

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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

27th 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

On 9th August, when Buckland Parish Council (Council) submitted a response that focused on Council's concerns relating to the Construction Logistics Plan prepared by Velocity Transport Planning, Council advised an intention to submit a further response.

Council has undertaken a preliminary review of the application documents and feels they currently fall well short of the level of detail Council was led to believe, during two stakeholder engagement meetings, would be included.

Council is disappointed to see so many factual inconsistencies and vague statements in the application documents and concerned that some residents could view the tone of the script disingenuous.

Council has outlined examples by reference to car parking, noise management, deliveries, lighting schemes and external communal areas and included references to current planning restrictions and supplementary information provided by the project team, in the attached appendix.

Council has yet to complete its review of the ecological reports and Biodiversity Net Gain submission as Council is awaiting clarification of the full extent of beneficial ownership of the land.

Council hopes additional information will soon be made available via the planning portal and a revised closing date for public consultation be set.

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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Appendix

Car parking

Capacity

The Design and Access Statement refers to “hotel keys” and cites a modest increase in the number of Hotel keys from 51 to 69. Section 4.5 of the Transport Assessment, quoting the SCC 2021 Parking SSD requirement for 1.5 car spaces per bedroom, applies this metric to a “development proposal of 69 rooms”.

Having reviewed the proposed layouts, it appears to Council that as each of the four lodges, two of the five tree houses and one suite on each of the subterranean levels have two double bedrooms, the total number of bedrooms being proposed is 77 with a parking requirement of 116 car spaces.

Council notes 77 bedrooms will be comparable to a recent application for the redevelopment of Gatton Manor Hotel and Country Club (“Gatton Manor”)¹, which provided 36 car park spaces for staff, 21 spaces for its 80 cover restaurant and 10 spaces for its spa.

The applicant’s transport assessment acknowledges the majority of staff currently travel to Hartsfield Manor by car. Council notes Betchworth station is not a well connected railway station², the timetable for the 32 bus has a limited “day time” operation and initiatives by previous operators to encourage the use of shuttle transport have not been successful.

The Design and Access Statement, on page 40, claims an “Upgraded restaurant, bar, and spa facilities will be accessible to local residents, strengthening ties between the Manor and surrounding villages and positioning it as a local social hub”.

The floorplan for the signature restaurant at Hartsfield Manor indicates an internal floor area of 176.5 square metres with 70 covers and and a further 88 covers for daytime use on the external terrace. The outline operational report (prepared by Collier) advises “we anticipate the hotel restaurant maintaining the current number of covers at around 70, that will be open to hotel residents and outside guests. The hotel will continue to have a tea lounge and bar, open to both hotel residents and outside guests”. Applying the same metric as quoted in the Gatton Manor application would seem to suggest a requirement for a significant number of car park spaces to support the restaurant, tea lounge and bar.

While the spa is mostly referred to as “principally an ancillary amenity offering for hotel guests” the applicant has published the following statement in a Q&A section: “there may be opportunities in the future to explore appropriate offers for local residents, such as occasional access, special events, limited memberships or spa day options once the hotel is operational”. The transport assessment advises the ancillary function of the spa means no specific car park spaces are being provided for the spa.

A capacity of up to 150 is cited for the proposed event venue at Hartsfield Manor and, while there are several statements in the application documents that anticipate the venue hosting events for non-residents there does not seem to be any event venue specific provision for parking.

Council, having drawn attention to just some of the inconsistent information in the application documents asks MVDC to ensure adequate car park spaces are provided onsite from the outset.

¹ MO/2025/1061

² As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework 2026

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Location of parking and access

The transport plan states “the site will retain access via the existing sole access point via Sandy Lane” and the transport surveys and risk assessments appear to have been completed on this basis.

The Design and Access Statement proposes the use of a second entrance, a short distance to the south of the main entrance to access what is being referred to as an overflow car park that will be available to staff. This proposed location, close to the main entrance and directly opposite residential properties, is sufficiently distant to the manor building, spa and event space that it doesn't appear on many of the site drawings and appears to conflict with the MVDC pre-application advice to concentrate development around the Manor House.

Council expressed concern about the overflow car park proposal at a stakeholder engagement meeting held in April. Council asked for a section drawing to be provided to include the residential dwellings to the east of Sandy Lane and for headlight arcs to be superimposed and is disappointed this request has not been met.

The environmental noise assessment focuses on Hartsfield Court and fails to address the impact a remote car park and second entrance will have on residents living to the east and north east of the site.

The noise assessment suggests that the “most sensitive high use period of car parking will be at the end of an evening event, that events could end as late as 0100, meaning guests are likely to be departing as late as 0130 and be expected to talk as they walk to their cars in pairs and groups.

Council is concerned that unless the staff car parking is located as close as possible to the staff amenity area in the basement of the event space that there is a high risk of noise disturbance when staff arrive early morning to start a shift or leave late in the evening or in the early hours after a shift.

The “overflow” car park, as drawn, straddles a public right of way, FP463, an important local amenity that allows walkers to avoid walking along the carriageway of Old Road between Sandy Lane and The Red Lion risking conflict between vehicles and individuals on foot.

Council asks MVDC to require the applicant to:

- *optimise the number of car park spaces provided in and around the current parking areas (main car park and close to the proposed event space);*
- *allocate staff parking as close as possible to the staff amenity area, which the drawings indicate will be located in the basement of the event space;*
- *relocate any additional car parking further to the south i.e. closer to the spa and lodges and distant from FP463;*
- *require all vehicles to access the site via the existing main entrance;*
- *secure a legal commitment from the applicant to ensure “No helicopters will be flown to or from the site”.*

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Current Planning Restrictions

When planning permission was granted, on appeal, in 2009³ the following conditions were attached:

- No amplified music or speech shall be played outside the buildings at any time;
- Fireworks shall not be ignited on the site at any time other than on 5 November prior to 2200 and on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day up until 0030 [...]; and
- Car parking facilities on the site shall not be used for the parking of cars belonging to persons who are absent from the premises for periods in excess of 24 hours [...].

As Council believes the rationale for attaching these conditions remains valid, *Council asks MVDC to confirm that these conditions, or if considered appropriate, strengthened versions of these conditions, will continue to apply to the operation of the site.*

Noise Management

Council recognises there is considerable concern amongst Buckland residents about a potential loss of amenity if noise is not adequately managed by the operational team. The topography of the site relative to Old Road and Dungates Lane, taken with prevailing south westerly winds mean noise nuisance is an issue that could have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of Buckland residents.

Council asks MVDC to:

- *attach comparable conditions to be applied to events and activities at Hartsfield Manor as apply to Buckland Park Lake⁴. In particular, Council asks for specific limits on noise to be conditioned and for the applicant to be required to implement a Noise Management Plan;*
- *require the use of electric vehicles and power tools for grounds maintenance activities; and*
- *require the use of white noise reversing alarms both during and after completion of the proposed construction works.*

Operational Management – Deliveries

Council has previously worked closely with the key personnel involved in operating the Shell Waitrose on the A25 Reigate Road. A key concern with the redevelopment of the petrol station to include a stronger retail offering was to minimise disturbance caused by deliveries of goods for retail sale to the site and collections from the site, all of which had the potential to undermine the amenity of residents living in Tranquil Dale.

Council, through a combination of planning and licensing restrictions, all of which the applicant agreed were reasonable, negotiated delivery windows as follows: Monday to Friday between 8am and 9pm, Saturdays between 10am and 6pm and Sundays and Bank Holidays between 10am and 4pm.

Council notes the Collier Report advises “It is proposed that the majority of deliveries / servicing would take place during the hours of 06:00 to 12:00.” and is concerned that early morning deliveries are likely to prove disruptive to sleep for the residents living on Old Road and Old Reigate Road and very disruptive to sleep for the residents living close to the junction of Sandy Lane and Old Road.

Council asks MVDC to require the “Delivery and Servicing Plan” referenced in the Collier report to adopt delivery windows consistent with those that are successfully applied at Shell Waitrose.

³ Planning Inspectorate Appeal Reference APP/C3620/A/08/2090058

⁴ MO/2017/1797 and MO/2024/1243.

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Lighting Schemes

Council notes that while there are references to lighting throughout the documents with broad statements suggesting lighting will be designed to limit its impact there is concern that the extensive glazing proposed across the site and provision of external areas where groups of guests can be expected to congregate will require careful management.

Council asks MVDC to require the applicant to ensure the external lighting and lightspill from internal lighting is designed

- *with suitable regard to the Institute of Lighting Professional's Guidance Notes for the reduction of obtrusive light GNo1-2021;*
- *to comply with the Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (Guidance Note 08/23);*
- *to include a horizontal illuminance contour plan to demonstrate dark corridors for nocturnal species; and*

require the appointment of a suitably qualified professional to validate the lighting schemes conform to the aforementioned requirements.

External communal areas

Within the application drawings several outside areas are proposed:

- The restaurant includes an external seating area "for use within the daytime" with drawings suggesting upwards of 88 covers;
- the new sub-terranean accommodation, which provide external balconies on every room appears to include an external terrace, which, on some drawings shows external seating, tables and possibly a bar;
- A rooftop observation area on the roof of the event space, accessed via a ramp appears on some drawings to include furniture and lighting; and
- Seating around the external pool at the spa.

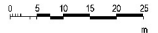
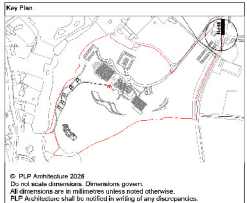
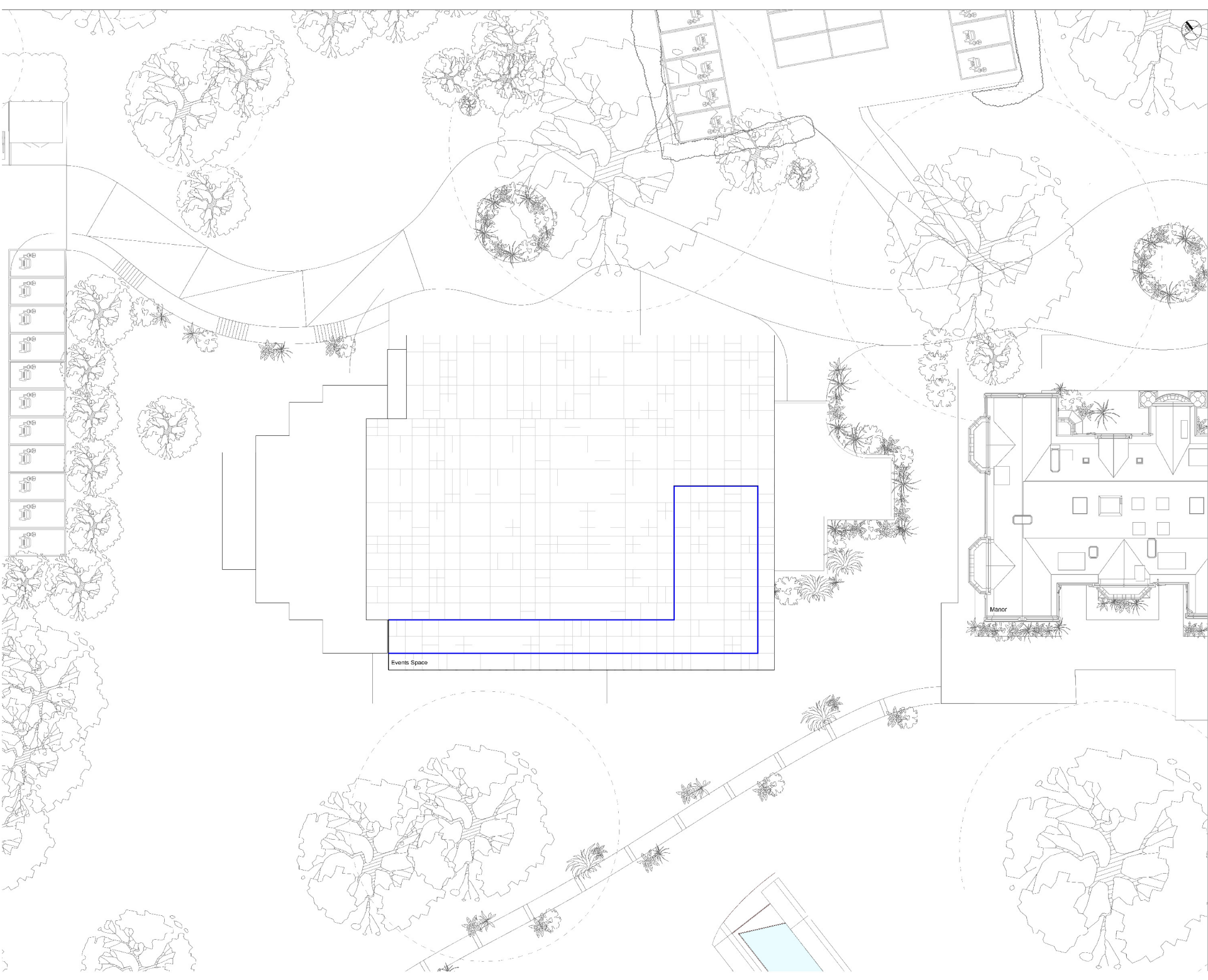
Council notes that the claims are made to the effect that noise disturbance will be low given the proposed design of the event space and is keen to ensure that the proposed communal external areas are limited to daylight use to remove any need for external lighting and ensure noise from these areas does not adversely impact the amenity of residents living on Old Road, Sandy Lane and Dungates Lane in Buckland and those living on Old Reigate Road, The Street and Wonham Lane in Betchworth.

The project team recently shared an additional drawing, intended to show the extent of the rooftop observation area proposed for the event space. The email accompanying the drawing advised "As shown on the drawing, the roof platform is enclosed by glass balustrades around its perimeter. The attached plan identifies the extent of the accessible roof area available to guests. There are currently no proposals for furniture or other permanent features on the roof platform itself. Lighting is expected to be limited to low-level spot lighting for safety and way finding purposes in with the wider lighting strategy. [...] access would be via the ramped walkway and the roof platform would operate as an ancillary part of the event venue rather than as a stand alone destination in its own right."

The project team advised the drawing (copy attached) was being submitted to MVDC to be uploaded as an additional application document.

Council asks MVDC to require the applicant to make such changes to the application drawings as are necessary to ensure they are consistent with the intended use of these areas to facilitate a full and proper assessment of the proposals and allow appropriate conditions to be attached to any permission granted.

Encl.



Legend:

Belustrade

Rev: 03/2026 Planning Application
Date: Notes:

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HARTSFIELD MANOR
SURREY

Project Name:
1979 Hartsfield Manor

Drawn:
Planning Application

Drawing Title:
Proposed
Site Plan - Roof

Drawing Number:
1979 -PLP-MA-00-DR-A-03001
(a)

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