

DRAFT

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 5 AUGUST 2026

Councillors Present: Alan Macro (Chairman), Richard Somner (Vice-Chairman), Paul Kander, Geoff Mayes, Clive Taylor and Nick Carter

Also Present: Simon Till (Development Control Team Leader), Paul Goddard (Team Leader - Highways Development Control), Dawn Bond, Catherine Ireland (Planning Officer), Jessica Bailiss (Democratic Services Officer) and Thomas Radbourne

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Justin Pemberton

PART I

5. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2026 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

7. Schedule of Planning Applications

(1) Application No. and Location: 25/01252/FUL, Land at Apple Tree Cottage, Pangbourne Road, Upper Basildon, Reading

1. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(1)) concerning Planning Application 25/01252/FUL in respect of the erection of one detached 5-bedroom dwelling, alongside the demolition and replacement of an existing garage building.
2. Ms Catherine Ireland 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 and update reports.
3. The Chairman asked Mr Paul Goddard if he had any observations relating to the application and he raised the following points:
 - The application had been challenging to assess due to restricted visibility at the existing and proposed access points.
 - The site had an existing access onto the public highway which, until approximately five years ago, had served Apple Tree Cottage and provided agricultural access. These uses had subsequently transferred to the access serving Elangeni to the east. Whilst the former access had not been used in recent years, it remained available and could be used to serve the proposed dwelling.

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

- The proposal would relocate the access slightly to the east, resulting in a modest improvement in visibility. Whilst the proposed access would not comply with current visibility standards, it would provide a marginal improvement over the existing arrangement. Given the fallback position that the existing access could continue to be used, officers considered it would be difficult to justify an objection on highway grounds or sustain a refusal at appeal.
 - The proposed parking, cycle storage and electric vehicle charging provision were considered acceptable and, on this basis, no highways objection was raised.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Ms Trish Kilgour, Parish Council representative, Mrs Jan Boyd and Mr Richard Church, objectors, Mr John Neville, applicant, and Councillor Laura Coyle, Ward Member, addressed the Committee on this application.

Parish Council Representation

5. Ms Kilgour addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Parish Council

6. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- A Community Speed Watch scheme had only been operating in the area for approximately 14 months. Figures available indicated that between 10% and 15% of vehicles recorded at the monitoring location were exceeding the speed limit.

Objector Representation

7. Mrs Boyd and Mr Church addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – Recording](#)

Member Questions to the Objector

8. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
- It was explained that the access serving Elangeni was located to the east of the site but was not shown within the application's red line boundary. The objector considered that the plans did not accurately demonstrate how the retained land would be accessed and suggested that a blue line boundary would have provided greater clarity.
 - Regarding ownership and maintenance of the access track serving Elangeni, the property benefited from a right of access through a legal covenant. It was understood that ownership of the track remained with the owners of Apple Tree Cottage, whilst responsibility for its maintenance had been undertaken by the residents of Elangeni for approximately 11 years.

Applicant Representation

9. Mr John Neville addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – recording](#)

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

Member Questions to the Applicant

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

- Legal advice had been obtained and it was understood the proposed development complied with the restrictive covenant.
- The existing access had previously served Apple Tree Cottage until approximately five years ago and continued to provide access to the agricultural land to the rear. The existing access was considered to be substandard. It was further noted that relocating the access to the western side would have just as much impact on mature trees in that area when comparing this with the proposed access. The proposed access would be only a few metres closer to Elangeni and it was stated that the planning assessment therefore needed to consider the relative impacts of the access options.
- Retaining the access on the western side had been considered but was not considered feasible as it would affect the delivery of the scheme and result in agricultural traffic crossing root protection areas on the western side of the site.
- The access track was owned by the landowner of the scheme, who also owned the field to the rear and therefore required access. The applicant would be willing to consider contributing towards maintenance of the road if required by the Committee.

Ward Member Representation

11. Councillor Coyle addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – recording](#)

Member Questions to the Ward Member

12. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Member Questions to Officers

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

- A four or five-bedroom dwelling would typically generate approximately eight vehicle movements per day, compared to around six movements for a two or three bedroom dwelling. It was advised that this difference would not be sufficient to justify a refusal on highway grounds.
- It was clarified that data on the 85th percentile was required to assess if there was a speeding issue rather than an average figure. It was noted that ten to 15% of vehicles speeding did not necessarily indicate an unusual issue. Officers did not have West Berkshire Council data on this to hand.
- The highways aspects of the application had been difficult to assess. It was acknowledged that neither the existing nor proposed access met current visibility standards. However, the proposed access would increase visibility to the west from approximately seven metres to 12 metres. It was also noted that Apple Tree Cottage and the agricultural access could use the Elangeni access, as the land was within the same ownership. On balance, it was considered that a refusal on highway grounds would be difficult to defend at appeal.

