

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Donna Bulbeck
Planning Department
Mole Valley District Council
Pippbrook
Dorking
RH4 1SJ

9th August 2026

Dear Donna,

MO/2026/01018: Demolition of East Annexe, Headley Wing and part of main building and erection of extension to main building including erection of replacement subterranean extensions to provide additional hotel accommodation (Use Class C1), erection of detached ancillary events space, spa and 4 No. lodges, 5 No. treehouses, car and cycle parking, access improvements, landscaping and other associated works at Hartsfield Manor, Sandy Lane, Betchworth, RH3 7AA

Buckland Parish Council (Council) is currently reviewing this application and will submit a further response. This response focuses on Council's concerns relating to the Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) prepared by Velocity Transport Planning (VTP).

The Statement of Community Involvement refers to two meetings between Buckland Parish Council and members of the project team. At both meetings the concerns set out in this response were shared and Council's understanding was that the team had agreed that all construction traffic should be directed to and from the A25 Reigate Road via Betchworth roundabout.

Council is extremely disappointed to see the wording of the CLP, especially given it appears to have been drafted prior to the second meeting, a meeting attended by a transport consultant. The attached two page report sets out Council's previously expressed concerns.

Council asks MVDC to share this response with the SCC Highways Transportation Planning Team at the earliest opportunity.

Council asks that the submitted CLP is not approved in its present form and that any subsequent detailed CLP is required to route construction traffic via Betchworth roundabout, Station Road, Old Reigate Road and Old Road. Council asks MVDC to require the CLP to incorporate an agreed vehicle booking and management system, restrictions to prevent opposing HGV movements on constrained sections of Old Road, appropriate marshal/banksman arrangements and require pre- and post-construction condition surveys of the highway and adjoining verges and banks and set out reinstatement commitments.

If you have any queries with respect to this response, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Parish Clerk

cc. MVDC Cllrs Simon Budd, Paul Potter and Paula Keay, SCC Cllr Helyn Clack

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Council concerns relating to the Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) prepared by Velocity Transport Planning (VTP).

VTP describe the CLP, one of the many application documents, as an “indicative plan” promising a detailed transport logistics plan at a later unspecified time.

Proposed Construction Traffic Volumes

The CLP suggests the construction period is to be approximately 21 months beginning in the spring of 2027 and that VTP envisage “approximately 20-25 construction vehicle trips could be made to the site on a daily basis, using 10m rigid construction vehicles.

There is no corresponding figure given for vehicle trips from the site and VTP need to clarify if the figure they have quoted is per direction, or if the figure is a cumulative total in both directions. Council asks VTP to set out the peak daily number of two-way movements and peak hourly movements.

Although VTP go on to say that large vehicles would be programmed to avoid “pinch points”, this is not explained in any detail nor is its implementation given as a guarantee.

Unsuitability of Old Road between the A25 Reigate Road and Sandy Lane “Old Road route”

Of particular concern is that routes selected for these vehicle trips originating from the motorway network involve lorry movements arriving either via the Reigate one way system and along the A25 or from Dorking via the A25 but in both cases continuing to access the site through the village centre of Buckland along Old Road; routing that would require one right hand turn at the junction of the A25 and Old Road per return trip. This is contrary to an assurance given to Council at two meetings during the stakeholder engagement process that this route is not suitable to be used.

As Old Road does not have roadside pavements vehicles share this narrow D class road with pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and mobility scooters. Buckland residents of the 49 dwellings between Sandy Lane and the A25 Reigate Road are obliged to walk along the narrow carriageway of Old Road to access bus stops, local amenities and local rights of way.

The absence of pavements means vehicles exiting residential driveways do not have the benefit of any roadside margin to aid visibility.

