

Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham,
Berkshire
RG40 1BN

Date : 8th July 2025
Ref : AWE_W_0021 – 250517 (no.2)

Sent via email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

Dear Sir/ Madam,

250517 - Hybrid planning application (part outline/ part detailed) comprising: Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved for future determination, save for the means of access via Basingstoke Road, for: up to 420 dwellings (Use Class C3), an 80 bed care home (Use Class C2), 1ha of employment land (Use Class E(g), primary school (Use Class F1), local centre (Use Classes E(a), (b), (c), (f)), GP Surgery (Use Class E(e), sports pitch and changing facility, public open space and a full application for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), associated landscaping/car park at Land Off Basingstoke Road To the south and west of Spencers Wood.

I write in respect of the above planning application further to the Applicant response letter dated 19th May following attendance at a meeting, alongside the Emergency Planner. I wish to formally reiterate our stance on behalf of AWE plc (AWE) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and do not consider this is an unconstructive and unjustified position as alluded to by the Applicant. AWE and the MOD stand by their previous submission that the Proposed Development should be refused planning permission, legislation regarding the DEPZ is set out in REPIR and the relevant body needs to follow the legislation.

AWE reiterates that while WBDC currently has an adequate OSEP in place, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), as the statutory regulator responsible for the enforcement of REPIR as it applies to UK nuclear sites, is concerned the OSEP is under strain. The development of a care home, school and surgery in addition to the 420 dwellings in the DEPZ, represents a fundamental and substantial risk to the OSEP and the operations of AWE. Placing such a substantial burden on a strained OSEP is unacceptable and can result in irreparable consequences for the CASD and national security as a whole.

It should also be noted that the calculations presented within the Applicant letter are not relevant to decisions which are required to be taken under REPIR for protecting the public, establishing the size of the DEPZ and the need to have and maintain an OSEP.

While AWE and MOD acknowledge the need for housing delivery, the continuing operation of AWE B is of the upmost importance for national security and defence commitments as a site responsible for the UKs nuclear deterrent. In line with the NPPF (para 102 (b)), it is essential that AWE B should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on it as a consequence of additional residential and other development in the DEPZ. In the worst-case scenario of ONR concluding that the OSEP is inadequate and cannot be made adequate, AWE B would have to cease all operations with immediate effect. This risk should be given considerable and substantial weight.

Yours sincerely,

Emma-Jane Houghton
Director Estate Strategy & Planning (AWE masterplan)
www.awe.co.uk
email – bryan.lyttle@awe.co.uk