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

- Agricultural access was described as a planning “red herring”. Agricultural access could take place from any part of the land with the landowner’s permission and there was no way to restrict access. The condition and maintenance of the Elangeni access were matters for the landowner and those with rights of access over it. It was further explained that officers had considered whether the proposal would intensify use of the access and had concluded that, in planning terms, the access would continue to serve a single dwelling, whether used by Apple Tree Cottage or the proposed dwelling.
- Regarding the slightly improved proposed access and whether account had been taken of the fact that Apple Tree Cottage was larger than it had once been and that there would be a further dwelling on the site if approved, it was explained that the existing access had previously served a single dwelling and could still be used for that purpose. The proposed access would be relocated slightly to the east, away from Garlands, and this modest improvement in the access arrangements made it difficult to raise a highways objection.
- It was confirmed that any potential improvements to the access serving Elangeni were outside the scope of the application and were a land ownership matter. It was further explained that the agricultural access was also outside the application site and that the timing of agricultural vehicle movements could not be controlled through the application. It was also noted that the area was residential in nature and that there were no existing restrictions on such movements.
- It was explained that the 85th percentile speed was the key measure used to assess vehicle speeds. If the recorded speed was significantly above the speed limit, this could require action by the Local Authority outside of the planning process. However, vehicle speeds carried limited weight in the assessment of the current application given the existence of the current access and the modest improvement provided by the proposed access.
- Regarding whether there was a planning issue in respect of the garden being outside of the settlement boundary, it was confirmed that this was not a planning concern, as planning policy related to built development rather than the use of land as garden. It was further noted that the proposed development was considered to reflect the surrounding pattern of development in the area.
- It was confirmed that a number of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) trees were located within and around the site. Tree protection measures were proposed and no TPO trees were proposed for removal as part of the development.

Debate

14. Councillor Richard Somner opened the debate by acknowledging that much of the discussion had focused on the access arrangements and associated matters such as speeding rather than the proposed dwelling itself. Whilst he remained concerned that the visibility splays did not meet current standards, he recognised that the proposal represented an improvement on the existing situation. He noted the complexities arising from the land ownership and access arrangements, and the differing views expressed by officers, residents and the applicant. He stated that he was struggling to find sufficient evidence to support refusal of the application and acknowledged the Highways Officer's position that the recommendation had been reached on balance.
15. Councillor Nick Carter noted that issues such as speeding and the location of garden land outside the settlement boundary were not material planning considerations. He considered that the proposed access represented an improvement on the current

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

arrangement and, having considered the scale of the dwelling and its relationship with neighbouring properties, could not identify any grounds on which to object to the application.

16. Councillor Paul Kander noted that the Committee was required to consider the application before it and assess whether it gave rise to any material planning impacts. Whilst acknowledging the concerns raised by local residents, he considered that issues such as speeding were not matters that could be addressed through the application. He stated that he was struggling to identify any planning grounds on which the application could be refused.
17. Councillor Clive Taylor advised that he had no concerns regarding the proposed dwelling itself but remained concerned about the access arrangements and highways implications. He considered that the objectors, Parish Council and Ward Member had raised convincing concerns and indicated that he was minded towards refusal.
18. Councillor Somner suggested that deferral could be considered to allow further investigation of speeding data and consideration of additional conditions raised during the meeting. He requested officer advice on the feasibility of such an approach.
19. In response, Mr Till advised that recent changes to planning legislation could affect the ability of the Committee to reconsider the application and reach a resolution at a later date. It was further explained that speed data could be reviewed however, this and any accident record would ordinarily form part of the Highways assessment regarding appropriate visibility splays. No evidence had been provided to indicate an unacceptable 85th percentile speed.
20. Mr Goddard confirmed that the accident record for the road had been considered as part of the highways assessment. One personal injury accident involving a cyclist had been recorded near the site and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, visibility requirements had been assessed on the basis of the 30mph speed limit.
21. Regarding additional conditions, Mr Till advised that a number of the conditions suggested by the objectors related to land outside the application site. To secure such matters, the application boundary would need to be amended, which would invalidate the application and require further consultation. Whilst officers understood the concerns raised regarding highway safety and access arrangements, they did not recommend that consideration of the application be deferred.
22. Councillor Carter stated that he could see no merit in deferring the application and considered that no additional information was likely to come forward. He noted that speeding had been discussed fully and did not consider it to represent grounds for refusal.
23. Councillor Carter proposed to accept Officer's recommendation and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main report and update report. This was seconded by Councillor Kander.
24. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Kander, to grant planning permission. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that provided that a Section 106 Agreement has been completed within three months of the date of the committee resolution (or such longer period that may be authorised by the Development Manager, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Eastern Area Planning Committee), to delegate to the Development

