to the current buildings, from the given proposals. Kayleigh Mansfield stated that there had been amendments to the design proposals from the previously refused scheme, including reductions of the heights of the buildings. In addition, the designs would now appear more broken up and less monolithic. Officers felt that the design proposals were suitable.

Pauline Jorgensen asked for clarification that the sequential test relating to hotels and gyms had taken into account all local town centres. Kayleigh Mansfield stated that the report had meant to refer to centres, and not a singular centre. The proposals would attract customers from outside of the Wokingham Borough to come and use the facilities, thereby reducing any impact on hotels and gyms in the local area. As a result, the planning policy team was now in support of the proposals.

Abdul Loyes sought confirmation that the proposals were suitable and sustainable in terms of flood negation, and whether the transport statement was fully compliant with policy. Kayleigh Mansfield confirmed that the proposals were sustainable against flooding. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that the transport statement was fully up to date and in accordance with policy.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried whether the parking proposals were sufficient to cope with the increased number of new staff, whether it could be conditioned to state the exact amount of trees to be planted on site, and whether the site was intending to use an environmentally friendly alternative to gas. Judy Kelly stated that the car parking condition was primarily due to securing provision of electric vehicle charging bays on site. The number of parking spaces met the standards for hotel and gym use. The car park accumulation survey had estimated that approximately 135 spaces were not currently in use at the busiest time, and therefore the proposed 81 additional spaces would provide ample parking. Kayleigh Mansfield clarified that there was due to be a net increase of trees, and additional details would be provided within the landscaping plans. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, stated that restricting the use of gas on site would be unreasonable, as there was no specific planning policy to make such provisions.

Malcolm Richards queried whether staff and other workers would be able to use the roof in the evening, for example to undertake repairs. Kayleigh Mansfield stated that the wording would be changed to include the restriction of staff and contract workers from the roof area during the evening time. Any maintenance work would have to be carried out during normal business hours.

RESOLVED That application number 193339 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 6 to 14, various amendments to conditions 3, 14, 20, 21, 22 and 25 as set out in the Members' Update, rewording of recommendation A as verbally updated by the case officer, and clarification that staff and contractors were not to use the roof area outside of business hours.

115. APPLICATION NO.192852 - SORBUS HOUSE, MULBERRY BUSINESS PARK, FISHPONDS ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG41 2GY

Proposal: Outline application with for the proposed erection of 38 dwellings to include one and two bedroom dwellings, landscaping, bike store and bin store (access to be considered)

Applicant: Mr P Smith

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 43 to 90.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included an amendment to recommendation A to read: *A completed legal agreement secured within three months of the date of the Planning Committee to secure the provision of a minimum of nine on site affordable housing units (in shared ownership with two x 1-bed units and seven x 2-bed units) and an Employment Skills Plan.*

In line with the given deadlines, two public written submissions were received for this item. These submissions were circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submissions as provided can be found below.

Paul Smith provided the following submission in support of the application. "Since the January planning committee meeting which granted outline planning permission for 38 units at Sorbus House subject to the signing of a legal agreement (S106), we have been working hard to fulfil our offer to provide on-site affordable housing. This followed the proactive and collaborative work we did with Simon Taylor before the January meeting to ensure the proposals we submitted were both compliant and acceptable.

We embarked on a series of protracted with Wokingham Council's Registered Provider (RP) with a view to them taking on the site for Affordable Housing (AH). We also continued to work proactively with the planning case officer to agree the S106 agreement and funded the Council's viability study to advise those discussions. As you can see from Simon's report, the final conclusion of that agreement is that the S106 provision of 9 shared ownership dwellings should be approved.

Unfortunately WBC's AH team couldn't progress and therefore we looked for an alternative HA to deliver the 38 units as fully affordable dwellings. We have worked hard to find that partner and are close to securing an agreement with another RP. The intention is for them to develop the whole site (38 units) for affordable housing. 38 is considerably more than the number requested under the local policies and, if our agreement is successfully concluded, means that Wokingham Borough Council will benefit from a significant uplift in affordable homes on this site. Better than the 9 units (which we can deliver and still commercially build and sell the remaining 29 units as private housing) or paying the commuted payment for offsite affordable housing provision (£714k) which the Housing team first requested. We have further agreed to a viability review at a stage when 70% of the homes are occupied so the Council can confirm they have best value in AH. Contracts have not yet been exchanged with the RP in question which is why the S106 is in its present form.

So, in summary, we have done what was asked of us at the January Committee meeting. This will result in a minimum of 9 AH dwellings on-site, but more likely 38 new AH units for the Borough. I hope you all agree that this is a fantastic outcome and I look forward to ratification of our outline planning proposal."

Sarah Kerr, Ward Member, provided the following submission commenting on aspects of the application. “You will remember at the planning committee meeting in January when I spoke against this development and the reasons why. There were many, not least, that this is a core employment area, and there are a now hundreds of residential conversions taking place through permitted development laws – laws that desperately need revising. As such, the committee agreed that this development would be allowed as it at least provided CIL money, unlike the other units in the area which I hope will go some way to making this a nicer place to live than an employment area would. One of the other objections I had was due to the lack of onsite affordable housing (zero). I thank the committee for insisting that onsite affordable housing was included, but am subsequently disappointed that the applicant is now trying to lessen their commitment, hence the decision before you tonight. Affordable housing has many meanings, and Wokingham has a distinct lack of truly affordable housing. Please may I remind the committee that you are here tonight not to help developers increase their profit margins. Your commitment is to the people of Wokingham Borough, and as a local planning authority, it has been determined what level of affordable housing is required for developments. Your job tonight is to uphold that requirement.”

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Simon Weeks commented that policy requirements for this application required 11.4 affordable housing units, however the applicant had subsequently agreed 9 on site units which had been independently assessed via a viability assessment. The applicant had been in contact with a housing management company in order to provide all units as affordable housing in future. The provision of all units as affordable housing was outside of the legal agreement.

Chris Bowring commented that the Committee had previously sought to get affordable housing on-site. The reduction from 11.4 units to 9 units was adequate in his opinion.

Gary Cowan commented that it may be appropriate to ask the relevant Executive Member whether these types of development were appropriate within the Thames Valley Heath SPA.

Andrew Mickleburgh asked that the amended recommendation A be agreed in conjunction with the Chairman of the Planning Committee. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, stated that this could be referred to specifically.

All Committee Members present were positive about the prospect of provision of 38 on-site affordable housing units, which would be an asset within the Borough.

RESOLVED That application number 192852 to approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 44 to 50, and amended recommendation A as set out in the Members Update which is to be agreed in conjunction with the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

116. APPLICATION NO.200475 - WOKINGHAM FAMILY GOLF, FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 3HG

Proposal: Application to vary conditions 2, 6 and 9 and remove conditions 3 and 7 of planning consent 172979 for the full application for the proposed erection of a single storey extension to existing driving range building to provide catering/bar and toilet facilities, erection of covered bike store and alterations to existing parking layout. Condition 2 (approved details) is varied to include an enlarged southern terrace, new lighting and changes to the building, car park and cycle parking (retrospective); Condition 6 (landscaping) is varied to discharge landscaping details; Conditions 3 (drainage) and 7 (protection of trees during construction) are removed and Condition 9 (opening hours) is varied allow extended trading hours between 07:30 to 23:30 Mon to Sat and 08:00 to 22:30 Sun and Bank Holidays and until 22:00 within external terrace areas, 7 days a week between the months of April and September inclusive.

Applicant: Mr A Williams

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 91 to 112.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification that the recommendation commencing on page 92 did not include the conditions in number order. The conditions being varied or removed were included first and were followed by the conditions remaining unchanged. Condition 1 (three year period to commence works) and Condition 7 (protection of trees during construction) had been removed as they were no longer relevant as the works had been completed;
- 3 further public submissions in support of the application had been received since the publication of the officer report;
- A submission from Cllr Maria Gee reiterating her opposition to the proposal was also received, specifically outlining concerns about the enlargement of the terrace and additional lighting. These matters had been addressed within the officer report.

In line with the given deadlines, two public written submissions were received for this item. These submissions were circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submissions as provided can be found below.

Mr and Mrs Williams, applicants, provided the following submission in support of the application. "Since opening in April 2015, Wokingham Family Golf (WFG) has become extremely popular with local people and is undoubtedly one of the town's most valued recreational facilities. Our success derives from our wide customer base and the strong appeal we have to families with young children, friends celebrating special occasions, grandparents with grandchildren and dedicated golfers of all ages.

