

## Planning Committee – 8 July 2020

### Written Public Submissions

#### Application No.200893 - 15 The Drive, Earley, RG6 1EG

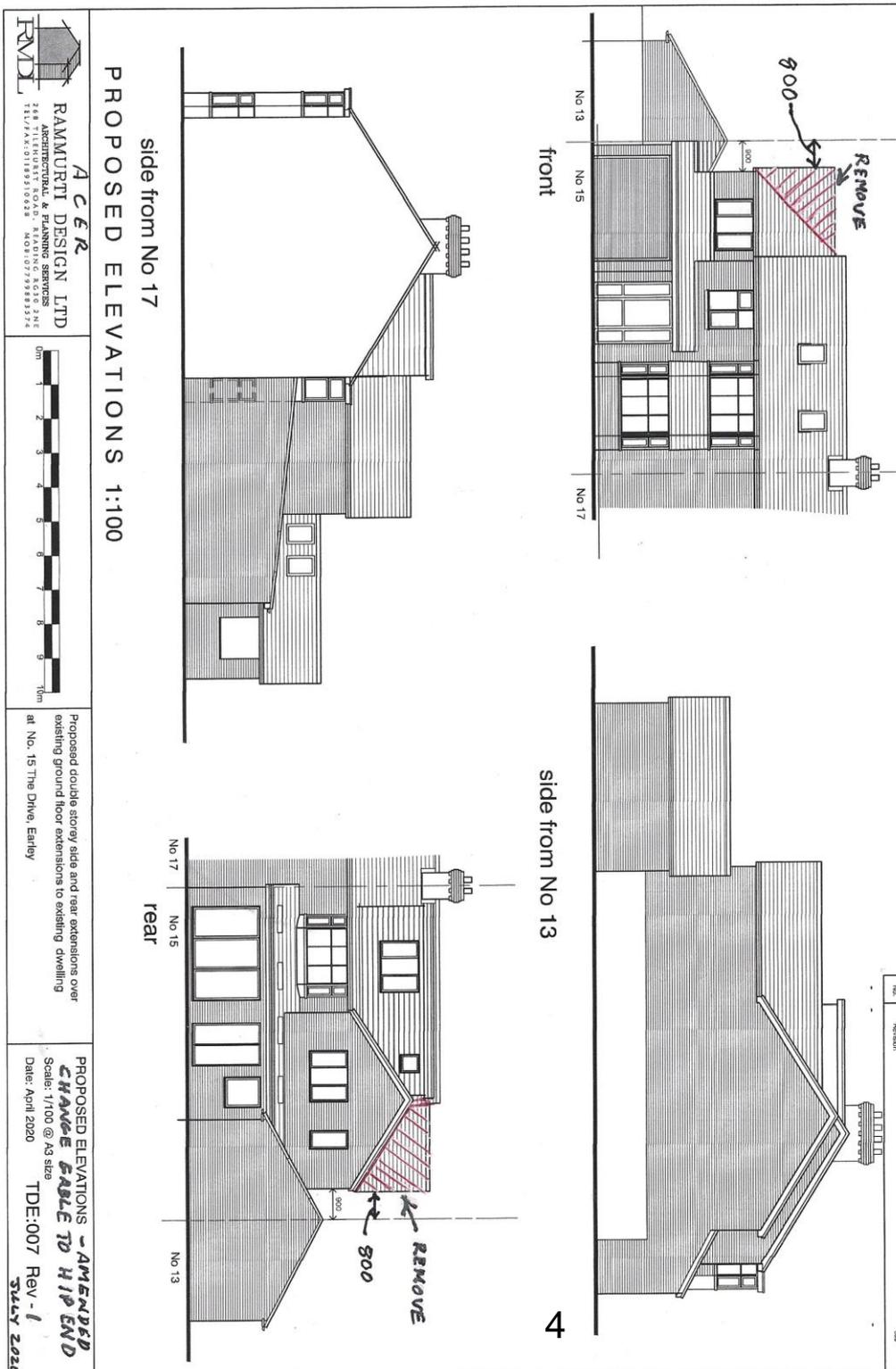
**Town and Parish Council** – No submission(s) received

