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Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 AUGUST 2025

Councillors Present: Richard Somner (Vice-Chairman), Paul Kander, Ross Mackinnon, Geoff Mayes, Justin Pemberton, Vicky Poole and Clive Taylor

Also Present: Sam Chiverton (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Paul Goddard (Team Leader - Highways Development Control), Emma Nutchey (Principal Planning Officer), Simon Till (Development Control Team Leader) and Lydia Theos

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Alan Macro and Councillor Jeremy Cottam

PART I

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2025 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Justin Pemberton declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(1) as, in his position of Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration, he held responsibility for setting Council policies around local business growth and rural economy. He reported that, as his interest was a personal or an other registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

3. Schedule of Planning Applications

(1) 25/01035/FUL - The Nurseries, Bath Road, Midgham

1. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 25/01035/FUL in respect of a change of use to allow retention of four and proposed siting of 20 additional storage containers for self storage at The Nurseries, Bath Road, Midgham.
2. Emma Nutchey introduced the report to Members, which took account of all the relevant policy considerations and other material planning considerations. In conclusion the report detailed that the proposal was acceptable in planning terms and officers recommended that the Development Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in the main report.
3. The Chairman asked Paul Goddard whether he had any observations relating to the application. He informed the Committee of the following:
 - The site was to be used by 20 storage containers and was to be accessed via an existing access on the A4.

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- He expected vehicle usage was likely to be very low due to the nature of the proposed usage. No more than five vehicles in and out per day.
 - He believed it was difficult to sustain refusal on traffic or highways grounds.
 - The site was in a sustainable location with regular bus services.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Louisa Hoe Yee Lai and Keith Rogers, objectors, addressed the Committee on this application.

Objector Representation

5. Louisa Hoe Yee Lai and Keith Rogers addressed the Committee. This representation can be viewed on the recording:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee - Wednesday 6 August 2025](#) (15:26)

Member Questions to the Objector

6. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- Louisa Hoe Yee Lai advised that the site was on a slope and as a result the entire site was visible from Church View Farm. A barn co owned by Church View Farm and the applicant was being used for storage and other activities by the applicant.
 - Louisa Hoe Yee Lai advised that the applicant's submitted plans informed that it was a small agricultural business with operating hours of 7:30am to 5pm Mondays-Fridays with ad hoc emergency operations on weekends when required. She noted they were operating outside of the prescribed hours.
 - Louisa Hoe Yee Lai had raised with both the applicant and the Council the fact that the business was operating outside of its prescribed hours however, it had not ceased, and no action had been taken.

Ward Member Representation

7. Councillor Christopher Read was unable to attend the Committee however, Councillor Richard Somner read a letter on his behalf. This representation can be viewed on the recording:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee - Wednesday 6 August 2025](#) (25:30)

Member Questions to Officers

8. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- Paul Goddard advised that visits could be made to the storage containers without large items.
 - Paul Goddard was not aware of any previous planning application that promised to measure traffic patterns near the site of the proposal. Emma Nutchey advised she had seen nothing referring to this.
 - Emma Nutchey advised an enquiry was made to the Planning Enforcement Team earlier in the week and a case had been opened to investigate a number of matters on the site, but an enforcement officer had not visited.
 - Simon Till noted that Members were present to consider the application in front of the Committee and any matters related to potential breaches of planning consent sat outside the consideration of the Committee item.
 - Paul Goddard had considered the position of the entrance in the road when recommending the application for approval. He advised that the containers were not large and as such they were not expecting large vehicles to visit that particular section of the site. He noted that the access had limitations but advised that the proposal was unlikely to make the limitations of that access any worse. He highlighted that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dictated that an application could only be

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rejected on highways grounds if the impact was severe, a threshold he believed had not been met.

