

MEMBERS' UPDATE

Planning Committee – 9 December 2015

Site Address: 97 Oxford Road, Wokingham
Application No: 150260, Pages 11 - 34

Further Clarification

In two places the Committee Report refers to the proposed building being set back 3m from the front of No. 99. This should read **5m**.

The Committee Report (page 18) also refers to the height of the building as 6.3m at present. The actual ridge height of the existing building is 6.0m; the 6.3m as shown on the application submissions includes the chimney. The proposed ridge height of the building would be 6.2m, a 0.2m increase. The eaves height of the building would remain at 2.5m.

For information, the existing building measures approximately 105 sqm (gross external area) whilst the proposed building would measure 96 sqm (gross external area), a reduction in footprint of approximately 8%.

The applicant has clarified how the Gospel Hall would generally operate, with two services/meetings per week (Sunday morning and Monday evening). They currently have 8 households who would use this Hall (which equates to 31 people including children) and have a target number of 35 users. Information from the applicant relating to the Plymouth brethren has been forwarded to Members.

The Council's Environmental Health Officers have confirmed that they have no objection to the development, subject to conditions relating to adherence to the Noise Management Plan (Condition 7/8) and use only by the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church (Condition 2). Environmental Health have also reviewed the other 3 sites used by the Plymouth Brethren in Wokingham (9 Hollow Lane, Shinfield RG2 9EQ, Pitts Lane, Earley RG6 1BT and 269a Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead RG40 3NS). All three sites adjoin residential properties to at least one side. Environmental Health have checked the records for each site and confirm that there have been no complaints made against any of these sites in respect of noise.

The Nine Mile Ride site was converted from a D1 doctor's surgery without the need for planning consent. For information, the government's Planning Portal website lists examples of D1 (non-residential institution) uses: *Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.* The application site can be used for any of these purposes without requiring planning permission.

The Town Council's comments were reported in the Committee Report, but their comments regarding the lawful use of the site were missed off. Their full comments are reported below:

Justin Turvey

From: Mike Dunstan <planning@wokingham-tc.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 September 2015 10:04
To: Development Control
Cc: Katie Herrington
Subject: Comments on 150260 97 Oxford Road

150260 (97 Oxford Road)

**Full Application for demolition of existing community building (D1 use class) and erection of a single storey replacement building for use as Gospel Hall (D1 use).
Planning Officer: Katie Herrington**

Wokingham Town Council objects to this proposal on the following grounds:

- The Council does not believe that the property benefits from an open D1 use class. The current use class is either sole use as a dental surgery (planning consent 35870) or residential (planning consent F/2013/0212)
- The north flank to boundary separation is 0.5m (Borough Design Guide is 1m minimum)
- The width of the proposed driveway is 2m (Highways Design Guide is 2.5m minimum)
- The low building line, front elevation and proposed gate are out of character with the street scene (Policy CP3)
- The proposed hours of opening are not stated, leading to potential noise disturbance to adjoining neighbours (policies CP1, CP3 & CC06)
- Off road parking provision is not adequate for the proposed use (policy CC07)
- Due to its size, scale and orientation the proposal would have a harmful impact on the residential amenities of 99 Oxford Road (overbearing and loss of light) contrary to the NPPF and policy CP3

Regards

Mike Dunstan
Planning & Transportation Officer

Wokingham Town Council
Town Hall
Market Place
Wokingham
RG40 1AS

Tel: 0118 978 3185
Direct Tel: 0118 974 0885
www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk



Further Submissions

Members have been sent a copy of the Committee Report annotated with comments made on behalf of 7 households and residents in the vicinity of the site. A response to the main points is provided below:

- Concerns regarding conditions – amendments are proposed to Conditions 2, 6, 7 and 8 below.
- Previous permissions restricted parking in the rear – parking in the rear was permitted under application 36870 following an earlier refusal which included a reason relating to parking in the rear.
- Previous permission F/2004/1405 restricted hours of use to 8 AM to 7 PM and not on Sundays – This permission related to an extension and the conversion of the roofspace to provide a flat. The hours restriction was imposed in the interests of the amenity of the occupiers of the flat who would have been living above the surgery. As this permission was never implemented, the conditions never took effect. There is no restriction on the hours the site may be used.
- Dimensions are misleading and the set back from No. 99 is incorrect – noted. This point has been addressed above.
- Building and its materials would be out of keeping with the area and are not used locally anywhere – there is a mix of ages, style and type of property along Oxford Road and in the surrounding area. Notwithstanding the comments made by objectors, there are a number of properties which have wooden or white plastic boarding in the vicinity of the site. There are examples along Oxford Road (65m and 170m from the site); Hawkes Road (90m from the site) and Reading Road (110m from the site). There are also a significant number of properties which have boarding as a feature along Brookside (180m from the site). Some examples are provided below:

Hawkes Road:



Rotherfield Avenue:



Reading Road:



Oxford Road:



- Residents close to the Gospel Hall in Pitts Lane report being woken up early on Sundays – as above, no complaints have been received by the Council's Environmental Health Department.
- Overbearing to No. 99 has not been assessed - No. 99 has a single storey rear extension hard up to the boundary with the application site. The proposed building would extend as far back as the rear wall of No. 99's extension, so would not be overbearing on the ground floor or garden of the neighbour. No. 99's first floor rear extension has a large rear-facing window, but given that the proposed building would be single storey and slopes away from this window, it is not considered that it would be overbearing.

View from rear of the site to No. 99.



- Concern re parking to the rear – it should be noted that an element of parking to the rear and side of the site was permitted in the 1990 application, and that the development would be limited to a personal permission, with controls on hours of use and a noise management plan. It must also be noted that the road fronting the site does not have parking restrictions, and the main time the building would be used (early Sunday mornings) is not a peak time in terms of parking demand.

Along with comments on the Committee Report, members have also been sent comments on the submitted Noise Management Plan by residents. The comments are attached to this update for information, and a response to the main points is provided below:

- Maintenance issues for No. 99 – No. 99 is hard up to the boundary with the application site. The application proposes that the new building would be set off the boundary by 0.5m.

- Main entrance is at the rear of the building – Noise and disturbance would be controlled through the Noise Management Plan.
- Noise from car doors cannot be controlled – There are no complaints from neighbours regarding the noise and disturbance from other sites within the borough, including where parking takes place to the rear of the building.
- Complaints from neighbours of Pitts Lane Gospel Hall – No complaints have been received by the Council's Environmental Health Department.
- Extraction should be to the east (rear) not north – This is a mistake in the Noise Management Plan, which will be addressed through a condition (see below).

Changes to conditions

Condition 2 restricts use to the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church 'or their nominees'. This is potentially unclear and a revised wording is suggested below:

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only by the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church. When the premises cease to be occupied by the Brethren, the Gospel Hall use hereby permitted shall cease.

Although the applicant has suggested that a restriction on the starting time for use of the building would be inappropriate, it is considered that amending Condition 6 to include a start time of 05:30 would be an appropriate balance between the needs of the occupier and the interests of neighbours. Condition 6 is amended to read:

6. The building shall not be used as a Gospel Hall outside of the following hours:
Sunday: 05:30 – 20:00
Monday – Saturday 09:00 – 21:00

The Noise Management Plan mistakenly refers to the northern flank of the building when it should refer to the eastern (rear) and accordingly needs to be amended. Condition 7 relates to noise mitigation measures being submitted and condition 8 refers to the Noise Management Plan. It is proposed that these can be combined into one condition, reading:

7. Before the development hereby permitted commences a noise management plan and scheme, including details relating to the insulation of the building, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority which specifies the provisions to be made for the control of noise emanating from the building and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building(s).

A further condition is proposed to limit construction hours:

13. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Site Address: 7 – 9 Wiltshire Road, Wokingham

Application No: 152192, Pages 35 – 66

Further Clarification

During the site visit, Members requested further information relating to the required number of parking spaces were the scheme for unrestricted C3 residential flats, rather than sheltered apartments as proposed. A table of parking requirements is produced below in response:

	STANDARD FOR A C3 FLAT SCHEME	STANDARD FOR A C2 CARE HOME	BASED ON SURVEYS OF C3 SHELTERED APARTMENT SCHEMES	OVERALL PROPOSED IN THIS SCHEME
NO. OF SPACES	33 spaces unallocated	14 spaces	15 spaces	25 spaces unallocated

25 parking spaces are proposed to serve the scheme. As a standard residential apartment scheme, the development would require 33 parking spaces; however, the development is limited by Condition 23 to sheltered accommodation for the elderly only (which includes the requirement for one of the occupants to be over 60), and the applicant advises that the first time purchasers in similar schemes are, on average, in their mid to late 70's. As such parking demand is less than a standard residential development - surveys of similar schemes indicate that 15 parking spaces would be required. It is therefore considered that the 25 parking spaces as proposed is acceptable to serve the development, subject to Condition 23 which restricts the use to sheltered accommodation for the elderly only. In addition, the development proposes a parking area for 10 mobility scooters.

Affordable Housing

A contribution of £205,228 would be secured for affordable housing. This equates to approximately 1 no. 2 bedroom unit so the contribution is effectively 3%. A policy compliant off-site contribution would be (if based on say 4 no. 1 bed units and 6 no. 2 bed units) approximately £1,818,234. Advice has been received from the Council's viability expert adviser that a contribution of over the £205,228 together with the CIL contribution of £557,715 would result in the scheme being unviable.

Visibility splays

The existing access to No. 7 Wiltshire Road would be blocked up, with the access to No. 9 upgraded to accommodate the development. Visibility to the north (right) for vehicles leaving the site is not ideal given the slight bend in the road before the access; however, the Council's Highways Officer has confirmed it allows for adequate visibility and, in any event, vehicles would be slowing at this point as they approach the junction. Visibility from the south is acceptable.

Changes to conditions

Condition 25 requires details of the drainage system and results of groundwater monitoring to be submitted prior to commencement in order to demonstrate that the basement car park will not be at risk of groundwater flooding or increase the risk of flooding to neighbouring properties.

Details of the drainage system are required under Condition 24, and so the first part of Condition 25 is an unnecessary duplication. In relation to groundwater, the required sampling has already been carried out, and the relevant data submitted for consideration by the Council's drainage consultant. The submissions include sampling at depths well in excess of the 2.6m depth of the basement, and confirm no evidence of groundwater strikes. The submissions conclude that '*...the effect of the development on groundwater flows would be negligible*' and the Council's drainage consultant agrees with this conclusion. Accordingly, the Council's consultant advises that Condition 25 is no longer necessary, and it is therefore recommended that it be removed.

Site Address: St John Ambulance, Church Road, Woodley **Application No: 152569, Pages 67-82**

There is a mistake in the 'Representations' section (page 69). No comments have been received from St John Ambulance Centre. A letter of support was received from St John Evangelist Church, however this has been withdrawn and the Church has stated that they were misled by the address on the planning application and they agree with objections received from local residents. The 'Representations' section should therefore be amended to remove reference to the letter of support and to increase the number of objections (from 18 to 19).

The houses on St Johns Close were granted planning permission in 1993. The antenna has been in place at the site since prior to 1993.

Site Address: 1 Pykes Farm Cottages, Forest Road **Application No: 152680, Pages 83 - 100**

Clarification that application CLP/2010/0411 (referred to in the 'Planning History' section at page 84) for a "certificate of lawful proposed use for 2 residential properties to be combined into 1 residential property" which was approved on 30/03/2010 relates to the neighbouring property at no.3 Pykes Farm Cottages and not no.1 Pykes Farm.

Change to paragraph 7.1.1 (page 87) which makes reference to 2 & 3 Pykes Farm Cottages should just read 3 Pykes Farm Cottages as the two units were converted to one and no.2 Pykes Farm Cottages no longer exists.

The site is located next to the motorway and experiences noise issues as a result. However, the extension will not introduce new receptors into this area as the current use of the premises is residential. As such, it would be unreasonable to refuse this application for the extension on noise grounds.

Pre-emptive site visits

152374 - Land adjacent to 8 Budes Cottages, Keephatch Road, Wokingham

Full application for the proposed erection of a new dwelling at land adjacent to 8 Budes Cottages with new parking area to be erected.

Reason – to assess impact on the character of the area

152661 – The Maidenover, Silverdale Road, Earley

Full application for the proposed change of use from public house (Use Class A4) to retail (Use Class A1).

Reason – to assess the impact on the character of the area and highways

152913 – Thames Bridge House, Henley

Full application for the proposed erection of an apartment block comprising 4 x 2 bedroom flats and associated development. Demolition of existing buildings.

Reason – to assess the impact on the character of the area and adjoining residents amenity

This page is intentionally left blank