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

Manager to grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the main and update report.

OR, if a Section 106 Agreement is not completed, to delegate to the Development Manager to refuse planning permission for the reasons listed in the report.

(2) Application No. and Location: 25/02375/FUL, Churn Lodge, Wantage Road, Streatley, Reading

1. The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4(2)) concerning Planning Application 25/02375/FUL in respect of a proposed new dwelling including new landscaping and parking.
2. Catherine Ireland 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 and update reports.
3. The Chairman asked Mr Goddard if he had any observations relating to the application and he raised the following points:
 - Churn Lodge would be accessed via Acer Lodge to the north, whilst the proposed dwelling would be accessed via the private track to the south.
 - Acer Lodge and Churn Lodge were within the same ownership.
 - As an existing access already served the private track, and the parking and layout arrangements were considered acceptable, no highways objection was raised.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Mr Denis Burke, objector, Mr Nigel Parsons and Dan Fleming, applicant / agent, and Councillor Laura Coyle, Ward Member, addressed the Committee on this application.

Objector Representation

5. Mr Burke addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – recording](#)

Member Questions to the Objector

6. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Applicant/Agent Representation

7. Dan Fleming (agent - Colony Architects) addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – recording](#)

Member Questions to the Applicant/Agent

8. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Ward Member Representation

9. Councillor Coyle addressed the Committee. The full representation can be viewed here:

[Eastern Area Planning Committee – recording](#)

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

Member Questions to the Ward Member

10. Members did not have any questions of clarification.

Member Questions to Officers

11. Mr Till addressed the Committee on a procedural matter raised by the objector in their presentation noting that the Officer's report did not directly address how the current application was considered to overcome the reasons for refusal of the previous application. Whilst this was considered implicit within the report, he advised that there was a reasonable prospect of judicial review if the application were approved in its current form. He therefore recommended that consideration of the application be deferred to allow amendments to the report, noting that the application could be returned to Committee before the introduction of the national scheme of delegation.
12. The Chairman advised that, notwithstanding the recommendation to defer the application, Member questions should continue in order to identify any additional matters that could be addressed within the amended report.
13. Members asked questions of clarification and were given the following responses:
 - Construction traffic was considered a temporary impact and could be managed through a Construction Management Plan. It was further noted that spoil removal could be addressed through a planning condition. It was advised that although land stability could be a material planning consideration, Officers had not been presented with evidence to suggest that the proposal would result in land stability concerns beyond the usual impacts associated with construction activities.
 - Officers confirmed that the amenity impacts of the proposal had been assessed and their conclusions were set out in the report. Members could form a different view regarding the impact on amenity or pattern of surrounding development.
 - In response to questions regarding the dwelling's proximity to the highway, it was explained that the proposed dwelling would be set further back from the road than Churn Lodge and that nearby properties were located at varying distances from the highway. It was noted that there was not a strong building line along this part of the Wantage Road.
 - In response to questions regarding discrepancies between the plans, it was clarified that the feature shown closest to the road was an existing garage building and not the proposed dwelling.
 - In response to questions regarding the ownership of land required to access Churn Lodge, it was explained that land ownership was not a planning consideration. Officers advised that if ownership of the land changed and the proposed access arrangements could not be implemented, this could prevent the development from proceeding. It was further noted that rights of access would normally be secured where required to enable a development to be carried out in accordance with a planning permission.

Debate

14. Councillor Richard Somner proposed that consideration of the application be deferred to a future meeting of Eastern Area Planning Committee in line with the Officer advice provided at the meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Paul Kander

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2026 - MINUTES

15. The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to vote on the proposal by Councillor Somner, seconded by Councillor Kander, for deferral of the application. At the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the item be deferred to a future meeting of Eastern Area Planning Committee.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.25 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature