
APPLICATION NO.	18/02874/FULLS
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - SOUTH
REGISTERED	01.11.2018
APPLICANT	King's Somborne Parish Council
SITE	Recreation Ground Adj. Village Hall, Romsey Road, Kings Somborne, SO20 6PP, KINGS SOMBORNE
PROPOSAL	Erection of Community Building/Pre-school
AMENDMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended/additional plans/information received 07/01/2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amended plans showing corrected siting of the building; ○ Footpath to be retained as grass; ○ Fencing changed from close board to open wire mesh; ○ All fences noted to be 1.8m in height to correct discrepancy with design and access statement; ○ Actual width of hedge shown; ○ Tree details and statement; ○ Fence included to restrict play area; ○ Bollard/building lighting included; ○ Height of building in relation to the MUGA now shown; ○ Simplified entrance pathway; ○ Clarification of soakaway details; ○ Clarification of additional hedge planting – shown on plans; ○ Utilisation statement • Amended plans received 05/02/2019 after a review of the levels at the site : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amended elevations and plans; ○ Removal of hedge on north west boundary; ○ Provision of air conditioning units; ○ Amendment to fenestration; ○ Submission of sequential test information.
CASE OFFICER	Mrs Sarah Appleton

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application is presented to Southern Area Planning Committee in accordance with the Member and Officer Interests Protocol.

2.0 **SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The site relates to part of the recreation ground which is located to the north east of the existing multi use games area (MUGA) adjacent to the north east boundary of the recreation ground. The existing village hall is located to the north west. Existing residential development which fronts onto the A3057 Romsey Road is located to the north, north east and north west. The site is currently laid to grass and includes part of a Public Right of Way (PROW) which runs from the A3057, along the north east boundary of the recreation ground towards surrounding residential development. Existing boundaries mainly consist of hedging and trees. Access to the site is taken directly from the A3057 from two existing accesses between 'The Croft' and 'Braemar' and adjacent to Field View.
- 2.2 The site is located within the King's Somborne conservation area and is adjacent to the site of John of Gaunt's Palace to the east which is a scheduled monument.

3.0 **PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The proposal involves the erection of a single storey building which would be used primarily as a pre-school and occasionally as a community building. When not in use as a pre-school the applicant has stated that the building would be used for:

- Breakfast club
- After school club
- Holiday club
- Relax kids
- Meetings
- Exhibitions
- Lectures
- Courses
- Sure and Steady
- Yoga

The applicant has stated that the use of the building for a community use would

Enable the Village Hall Management team to offer three community rooms along with the main village hall.

- 3.2 The proposed building would consist of a pre-fabricated modular steel building which would have a footprint of approximately 15 x 9.6 metres and would have a maximum height of approximately 3.8 metres. The site slopes away slightly to the south west and from here it is proposed to place the building on jacks to make it level and to include an area of decking. The building is proposed to be raised to avoid the 1:1000 year flood level. A raised area of decking will also be added to the south east elevation.

3.3 Internally, along with the main teaching area, the proposed building would include an entrance lobby, office, kitchen, store and W/Cs. Externally the proposals would include a new pathway from the existing village hall along with an external play area. Proposed boundary treatments are to include close board fencing, open mesh fencing and hedging. Existing parking at the village hall is proposed to be utilised for the development.

4.0 **HISTORY**

4.1 The most recent planning applications within the recreation/Village Hall area are as follows:

4.2 18/00986/CLES - Certificate of lawful existing use for the land adjacent to the Recreation Ground - previously leased as grazing/recreation use, now only used for recreation – ISSUE CERTIFICATE 05.07.2018.

4.3 17/01674/FULLS - Side extension to form a pre-school area and associated enclosed play area – WITHDRAWN 03.08.2017.

4.4 15/01904/FULLS - Erection of entrance lobby and open porch to front; Replace flat roof with mono-pitched roof; extension to north west (Village Hall) – PERMISSION subject to conditions 09.10.2015.

4.5 14/01848/CLPS - Certificate of lawful proposed development - Erect multi-use games area on land owned by Parish Council including 3 metre high mesh fence – ISSUE CERTIFICATE 02.09.2014.

4.6 14/01648/FULLS - Installation of solar roof panels on the south east and south west elevations and installation of 2 air source heat pumps on the north east elevation and one air source heat pump on the north west elevation (Village Hall) – PERMISSION subject to conditions 01.09.2014.

4.7 14/01049/CLPS - Certificate of lawful proposed development - Erect multi-use games area on land owned by Parish Council including 3 metre high mesh fence (amended description) – NOT ISSUE CERTIFICATE 16.07.2014.

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Archaeology** – No objection.

5.2 **Services for young children** – Comment:

- Proposal will provide the pre-school with the opportunity to provide a more flexible service to the community and offer full wrap around care, including holiday care, dependent on demand.
- Within King's Somborne and Michelmersh ward there are currently 2 pre-school settings and 2 EYE (Early Years Education) registered childminders which offer sessional EYE funded places. Both their occupancy levels are currently at approximately 80% with a waiting list for the next term due to demand for consecutive early years education funded places and 30 hours extended entitlement.

- Child population within the ward shows a rise in 2 Year olds with a total of 22 and a slight dip in 3/4 year olds at 40 for the year. Forecast shows a continual rise in 2 Year olds and the stabilising of numbers for 3/4 year olds by 2024.
- Due to the rural location of this facility this proposal would help local families in choice of childcare provision.

5.3 Lead Local Flood Authority – Comment:

“As this application relates to a site which is less than 0.5 hectare in size (residential) and under 1000 Sq.m floor space, (fewer than 10 dwellings) or under 1 hectare in size (commercial) there is no need for us to comment on it at this time.”

5.4 Highways – No objection subject to condition.

- Application is supported by a parking survey accumulation study which sufficiently demonstrates that the existing car park has sufficient space capacity to cater for any expected demand.
- Review of the application would suggest that only an immaterial level of new trips would be created with a large amount of pre-school attendees already being present at the Village Hall Facility.
- With this in mind, Highways Development Planning raises no objections to this proposal subject to a condition requiring the submission of a travel plan.

5.5 Conservation – No objection.

“The proposed building is of no particular architectural quality and is not particularly attractive, but it is a simple modular structure. It will be seen in context of the games area and its fence, the skate board park and the existing village hall, none of which are structures which particularly enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Given the scale of the structure and its context with the aforementioned structures, any harm to the significance of the conservation area in this respect will be modest. Strengthening the screening effect of the important hedgerow here would do much to reduce this further...”

5.6 Historic England – No objection.

“The proposed site is separated from the monument by an existing vegetation boundary but there may be limited visual connection from the monument to the proposed development site. There will also be a limited impact to the ground from the building and through service trenches, however this will be outside of the area of the Scheduled Monument. An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by the applicant on the advice of Historic England and Hampshire County Council’s archaeological advisors to establish whether there are any remains relating to John of Gaunt’s palace within the proposed development area. Whilst the archaeological works were limited in their nature no artefacts or features were discovered within the works.

Considering the limited impact of the proposals and the results of the archaeological monitoring we have no objections to the proposals.”

5.7 **Policy** – No objection.

5.8 **Sport England** – No objection.

- It is understood that the proposal prejudices the use, or leads to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field in the last five years, as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No.595). The consultation with Sport England is therefore a statutory requirement.
- Sport England is satisfied that the proposed development does not have an adverse impact on the playing field, and will not affect any land capable of forming a playing pitch or part of a playing pitch. On that basis, the proposal meets exception 3 of our playing fields policy, in that:

‘The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
- result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site’

With the above being the case, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application.

5.9 **Environmental Protection** – No objection subject to condition.

- Details of air conditioning units required by condition.

5.10 **Landscape** – Comment:

- Site is in open grassed space between the existing MUGA, which is surrounded by a high fence- this already has a visual impact, though it is away from the PROW and is semi permeable being a weld mesh style fence. The sites new boundary is close to the existing skateboard ramp also. The ramp can be seen from the PROW and again has a visual impact for PROW users.
- The proposal is for a new building with a small area around it enclosed by a close board fence to the PROW. The PROW will become enclosed along this length and the loss of the wider landscape views will be the impact. There will be views of the building also over the fence. This is not easily mitigated.
- Though existing views are of grass and play equipment the views are relatively open, and this will change.

- The enclosure created here would have a negative impact upon PROW users for this section of the pathway. The enclosure here would be similar to the enclosure at the beginning of the PROW between properties.
- There may be safety concerns for users of the path way as it becomes more enclosed.
- Close board fence would further restrict passing on the footpath.
- Building is of little architectural merit and views of it will have a negative impact. The fence, though having a negative impact reduces views of the building. A building with architectural merit could warrant being seen more openly and a less obtrusive footpath boundary.
- Feels squeezed in and as such has a poor relationship to other building/units/apparatus.
- Area is likely to have little amenity value to the users of the new building.
- What is area around the site – grass shown may be difficult to manage – would suggest change of materials- through condition.
- Fence posts will require foundations, these must be considered with proximity to the large hedge which has some trees within it and its rooting space.

5.11 **Trees** – No objection subject to condition.

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 25.02.2019

6.1 **King's Somborne Parish Council** – Support.

“...this is a Parish Council application following months of preparation, pre-submission and consultation. Councillors were well aware of the objections raised and submitted to TVBC as well as the over-riding support for the project within the community and wish their continuing support to be noted.”

FIRST ROUND OF NOTIFICATION

6.2 **67 x letters of support raising the following (summarised):**

Impact on local community

- Hugely benefit the local community if the children could have their own permanent structure.
- Children are the future of any community and we must invest in their education, the pre-school provides these vital first steps in their educational journey.
- Proposals would also offer other activities which would benefit the community including being used for over 50's groups in the village and for other child groups.
- Proposal is necessary for a village that is expanding fast and the needs of young children from a variety of backgrounds, is essential to allow every child to have the opportunity of early learning and not be disadvantaged in any way.
- Children are the lifeblood of the school – the more children on roll, the more funding the school will receive. Having a permanently based pre-school will act as a feeder for the school ensuring a healthy school population for years ahead.

- There will be plenty of greenspace left in the village.
- Proposed additional 30 hours childcare would further block off the village hall even more than the current arrangements preventing other age groups and societies from using it. Seems obvious that many pensioner village residents would benefit from being able to have some morning activities in the hall.
- Approving the application will be a positive start in ensuring the security of the village's economy and education system.
- Currently some local families are choosing to send their children to Stockbridge due to them having an independent pre-school in place and are then remaining in Stockbridge for primary school because of formed friendship groups. If King's Somborne were to offer the same provisions, this situation would not occur and we would be able to retain our families and the primary school.
- Pre-school provides valuable child-care provision and employment.
- Proposal would be a real asset to King's Somborne.
- Proposal would provide a better learning environment for our children.
- Children at the pre-school would also be able to join the Beavers and Cubs at the Scout Hut – the pre-school would provide a seamless transition to these and other facilities currently held in the village hall and Scout Hut.
- Pre-school is a key part of building parent relationships in the community as well as child relationships.
- Both the primary school and pre-school are critical for the health of the village.
- Before the pre-school existed, numbers at the primary school were in decline. The number of pupils attending the primary school have increased since the pre-school started.
- Provision of preschool meets the requirements of the whole village as expressed in the survey conducted for the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- This project is a fine example of cooperation between the Parish Council and the Village Hall and will allow the Village Hall to be utilised by more of the local community for which it is intended.
- Children have made so many friends in the village as a result of the pre-school and they will be in the same class as their friends as they transition to the primary school in the future.
- Without the school the village would become another heartless commuter belt community. The pre-school completes the whole spectrum of community facilities.
- Proposals will help drive the growth, sustainability and evolution of the village and its amenities.
- Proposal would provide the pre-school with a professional standard facility to enable the business to grow.
- Number of children attending the pre-school has grown year on year and it now needs its own building.
- Proposal would be a real asset to the village.

6.3 Existing accommodation /need for separate building

- Existing village hall is not suited to the needs of the pre-school. At the end of each session everything needs to be stored away which is a waste of time and energy. The concrete outdoor area is not suited to children.
- Existing toilets are inappropriate for the pre-school children. New building would provide for toilets specially catered towards children.
- Existing pre-school facility has limited outside space. Proposed development would provide better outside space for the children.
- There are health and safety and access issues with existing facility.
- Permanent structure is required so that there is sufficient space for the number of children who need to attend.
- Existing accommodation is inadequate to accommodate the amount of children requiring a pre-school place particularly when considering new affordable housing in the pipeline and the added government grant.
- Village hall is unsustainable as a location for the pre-school as it is unable to offer 30 hours childcare and other activities at the same time.
- Existing hours offered by the pre-school are restricted due to other bookings.
- Proposals would allow children's work to be displayed on the walls which is not possible in the Village Hall.
- Current situation hampers the learning environment by the need to fit into a multi-use space.
- The proposal will allow the village hall to recover valuable storage space currently taken up by pre-school equipment which would benefit other local organisations.

6.4 Location of proposed pre-school

- This site is accessed by a good, useful footpath, which enables the children to spend some time in the primary school. Link between the building is incredibly valuable as the children make their transition to primary school.
- Site is in a safe area with excellent parking facilities – children's security would be easy to protect and maintain.
- This is a very small area of public land which is not utilised.
- The site, close to the heart of the village has car parking nearby, is very close to the primary school, adjacent to the children's playground and at some distance from housing, giving a degree of privacy to both Preschool and homes.
- Site is close to other amenities that the pre-school children could use such as the play area and MUGA.
- Other sites for the pre-school were investigated but were considered unsuitable. Use of the Scout Hut would bring with it the same challenges as sharing the Village Hall.
- Site currently includes junior goalposts which are not utilised and can be relocated to a more suitable space.
- Proposed location is easily and safely accessible by car.
- Should be careful consideration in relation to walking routes.

- Proposed location is ideal as it has easy access for the maximum number of families in the village.

6.5 Neighbour amenity

- Site is surrounded by public uses, there will always be hustle and bustle, the sound of children playing for a small amount of time should not be a deciding factor in the application.
- Smells from the kitchen and toilets have been raised – kitchen and toilets in the Village Hall are directly behind three of the Romsey Road houses and a complaint of this nature has never been received.
- Sound coming from the pre-school – there are fewer better sounds in life than to hear children at play. The primary school already generates this wonderful noise and the addition of the pre-school will only add to this pleasure, albeit for very short periods in a day.
- Proposals would be located further away from neighbouring properties than the existing facility.

6.6 Highways

- Before there was a pre-school in the village, it was necessary to travel outside of the village using private car for those fortunate or using spasmodic bus service.
- With a population of 1800 people and with more than 25% of the housing being social housing the number of children in the village is significantly higher than in neighbouring communities and with all the concerns about climate change it is imperative that families should not drive to get their children to the pre-school education they need.

6.7 Heritage

- Understand the challenge of balancing the care of our heritage with the requirements of people now. Trust that plans for the proposed building will continue to enable King's Somborne to strike a balance between valuing and caring for the past, and supporting the current community to thrive.

6.8 **1 x letter of support from King's Somborne C of E School (summarised):**

- School is a small rural primary school and consequently numbers fluctuate year on year. Before the existing pre-school was in existence, numbers fell significantly due to parents taking their children to other village pre-schools and then transitioning on to the associated primary schools. Since the pre-school started, numbers of children entering the school each September have increased and are continuing to increase year on year.
- School is a major part of the village community and everything possible should be done to keep it viable for future generations.
- As pre-school has grown, it is clear that present accommodation is not allowing it to fulfil its true potential. A purpose built facility is required to make it flourish and give children the opportunities they deserve.
- Also clear that the presence of the pre-school in the village hall is restricting its use to other interested groups within the village.