**Objectors** – ACER Residents' Association:

1. – ACER's is concerned to maintain the character of Whitegates which is predominantly separated semi-detached houses with sloping hip-end roofs.
2. To build houses too close to each other and omit the sloping roofs causes a terracing effect
3. Whitegates streets are characterised by green frontages. Removal of all greenery in front gardens changes the character of a street
4. To build the side extension **less** than the *minimum* distance to the boundary is unacceptable as it contributes to a terracing effect.
5. The side extension adjacent to the house shows a vertical gable end construction. This vertical end would give rise to a terracing effect which is unacceptable.
6. It should be noted that if the pitched roof of the main extension was continued all the way along its length, then the main house would end up with a hip end roof, which would be in keeping with the character of the area. Please see marked up drawing TDE:007.
7. The Borough Design Guide states that the rhythm of buildings and the gaps between them are important to the character of the area, which is valued by the residents.
8. Similar roof conversions have been rejected when applied for under local Planning procedures as they were *not* in character, including 192998 at 5 Byron Road
9. Should the Committee be inclined to Approve, the following conditions are requested:
  - i) The **gap to the boundary should be a *minimum* of 1 metre**. There is no reason given as to why it should be less.

- ii) **The pitched roof profile of the extension should extend along the full length of the property.** This has no effect on the internal accommodation but has the benefit of returning the main property to a hip end.
- iii) **Reinstate soft landscaping in the front garden** which is tall enough to be seen when travelling down The Drive. This would maintain the character of the area in line with CP3 and assist with the green environmental emergency measures declared by WBC.

ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association



**Supporters** – No submission(s) received

**Ward Members** – Shirley Boyt:

There are 58 dwellings in The Drive.

All are 1930s semi-detached except for three newly built detached and one pair of semis which has a new dwelling attached making a terrace of three.

The convention in this road is for hipped roof joints not gable ends.

The houses stand on generous plots with ample room for side and rear extensions and the majority of houses have taken advantage of this. However, with the exception of only 3 dwellings (13, 15 and 27), all have maintained the hipped roof joint. Even the newly built properties have kept to this convention. Numbers 13 and 27 have no side extensions but have gable ends to the original house; in the case of no. 27, this is barely visible due to mature trees and shrubs in the front garden.

On the current application I have three points to make:

- a) What the Officer's report does not make clear is that no. 15 and its neighbour, no. 13 are already at odds with the rest of the street scene as both have gable ends to the main house roof. Adding a side extension with another gable end will only exacerbate the problem whereas an extension with a hipped joint would go some way towards correcting this anomaly.
- b) The distance from the boundary should be 1 metre not 90cm. This might be seen as nit-picking and indeed the Officer's report treats this as being inconsequential, so I would ask the Committee to consider this – do we now have a 10% tolerance in this regard? Is 90cm the new normal?
- c) WBC has declared a climate emergency. The planning process should be encouraging the retention or re-instatement of trees and shrubs at every opportunity to balance the needs of the motor car with the needs of the planet.

I note also that number 13 has just been sold and it is extremely likely that the new owners will at some point wish to extend. If you allow a gable on this extension, you will have set a precedent for number 13 to follow suit.

I therefore request that if the Committee is mindful to approve this application, please make such approval conditional on items a, b and c above.

Cllr. Shirley Boyt

Member for Bulmershe and Whitegates Ward

**Application No.200888 - Lambs Farm Business Park, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield**

**Town and Parish Council** - No submission(s) received

**Objectors** - Roderic Vaughan, for Planning Committee WBC. Reasons for refusing PA number 200888.

Lambs Farm Business Park LFBP is not in Spencers Wood (paragraph 12 of report); is in rural parish of Swallowfield in open countryside, where a presumption against new development applies, in principle, based on current Development Plans.

Expansion of rural business parks like LFBP are considered strategically, through the Local Plan. This was done, but without success. Around 2010 it was noted the site 'could be recognised as having scope for consolidation or limited additional development'. LFBP was considered as a potential employment allocation through the MDDP when the Examiner noted 'evidence to support the site's inclusion on the basis of additional land is required, or that they are preferable in location, sustainability or deliverability, is not convincing'. There has been major expansion at LFBP since 2012. Sound planning principles have been ignored; potential further development at LFBP was found to be unsustainable at public examinations.

