

PLANNING REF : 261556
PROPERTY ADDRESS : School Green Centre
: School Green, Shinfield
: RG2 9EH
SUBMITTED BY : Bruce Winton
DATE SUBMITTED : 04/09/2026

COMMENTS:

The Parish Council recognises the growing need for specialist accommodation for older people and acknowledges the benefits of investment in an existing care home facility. Whilst the Parish Council does not object in principle to the expansion of care provision at this location, it wishes to raise the following concerns and requests that these matters are fully addressed before any determination is made.

The Parish Council also notes that the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan and therefore carries material weight in the determination of planning applications within the parish. Particular regard should be given to Policies 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Parking Provision and Existing Parking Pressure

The submitted Transport Statement demonstrates that the existing car park is already operating above its formal capacity. Parking surveys undertaken by the applicant recorded a peak weekday demand of 24 vehicles despite only 22 formal parking spaces being available, with the report acknowledging that vehicles were likely parking informally within the turning area.

The proposal would increase accommodation from 66 bedrooms to 81 bedrooms and staffing from 98 employees to 107 employees whilst providing only five additional parking spaces, increasing total parking provision from 22 spaces to 27 spaces.

The Parish Council is not satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the proposed parking provision will adequately accommodate future staff, visitor and operational demand. Existing parking demand already exceeds formal parking capacity before the proposed increase in residents and staff is considered.

The Council therefore considers that further justification is required to demonstrate compliance with:

- Core Strategy Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand
 - MDD Local Plan Policy CC07 - Parking
 - Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 5 - Parking Provision
- The Parish Council is not satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the proposal complies with these policies.

2. Existing and Potential Overspill Parking

The Design and Access Statement records comments arising from the Local Planning Authority's site visit noting that numerous vehicles were parked in front of the facility, including on double yellow lines near the junction with School Green.

The Parish Council considers this to be important evidence of existing parking stress associated with the operation of the site.

Given the increase in accommodation, staffing and visitor activity, the Parish Council seeks assurance that the development will not result in additional overspill parking on:

- School Green;
- Beke Avenue; and
- surrounding residential roads.

This concern is particularly relevant during staff shift changes and peak visiting periods.

Whilst a Travel Plan has been submitted, it contains no specific parking management measures aimed at addressing the existing overspill parking issues identified through both the parking surveys and the Local Planning Authority's observations.

The Parish Council therefore requests that a Parking Management Strategy be secured and implemented as part of any approval.

The Parish Council further considers that the existing evidence of overspill parking and parking on double yellow lines raises concerns regarding compliance with Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan:

- Policy 4 - Accessibility and Highway Safety
- Policy 5 - Parking Provision

Both policies seek to ensure that development does not create unacceptable impacts on local highway conditions or parking availability.

3. Travel Plan and Reliance on Private Car Use

The submitted Travel Plan confirms that:

- 52% of staff currently travel to work as car drivers;
- 12.2% travel as car passengers;
- only 1% currently cycle to work.

The Travel Plan's principal target is to reduce staff driver mode share from 52% to 46.8% within three years. The proposed measures consist primarily of information provision, noticeboards, travel guides and encouragement of car sharing.

Whilst these measures are welcomed, the Parish Council is not convinced that they alone will materially reduce parking demand at a site where existing surveys already demonstrate parking pressure.

The Council therefore remains concerned regarding compliance with:

- Core Strategy Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand
 - Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4 - Accessibility and Highway Safety
- both of which seek to encourage sustainable travel choices and reduce unnecessary reliance on private vehicles.

4. Assessment of Regional Training Facilities

The Design and Access Statement states that the proposed first-floor staff accommodation will also operate as a regional training hub for the operator.

However, neither the Transport Statement nor the Travel Plan appears to provide any assessment of:

- anticipated training attendance;

- frequency of training events;
- associated vehicle movements; or
- parking demand generated by training activities.