6.9 **1 x letter of support from King's Somborne School Association (summarised):**

- Availability of high quality, local preschool provision is a key asset to the village community.
- Appreciate compromises that which have had to be made to establish the preschool as one of many village hall users.
- As well as being an excellent facility in its own right, the preschool has also developed excellent links with the primary school, underpinning the entry of children into Year R in particular.
- To continue the growth of the last 7 years, believe that the preschool now requires its own dedicated space with facilities specifically appropriate to the young children attending, in a setting available five days a week during term time without compromising either its own operation or other community activities.
- The chosen location within 150m of the school ensures convenience for families with children at both the school and pre-school and also promotes the use of facilities such as the school library by the preschool, to mutual benefit.
- The proposed development would add significant further value for hosting other facilities such as holiday clubs. Such activities would provide additional opportunities for children in the community, which are not typically available without travel by car.
- Building may also, by arrangement with the preschool and other users, support the provision of after school clubs for children at the school during term time; providing changing and toilet facilities for activities using the MUGA, or an additional space for clubs in case of inclement weather.
- While acknowledging the concerns of some local residents, we hope our view will be taken into account and that the overriding benefit of this development to the King's Somborne community will be recognised.

6.10 **19 x letters of objection raising the following (summarised):**

General comments

- Support the idea of a pre-school building but object to the application on other grounds.
- Do not object to the principle of a pre-school.
- Submitted plans are inaccurate, some plans have been notated with the incorrect scale, datum information is required otherwise it is difficult to appreciate the overall height compared to the MUGA fence.
- There are discrepancies between the plans and submitted documents.
- Proposal is an easy option, a better scheme could be possible.
- If planning permission is forthcoming, it should be on the basis of a temporary consent to allow the applicants time to develop ideas for a more suitable site, and fund raise for a permanent solution.
- Proposal appears to kill the NDP (neighbourhood development plan) before it is finished.

- Feel let down by the committee members in charge of this project who did not have the courtesy to contact adjacent neighbours directly affected before planning permission was applied for giving a chance to talk through our concerns.
- Building on the recreation ground sets a precedent for further building on the recreation ground.
- Building on the green belt.
- Believe contrary to PPG2 in the NPPF.
- NDP does not form an acceptable foundation for the consideration of this application.
- It is hoped that TVBC will apply identical planning parameters and standards to the pre-school application as would be used for other applications in this location.
- Although building cost is important, it should not be used to justify an application, which, if made by another applicant would not be approved.
- It has yet to be explained how the proposal would be used as a community building.
- Grant applications would seem inappropriate for the purpose it is now to be used for.
- Community Involvement Report represents a one-sided view
- Full building specification is misleading.
- If approved the structure should be moved back to be at least level with the MUGA moving the sight lines away from neighbouring properties.
- Why can't the half pipe be moved?

6.11 Impact on local facilities

- Proposed development is in the green belt and on amenity land used by the local residents.
- Development is in the middle of a Local Area of Open Space – obviously as a pre-school it won't be accessible to the general public, nor open.
- Application says building is to be a community building available to anyone outside of pre-school hours. However, building only seems to have been designed for pre-school use with minimal storage area for their equipment. Where will the equipment be stored if the building is to be used for other purposes?
- Presumably, the use as a community building needs to happen to subsidise the pre-school and will require regular hirers – all equipment will have to be packed away by the pre-school for each hiring – no different from the current situation.
- Proposals would result in the loss of amenity to the wider community.
- Is there a risk that this development would affect the financial viability of the village hall? This needs to be addressed before planning approval is granted.
- Scheme should be supported by detailed financial projections demonstrating the viability of the project, the impact on the hall and how the rest of the community will benefit from rental income.
- Proposed community use will be unsuitable for adults due to the toilets that are to be installed.

- Due to type of building proposed it will deteriorate and become vandalised in time.

6.12 Heritage and design

- Site is within the conservation area – proposal is not in keeping with the conservation area and therefore contrary to policy E9.
- Proposed building of a utilitarian box like appearance with surrounding high fences – poor design not in keeping with surrounding buildings.
- Design is ugly and would be a carbuncle on the face of a lovely village.
- Utilising a temporary building in a conservation area on a permanent basis is inappropriate.
- Planning policy requires any development within a Conservation Area to ‘preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area’ and to be ‘sympathetic to adjoining spaces and views’ additionally ‘the nature and quality of the design and architectural detailing and materials used for the development to be sympathetic to the site and its setting’. Does this scheme meet this brief?
- Village Hall committee have committed to successful fund raising to improve facilities within and the external appearance of the hall, getting rid of flat roofs, and the results are very pleasing, than an application proposes to put an ugly temporary structure with a flat roof in the vicinity. Where is the logic?
- A view down to the proposed roof would be visible from the Three Field site – some attention needs to be given to the roof design.
- Saying that the hall and MUGA are of no conservation merit, so the conservation area rules can be ignored implies that the conservation area rules have no merit.
- Proposal is a large prefabricated building squeezed between the MUGA and skate ramp changing the character of this conservation area and setting the precedent for other buildings of this nature.
- Proposal would be over development.
- Proposal would destroy the rural character of the area.
- Proposal would enclose and be imposing on the public footpath – proposals would prevent free access from the village hall to the footpath along the north eastern side.
- Proposals would impact on adjacent historic site.
- The overall appearance of the proposals, including fencing and harsh lighting would be an unwelcome intrusion into a rural environment.
- Proposals would look like a prison.
- As an owner of a listed property within the conservation area, we have to jump through many and varied hoops in order to fulfil the conservation department’s requirements when renovating or extending our property. Beggars belief that less than 100m away an ugly urban prefabricated building such as this can seriously be proposed.
- Existing village hall has just been through a significant face lift to make it more attractive, so why proposed such an ugly building crammed into a site that is too small and bring the aesthetic of the area down again?
- Site and design are detrimental to the character of this part of the village and fill in the space between the current build area – exactly what the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is trying to avoid.

6.13 Neighbour amenities

- Proposals would have a visual and noise impact on neighbouring properties.
- Use of the building as a community building along with a pre-school from 8am -12pm seven days a week is unacceptable. Will it have adequate sound proofing, be licensed for music/alcohol?
- Potential for noise from the external play areas especially in the summer months.
- Proposal would overlook adjacent residents.
- Neighbouring residents would be affected by noise, particularly if it is used as a community building.
- Site is inappropriately close to neighbours causing loss of privacy.
- Proposals would result in light pollution and smells from the kitchen which would be carried towards neighbouring residential dwellings.
- As neighbours we are feeling increasingly hemmed in – will be glad to see the pre-school move from its current location as existing outdoor play area creates much noise and is unbearable at times.
- Noise from existing village hall can also be intrusive.
- MUGA is another source of intrusion.
- No effort seems to have been made to protect or respect the privacy or security of near neighbours.
- Proposed fencing would provide an ineffective screen and building would dominate the view from neighbouring properties.
- The proposed building is within 5 metres of neighbouring property, this is uncomfortably close. We are unhappy with it adjoining our land.
- Consider it essential for privacy and security that a proper, secure 2m+ close boarded fence along the full length of the perimeter between the MUGA/pre-school and neighbouring land be provided and maintained.
- Proposals would increase anti-social behaviour, particularly as the footpath will become enclosed.
- There would be no let up in noise, I will not be able to site in peace and quiet in my garden or even have my windows open.

6.14 Alternative sites

- Cannot understand why the proposals did not involve the redevelopment of the Scout Hut – which is understood is the property of the applicant.
- Insufficient feasibility has been undertaken on the potential to use the Scout Hut – don't believe that it is not possible to design a building that can fulfil both purposes (scouts and pre-school).
- Has a financial viability study been carried out to see if the pre-school can sustain itself in its own building? Sharing a building must be more economically viable.
- Existing pre-school generates hire charges which provided a vital contribution to the overheads of the hall – difficult to think of regular replacement hirers, if the pre-school vacates, for 30 hours a week at the time of day the pre-school to generate similar income.