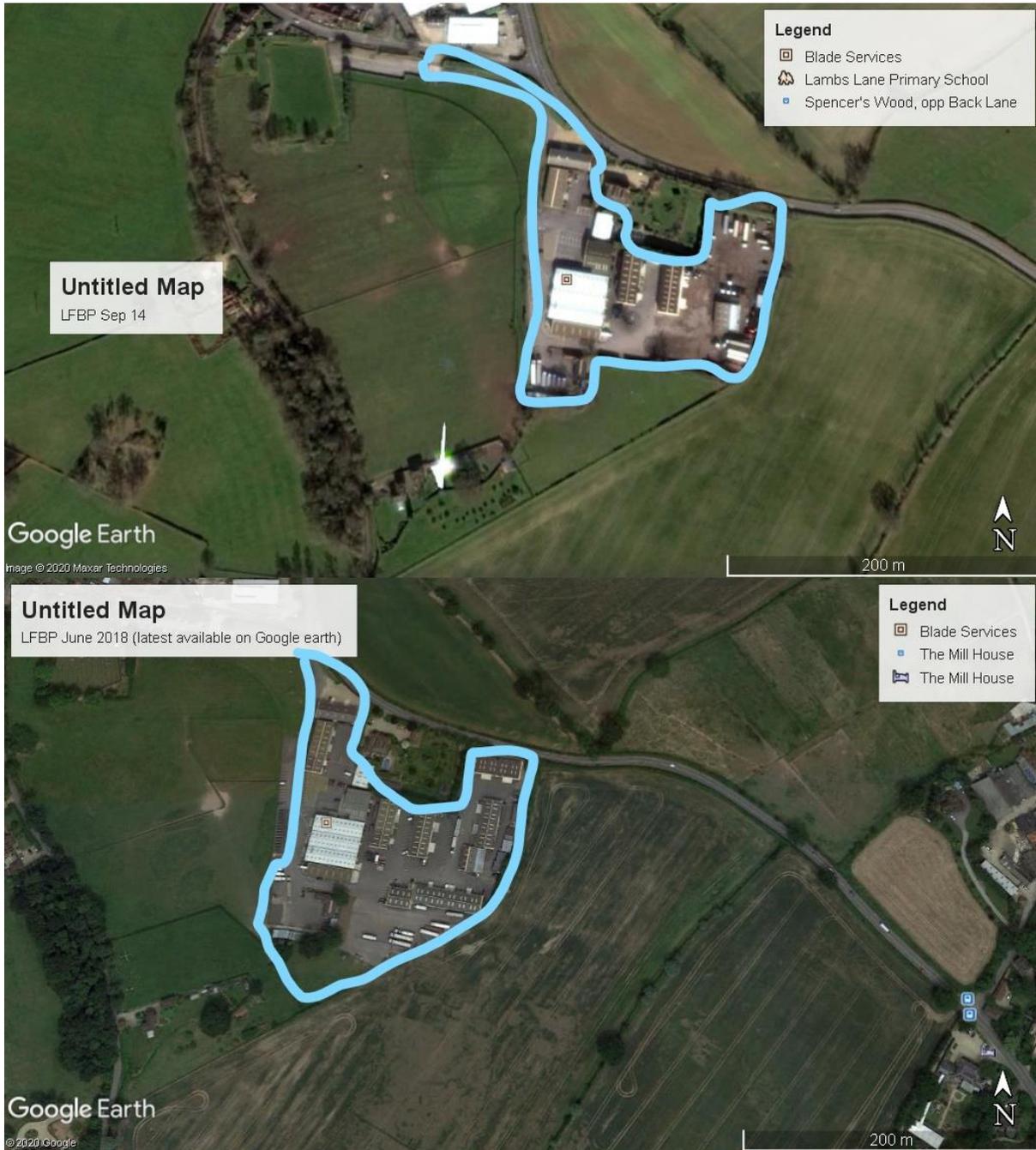
Policy CP 11 is relevant; restricts development outside development limits. Rural enterprise is referred to in the report in paragraph 7. Key consideration is whether the proposal contributes to a 'sustainable rural enterprise', which is not the case as stated previously and therefore conflicts with criterion 1 of CP11. Paragraph 10 of the report states 'there is no excessive encroachment away from original buildings'. Actually, this development is part of a continual encroachment of built form into the open countryside.

The application site and additional land was previously used for HGV parking without permission. Use was permitted in December 2018, with part of the land returned to pasture and a landscaping scheme introduced as conditions. The retrospective application noted parking arrangements at LFBP have always been generous to benefit occupiers. Massing of buildings to meet more business floorspace will displace HGV parking and will create pressure for further expansion. Expansion is already excessive according to criterion 2 of CP11. It also fails the test of criterion 3 of CP11 of 'not being within suitably located buildings etc..'. The proposal conflicts with CP11.

The NPPF, paragraph 83, states 'Planning Policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas'. Carte blanche to any rural employment development is not permitted; it needs to be sustainable, the proposal isn't and should be refused.

Images LFBP





**Supporters** – Written Statement by the Applicant (J P Winkworth Ltd) in support of the proposed development:

Lambs Farm Business Park is an established high quality Business Park with some 70,000 sq.ft of business floorspace. This application is for 3 units to provide 5,000 sq.ft additional floorspace taking the total to 75,000 sq.ft. The height, design and colouring of the units is consistent throughout the Business Park. The proposed units are located within the confines of the existing Business Park and will follow the same ethos of scale, design and colouring.

The Business Park has grown incrementally with new units being built to meet specific demand rather than on a speculative basis. The policy of consolidation within the existing Business Park has evolved from the views of the Local Plan Inspector several years ago who concluded that the site was not large enough to be categorised as a Core Employment Area but he recognised its importance in providing a range of smaller business units and supporting local employment. It has therefore been regarded as compliant with Policy CP11 and the qualitative element of Policy CP15.

The occupiers are predominantly local businesses, employing local people and run by owners or managers who live within five miles of the site.

The main features that make this Business Park such a success are:-

- meticulous maintenance of the site ensuring that it always has a prestigious appearance;
- high level of security including CCTV, security fencing and gates, together with lighting;
- a good local pool of labour
- spacious layout with ample room for cars and lorries to park and manoeuvre;
- informal, flexible and approachable management style with on-site management from an estate office.

There is an un-met need for employment space of this type, which is small-scale and high calibre.

The demand is continuing and there is always full occupancy and a constant waiting list for business units. Meeting this demand supports the local economy, increases the provision of jobs and is vital to the growth of the economy particularly following the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Applicant is geared up to start the discharge of planning conditions immediately and to commence the development as soon as the necessary consents are in place.

The Officer's report deals very thoroughly with the relevant planning considerations. In particular it concludes that there is no highway objection or harm to the character of the countryside or wider area.

**Ward Members** – No submission(s) received

**Application No.193392 - Star Works, Star Lane, Knowl Hill**

**Town and Parish Council** - No submission(s) received

**Objectors** - *(Word limit increased per category at the discretion of the Chairman)*  
Statement of objection submitted by Barton Willmore on behalf of Residents of Star Lane and Knowl Hill:

Barton Willmore submitted a detailed response to the planning application which we trust members have had the opportunity to read and digest.

Fundamentally, this objection focuses on the fact that the case Officer's report acknowledges the detrimental impact that the Star Works Site has on residential amenity, however there remains a reliance on planning conditions that are neither complied with nor enforced.

In allowing the original application at appeal, the Inspector identified that, notwithstanding the inconvenience likely to be caused by a site such as this (due to the proximity to residential dwellings), the disadvantages would be spasmodic and short lived, and must be set against the considerable long-term benefit.

The application currently before you, seeks to extend the time limit to 2023 to cease deposits of waste material, and 2024 to complete restoration. A total of 5 years beyond that envisaged by the Inspector when they referred to 'short term pain for long term gain'.

The Council, like the Inspector before them, have historically sought to rely on the ability to enforce against breaches of planning conditions to protect residential amenity; environment and highway safety, and it is noted that the same position has been adopted this time round. Your Officer refers consistently to the existence of Conditions which will protect residential amenity.

However, the fundamental point, is that to serve their purpose and be effective, the conditions must be enforced. The residents of Star Lane and Knowl Hill feel let down by the Council, who have consistently failed to enforce against clear breaches of conditions and have indicated that they are unable to do so; and also let down by the Applicants who have failed to comply with the conditions.

The Council have been made aware of breaches of planning conditions on many occasions over the years, and these continue to this day. Local residents have no confidence in the enforcement of conditions to protect their residential amenity, and therefore it is inappropriate to extend this situation any longer.

They reiterate the objections that have already been submitted on their behalf, and request in the strongest terms that this matter is brought to a close and this application be refused.

.....

Statement by Maureen Hunt, RBWM Ward Member for Hurley & Waltham Ward:

Thank you for allowing me to submit this statement.

I hope you have had the opportunity to read my email of 6th July as it contains very pertinent information of what Grundon have chosen NOT TO DO and is only related to this application for the restoration and not the B2 use on the whole site.

I and Cllr Johnson have worked hard to get a solution for Grundon and the lack of inert material for restoration as stated in this application.

RBWM have offered enough inert material which complies with the criteria for restoration FREE to Grundon. All they have to do is collect it from a location in RBWM about 4.5 miles away.

They have chosen to REFUSE this offer. They cannot forecast the delivery of enough inert material over the next two years and have even mentioned to me there could be a further downturn in building due to a 2nd wave of Covid 19.

They inform us that with this extension the landfill restoration will be completed. That was said in 2016 when they gained permission for an extension of time. By asking for an extension of time, Grundon are not adhering to policies in the Berkshire Mineral Plan or the Waste Mineral Plan for Berkshire.

The cost of haulage is not a consideration for this Panel. They knew there was no stockpile of restoration material when they first gained permission for the Landfill. Grundon have failed to ensure they stockpiled for this over the years and have now REFUSED the help of RBWM. In good faith and for the benefit of the Green Belt and residents of Knowl Hill, they should reconsider the offer made.  
Thank you.

**Supporters –** *(Word limit increased per category at the discretion of the Chairman)*

This statement is being submitted by Mrs. Veronique Bensadou, Interim Head of Estates and Senior Planner at Grundon (The Applicant):

Landfilling at the Star Works site started in 1999. Under the current planning permission for the landfill site, the disposal of non-inert waste was to cease by January 2019, the disposal of inert material (soils) was to cease by January 2020, with the restoration of the site (tree planting and grass seeding) completed by January 2021.

The import of non-inert waste was completed during the course of 2018, with the last load of non-inert waste being deposited in April 2018, ahead of the January 2019 deadline. Over large parts of the site, the placing of inert soils has been completed and the landfill site is clearly progressing towards completion and full restoration. However, there are still areas that require completing.

The current planning application requests an extension to the life of the landfill so that we can continue to bring restoration soils to the site until January 2022 and complete the approved restoration scheme by January 2023 (2-year extension).

The site operates under various constraints imposed by planning conditions and in accordance with its Environmental Permit which is monitored by the Environment Agency. The Permit governs the day-to-day operation of the site and sets out pollution and environmental control measures. These controls and constraints are in place to protect the local environment and the amenity of the local area and residents. The areas of the landfill site that still require to be completed are the furthest away from the residential properties (those off Star Lane) as the areas closest to these properties have been completed and restored first. Also the vehicles delivering the soils to the landfill do not pass by any of the houses on Star Lane.

The alternative to the proposed extension of time, is for the restoration of the site to be curtailed prior to the approved levels being reached across the site. Even with a significant proportion of the site already restored, this would result in a landform which would not blend into the surrounding landscape in the way the approved scheme had been designed to achieve. This in turn, would have a long term and (effectively) permanent detrimental impact on the local landscape and the character of the area.

In addition to this, the systems in place to collect and manage the leachate and landfill gas were designed based on the landfill being completed and the restoration levels being achieved. Again, curtailing the restoration of the site prior to these levels being reached would have long term implications on these environmental controls and jeopardize how effectively and efficiently these systems are meant to operate.

In conclusion, officers have carefully considered the application proposals, and have determined that they accord to the local and national planning policy and recommended approval. For this reason and those I have outlined, I hope you will endorse this recommendation.

**Ward Members** – No submission(s) received

**Application No.200856 - Winnersh Triangle Car Park, Wharfdale Road, Winnersh**

**Town and Parish Council** - No submission(s) received

**Objectors** - No submission(s) received

**Supporters** – On behalf of the Applicant:

**1** The Scheme seeks to improve the Park and Ride facility at Winnersh Triangle Station by increasing the capacity of the car park to allow higher number of drivers to park and use rail and bus services from Winnersh Station into Reading, as well as other locations. The Scheme has been accepted by the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and their independent technical advisors;

**2** In its present form, and with restricted parking capacity, the station cannot fulfil its potential both as a gateway to the local area and as a much-improved park and ride facility. The enhanced car park design will include spaces and charging points for electric vehicles which will help reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change. This will encourage increased use of electric vehicles given that the availability of charging points is a major consideration for purchasing electric vehicles;

**3** Given that Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) have declared a “climate emergency”, the Scheme will demonstrate the steps WBC is taking to reduce adverse environmental impacts and improve public health in the area, and to make WBC carbon neutral by 2030;

4 The Park and Ride facility will be complemented by station forecourt improvements in the form of a new access, turning head and urban realm enhancements. These elements of the Scheme would not only generate a number of strategic benefits, based on its own merits, but would also complement the car park enhancements. The improved access for buses would help the access and egress manoeuvres, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the bus park and ride;

5 There will be additional safety benefits associated with the new access arrangements (e.g. pedestrian movements between the business park and the station will not have to interact with buses and other vehicles accessing the forecourt). This would greatly enhance the perception of pedestrian safety at the station forecourt. The planting of new trees and an overall improvement in the ambience and appearance of the station approaches will also generate benefits for those using the station;

6 The Planning, Design and Access Statement assessed the Scheme against the NPPF and relevant local planning policies of the development plan. The Scheme implements the local aspirations of WBC with regard to the improvement of park and ride facilities at Winnersh Triangle Railway Station and accords fully with other local and national policies.

**Ward Members** – Statement by Winnersh Councillors: Prue Bray and Paul Fishwick:

We support this application because it:

- Contributes to reducing journeys by private car, and therefore helps both reduce congestion and the borough's carbon footprint;
- Includes solar panels, again helping the borough's carbon footprint;
- Provides extra parking capacity, which should help reduce problem parking on adjacent residential roads.

We welcome the increase in disabled parking provision from 8 to 20 spaces, and the increase in electric vehicle charging points from 4 to 48.

However, there are 3 spaces reserved for station staff at the moment, and this is being reduced to 2. We do not understand why this reduction is taking place, and ask for that 3rd space to be allocated so that station staff can continue to park.

We are disappointed that no parent and child spaces have been allocated. These extra-wide spaces make it much easier for people with young children to park and get their children out of the car. The provision of a few such spaces would have encouraged people with young children to use both the station and the park and ride bus.

## **Application No.200985 - Cantley Park Recreation Ground, Norreys**

**Town and Parish Council** - No submission(s) received

**Objectors** - No submission(s) received

**Supporters** – On behalf of the applicant:

I write to present a strong case to the Planning Committee in relation to the Cantley Planning Application.

Cantley Pavilion is in dis-repair facility. Currently there are health and safety issues for residents and football clubs presently using the facilities. The pitches are in a poor condition

The playing pitch strategy is to be finalised by January 2020 and is showing an increase in football teams within the Borough, currently 534 teams. Teams are travelling outside the borough to use football pitches, and winter training facilities, therefore an upgrade and 3G pitch is required

Increasing provision for additional 3G pitches, this will also help towards the climate control action plan. Our teams will no longer need to travel outside the borough for external matches and training facilities. This will include a cycle shelter.

Parking is currently an issue as there is not sufficient parking on site to meet demand, cars are parking on roadside causing a potential risk, causing negative publicity for the council. By increasing, the parking by an additional 40 spaces and implementing a travel plan for the site.

**New facilities/** benefits to our residents:

- New 3G pitch
- Upgrade sports pavilion and changing rooms
- New Café and social space
- Additional 40 car parking spaces
- New Artificial cricket wicket
- Upgrade the existing grass football pitches
- Destination play area
- Arts and culture events

**Timeline:**

Two phases, the first commencing in Winter 2020, maintaining the existing facilities while upgrading the pavilion, parking, new cricket wicket, café/social space and new 3G pitch and 40 additional car parking spaces. Phase 2 will be the upgrade of the grass pitches commencing spring 2021.

Climate control

WBC will contribute to the climate emergency plan, as the majority of local teams are currently travelling out of the borough.

To help the carbon footprint of the building, we are proposing to use an array of Photo Voltaic panels on the pavilion roof to generate electricity, this will then be stored on site in batteries and be used to power the new LED floodlights to the new AGP facility. All new lighting throughout the scheme will be LED. We are also looking to install a rainwater-harvesting tank under the new pitch to store water which can be used during dry periods.

I trust that the Planning Committee will consider the Planning Application having noted all the above points.

**Ward Members** - No submission(s) received

**Application No.201050 - Alexandra House, Alexandra Court, Wokingh**

**Town and Parish Council** - No submission(s) received

**Objectors** - No submission(s) received

**Supporters** - No submission(s) received

**Ward Members** – No submission(s) received

This page is intentionally left blank