- Paul Goddard noted that sight lines on a 60 mile per hour road should be 215m looking in both directions. The access only had sight lines of 85m looking towards the east but the deficiencies of the access were not so harmful due to the limited increase in access the proposed usage was likely to create.
- Simon Till advised that the retrospective nature of this application would make it a matter for Planning Enforcement to consider, should the Committee be minded to reject the proposal.
- Paul Goddard advised that he was happy to have a condition applied requiring the site to include an electric vehicle charging point. However, he did not consider that people accessing the site were likely to stay there for very long.
- Simon Till reminded Members that conditions as set out in the NPPF were for the purpose of making an otherwise unacceptable development acceptable.
- Simon Till advised that planning permission applied to the land unless granting personal planning permission which only applied in very particular circumstances (none of which applied with this application). He reminded Members that they were considering the use of the land.
- Emma Nutchey advised that there were no hours of access conditions granted on previously approved usages. The condition restricting hours of operation was new and did not conflict.
- Emma Nutchey was unsure whether the units had access to a power supply.
- Emma Nutchey advised that there was a use restriction determining that the site was to be used for storage purposes only.
- Paul Goddard advised that the external highways specialist consultancy, Stewart Michael associates, based in Thatcham, had been engaged by the objectors to write a report. This had stated similar concerns to the objector regarding the width of the access, sight lines and speed of traffic on the A4.
- Paul Goddard advised that the number of vehicle movements was calculated by referring to the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) National Database which included traffic surveys of many different land usages.
- Paul Goddard advised the road surface was tarmac when entered but became rougher further down. He felt that the level of traffic expected, combined with the size of vehicle expected to make use of the site, meant it was unlikely that the proposal was going to damage the road. He highlighted that the access was private and a private matter.
- Paul Goddard advised that the sight lines on to the A4 had not changed for a long time. Guidance had also not changed within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges which applied to the A4, though sight lines had changed to lower speed settings with the production of the Manual for Streets in 2007. He did not expect the sight lines for major roads to change moving forward.
- Sight lines of 215m could not be achieved as the land was not in the applicants' control, as a result the most that was achievable was 85m. However, as the access was existing, the Committee had to decide whether the proposal had significant enough additional impact to justify refusal.
- Emma Nutchey advised that the condition on opening times did not override conditions elsewhere on the site and only the 24 containers referred to within this application were to be subject to this condition. She advised that there were six other authorised containers on site.
- Emma Nutchey informed Members that there was sufficient space within the red line for customers to access all of the storage containers on the site.

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- Paul Goddard advised that the access already had a number of HGV movements in and out and had done for decades. Once the containers arrived on the site they were likely to remain in situ and as such were not going to require long term access from larger vehicles.
- Emma Nutchey advised that the specific items to be stored was the responsibility of those managing the site and planning could not control what was stored.
- Simon Till advised that aspects such as hazardous materials had different permitting regimes.
- Paul Goddard advised that the mitigations for this proposal were the relatively low vehicle movement numbers and that they did not necessarily have to apply physical works to mitigate.

Debate

9. Councillor Justin Pemberton opened the debate by noting there was a certain level of inconvenience in living next to a commercial area and that approving this application was likely to add to that for the residents of Church View Farm. He accepted the comments the objector made about the higher ground the farm was situated on, as this would make the activities on the site more visible. He noted that he lived on farmland himself and whilst heavy machinery and vehicles could cause an inconvenience it created little cause for concern. He advised that he was struggling to get past the highways elements and felt that not enough regard had been given to the impact of vehicles turning into and out of the site via the A4, highlighting that the road bended which greatly increased the risk of an incident. He felt that if one serious incident could occur because of the increased vehicle usage, the potential impact should have been considered serious enough to reject. He highlighted that the fact that this was an existing access did not mean it should be made worse by adding to the problems it had.
10. Councillor Vicky Poole agreed largely with what Councillor Pemberton had said. She raised concerns around visibility noting that she was uncomfortable approving this application with the proposed sight lines of 85m whilst it was national guidance that sight lines of 215m be adhered to.
11. Councillor Ross Mackinnon highlighted that the sight line was 85m and not 215m and that this was not going to change regardless of whether the application was approved or not. He felt that Councillor Poole's logic precluded any development that was likely to increase traffic movements down the lane in question. He felt that the application could not be assessed based on one incident occurring as this was to imply that the Committee was moving forward on a zero risk basis. He highlighted that the traffic officers had advised that the increase in vehicle movements was likely to be minor. Though he had not made his mind up on the application, he felt that if Members were minded to reject permission then the reasons needed to be stronger than were being suggested.
12. Councillor Clive Taylor was inclined to agree with Councillor Mackinnon on the highways issue but raised concern around the issue of noise. He noted the proposed opening times and that the proposed location of the containers was very close to Church View Farm. He felt that if the proposal was to be accepted, he would like the opening times to be revised to 8:30am to 5:30pm Monday-Saturday and 9am-12pm Sundays and bank holidays.
13. Councillor Paul Kander found Councillor Taylor's suggestion to be reasonable. He noted that whilst he was pro-business, the reduced hours would not matter that much but would have significantly smaller impact on amenity for the neighbours. He sought clarity on whether it was possible to make it a left turn only when exiting the site. He