- Opportunity exists to integrate the pre-school into the village hall as it has recently been decided to move the football pitch further from the hall – creates an opportunity to add a small extension to the now plain south eastern gable of the hall. This would have the advantage of a permanent structure further enhancing the appearance of the hall in traditional materials and contain the development instead of sprawling onto the recreation ground away from the hall. Has this even been considered? This would be cost effective as extension would be smaller than the current proposal.
- Proposals have ignored the possibility of the pre-school sharing the existing Scout Hut building or the redevelopment of the Scout Hut site.
- Scout Hut should be replaced by a new building to house both the Scouts and the pre-school.
- Appraisal of the Scout Hut is bias and limited in its scope.
- There are already a number of under-used village spaces including the village hall, Epworth Hall, Working Men's Club and Scout Hut. It makes more sense to upgrade an existing facility than to build a new one.
- Data from NDP shows overwhelming support for building on brownfield rather than greenfield sites.

6.15 Trees

- Trees surrounding the site are protected – required root protection areas are likely to have an impact on the development including proposed hard surface for the footpath.
- Accurate tree survey and assessment of levels at the hedgerows to adjacent John of Gaunt field is required.
- Tree report also likely to be required for the access into the recreation ground as trees may require some attention to allow delivery of the prefabricated units and the crane to erect.

6.16 Highways/Parking

- Parking provision ignores requirements by users of the recreation ground and users of the Scout Hut at times uses would clash. A random survey over two weeks in the summer is not indicative of the actual use at many times through the year. A football or cricket match often fills the car park on its own.
- As the pre-school is an additional facility on the site it must require additional compliant parking spaces in its own right.
- Concerned that the footpath alongside Nanjizel's garden will become a shortcut to the pre-school meaning cars being parked on the A3057 – this is an extremely busy and dangerous road.
- Have witnessed many near-accidents caused by drivers turning into the lane only to be confronted by pedestrians. Please consider banning vehicles in this lane which should be for pedestrians only.
- Proposals would cause increased safety problems on the A3057.
- The footpath would be fenced off and put into a corridor.
- Proposals would remove desire line along the northern edge of the proposed development.
- Any potential increase in traffic in this vicinity is potentially dangerous, particularly where children are concerned.

- Longer opening hours will mean more cars dropping children off – likelihood is that parents will take the shortest route which would see them parking at the A3057 end of the footpath and walking through – unacceptable to consider any development that would further increase traffic and stationary vehicles on this particular part of that road.

6.17 Flooding

- Site is in an area that has flooded within the last 4 years.
- Site is in Flood Zone 2 and is well known for having standing water on it during the winter. Any further development at the site will only increase flood risk.
- Local residents have already been reduced to a choice of one company from which to purchase buildings insurance since the construction of the MUGA. A further building on the site will only cement that monopoly.
- Concern that further development of the site would increase flooding to surrounding residences.

6.18 Trees/hedges/ecology

- Present hedges should be retained as wildlife needs protection. Hedges also provide screening.
- Being deciduous, trees/hedges would only screen the building for 5/6 months of the year.
- Development would result in the destruction of hedgerows and associated wildlife habitats.
- Site is within the SAC for the Mottisfont Barbestelle Bat colony – this is a major consideration especially during late opening hours, which will inevitably include lighting which is detrimental to the bats' feeding patterns.

6.19 Sport England comments

- Proposed development would take away remainder of practice pitch which the children use for kick-about, goal shooting practice etc.
- The MUGA is not used as they prefer to use the grass.
- By developing this piece of land younger children would be denied practice opportunity and would be an enormous disservice to the youth of the village.

SECOND ROUND OF NOTIFICATION AFTER SUBMISSION OF AMENDED PLANS

6.20 **4 x further letters objecting to the proposed. The following is a summary of additional matters raised which have not previously been summarised above**

Community Building & Preschool Utilisation Statement

- Document indicates that there will be a number of different uses by adults – there are no storage facilities for adult chairs or display units for exhibitions and sufficient adult toilets are not being provided.

- GDPR – no work display can be displayed in public places where people can be identified.
- 6.21 Travel Plan
- Proposed travel plan condition – the aim to reduce single occupancy trips from the site. Many of the parents will not fall within this scope. How will the plan be managed and monitored to achieve the targets?
- 6.22 Accuracy of plans
- Question the accuracy of the plotting of trees.
 - There are no existing levels – not possible to assess where the building will sit in relation to existing ground level – is cut and fill required?
 - No details have been submitted in relation to intended materials.
 - Elevations – basic information remains incorrect.
- 6.23 External lighting
- External lighting is now proposed but there is nothing to light the path from the car park to the building, will this be required?
- 6.24 Trees
- Question the accuracy of the tree information that has been submitted – surely an arboriculturalist should be putting forward a detailed assessment of how the proposals can be accommodated without causing harm to trees.
- 6.25 Character and appearance
- Amendments only change the fencing material and do not change the material of the building and therefore do not satisfy the criteria of a solution suggested by the landscape officer.
 - Proposals would still look like a large green plastic box in a Conservation Area.
 - Stunned by Conservation’s opinion in relation to the proposals. Any development should not cause any harm. The fact that Conservation are happy to support the development based on only “moderate harm” is ridiculous. Any other resident wishing to build such a structure on their own land within the conservation area would get very short shrift.
- 6.26 General
- Application should be refused on the basis that insufficient justification has been presented to show that there is no alternative site to accommodate this facility.

THIRD ROUND OF NOTIFICATION AFTER SUBMISSION OF AMENDED PLANS

- 6.27 **4 x further letters objecting to the proposals (at the time of writing). The following is a summary of additional matters raised that have not previously been summarised above.**

Impact on neighbour amenities

- Proposed air conditioning units presents additional noise issues to those living in adjacent houses. These should have been added to the original application along with decibel ratings, as they require planning consent in their own right in order that Environmental Health can assess their acceptability.
- The building would stand a full 2.1 metres above the top of the proposed fence adjacent to Okanagan. As a result amenities of the occupiers of Okanagan, Wattle Cottages and the wider Romsey Road setting would be affected. Overlooking would have a particular impact on garden of Okanagan.
- Light pollution from windows and security lights would impact on surrounding neighbour amenities.
- From a perspective of damage limitation, initially relieved that the application has been amended to show a close boarded fence along the boundary with Okanagan, however, now concerned that this is no where near adequate due to the raised height of the building which would have clear sightlines over the fence and would overlook the garden as well as the garden for Wattle Cottages and Nanjizel.

6.28 Impact on character and appearance/heritage

- Recent works to decimate the copse to the rear of the children's play area has left the site further exposed.
- With the proposed removal of the hedge and replacement with fence, proposal would be visible from Romsey Road across the gardens of Wattle Cottages and Okanagan. These views include listed buildings.
- Max and Min fence height shown on the drawings is misleading – find it hard to believe that the MUGA would not have been installed level. See no reason why the MUGA fence height cannot be shown on the plans to give a clear indication in relation to the height of the proposed building. Not doing so appears to be an attempt to deceive and disguise the real height of the building in relation to the MUGA fence.
- The building is now proposed to be at least a minimum of 0.6 metres above ground level. A building constructed of traditional materials with a shallow pitch roof could sit on the ground and lower the eaves by at least 1.10 metres – this would avoid the need for raised porch areas and ramps and would be a safer option for children. Ridge of a shallow pitched roof would be higher than the proposed flat roof but more appropriate in a conservation area and with the overall impression of a lower building with less visual impact.
- Disappointed and angered to read landscape and conservation comments that this design should be seen in context with the skate ramp and MUGA – this seems irresponsible and a dereliction of duty. Amongst objections to the MUGA were the concerns that it would set a precedent and they were clearly right. This ugly design will be overbearing and would further cheapen the area.

6.29 Ecology

- Proposed hedgerow removal would result in the loss of wildlife habitat – there does not appear any need or justification for its removal.

- What is the specification for the new hedge? At 0.3 metres wide it is hardly going to provide an equivalent replacement habitat. Surely the removal of the hedge will require a full Ecological survey by a qualified ecologist to establish that there are no protected species here.

6.30 Parking

- There is still no indication where the additional parking space for a disabled person will be located.
- Am doubtful that 50 cars can be accommodated at the site.