Given that a significant proportion of Old Road is less than 5 metres wide and the carriageway is lined by unstable sandy banks the bus companies ensure the timetabling of the buses is set to avoid two buses meeting; providing a useful indication of the constraints of the carriageway. The drivers on the 32 bus route are familiar with the narrow residential driveway entrances that line Old Road between the village centre and Sandy Lane and know to exercise extreme caution on the two blind bends and when passing through the centre of the village amenities (village shop, village hall and church) as they approach the A25. Council does not consider it reasonable to suggest drivers operating construction vehicles who may be unfamiliar with local road conditions can be relied upon to act with the same degree of caution.

Preferred Construction Route

The alternative route, exiting the A25 from Betchworth roundabout to travel along Station Road and Old Reigate Road, avoids the need for any right hand turns and uses a much wider B road. This route is lined by pavements that ensure pedestrians are segregated from vehicles and ensure vehicles exiting residential driveways will be more likely to be seen by advancing vehicles. Council believes the use of this route would reduce the risk of vehicle/pedestrian conflict, opposing vehicle conflict, reversing manoeuvres and damage to roadside banks, trees, hedges, and private frontages.

Clerk to Buckland Parish Council

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While the final approach along Old Road, between the Red Lion, Old Road, Buckland (“Red Lion”) and Sandy Lane does not benefit from roadside footways, the width of the carriageway is still greater than on sections on Old Road to the north east of Sandy Lane and there are no narrow residential driveways on this short section. It is much more realistic to plan for marshals to supervise construction vehicle movements between Sandy Lane and the Red Lion than to manage the length of Old Road from Sandy Lane to the A25 Reigate Road.

The positioning of bus stops at both the Red Lion and Sandy Lane ensures pedestrians do not need to walk along this section of road and the local public footpath network provide local residents of Betchworth and Buckland with alternative routes.

Council can see no highways or logistical justification for the CLP preferring the Old Road route over this safer and more suitable alternative.

Mitigation Measures

Should the outline transport plan be taken forward into the detailed plan without a routing change, BPC asks for the entire length of Old Road to be defined as a “pinch point” (to use the applicant’s language) to avoid any likelihood of construction vehicles passing each other or encountering any other large vehicle.

Council seeks much greater clarity as to how the proposed transport plan will avoid construction vehicles meeting along Old Road. Council’s concern is that vehicle conflicts will create a significant risk of irreparable damage to the roadside banks, verges and adjoining vegetation.

As it is not possible, on sections of Old Road, for a car to pass a large vehicle, construction traffic will need to be operated by a two man team to provide a banksman or be accompanied by a site marshal for the journey between Hartsfield Manor and the A25 Reigate Road to act as banksman should a reversing manoeuvre be required. It should be noted that if a Compass or Metrobus vehicle on route 32 is encountered the bus company drivers are under strict instruction not to engage reverse gear.

Accordingly, Council asks MVDC, if, with the benefit of input from Surrey Highways, MVDC accepts any use of Old Road, north east of Sandy Lane, to require a controlled one-way movement protocol, banksman/marshal arrangements and a vehicle booking system.

Council requests the opportunity to be consulted when a detailed CLP is being prepared to provide an opportunity for Council to make practical suggestions to help ensure local concerns are recognised and constructively addressed.

When SES Water undertook work on the A25 Reigate Road that required Old Road to be used for a few weeks as a diversion route large weighted traffic cones were positioned along the length of Old Road from the village centre to Sandy Lane and the contractors replaced damaged traffic cones on an almost daily basis. This allowed residents exiting driveways to be seen by approaching road users, reducing the potential for conflict and gave added protection to pedestrians. All involved at that time recognised that without the large weighted traffic cones ancient banks lining the roads, trees and hedgerows would have incurred significant damage leading to claims for reparation. Council asks for consideration to be given to installing and maintaining large weighted traffic cones along the private frontages of Old Road between Sandy Lane and the A25 Reigate Road prior to the route being used by construction traffic.

Council asks MVDC to require, before commencement, a photographic condition survey and agreed procedure for recording, attributing and making good damage to the highway, roadside banks, hedges, trees and private frontages arising from construction traffic with appropriate reinstatement commitments.

End.

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