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8 July 2010

Ms Hayley Butcher
WBC Case Officer
Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
PO Box 157
Shute End
WOKINGHAM RG40 1WR

Dear Ms Butcher,

Application F/2010/1194: Land to rear of Derydene, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood

Following full consideration at our Planning and Transportation Committee earlier this week, we wish to record the following concerns with regard to the above proposed development in our parish, for whilst we acknowledge the need for the provision of such facilities, there are aspects of this proposal that cause us significant concern, including an absence of definitive detail on several elements:

- 1) Our first prime concern that obliges us to record an objection, is that the proposed site lays outside the designated village envelope settlement boundary rendering it a development in open countryside. We had understood that WBC policies precluded such development except given overriding justification and our members remain doubtful that this has been provided.
- 2) Whilst appreciating the need to cater for people with complex and specialist needs, our members are mindful of any adverse impact on the character of the area and the residential amenity of adjoining properties. There is scant detail within the application of the implications for accommodating such a care service, which therefore creates concern.
- 3) Little detail is given of the scale and nature of the proposed activity relating to the cafeteria and shop, which causes concern with regard to hours of operation and traffic movements to and from the site, not only by users of such retail facilities but also with the associated commercial vehicle movements, for a 1½-acre cultivation area will not generate sufficient produce to make a retail shop and cafeteria outlet viable without being supplemented by external suppliers. Furthermore, the provision of eighteen parking spaces along with the assurance that staff would come by mini-bus and many visitors would walk and cycle suggests that high visitation rates associated with the retail activity are envisaged. Such a significant increase in vehicular movements along a narrow track constrained by valuable trees protected by TPOs, causes us grave concerns.
- 4) Our concerns about establishing a cafeteria and retail shop outside the settlement boundary and in open countryside are compounded by the fact that it is only in recent weeks that the CafActive project was opened at St Michael's Church about 300m south along the Basingstoke Road. This facility was established with public funding to satisfy a local social need, which makes this provision questionable.

continued/-

Such is the magnitude of this significant proposed change of use outside the designated settlement boundary in open countryside, that our members consider that it should go before the WBC Planning Committee for determination were you minded to recommend approval. We therefore confirm that we shall be asking our Shinfield South Borough Ward members to seek a listing of this application were you so minded.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqui Barnes, Clerk

Copies: Cllrs N Gould, C Haitham Taylor, B Patman and A Pollock