6.31 General

- Believe that the older generation should be leaving a positive legacy for the younger generation of people living in the village and not causing a long-term problem caused by short-term thinking.
- If permission is refused and a more suitable site proposed, the building should have architectural integrity and not just be the cheapest, easiest option.
- Amended proposals represent significant material changes to the original submission. These should not be considered as acceptable amendments as they were not included in the original submission. The scheme should be withdrawn, or refused, and a new application submitted with a correctly completed application form which accurately describes the scheme to be constructed to allow it to be accurately advertised to allow consultees and the public to make new and informed appraisals. A new application would also allow all the discrepancies between submitted documents, which have not been updated, to be rectified.
- Would be useful to have existing levels added to the drawing in order that the floor level of the building can be related to adjacent ground.
- If an application was submitted by a private individual, for this type of structure as a permanent structure for any other purpose in the Village, it would be rejected immediately by the Parish Council and the Local Authority – believe that this application, without strong Local Member support would also fail.
- Is there one policy for private individuals and another for Parish Councils and Borough Councillors?
- Upset that correspondence received from persons close to the application seem to assume with certainty that permission will be granted – cannot help but feel that a decision has already been made.

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)(RLP)

COM2 – Settlement hierarchy
COM9 – Community led development

E1 – High quality development in the Borough
E2 – Protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character of the Borough
E5 – Biodiversity
E7 – Water management
E8 – Pollution
E9 – Heritage
LHW1 – Public open space
LHW4 – Amenity
T1- Managing movement
T2 – Parking standards
CS1 – Community safety

7.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- Kings Somborne Conservation Policy (1987)

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning considerations are:

- The principle of development
- Community benefits
- Loss of public open space
- Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area
- Heritage
- Trees
- Impact on neighbour amenities
- Highways
- Flooding
- Ecology
- The planning balance

8.2 **The principle of development**

The site is situated within the settlement boundary of King's Somborne. As a result, in accordance with policy COM2 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016 (RLP) provided the proposals are in accordance with the other relevant policies contained within the RLP, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle.

8.3 Site Selection and alternative design

Third party comments received during the publicity period of the application are concerned that other sites within the locality, including the Scout Hut site, would be more suitable for the proposed development. To clarify, as the site is situated within a settlement boundary, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle (as discussed above). There is no requirement within policy COM2 of the RLP or within any of the other policies that relate to the proposed development that require the applicant to demonstrate that there are no other suitable sites available for the proposals in principle terms (alternative sites in relation to flooding is discussed at paragraph 8.63). Whilst there may be other sites within the locality that are

suitable and considered preferable by some of the commenters, this is not a matter that is material to the consideration of this planning application. In addition, in relation to the design of the building, commenters have suggested alternative designs. Alternative building designs may well be available for the proposed development however, again, this is not a material planning consideration. The application can only be determined on the basis on which it has been submitted.

8.4 Green Belt clarification

Many of the third party comments that have been received mention that the site is Green Belt. To clarify, the Borough does not include any areas of designated Green Belt and as such, the site is not designated as Green Belt.

8.5 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) progress

The Parish Council is progressing a NDP for King's Somborne, which, once adopted, would be given more weight in certain circumstances as the Borough wide Development Plan (the RLP) when determining a planning application. At present however, whilst the NDP gives a direction of travel, it is not at an advanced stage and has not been adopted. As such, in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF, the NDP cannot be given any significant weight at the present time.

8.6 **Community benefits**

The application has not been submitted under policy COM9 of the RLP (Community- Led Development). Nevertheless, the applicant has demonstrated that the proposals would result in some community benefits. Such benefits are material to the determination of the planning application and are discussed below.

8.7 Constraints of the existing arrangement and opportunities provided by the proposed development

At present, the existing pre-school is located in the Village Hall. The applicant confirms that this arrangement results in some disadvantages:

- Due to commitments to other users, the Village Hall is unable to extend the pre-school hours and as such, the pre-school, in its current location, would not be able to provide the 30 hours of childcare offered by the Government.
- The Village Hall does not have appropriate toilet facilities or office facilities for staff.
- The pre-school has to clear away all equipment from the hall each day to enable the evening use of the Village Hall.

8.8 The pre-school business plan shows that if it were able to offer the full 30 hours of funded childcare along with a more desirable environment for the children, numbers could be increased to cover all of the village and surrounding area's needs. In addition, the pre-school being located in the Village Hall prevents the village hall from expanding its community services. With the pre-school having its own building, the Village Hall would be able to provide space by a more diverse group of users, which would increase revenue.

- 8.9 The applicant states that a new community building, with the main user being the pre-school will provide the community with:
- A well-positioned pre-school facility which will cater for the needs of local parents for years to come.
 - A wider range of activities and services provided at the Village Hall where the main room would be available for alternative uses throughout the day.
 - A Village Hall which could enhance its income by new lettings of the main hall which would place the Village Hall in a financially more secure position for the future.
- 8.10 In support of the application, the chairman of the King's Somborne Village Hall Management Committee has written to confirm that the proposed development would allow the Village Hall to be *'utilised by more of the local Community for which it is intended offering such things as adult learning classes, computer instruction, cookery classes, village cinema, a Saturday morning cinema club, indoor sports and more amateur dramatics.'*
- 8.11 In relation to the need for pre-school childcare within the Ward, the Childcare Development and Business Officer at Hampshire County Council has stated that existing Early Years Education (EYE) in the Ward is running at approximately 80% capacity, with a waiting list due to further demand for consecutive early years education funded places and 30 hours extended entitlement. The Childcare Development and Business Officer has confirmed that the proposals would, due to the rural location, help local families in their choice of childcare provision and would provide a more flexible service to the community.
- 8.12 *Sustainability of the Primary School*
Comments on the proposals have been received from King's Somborne C of E school who are in support of the provision of a separate building for the pre-school (see paragraph 6.8) The school have stated that before the pre-school existed, pupil numbers fell significantly due to parents taking their children to other village pre-schools and then transitioning on to the associated primary school and that since the pre-school has been operating, the numbers of pupils coming into the school have increased and are continuing to do so year on year. The King's Somborne School Association (para 6.9) confirm that the preschool has developed excellent links to the primary school, underpinning the entry into Year R in particular. Both the school and the school association believe that the expansion of the pre-school would ensure the highest standard possible and help to meet the objectives the school association has to promote educational opportunities for children in the community. These comments clearly indicate that the provision of a pre-school in the village assists with the sustainability of the primary school and that the proposals, to provide a separate building to enable the pre-school to expand would ensure that the pre-school can help to sustain the school in the future. The comments go on to state that the primary school is *'a major part of the village community and we need to do everything possible to keep it viable for future generations'*.

8.13 The school association have also commented to confirm that the dual use of the building for the community e.g. for children's holiday clubs would provide additional facilities for children in the village that are not typically available without travel. They also note that the location of the proposal has an advantage in that it is immediately adjacent to the MUGA and recreation ground and is within 150 metres of the school via a footpath which ensures *'maximum convenience for families with children at both school and preschool and promotes the use of facilities such as the school library by the preschool, to mutual benefit'*.

8.14 It is clear that the proposed development would result in significant social benefits. These benefits must weigh heavily in favour of the proposals however, these benefits need to be weighed against other material planning considerations which are considered below. The planning balance is then considered at paragraph 8.83.

8.15 **Loss of public open space/sports pitch**

The proposals would result in the loss of a small area of open space between the MUGA and the public right of way (PROW). Policy LHW1 of the RLP only allows the loss of existing open space where:

"d) the space or facility is not needed to meet the full range of leisure and recreational needs of the local community;
e) the proposed development is for alternative open space, sport or recreation facility for which there is a need as to outweigh the loss; or
f) any space or facility to be lost would be replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality and be in a suitable location."

The Test Valley Borough Council 2012 Public Open Space Audit identifies the site area as an Informal Recreation Area, of which there is a 1.07 hectare surplus in the Parish. As a result, it is considered that the space is not needed to meet the full range of leisure and recreational needs of the local community. The proposals therefore comply with policy LHW1 of the RLP as it meets criteria (d). In addition, the proposals are considered to comply with criteria (f) as an alternative for the space has been provided. The application states that the area was previously used informally for junior ball sports, but that this use has been replaced and enhanced through the provision of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) which has been installed in an area directly adjacent to the site.

8.16 In addition to the above, Sport England have been consulted on the loss of the area as it was previously used as an informal sports pitch. Sport England have not objected and are satisfied that the proposals would not:

- have an adverse impact on the playing field; and
- affect any land capable of forming a playing pitch or part of a playing pitch.

- 8.17 As a result of the above, it is considered that the loss of part of the public open space to the development is acceptable and would accord with policy LHW1 of the RLP.
- 8.18 Notwithstanding the above, third parties are concerned that the proposals would result in the loss of an area that is used by children for kick-about and shooting practice and that the MUGA isn't used for this as some prefer to practice on grass. In response to this, the applicant has confirmed that there is adequate, alternative space for children to have a kick-about on the recreation ground and that space has been provided adjacent to the copse to the south. This replaces the space that is to be lost as a result of the proposed development.
- 8.19 **Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area**
The site is located within the existing recreation ground which is characterised by an area of open land set up as sports pitches. The site consists of a small area of grass between the existing multi-use games area (MUGA) and the north east boundary of the site, adjacent to John of Gaunt's Palace (scheduled monument). The site is immediately adjacent to the MUGA, half-pipe skating ramp and play area, the existing Village Hall is located to the north west and neighbouring residential dwellings are located to north, north east and north west, these dwellings being in a linear form along the A3057, Romsey Road. The site is surrounded by hedges and other vegetation. The area immediately surrounding the site is considered typical in its character of a recreation ground.
- 8.20 The building proposed is pre-fabricated modular steel building placed on concrete pads which would lift the building off the ground. The building would have a footprint of 9.6 x 15 metres and would have a flat roof. Decking and ramps would be provided around the building to allow for access.
- 8.21 Public views of the proposed building would be available from the adjacent public footpaths to the east/south/south west. The site would be screened by existing vegetation as the footpaths run further to the south, towards 'The Gorrings' and as such, you would only become aware of the building as you move closer towards that part of the recreation ground when heading north. The site is significantly screened from the public footpath which runs to the east, across John of Gaunt's Palace Scheduled Monument towards Church Road and from informal paths within the Scheduled Monument by existing boundary vegetation. The site is not visible from the A3057 (Romsey Road) due to the separation distance from the road and as it is screened by the existing built form of adjacent dwellings.
- 8.22 The proposed building is utilitarian in its appearance and is not considered to be of any particular architectural merit. Notwithstanding this, from the surrounding public vantage points mentioned above, the proposed building would be seen in context with surrounding utilitarian development, including the adjacent MUGA, skate ramp and play area. The building would also be seen in context with the adjacent village hall. As a result of this context and

subject to the final colour of the building being agreed, it is not considered that the proposals would result in any adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, it is considered that the proposals comply with policy E1 in this regard.

- 8.23 *Impact on landscape character and the character of the Public Right of Way*
Policy E2 of the RLP ensures the protection and enhancement of the landscape character of the Borough. Policy T1 of the RLP seeks to ensure that developments do not have an adverse impact on the character of the rights of way network.
- 8.24 The siting of the proposed building, adjacent to the PROW would result in a change to the character of both the PROW and the landscape character from the PROW. Currently, there are open landscape views across the recreation ground from the footpath. These open views would be lost from a small section of the PROW where it runs along the north east boundary of the site (approximately 30 metres). The provision of wire mesh fence on the PROW boundary (similar to the MUGA fence) would help the footpath feel less enclosed, however, the building itself would still result in the loss of open views across the recreation ground. The loss of open views from the footpath is a concern raised by the Council's landscape officer.
- 8.25 Whilst the proposals would result in a change to the character of the surrounding landscape/PROW, as this change would effect a relatively small section of the PROW immediately adjacent to the site, as open views of the surrounding landscape are already interrupted by existing structures, specifically the MUGA and as an existing section of footpath is already enclosed as it meets the A3057 pavement (the proposal would extend this already enclosed section), it is not considered that the change would result in an adverse impact on the overall landscape character or the character of the PROW.
- 8.26 The proposals would result in the removal of an existing hedgerow on the north west boundary of the site which is proposed to be replaced by a 1.8 metre high close-board fence with a replacement hedge planting in front. The existing hedge stands to the playing field side of a chain-link fence and is comprised of mixed native species. The Council's tree officer has looked at the hedge and has noted that it is of poor condition and, other than providing a soft vegetative screen between the chain-link fence and the playing field can see little intrinsic merit in this hedgerow remnant. The Council's landscape officer has also confirmed that they would have no objection to the removal of this hedge.
- 8.27 In order to retain a soft vegetative screen on the north west boundary after the removal of the hedge and to help soften the appearance of the proposed fence behind, a replacement hedge is shown on the submitted plans. The Council's landscape officer has confirmed that there is adequate space here for a hedge to establish. It is recommended that a condition be added to any permission requiring specific details of the hedge and other proposed landscaping to be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

8.28 As a result of the above, subject to a landscaping condition, it is not considered that the proposals would have any adverse impacts on the landscape character of the area or on the character of the PROW. The proposals are considered to comply with policies E2 and T1 in this regard.

8.29 **Heritage**

Impact on conservation area

The proposed building is located within the King's Somborne conservation area which was designated as such in September 1987. King's Somborne Conservation Policy was adopted at the same time. This document sets out the character of the village along with information on development management procedures and environmental enhancement. The King's Somborne Conservation Policy is a material consideration when determining this planning application.

8.30 The area around the recreation ground was brought into the conservation area boundary in 1987 as it was considered to be an important open area (page 1 of the Conservation Policy). The Conservation Policy document does not provide any specific comments on the contribution the recreation ground makes to the character of the conservation area as a whole and there is no other mention of the site within the document although it does show that there is an important hedgerow along the north east boundary of the site.

8.31 The existing character of the area surrounding the site is discussed above (para. 8.19) The proposed building, being utilitarian in its design is not considered to be of any particular architectural merit however, it is important to consider the existing character and context of the site to understand what, if any harm the proposals have on the character of the conservation area to understand what impact the proposal would have on this heritage asset.

8.32 As discussed above, the proposed building would be sited so that it would be seen in context with the recreation ground and associated structures. The building would be seen in context with the MUGA and its tall, wire fence, the skating half pipe and play area which, whilst some may not consider to be visually attractive, are wholly characteristic of structures you would expect to be sited within an area used for recreation. The proposed building would also be seen in context with the existing Village Hall, which, whilst more traditional in its appearance, is not considered to be of a design that enhances the character of the conservation area within which it sits. None of the structures in the immediate vicinity of the site are considered to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is noted that the hedge designated an important hedgerow in the Conservation Policy is to be retained.

8.33 As a result of the above, whilst not of a particularly attractive design, due to the context within which it will sit and its modest scale, it is not considered that the proposed building would result in any additional significant harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The harm that the building would have on the conservation area is therefore considered to be less than substantial, a view which is shared by the Council's conservation officer.

8.34 Policy E9 of the RLP states that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm would be considered against the public benefit of the proposals. The public benefits of the proposed development have been discussed in detail at paragraphs 8.6 – 8.14 of this report. It is considered that these public benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm that would result from the development. As such, it is considered that the proposals comply with policy E9 of the RLP.

8.35 Archaeology

The application is supported by a report on an archaeological watching brief (Cotswold Archaeology August 2018). The report states that there is clear evidence for a general background of prehistoric activity in the landscape around the site and approximately 60m to the east is the Scheduled Monument of John of Gaunt's Palace. The aim of the watching brief was to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed. An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising of two geotechnical test pits.

8.36 Despite the archaeological potential of the site, the watching brief identified no archaeological remains. As a result of this, it is not considered that the proposals would have any adverse impacts on archaeology. The County archaeologist has confirmed no objections on this basis.

8.37 Listed buildings

There are various listed buildings along Romsey Road, due to the separation distances between these buildings and the site, it is considered that the proposals would not result in their settings being adversely affected.

8.38 Scheduled monument

The site is adjacent to John of Gaunt's Palace to the north east which is designated as an ancient monument. The site is separated from the monument by an existing vegetative boundary and there would be limited visual connection from the monument to the proposed site. In addition, due to the nature of the building, there would be limited ground disturbance and as above, no archaeological remains were found during the watching brief. As a result, it is not considered that the proposals would result in any adverse impacts on the scheduled monument. Historic England has confirmed that they have no objections to the proposed development.

8.39 Heritage summary

As a result of the above, it is considered that the proposals would sustain the significance of surrounding listed buildings, surrounding archaeology and the adjacent scheduled monument. It is considered that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is considered that the public benefit arising from the scheme would outweigh this harm. As a result, the proposals are considered to comply with policy E9 of the RLP.

8.40 **Trees**

The application is supported by a tree statement which details the trees in the vicinity of the site. The details include species, root protection areas, and canopy sizes and these are shown in context with the proposed development.

8.41 The original plans submitted with the application showed that the footpath, which currently consists of grass/mud track to be laid with hardstanding. The Council's tree officer was concerned about the impact this would have on adjacent trees, particularly the roots of those on the north west boundary of the site. The applicant has since submitted amended plans confirming that the proposals would no longer involve laying hardstanding along the route of the footpath. They have confirmed that no changes are to be made to the surfacing of the footpath. The Council's tree officer has since confirmed no objections to the proposals on this basis, subject to a condition requiring the applicant to confirm where service routes are intended to be located. It is recommended that such a condition is added to any permission.

8.42 Concerns have been raised in relation to two Birch trees (one of which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)) adjacent to the access of the site and the impact bringing the pre-fabricated building onto the site would have on these trees. The applicant has confirmed that the supplier of the building has visited the site and it would be their view that no pruning would be required to bring the building onto the site and that most overhanging material could be eased back by hand. The branches of an Ash tree set further into the site are higher than the building/lorry combination. In response to this, the Council's tree officer has noted this additional information and has confirmed that the trees are protected by virtue of their location in the conservation area, or through a TPO and that an advisory note should be added to any permission. This note should advise that the trees are protected and if any works are needed to allow access to the site, that a tree works application and/or notice will need to be submitted and consented before works to the trees can be undertaken.

8.43 Subject to the condition and note mentioned above, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any adverse impacts on trees. The proposals are considered to comply with policy E2 of the RLP in this regard.

8.44 **Impact on neighbour amenities**

Overlooking, overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light

It is noted that the proposed building, due to it being raised above the existing ground level of the site, would be visible from adjacent neighbouring dwellings and associated gardens, specifically those dwellings at Okanagan, Wattle Cottages, Nanijzel and Thyme. However, the separation between the site and these neighbours would be such that it is not considered that the proposals would result in any adverse overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing or overlooking impacts on the amenities of the occupiers of these neighbouring dwellings. Approximate separation distances are as follows:

- Between the rear elevation of Okanagan and the boundary to the site: approximately 55 metres.
- Between the south east side elevation of 2 Wattle Cottages and the boundary to the site: approximately 35 metres.
- Between the rear elevation of Naniijzel and the boundary to the site: approximately: 32.5 metres.
- Between the rear elevation of Thyme and the boundary to the site: approximately 35 metres.

It should be noted that the decking and building itself would be sited a further 2.5 – 5 metres (approx.) from the boundary.

- 8.45 The proposed building would be located directly adjacent to the boundary with a parcel of land that is understood to be owned and associated with the adjacent property at Okanagan. The occupier of this dwelling has raised concerns that the proposal would result in adverse impacts on this piece of land, particularly in terms of loss of privacy/overlooking. Currently this land is significantly overgrown, is unkempt and unmanaged appearance. There is no evidence from a site visit to the land, that the area is used as part of the private garden for Okanagan, with the domestic garden activity of this property taking place immediately to the rear of the dwelling, approximately 30 metres from the boundary with the site.
- 8.46 The proposals would include windows and an access ramp/decking which would provide views directly towards the adjacent land at a distance of approximately 2.5 metres (ramp/decking) and approximately 5 metres (windows) from the boundary. Due to the level that the proposed building would be positioned at, views would be available over the proposed fence which is proposed to be erected on the boundary. However, it is not considered that views into this land would have an adverse impact on the amenities of the occupiers of Okanagan. The windows are proposed to be obscurely glazed and these, and the proposed ramp/decking, would be located a significant distance from the area being used as private garden for this property (see above paragraph).
- 8.47 As a result of the above, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any adverse impacts on the amenities of the occupiers of Okanagan.
- 8.48 The occupier of Okanagan has requested that the applicant raise the height of the proposed fence to be erected on the boundary from 1.8 metres to 2 metres. Raising the height of the fence by 0.2 metres would not materially affect the impact the proposal would have on this property (as discussed above). As such, whilst the applicant has agreed by email to raise the height of the fence to 2 metres, it is not considered necessary in planning terms for this to be secured as part of any permission. It is considered that a condition securing such an amendment would not meet the tests set out in at paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

8.49 Noise

The proposed external play area would be located to the south east of the building. It would be separated from existing neighbouring dwellings by the proposed building itself and access to the north east and north west area around the building would be restricted by the provision of a fence/gate. Based on the existing, recreational use of the site and due to the separation between the play area and surrounding residential dwellings, it is not considered that this part of the proposals would result in any adverse impacts on residential amenities in terms of noise.

8.50 The proposals include the provision of air conditioning units on the north east elevation of the building. The location of these units is such that they would not directly face neighbouring dwellings and would be at an appropriate separation from them. Notwithstanding this, it is recommended that a condition be added to any permission requiring details of the final location/specification of the units to ensure that they would not result in any adverse impacts on surrounding neighbouring dwellings.

8.51 In relation to the use of the building itself, particularly as a community building, the applicant has confirmed that the proposed community use would likely take place on occasional evenings, weekends and during school holidays. The applicant has confirmed that when in use by the community, the pre-school's equipment, although moved to the sides and storage areas would still be present and that this would limit potential community uses to activities by children of similar ages or sedentary activities by adults. As a result of this and considering the existing, recreational use of the site, it is not considered that the use of the proposed building would result in any adverse noise impacts on surrounding neighbouring dwellings.

8.52 Notwithstanding the above, if the use of the building intensifies in the future, i.e. through the sale of alcohol, then potential impacts on surrounding amenities would be covered by the licensing regime.

8.53 Light

The proposal shows that external lights will be provided on north east and north west corners of the building directly adjacent to the boundary. To ensure that these lights would not result in any adverse impacts on the amenities of adjacent neighbours, it is recommended that any permission include a condition requiring the applicant to submit further details/specification of these lights for the consideration of the local planning authority.

8.54 Neighbour amenity summary

As a result of the above, subject to conditions controlling the installation of the air conditioning units and lighting, it is not considered that the proposals would result in any adverse impacts on neighbour amenities. The proposals are considered to comply with policies LHW4 and E8 of the RLP.

8.55 Highways

Parking

The parking standards set out at Annex G of the RLP require a pre-school to have 1.5 spaces per 2 full time staff and 1 space per 4 children for drop off and collection. A community hall is required to have a minimum of 1 space per 10sqm metres of open hall. Therefore, if used as a pre-school, there would be a requirement for the provision of 11 car parking spaces. If used as a community building, there would be a requirement for 8.5 spaces.

8.56 Information submitted with the application confirms that the existing Village Hall car park has the capacity for 50 parking bays. The applicant also confirms that the requirement for the existing Village Hall based on its floor area, would be 22 spaces. The requirement for the playing fields would be 8.4 spaces (calculated on the area of the biggest pitch at 0.7 hectares– as football/cricket pitches overlap it is not possible to play both sports at the same time) . As a result, whether the proposed building is used as a pre-school or a community building, the existing car park is considered to provide enough spaces for the proposed development according to the RLP parking standards.