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also expressed concern about how this portion of the site was going to be policed given that the rest of the site was allowed to be accessed at all hours.

14. Paul Goddard advised that making the exit a left turn only was not possible as it was a private access, and a Traffic Regulation Order would be required in order to enforce such a condition.
15. Councillor Mackinnon proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main report, with an additional condition that opening times be revised to 8:30am to 5:30pm Monday-Saturday and 9am-12pm Sundays and bank holidays. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor
16. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Mackinnon, seconded by Councillor Taylor, to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was rejected.
17. Councillor Pemberton proposed to reject Officer's recommendation and refuse planning permission on the basis that it contravened paragraph 116 of the NPPF by having an unacceptable impact on highways safety, this was seconded by Councillor Tom McCann
18. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Pemberton, seconded by Councillor McCann, to refuse planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to refuse planning permission on the basis that it contravened paragraph 116 of the NPPF by having an unacceptable impact on highways safety.

(2) 25/00732/HOUSE - Gardeners Cottage, Buckhold, Pangbourne

19. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) concerning Planning Application 25/00732/HOUSE in respect of the erection of side extension to existing dwelling and internal alterations at Gardeners Cottage, Buckhold, Pangbourne, Reading, RG8 8QA. It was decided that Agenda Item 4(3)), concerning Planning Application 25/00733/LBC, would be considered under the same agenda item but with a separate vote.
20. Simon Till introduced the report to Members, which took account of all the relevant policy considerations and other material planning considerations. In conclusion the report detailed that the proposal was unsatisfactory in planning terms and officers recommended that the Development Manager be authorised to refuse planning permission for the reasons listed in the main report.
21. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Andrew House, Parish Council representative, and Miss Karen Lane-Standley, Mr Mark Pettitt and Mr Richard Massey, applicant/agent, addressed the Committee on this application.

Parish/Town Council Representation

22. Andrew House addressed the Committee. This representation can be viewed on the recording:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee - Wednesday 6 August 2025](#) (1:33:27)

Member Questions to the Parish/Town Council

23. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

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Applicant/Agent Representation

24. Miss Karen Lane-Standley, Mr Mark Pettitt and Mr Richard Massey addressed the Committee. This representation can be viewed on the recording:
[Eastern Area Planning Committee - Wednesday 6 August 2025](#) (1:37:49)

Member Questions to the Applicant/Agent

25. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Ward Member Representation

26. Councillor Ross Mackinnon addressed the Committee. This representation can be viewed on the recording:
[Eastern Area Planning Committee - Wednesday 6 August 2025](#) (1:44:58)

Member Questions to the Ward Member

27. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Member Questions to Officers

28. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:

- Simon Till advised Members that this was a tricky application to assess. He noted that the extension approved in 1996 created a single built form, and the combination of the historical core and the extension that was approved in 1996 had effectively doubled the size of the building. The issue with the proposal was that the guidance in relation to listed buildings maintained that the listed building needed to retain its significance within the site. He advised that there was no hard and fast rule but conservation officers tended to object to applications that were going to subsume the original building unless there was a public benefit to outweigh this.
- Simon Till advised that any departure from policy had certain legislative requirements associated with it, but that overturning officer's recommendation would not necessarily mean departing from policy in a case where design was the concern. He advised Members could take a view on all the circumstances and whether the proposal would do harm to the listed building.
- Simon Till advised there was no concrete definition of what constituted harm to a listed building. He informed Members that they were expected to reach a conclusion based on whether they felt that the significance of the listed building would be retained. He referenced the report noting that the building had a particular place in the wider estate as an ancillary cottage, a necessarily small building which was to be greatly increased in size under this proposal. He advised that there was a danger of a further extension subsuming the building and fundamentally changing how the building was read that informed the officer's recommendation of refusal.
- Simon Till advised that the North Wessex Downs Natural Landscape organisation was finding it difficult to respond to applications but was unsure whether they had been contacted for comment. He highlighted that it was the duty of the Local Planning Authority to make reasonable decisions regarding the future and heritage of the National Landscape. Councillor Vicky Poole advised she had approached the NL organisation, and they had no comment as it was not something that was likely to affect the overall visual characteristics of the landscape.
- Simon Till advised that there was a prepared list of proposed conditions should Members be minded to go against officers' recommendations.

Debate

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29. Councillor Ross Mackinnon opened the debate by highlighting that this was a judgement call. He credited Simon Till for recognising that. He felt that a one size fits all approach was not always best. He highlighted that there was no clear definition of substantial harm and noted that from the road, the first thing that was going to be visible, should this application be approved, was the listed building and the extensions were going to be round the back. He advised that he could not see who this proposal was harming, noting Councillor Poole's information that this was something that the AONB would not look to comment on. He felt that the extension would not cause substantial harm due to the secluded nature of the site.
30. Councillor Justin Pemberton noted that the parish council and the ward member spoke positively about the application and felt that this was something that needed to be taken into account. He advised that whilst he sympathised with the applicants' personal circumstances, the position of officers could not be clearer. He highlighted the Inspector's report from 2014. He noted that the development needed to be sympathetic to its surroundings and the existing form of the listed building. He felt that the increased floor space (totalling 69%) and how it would sit within the context of the site made it difficult for him to override a number of policies that had only recently been adopted. He believed that the only way to go against officers' recommendations was to interpret the Local Plan in a particular way. He felt he could not discount the professional view of officers that this would represent a disproportionate extension to a grade II listed building. He felt that the number of policies this application contravened made it difficult for him to support.
31. Councillor Mackinnon was surprised by Councillor Pemberton's comments. He advised that the 69% increase in floor space was the increase in floor space delivered by the previous extension. He believed that Simon Till was clear that this was a judgement call and it was for Members to judge whether this application caused substantial harm. He noted that many of the policies were complied with and that the application was balanced.
32. Councillor Paul Kander noted the point of the Committee was to deal with difficult applications. He felt that this was not clear cut and it was for Members to determine what significant harm meant. He advised that old buildings had always been built upon and that the proposals were sympathetic to the original building. He believed that it was important for a common sense view to be taken and highlighted that if this was not to be built on it could become unfit for purpose and fall into disrepair. He felt that common sense and usability should prevail.
33. Councillor Clive Taylor largely agreed with Councillor Kander's comments. He noted that the original extension was very well constructed and it was difficult to tell it apart from the original building. He felt that it was for Members to judge whether the conclusion, that this caused significant harm, was the correct one. He highlighted that St Andrews School was on the estate and was surrounded by a number of odd buildings that had received planning consent. He felt that the changes proposed would improve the amenity of the site.
34. Councillor Poole extended her sympathies to the applicant, she felt that people looked to adapt their properties for their needs and this was what the application was trying to do. She could see both perspectives of this application but was leaning towards supporting this.
35. Councillor Tom McCann noted the quality of the debate and was swayed by Councillor Kander's comments. He agreed that it was important to be sensitive to the future use of buildings. He felt well designed buildings would add character and was leaning towards supporting the application.

