

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250997
Site Address:	Travis Perkins, Woodley Green, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4QP
Expiry Date:	19 June 2025
Site Visit Date:	09/05/2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. electrical substation.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP15 – Employment Development
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB12 – Employment Skills Plan TB15 – Major Town, and Small Town/District Centre development TB16 – Development for Town Centre Uses TB20 – Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use
Other	National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
242049		
233168		

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received
WBC Drainage – Request additional information (detailed within officer report)
WBC Highways – No objection
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection
WBC Public Rights Of Way – No comments received
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No response received
WBC Ecology – No objection

External

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The site is located within the major development location of Woodley, on the border of the Core Employment Area of Headley Road East.

Full planning permission was granted for a care facility under reference 242049 as varied by 233168, on the grounds of the former Travis Perkins builder's yard. The site at current is bound in heras fencing, and site clearance is almost complete.

Proposal description:

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a substation to power the care home associated with approval referenced 242049 as varied by 233168.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Character of the Area:

The proposed substation would be brick built with dark tile, within the care home's built envelope adjoining the 3no. consented disabled parking spaces. These match the consented material palette.

Metal louver doors are proposed, as well as louver vents on the side elevation which are a relatively standard with substations and often align with statutory undertaker's requirements. These are white in colour with dark slatted louvers.

The proposed substation is modest in scale, at circa 16sqm (4x4 metres) and would not be appreciable from the street scene given the care home's boundary treatment wrapping around the site. The proposal would not result in adverse harm to the character and appearance of the area and therefore is not contrary to CP1 or CP3 of the Core Strategy.

The substation would however replace a garden shed and result in the limited loss of some native hedgerow landscaping which stands contrary to CC03 of the MDD which seeks to prevent the fragmentation of green infrastructure, however, as these details are reserved and approved under condition 2 of the care home permission, the responsibility falls on the application to vary this condition outside of the remit of this application. It is further worth noting that WBC Trees and Landscape raise no objection to the proposals.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposal would not significantly or detrimentally harm any adjoining occupiers on overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing grounds, owing to the nature of the use and modest built form.

The MDD Local Plan outlines in Appendix 1, that when assessing the acceptability of a proposed noise sensitive development, the Council will determine the effect of noise from any adjacent and nearby sources will have on the noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) taking into account both daytime and night-time noise levels.

In this case, given the minimal separation distances of circa 1 metre and 6.9 metres respectively between the proposed substation and Nos. 8 and 10 Stafford Close, the 2no. residential dwellings form NSRs that could be impacted by the development if appropriate mitigation is not in place.

No noise assessment has been provided by the applicant which confirms the proposed substation will result in a no observed effect level (NOEL) on the adjoining NSRs, which is required to prevent adverse harm arising from the proposal. In quantitative terms, this equates to a maximum decibel emission of 45db LAeq from the building itself and a maximum of 30db LAeq within adjoining habitable rooms. At this limited level, the noise generated by the substation would be non-adverse, insofar as to preserve the neighbouring amenities of existing occupiers.

In absence of a noise assessment, a condition has been appended to the planning permission that requires the applicant to submit details covering how the noise emitted from the building does not exceed 45db LAeq and does not result in levels to neighbouring habitable rooms above 30db LAeq (via baffling etc). To avoid harms to neighbouring amenities, this detail must be provided prior to first operation and once approved by the LPA be maintained as such for the lifetime of the development. It is considered that a condition is appropriate in this instance because the substation is enclosed by a building and therefore further attenuation could be provided within the structure if required.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would not impact parking provision, safe access or egress. Accordingly, WBC Highways did not raise an objection to the scheme.

Flooding and Drainage:

The application site is solely located within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of surface flooding. The site has permission to be hard surfaced from preceding 242049 as varied by 233168.

WBC Drainage requested additional information, as to whether the proposed 16sqm structure would increase surface run-off. In this instance, given the modest scale of the proposal this request would be unreasonable. Accordingly, no objections are raised on drainage grounds.

Landscape and Trees:

Further to consultation, WBC Trees and Landscape did not raise any objections. Accordingly, notwithstanding the limited degree of landscaping loss (which again is secured by separate condition, outside of this application) given the substation falls within the built envelope of the care home, there would be no significant or detrimental impact to landscape species or character.

Ecology:

Further to consultation, WBC Ecology did not raise any objections, citing the proposal has no impact on protected species. Furthermore, given its modest scale (under 25m2) there is no requirement to provide statutory biodiversity net gain. There are no objections in respect of ecological matters.

Conclusion:

The proposal is development plan compliant, would not result in character, highways, landscape, drainage or ecological harm, and as such is recommended for approval subject to conditions detailed within the decision notice.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approved
Date:	4 June 2025
Earliest date for decision:	21 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	MC
Date:	04.06.2025