In terms of outreach work we have an attachment with 8 local schools, providing 180 children from each school the opportunity to play golf whilst running after school clubs in each school and our academy currently coaches around 100 children a week. We are particularly proud of our work with disabled and special needs individuals from Ravenswood.

We have a loyalty to all our customers and knew there was strong demand for a food and beverage operation which is why we embarked on the new clubhouse project. We believe that this is the next step in making WFG the complete experience for our customers whilst

simultaneously also creating 5 x full time and 7 x part time employment opportunities for local people.

As a small family-run business, the clubhouse operation has been a significant investment and its success is vital to the longevity of the business. This service comes at an increased cost to the business through additional staff wages, increased business rates and higher operational expenses. For these reasons, it is imperative our operating hours are extended so as to help us cover these costs but, as at present, we will ensure that our activities do not give rise to justified objections from our neighbours (the nearest house being more than 80m away from the clubhouse with intervening fencing and mature planting).

In summary, the extended opening hours will provide us with an extra 20% revenue according to our business plans. We believe this is of paramount importance to our ability to continue to provide our invaluable services (driving range, pitch and putt, adventure golf and footgolf) to Wokingham families.

Now more than ever we are seeing the unquestionable importance of outside spaces for the public to enjoy and the physical and mental health benefits of recreation. As Wokingham continues to expand, the need for businesses like ourselves has never been stronger. We look forward to growing and providing our community with our unique service for many years to come.”

Maria Gee, Ward Member, provided the following statement in objection to the application. “The application to vary condition 9 of PA172979 is to align the opening hours of the bar and terrace with the licensing hours. However, the licensing hours application was made in the knowledge that condition 9 did not allow for this alignment; therefore a more logical approach would have been to align the licensing application hours with the planning conditions. I cannot see why there is a need now to align opening hours, when in September 2019, the date of the premises licence application, there was no need for alignment.

The reason given for condition 9 is to protect residential amenity, and the draft decision notice, in respect of noise, stated that hours of operation were not changed. Arguing that there were no objections to the premises licensing hours is missing the point that residents were at that point protected by condition 9. The need to protect residential amenity has not changed and thus the extended opening hours should be denied.

Extending the opening hours will also have effects on the environment, most specifically (a) vehicles traversing the drive late at night, with accompanying noise and (b) the lighting and noise on the extended terrace. Both will have some detrimental impact on wildlife, especially insects, birds and foraging bats. These effects were not considered in PA172979 with its restricted opening hours and therefore should be considered now, before the application proceeds. The draft decision notice for PA172979 stated that there were no ecological effects and that it was unlikely that there would be any effect on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. I would respectfully ask the committee to consider if, in the round, these statements are still likely to hold with respect the current application? If not, then how should this application proceed.

Undoubtedly, Wokingham Family Golf is an asset to Wokingham residents, providing outdoor and indoor family activities. However, the benefits to Wokingham residents, in general, have to be weighed against the impact that such a facility has on residents closest to it, and on the countryside location. Maintaining a family element does not require

extended opening times to a bar and terrace; that extension would, in fact, go against the 'family' focus of the facility."

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Simon Weeks commented that that this business was approximately 350m away from the nearest residential property, bar those immediately adjacent to the business property. Simon added that this was an existing facility which was looking to extend the hours of business for its bar facilities.

Chris Bowring commented that under the Licensing Act 2003, the premises licence could be reviewed should any issues arise. As such, Chris felt that it would be wrong to refuse the application on these grounds.

Carl Doran queried which parts of the application were retrospective. Simon Taylor, case officer, stated that this application was lodged as the applicant wished to seek an amendment to the trading hours. Upon an officer site visit, various discrepancies were identified such as the external terrace, cycle storage, and outside and inside areas. These discrepancies were then addressed as a retrospective element of this application.

Malcolm Richards sought clarification regarding the drainage discharge of conditions. Simon Taylor stated that officers noted that there was no discharge of conditions relating to drainage, and it was possible to discharge this retrospectively if the condition was amended. Drainage was already installed on site, however the business could not operate without the drainage details being discharged.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried why condition 16 did not suggest that glass waste would be recycled. Simon Taylor clarified that this was not the intention, and the wording would be edited to reflect this.