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36. Councillor Kander proposed to reject Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to conditions listed below, including a condition that the property not be split into multiple properties. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor.
37. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Kander, seconded by Councillor Taylor, to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Development Manager be authorised to grant conditional planning permission, which would include a condition that the property not be split into multiple properties.

Conditions

1. Commencement

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:

231013-01 - Location Plan & Proposed Site Plan received on 27/03/2025

231013-02 - Proposed Site Plan received on 27/03/2025

231013-03 - Proposed North and West Elevation received on 27/03/2025

231013-03 - Proposed South and East Elevation received on 27/03/2025

Cover Letter received on 10/04/2025

Heritage Statement received on 31/03/2025

Design and Access Statement received on 10/04/2025

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Bat Roost Assessment) received on 27/03/2025

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in interest of proper planning.

3. Approved materials

The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be in accordance with those specified on the associated listed building consent reference 25/00733/LBC.

Reason: To ensure the appropriate use of external materials. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP7, SP9 and DM10 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).

4. Ecology

All ecological measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat risk Assessment (March 2025, Bombus Ecology Limited), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the Local Planning Authority prior to determination.

Reason: To ensure the adequate safeguarding of protected species in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

5. Ancillary use

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The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary and/or incidental to the residential use of the dwelling known as Gardeners Cottage.

Reason: The creation of a separate planning unit would conflict with the strategy for the location of new development, and be unacceptable in the interests of ensuring a sustainable pattern of development. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies SP1, SP2 (if National Landscape), DM28, DM30 and DM44 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

(3) 25/00733/LBC - Gardeners Cottage, Buckhold, Pangbourne

The Committee considered this report (Agenda Item 4(3)), concerning Planning Application 25/00733/LBC, as part of the debate for Agenda Item 4(2).

Debate

38. Councillor Paul Kander proposed to reject Officer's recommendation and grant listed building consent subject to conditions, including a condition that the property not be split into multiple properties. This was seconded by Councillor Clive Taylor.

39. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Kander, seconded by Councillor Taylor, to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that Development Manager be authorised to grant conditional listed building consent which would include a condition that the property not be split into multiple properties.

Conditions

1. Commencement

The works hereby granted listed building consent shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2. Approved plan

This listed building consent relates only to work described on the drawings/and/or/in the documents identified below:

231013-01 - Location Plan & Proposed Site Plan received on 27/03/2025

231013-02 - Proposed Site Plan received on 27/03/2025

231013-03 - Proposed North and West Elevation received on 27/03/2025

231013-03 - Proposed South and East Elevation received on 27/03/2025

Cover Letter received on 10/04/2025

Heritage Statement received on 31/03/2025

Design and Access Statement received on 10/04/2025

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Bat Roost Assessment) received on 27/03/2025

The works shall be carried out in strict conformity with the approved plans and associated approved submitted information.

Reason: To clarify what has been approved under this consent in order to protect the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

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3. Approved materials

The materials, finishes, new windows and doors to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the plans, within the Design and Access Heritage Statement, and the application forms. Where stated that materials shall match the existing, those materials shall match those on the existing development in colour, size, texture and bond.

Reason: To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the special architectural or historic interest of the building. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies SP9, DM9 and DM10 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

4. Windows/doors

No new external doors and windows shall be fitted until working drawings (scale 1:20, 1:10, 1:5, half or full size etc.) fully detailing the new / or replacement windows and/or external doors (cross sections for full glazing bars, sills, heads etc.) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out using the approved specification and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed works can be effected without detriment to the special architectural and historic interest of the heritage assets and to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies SP9, DM9 and DM10 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

5. Workmanlike manner

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in a proper workmanlike manner appropriate to the age and character of the building and using traditional materials and techniques except where the use of modern materials and techniques has specifically been approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies SP9, DM9 and DM10 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

6. Making good

All new development, and development associated with making good to the retained fabric, whether internal or external, shall be finished to match original/adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to materials, colours, textures and profiles.

Reason: To protect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. This condition is imposed in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies SP9, DM9 and DM10 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.

(The meeting commenced at 18:30 and closed at 20:56)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature