

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242864
Site Address:	Ernest James House, Toutley Road, Wokingham, Wokingham, RG41 1QN
Expiry Date:	Extended to 20 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	22/11/2024
Proposal: Full application for the use of the land for the siting of a mobile catering unit (retrospective).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Core Employment Areas
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Ground Water Zones
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Strategic Development Location
Borough Wards
Landfill Gas Consultation Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
JCEB Preferred Waste Areas
Flood Zones 2 and 3

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP15 – Employment Development
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction

	CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB12 – Employment Skills Plan TB20 – Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
<i>There is an extensive planning history for the Toutley Industrial Estate, but none relevant to this application.</i>		

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No objection
WBC Enforcement – No comments
WBC Highways – Requested additional information (further details below)
WBC Licensing – No comments

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site forms part of the Toutley Industrial Estate (a Core Employment Area), located between Toutley Road and Old Forest Road, on the northern outskirts of Wokingham.

The subject mobile catering trailer is positioned at the entrance of the Industrial

Estate, within an existing parking area to the south-west of the Ernest James House building.

The surrounding area comprises of mix of offices and light industrial spaces with parking and loading bays. Charles House and Crown House buildings within the Industrial Estate have both been converted into residential use.

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.

The site is within an allocated Core Employment Area as set out by Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy, and update by Policy TB11 of the MDD Local Plan. These policies sets out that employment growth will occur in the areas defined by policy CP15 and specifically requires that any proposed changes from B1, B2 and B8 uses do not lead to an overall loss of floor space in B Use within the Borough. It also requires a range of types and sizes of sites to accommodate the different sectors of the business community. In this case, it is considered that the provision of a catering facility within the site is consistent with the intent of Policy CP15 which allows for the expansion and investment accommodation needs and having regard to the needs of specific sectors of the business community, in this case the users of the commercial/industrial units within the Industrial Estate who will directly benefit from the catering service on site.

Character of the Area:

The application site forms part of the wider Toutley Industrial Estate, where there are several commercial/industrial buildings. The mobile catering unit has the appearance of a standard mobile caravan, and given its modest size, it would not be perceived as an odd structure within the context of its immediate surroundings. Therefore, the proposal is not considered to result in any harmful impact to the character and appearance of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Given the location of the mobile catering unit, at a considerable distance from the nearest residential area to the south-west of the site opposite Toutley Road, it is considered unlikely there would be any negative impact with regard to loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearing. Likewise, it is noted that the Charles House and Crown House buildings within the Industrial Estate have been converted to residential apartments, under prior approval procedure. However, the mobile catering unit is still

located at a significant separation distance (circa 23m & 64m respectively), so that no adverse impact would occur upon these private residential amenities.

The unit predominantly offers cold sandwiches and a limited selection of cooked food such as jacket potatoes. Due to the separation distances between the unit and the residential properties, it is unlikely that there would be any odour concerns.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The WBC Highways Officer has been consulted on the proposals, and has indicated that while the existing parking is not clearly indicated on the site plan, according to the satellite view, the proposed mobile catering unit will potentially be sitting on existing parking space. The adjacent parking space to the proposed catering unit will not be suitable for parking, resulting in a reduction of two parking spaces. The Highways Officer further indicates that the proposal would require 2 short-stay parking spaces, in addition to the existing parking demand of Ernest James House.

Additional clarification has been sought from the applicant/agent in this regard, which states that the majority of parking for the Ernest James House unit takes place at the frontage of the building; however, the yard at the rear of the building/site (the application site) to the north-east and east is readily available for additional parking for users/visitors of the building and can accommodate circa 20 car spaces. This area is shown within the red line identified for this application. Moreover, nearly all of the trade from the catering mobile van is from employees and visitors of the commercial units within the Toutley Industrial Estate, who already park within the designated parking areas, thus the parking/traffic generation from the catering service would not be significantly different from the existing situation within the overall Core Employment Area. The dwell time for the ordering and collection of food from the unit would also be limited, therefore the turnover and need for multiple spaces is unlikely to raise an issue. Moreover, the site is considered to be in a sustainable location where external visitors (i.e. those living in the Toutley Road/Summerfield Close) can easily walk or cycle to the catering van.

On the basis of the above, on balance it is considered that the proposal does not have an adverse impact in terms of highways, and the parking provision within the site is adequate to cater for the existing Ernest James House and the mobile catering unit, therefore no further concerns are raised on these grounds.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site and access thereto are located within Flood Zone 2 according to EA mapping system. The WBC Flood Risk & Drainage Engineer has indicated that the trailer is a temporary, mobile structure raised above the hardstanding, and the trailer's mobility ensures it can be promptly relocated in the event of a flood or warning, mitigating any risks. Additionally, as there is no permanent development on the site, the floodplain's capacity remains unaffected, and there is no increased risk to surrounding areas. The proactive plan to monitor flood notifications and move the trailer as necessary demonstrates responsible management and compliance with flood risk protocols. On this basis, the Officer has raised no objections to the proposal.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council

will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

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:	Approval
Date:	16 January 2025
Earliest date for decision:	10 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by:	
(Authorised Officer)	
Date:	16 January 2025