A number of Members noted their disapproval for the retrospective element of the application, and asked that the applicant endeavour to make all future applications in good time.

RESOLVED That application number 200475 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 92 to 97, removal of condition 1 and 7 as set out in the Members' Update, and amendment of the wording of condition 16 to reflect that glass waste would be recycled.

117. APPLICATION NO.200312 - GRAVELLY BRIDGE FARM, GRAZELEY GREEN ROAD, GRAZELEY, RG7 1LG

Proposal: Full application for the temporary change of use of the agricultural land to soil and aggregate production with a single storey site office and bunds (retrospective)

Applicant: Mr Fleetwood

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 113 to 136.

The Committee were advised that there were no Members' Updates.

In line with the given deadlines, one public written submission was received for this item. This submission was circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submission as provided can be found below.

Alison Crooks, agent, provided a submission in support of the application. "Dear Mr Chairman

My name is Alison Crooks and I represent the applicant. I trust that you and the committee are keeping safe and well.

I would like to start by thanking the planning officer for his report and assistance throughout this application. This has been a positive process, even during these unusual working conditions.

Fleetwood Grab Services is a local company. They have been based at Gravelly Bridge Farm for many years and work in the local area. They specialize in the management of soils generated from construction projects which can include foundations from household extensions. Fleetwood Grab process clean soils to produce a British Standard quality soil. The soils are returned for landscaping projects and the stones are used in drainage or laying tracks. This helps to achieve 100% diversion from landfill and ensures that the soils are used for beneficial uses.

During this lockdown period, Fleetwood Grabs has continued to serve customers, in line with Government guidance, to help ensure that waste continues to be managed in an environmentally sound manner. No staff have been made redundant or furloughed. The continued use of the application site is paramount to the survival of this business.

We note in the officer's report that there are no local or statutory objections to the development. We fully support the officer's recommendations and thank you for your time."

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Simon Weeks commented that this site had been operational for three years with no planning permission. Should the Committee be minded to grant planning permission, this would give the Council more control via conditions. Simon added that the site was obliged to keep waste transfer licences, which detailed what material was entering the site. Simon stated that this site would allow for material to be recycled and used for construction purposes instead of being turned into landfill waste.

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey queried whether this site had any relation to the potential development site at Grazeley. Simon Weeks stated that the Committee could only determine this application based on what was present currently.

Gary Cowan queried whether the site could be restricted to using materials within a five mile radius, as per Shinfield Parish Council's request. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, stated that conditions were required to be reasonable. In this case, it would not be reasonable to restrict materials to a five mile radius. Gary Cowan added that records would be required to be kept, via the waste transfer licences. Simon Taylor, case officer, clarified that a radial restriction of materials would be unnecessary as movements were restricted to six in and six out per day.

A number of Members stated their disappointment of the retrospective nature of this application, and urged the applicant to endeavour to make all future planning applications in good time.

RESOLVED That application number 200312 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as in agenda pages 114 to 116.

118. APPLICATION NO.193248 - LAND NORTH OF CHURCH LANE, CHURCH LANE, THREE MILE CROSS

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a temporary compound to facilitate infrastructure works, including hardstanding, parking, fencing and gates, cabins and storage units. (Part retrospective)

Applicant: Southern Electric Power Distribution

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 137 to 158.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included an updated description of the proposal to include mention of lighting and CCTV towers.

In line with the given deadlines, one public written submission was received for this item. This submission was circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submission as provided can be found below.

Rory Hollings, agent, provided the following submission in support of the application. "Southern Electric Power Distribution (SEPD) is in the process of replacing its end of life Reading Main to Reading Town 132 kilovolt underground circuits running between the London Road and Vastern Road sub-stations, part of a multi-million pound investment to Reading's electricity infrastructure. To enable these works to be undertaken several temporary compounds have been established for the siting of materials, equipment, machinery and welfare facilities.

The planning application before you today is for one such compound located in land to the north of Church Lane near Shinfield, opposite the Pulleyn Transport depot. The compound was first established in July 2019 under the assumption that it constituted permitted development. It has since been highlighted that this may not be the case. Following dialogue with the planning team it was agreed that an application would be submitted in order to regularise the use of the site as a temporary compound.