The Parish Council considers this to be a material omission and requests clarification regarding the anticipated transport impact arising from this aspect of the proposal and confirmation that any associated vehicle movements have been included within the transport assessment.

In the absence of this information, the Parish Council cannot be satisfied that the proposal complies with Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4 - Accessibility and Highway Safety.

5. Loss of Communal Outdoor Amenity Space

The proposal would extend into a substantial area of existing garden space whilst increasing accommodation from 66 bedrooms to 81 bedrooms.

The Parish Council notes that the Local Planning Authority's pre-application advice identified concern regarding the reduction in communal outdoor space available to residents and requested justification for this reduction.

Whilst replacement landscaping, private patios and improved garden layouts are proposed, the Council considers it important that adequate communal outdoor amenity space remains available for both current and future residents.

The Parish Council therefore requests that the Local Planning Authority carefully consider whether the remaining amenity provision is sufficient for an 81-bedroom care home having regard to: - Core Strategy Policy CP2 - Inclusive Communities

- Core Strategy Policy CP3 - General Principles for Development
 - Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2 - General Design Principles
- which seeks to ensure that development contributes positively to the quality of the built environment and the wellbeing of future occupiers.

6. Arboricultural Information

The Design and Access Statement identifies both an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and an Arboricultural Method Statement as supporting documents accompanying the application.

However, these documents do not appear to be available on the public planning file at the time of the Parish Council's review.

The submitted Tree Protection Plan identifies:

- removal of Tree T07;
- development activity within Root Protection Areas;
- foundation works within the Root Protection Area of retained Tree T08; and
- installation of no-dig surfacing within retained tree root zones.

Without access to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement, the Parish Council is unable to properly assess:

- impacts on retained trees;

- adequacy of mitigation measures;
- implications for landscape character; and
- compliance with planning policy.

This prevents a full assessment against:

- Core Strategy Policy CP7 - Biodiversity
- MDD Local Plan Policy CC03 - Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 6 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
- Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 7 - Biodiversity

The Parish Council therefore requests that the missing arboricultural documents are published and fully considered before determination of the application.

7. Drainage

The Parish Council notes the submitted Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy and welcomes the inclusion of attenuation measures designed to accommodate a 1 in 100-year storm event plus a 40% climate change allowance. The strategy confirms that infiltration testing was undertaken and that soakaway drainage is not feasible due to site conditions.

Notwithstanding this, the proposal increases impermeable area across the site and relies upon discharge into the existing drainage network.

The Parish Council therefore requests confirmation from the Lead Local Flood Authority that:

- the proposed attenuation measures are adequate;
- the restricted discharge arrangements provide sufficient long-term capacity and resilience; and
- the development will not increase flood risk on-site or elsewhere.

This is particularly relevant having regard to:

- Core Strategy Policy CP1 - Sustainable Development
- MDD Local Plan Policy CC09 - Development and Flood Risk
- Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy 8 - Flooding

Conclusion

Whilst Shinfield Parish Council supports the principle of improving local care provision and recognises the need for additional accommodation for older residents, concerns remain regarding: 1. The adequacy of the proposed parking provision.

2. Existing and future overspill parking on surrounding roads.

3. Continued reliance on private vehicle travel despite the submitted Travel Plan.

4. The absence of a clear assessment of traffic and parking associated with the proposed regional training facilities.

5. The reduction in communal outdoor amenity space.

6. The absence from the public planning file of the Arboricultural Imp act Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement.

7. The need for confirmation from the Lead Local Flood Authority regarding the adequacy of the proposed drainage arrangements. In particular, the Parish Council considers that further information is required to demonstrate compliance with the following Shinfield

Neighbourhood Plan policies:

- Policy 2 - General Design Principles
- Policy 4 - Accessibility and Highway Safety
- Policy 5 - Parking Provision
- Policy 6 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
- Policy 7 - Biodiversity

- Policy 8 - Flooding

Accordingly, Shinfield Parish Council requests that these matters are satisfactorily addressed and that the missing arboricultural documents are made publicly available before any planning permission is granted.