

FULL PLANNING APPROVAL **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 28 May 2025

Application Number: 242418

Location: Cousins House, 1-3 Reading Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG27 0RP

Proposal: Full application for a change of use from offices (Use Class E(g(i))) to a Patient Transport Service building (Use Class Sui Generis), along with the extension of the existing car park to provide an additional 5No. parking spaces. (part retrospective)

Recommendation: Refused

Reasons

1. The proposed development constitutes an unacceptable and unsustainable form of development in an unsustainable location and introduces new hardstanding in a rural location outside any defined settlement boundary for which no justification exists and which fails to maintain the quality of the environment and is detrimental to the character and appearance of the countryside. The proposal is contrary to Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP11, MDD Local Plan Policies CC01, CC02 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The hardstanding and associated parking of vehicles would expand development away from existing development and would encroach into and harm the countryside. The introduction of hardstanding would result in a permanent and solid feature in the landscape and represent an unacceptable encroachment of built development into the countryside. This neither protects the separate identity of settlements, nor maintains the quality of the Blackwater Valley Landscape Character Area. The proposal is contrary to Section 15 of the NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3 & CP11 and MDD Local Plan Policy TB21.
3. The application site lies within Flood Zone 2 & 3, adjacent to the River Blackwater, and insufficient information has been provided to satisfy the Authority that the development would not lead to an unacceptable impact on flood risk. It has not been demonstrated by any exceptional circumstance, through a Flood Risk Assessment or any other material consideration, that the proposed development is appropriate within Flood Zones 2 & 3, contrary to the NPPF and Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan.
4. In the absence of an arboricultural survey, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that there will not be an unacceptable impact on existing trees and vegetation, the loss of which would be detrimental to the character of the area and contrary to: The National Planning Policy Framework, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3 and MDD Local Plan Policy CC03.

5. By virtue of the increasing number of people and cars through additional comings and goings and the additional noise and activity due to the sui generis use of the site and the 24/7 operating hours, there is a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties. This would be contrary to policy CC06 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and policy CP1(8) and CP3(a) of the Core Strategy.

Informatives

1. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, no pre-application advice was sought before the application was submitted. As the proposal was clearly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, it was considered that further discussions would be unnecessary and costly for all parties.

2. This decision is in respect of the drawings and plans titled/numbered (Proposed Block Plan / PP-12960784) (Location Plan / PP-13286738v1) received by the Local Planning Authority on 23/09/2024.



Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:

Date: 27 May 2025

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **17 October 2024**