Permission is sought to continue the use of the site as a temporary compound up until the end of Summer 2021. The compound enables SEPD and its contractors to continue working safely and help ensure that future electricity supplies are secured for those served by this key power line. The site has been successfully and safely operated to date with no known issues or complaints from local residents.

Following the completion of these infrastructure works, the compound will be demobilised, and the site will be returned to its original state as a grazed pasture field.

SEPD is committed to undertaking the infrastructure works and operation of the compound site safely and as a 'responsible neighbour' and any issues that are raised will be dealt with quickly and appropriately and to the satisfaction of all affected parties.

During the course of the application SEPD has liaised with the case officer to provide the required information to assist in reaching the recommendation before you today. Where the possibility of harm has been identified, every effort has been made to mitigate this through design and collaboration with the Council. SEPD has worked to reach a suitable outcome to the satisfaction of all.

We respectfully request that the planning committee, in accordance with the case officer's recommendation, approve the continued use of this site as a temporary compound to allow these essential infrastructure works to be completed in a safe, timely and economic manner."

Brian O'Donovan, case officer, provided the following verbal updates with regards to conditions. Highways had visited the site and confirmed that they are happy with the visibility splay subject to some shrub clearance to one side, which would be required to be completed within the next 2 weeks. They were also happy with the suggested routing, and therefore they don't require a further plan to be submitted. Therefore conditions 4 and 6 are suggested to change to a wording along these lines:

- C4 - Within 2 weeks of the date of this decision visibility splays shall be provided for the access of the approved development measuring 2.4m by 120m, and shall be so designed that there is no obstruction to vision above 0.6 metre in height relative to the nearside edge of the adjacent carriageway over the whole of each vision splay area. Such splays thereafter shall be maintained free of obstruction to vision.
- C6 - All traffic above 7.5T serving the development hereby permitted shall enter and leave the site only from the east via Church Lane and Brookers Hill and not via Church Lane to the west.

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Simon Weeks commented that this application was in part retrospective, as the applicant believed that alterations were covered under permitted development rights. Simon added that permission was sought for 24 months temporary use by Southern Electric, and the use was expected to cease in the summer of 2021. The application was only before the Committee as the site was larger than 1 hectare.

Angus Ross queried why there was no application for a change of use, and how would the restoration of the site be managed. Brian O'Donovan stated that there was an associated change of use for the requested temporary period. Detailed comments had been received from the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) landscape and tree officer, which had

concluded that the land was of relatively low value. Using previous satellite images and the like, the site would be restored to as close to its original value as possible at the end of the temporary period.

RESOLVED That application number 193248 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 138 to 140, and amendments to condition 4 and 6 as verbally updated by the case officer.

119. APPLICATION NO.200863 - 75 LONDON ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 1YA

Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use from HMO (Use Class C4) to supported living (Use Class C2), plus erection of two storey rear extension with 3 no. rooflights and solar panels and erection of detached rear outbuilding to form a meeting room following demolition of existing outbuilding, with associated parking, cycle and bin storage.

Applicant: Wokingham Borough Council

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 159 to 184.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included:

- Clarification of the floor areas;
- Clarification that Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) purchased this property as a house of multiple occupancy (HMO) in 2017, and had been vacant since;
- Clarification that notification Letters were sent on 8 April 2020. However, in response to objections received from neighbours and in the interest of openness, a site notice was also posted by the applicant on 30 April 2020;
- Clarification that on agenda page 170, paragraph 22, R23 of the Borough Design Guide refers to alterations and extensions to buildings;
- Since publication of the report, 5 additional public letters of objection had been received. The points raised by these letter have been addressed within the officer report;
- Clarification that the applicant had provided details of the proposed surface water drainage strategy. The WBC Drainage Officer was satisfied with these details, and so has determined that Condition (10) is no longer necessary.

In line with the given deadlines, one public written submission was received for this item. This submissions was circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submission as provided can be found below.

Maria Gee, Ward Member, provided the following submission in objection to the application. "I wish to object to the application in its current form (revised). I objected initially to the extent of the new build on site, the parking and access to London Road, and to the building in the garden, while acknowledging the need for local accommodation for care leavers. It is also good that measures have been taken for sustainability and that the building will be brought back into use.

In my original objection I observed that three parking spaces did not allow safe access to and from the site on a bend in a very busy road. I suggested that reducing the size of the accommodation proposed would solve this problem because fewer parking spaces would be required. I am very pleased to see that the number of parking spaces has been reduced and reserved for residents or visitors with disability permits. However, reducing

the car parking spaces does not overcome the problem that led to the need for the original proposal to have three spaces. That problem is that the application is overdevelopment of the site. The application almost doubles the footprint of the main dwelling and the percentage of the site occupied by buildings has more than doubled from 25% to 53%.

I cannot see the need for a very sizeable meeting room separated from the main building. The meeting room would be better placed within the footprint of the main building; this would also avoid any problems with noise, especially at night, from residents travelling to and fro between the meeting room and the main building. Perhaps the sitting room/staff sleep-in area could be reconfigured to put the meeting room on the ground floor and the staff sleep-in on the first floor? Relocation of the meeting room would also preserve the green corridor of back gardens. If that is not possible, then some form of restriction on hours of usage would seem appropriate.

I therefore recommend to the committee that they reject this application. If that is the outcome, then the council, as developer, could engage more with the local community. So far there has been no community involvement other than an informal chat with the residents at number 77. It is better that the council take residents with them when developing its own sites.”

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey asked for officer clarification regarding any overlooking and massing as a result of proposals. Adriana Gonzalez, case officer, stated that the neighbouring property had no 1st floor windows except non-habitable rooms, which were high level windows. The sunlight and daylight assessment had determined that there would be no loss of light in the neighbouring dwellings as a result of proposals.

Angus Ross queried whether a bat survey should be required prior to the application being determined, and sought clarification regarding the harvester within the plans. Adriana Gonzalez clarified that the site was not located within a bat survey area, and it was therefore not required to be completed within the validation period. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, clarified that the harvester was likely a rain water collector located underneath the grass.

Angus Ross asked for clarification regarding the parking at the front of the property, which appeared constrained. Angus added whether there would be sufficient provision for deliveries, and queried whether the proposals would be intrusive towards the garden amenity of property number 71. Judy Kelly, Highways Development Manager, stated that there were two existing dropped curbs, which allowed quite a wide area at the front for deliveries. Adriana Gonzalez stated that there would be no adverse impact on number 71 in terms of overshadowing, and there was a separation distance of 2.7m along the side boundary which was policy compliant.

Malcolm Richards queried whether the disabled space at the front of the property could be used by another resident, should no disabled residents be present at the property. Simon Weeks clarified that the space was designated to be used as a disabled space, however as it was not on a highway it was not a legal requirement.

Andrew Mickleburgh queried whether the parking on site was sufficient, being only 1 space, when there were already on-street parking issues. Judy Kelly stated that the

property parking was suitable given the demographic in this case. Judy added that there was a bus stop with a good service nearby.

Andrew Mickleburgh asked for clarification regarding the proposed meeting room. Justin Turvey stated that the meeting room was of ancillary usage, and therefore its hours should not be restricted.

Abdul Loyes queried whether there would be any additional trees planted, as the site was located on a green route. Adriana Gonzalez stated that there would be no loss of trees, and further landscaping details were to be submitted via condition.

Pauline Jorgensen sought clarification regarding the rear boundary. Adriana Gonzalez stated that there would be 16.1m of the rear garden remaining, which was policy compliant. Pauline reiterated other Member concerns regarding parking, and stated that she was minded to refuse the application on those grounds.

Carl Doran commented that agenda page 169 noted that extension would be subservient. Carl was of the opinion that this could be seen as a case of overdevelopment. Simon Weeks stated that WBC could rent out the property as a HMO immediately, with 8 occupants and 8 cars with no modernisations to the property. This application gave more control to the management of the site and allowed a staff member on site to manage the property.

Gary Cowan asked how many car parking spaces would be required for an eight bedroom house. Judy Kelly stated that a maximum of 2.3 spaces, plus an additional 0.2 visitor spaces, would be required for an eight bedroom house. Gary added that he would not support this application until the parking provided was equivalent to that of an equivalent private application. Judy reiterated that parking was policy compliant, given the sustainable location, proximity to town centre car parks and the specific usage of the property.

Stephen Conway commented that the highways officer had made a clear judgement with regards to this application, and Members would need a clear technical reason to oppose the application on these grounds. On balance, Stephen stated that he was minded to approve the application.

Chris Bowring queried whether a change of use and change of parking standards would be required should the property be sold to a private family. Justin Turvey confirmed this to be correct. Chris Bowring added that in his opinion the parking on the Easthampstead Road was sufficient, the proposals were not out of keeping with other houses in the area and the extension could not be seen from the front of the property.

RESOLVED That application number 200863 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 160 to 163, and removal of condition 10 as set out in the Members' Update.

120. APPLICATION NO.200753 - 2 WALNUT TREE CLOSE, RUSCOMBE, RG10 9PF

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with 5no. rooflights including interior alterations and changes to fenestration, plus first floor front extension with 3no. rooflights

Applicant: Mr and Mrs D Kinnersley

The Committee received and reviewed a report, set out in agenda pages 185 to 200.

The Committee were advised that the Members' Update included the existing and proposed side elevation plans.

In line with the given deadlines, one public written submission was received for this item. This submission was circulated to Members in advance, and noted on the evening. The submission as provided can be found below.

Anne Owen, agent, provided the following submission in support of the application. "The design of the renovations has been carefully considered and developed in keeping with the character of the existing buildings in the Close. The pre-application consultation with Wokingham Planning Department enabled us to establish an acceptable approach, in size and style. The Department's preapplication report highlighted the unique nature of the corner plot, which is relatively secluded, minimizing impact on the street scene.

The corner plot is unique in the Close, being set back from the street scene. It does not set a precedent for future development of any other dwellings in the Close, because they are all sited closer to the roadway.

The extended house will have 5 bedrooms plus kitchen-diner, living room, playroom and study. This is reasonable and proportionate provision for a family home in the area.

The new roof design complements the existing building, using exactly the same form with a ridge height increase of only 1.9m – less than a full second storey.

The study window of Number 3 is already visible from the existing ground floor windows of the playroom at Number 2 and is the only window of a habitable room on this side of Number 3. The new first floor windows are positioned directly above the existing ground floor windows. The top sections of these windows are rooflights, set obliquely in relation to the neighbour's windows. They follow the profile of the roof, being set at the same angle. This design reflects the character of the existing house and neighbouring buildings.

There is a distance of 13.1m between the extension and Number 3, exceeding the minimum recommendation of the Borough Design Guide.

The single storey garage is retained, creating a step down in form from the first floor extension. There is a 15.8m visible gap to the next house from the first floor extension. It does not create additional enclosure.

The first floor extension meets all Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidelines on daylight provision, with 45 degree and 25 degree daylight lines shown correctly on the drawings.

My clients fully appreciate the spacious and pleasant character of the Close and its community, which they enjoy. Their brief was to design a sympathetic extension in this context, to meet the needs of their growing family. We have enacted this with great care."

Members were asked in turn for any comments or queries on this application. Specific comments or queries are summarised below.

Stephen Conway commented that separation distances complied with guidelines, and although sympathetic to neighbour concerns, there were no planning reasons for refusal. Stephen asked for clarification relating to overlooking of the neighbouring study. Baldeep Pulahi, case officer, stated that there was no perceived overlooking of the neighbouring study that would harm the use of the room. There was a distance of at least 13m from the proposed extension to the study, which was in excess of the required 10m front to front elevation separation distance. Justin Turvey, Operational Manager – Development Management, stated that any perceived overlooking was into the front garden space, which was already publically viewable.

Simon Weeks commented that if refused, this would go against the Council's own residential design guide, which would result in a loss should the decision be appealed by the applicant.

Carl Doran commented that a site visit would have been useful, but it was fully understandable why one could not be conducted at this current time. Simon Weeks added that the case officer had provided many photos to enable Members to gauge the relationship between the neighbouring properties.

Abdul Loyes queried whether the neighbouring properties would experience daylight loss as a result of the proposals. Baldeep Pulahi stated that the proposals were setback 6.3m from the property boundary, and there was a compliant 45 degree line. As such, there was no anticipated loss of light for property number 3.

Simon Weeks commented that much of the discussions were focussed not on subjective issues, but whether distances met guidelines, which they appeared to in this case.

RESOLVED That application number 200753 be approved, subject to conditions and informatives as set out in agenda pages 186 to 187.