8.57 In addition to the above, the applicant has undertaken a two week survey of utilisation of the car park. The results of this survey shows that the existing car park at the site is currently under utilised and that this reflects that many users walk to the facilities.

8.58 As a result of the above, it is considered that the proposals would be provided with a sufficient parking. The highways officer at Hampshire County Council agrees that the information submitted with the application sufficiently demonstrates that the existing car park has sufficient spare capacity to cater for any expected demand. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy T2 of the RLP.

8.59 Traffic generation

Considering the modest size of the building and considering that the pre-school is already accommodated within the Village Hall complex, it is not considered that the proposals would result in a material increase in the amount of vehicular trips to and from the site. As such, it is not considered that the proposals would result in an increase in traffic that would have an adverse impact on highway safety. The highways officer has confirmed no objections to the proposals in this regard. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy T1 of the RLP.

8.60 Public Right of Way (PROW)

The proposed development would take place adjacent to a PROW which runs adjacent to the hedge on the north east side of the site. The submitted plans show that the PROW is to be retained in accordance with policy T1 of the RLP. The impact the proposed development would have on the character of the PROW is discussed at paragraph 8.23 of this report.

8.61 Other highway matters

There are concerns about the potential for parking on the A3057 opposite Frogmore Lane and users of the community/pre-school building accessing the site via the footpath that runs between Wattle Cottages and Nanjizel. The block plans submitted with the application show that the proposals will not allow access to the building directly from the adjacent footpath. The proposal will only be able to be accessed from the existing vehicular accesses between The Croft and Bramar and adjacent to Field View. As such, people would not have direct access to the building if they parked on the A3057 and therefore the use of the existing car park, providing off street car parking would be more convenient. The layout of the development would discourage parking on the A3057.

8.62 The highways officer has recommended that a condition be added to any permission requiring the submission of a travel plan which should include measures to improve and encourage the use of sustainable transport in accordance with policy T1 of the RLP. Such a condition is included in the recommendation.

8.63 **Flooding and drainage**

The site is situated in Flood Zone 2 and as such is at medium risk of flooding. The proposal would fall within a 'More Vulnerable' use as determined within the NPPG. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA, RCP Architecture and Civil Engineering, October 2018) and Sequential Test (Issue 1, 3 February 2019).

8.64 Flood Risk

The submitted FRA assesses the minimum required finished floor level of the building taking into account fluvial, surface and groundwater flood risk at the site. The proposals show that the building would be set 600mm above the 1 in 1000year flood level which equates to a level of 34.31mAOD. The FRA determines that this would ensure that the development proposals would mitigate the risk of flooding from the 1 in 100 year plus climate change fluvial flood event.

8.65 With regards to flood water storage (to ensure that the proposals would not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere), the proposals would not raise any existing ground levels and the proposed modular building would be set above the existing ground levels. As such, potential flood volume storage provided within this part of the site should not be displaced elsewhere.

8.66 Whilst the above information seeks to demonstrate that the proposals would not increase flood risk elsewhere, compliance with the government's sequential approach to development in flood risk areas also needs to be demonstrated.

8.67 Sequential Test

The application is supported by a Sequential Test document which has been prepared by the applicant. This details available sites for the proposed development within a search area agreed by the Local Planning Authority (in accordance with guidance within the NPPF and NPPG). In this instance, it was considered important that the proposal be sustainably located in relation to existing village facilities and as such, it was agreed that the search area should include sites within 500m walking distance from other local facilities including the school and recreation ground.

8.68 The Sequential Test lists potentially suitable and sequentially preferable sites for the proposed development within the search area. A total of 15 alternative sites for the proposed development were identified (shortlisted from an original 49 alternative sites) within the search area, however, these have been discounted for various reasons, including:

- Site is potential alternative allotment site
- Site does not have vehicular access and no footpath/pavement connections
- Site is in active, community use
- Site is consecrated land, in curtilage of listed building
- Site is within the Scheduled Monument
- Land to be nominated as open space
- Land used by Primary School for secure grassed play area
- Land not available (in private ownership)
- Site not of a size that could accommodate the proposed building.

No other sites were identified within the search area that would be available and suitable for the proposal.

8.69 Following assessment of potential sites within the agreed search area, it is considered that the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated that it is not possible to locate the proposed development in a flood zone with a lower probability of flooding. As such, the proposed development is considered to have passed the Sequential Test.

8.70 According to the NPPG, due to the 'More Vulnerable' classification of the proposed development and due to the siting in Flood Zone 2, an Exception Test need not be undertaken in this instance.

8.71 Flooding summary

As a result of the above, it is considered that sufficient information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that the Sequential Test can be passed. It is also considered that information submitted in support of the application adequately demonstrates that the proposals are appropriately flood resilient and resistant in accordance with the NPPF. As such, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of flooding and comply with the guidance set out in the NPPF, NPPG and complies with policy E7 of the RLP.

8.72 Drainage

The submitted FRA includes details on the proposed drainage strategy for the development. With regards to foul water drainage, it is proposed to discharge to the existing public sewer network. In relation to surface water, the FRA details that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) would be used.

8.73 Ground investigations at the site indicate that the underlying strata consists of sand and gravel and as such, a shallow SuDs infiltration technique is proposed to discharge the surface water run-off. This aims to replicate the existing greenfield baseline hydrology as closely as possible and would take the form of an infiltration blanket located to the south east of the proposed building. The FRA states that this would represent betterment to the sites existing greenfield run-off rates.

8.74 It is considered that the information submitted with the application satisfactorily demonstrates that the development can be drained. Further, more technical information relating to drainage will be required under a Building Regulation application.

8.75 As a result of the above, it is considered that the proposals would comply with policy E7 in relation to drainage.

8.76 **Ecology**

The Council's ecologist when considering the proposed lighting, is of the view that, due to the nature of the site (amenity grassland with adjacent hedgerow habitat), the proposals would not result in any adverse impact to commuting and foraging bats.

8.77 The Council's ecologist acknowledges that the site is in close proximity to hedgerow that may support nesting birds and has advised that works within 5 metres of the hedgerow should be carried out outside of the bird nesting season. An informative will be added to any permission advising the applicant of their responsibilities in relation to nesting birds.

8.78 The ecologist has recommended that habitat features be incorporated into the proposed development. Such a requirement can be secured through a condition on any permission.

8.79 As a result of the above, subject to conditions, it is not considered that the proposals would result in any adverse impacts on ecology. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy E5 of the RLP.

8.80 Comments from third parties are concerned that the removal of the hedge (on the north west boundary) would result in loss of potential habitat for protected species. The Council's ecologist has been consulted on the amended plans which show the removal of this hedge. The ecologist has not raised any concerns that the hedge is suitable for protected species, other than nesting birds. The Council's ecologist has stated that a replacement hedge should be planted with a mixture of native species and this can be controlled by a condition on any permission.

8.81 Other matters

Safety

Policy CS1 of the RLP states that development will be permitted provided it *'delivers safe, accessible and liveable environments and that the design takes account of the need to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour'*. The proposal will result in an area of the adjacent PROW becoming more enclosed and there are concerns that this would impact on the safety of the PROW. A relatively small section of the footpath would become more enclosed as a result of the siting of the proposed building. However, the enclosure would be mitigated by the provision of an open mesh fence which would allow some permeability through the site (the proposed building itself would be set back approximately 2.3 metres from the footpath). In addition, the proposed building would include windows facing onto the footpath which would provide surveillance over the footpath. Lighting is also proposed to be provided towards the footpath.

8.82 As a result of the above, it is not considered that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on community safety. The proposals are considered to comply with policy CS1 of the RLP in this regard.

8.83 The planning balance

The proposed development, being located in the settlement boundary of King's Somborne is considered acceptable in principle provided that it complies with the other relevant policies contained within the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016 (RLP).

8.84 Due to its utilitarian design, it is considered that the proposed building would result in a less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area. The harm identified weighs against the granting of planning permission for the proposals. How much weight this is afforded is discussed below.

8.85 In accordance with E9 of the RLP, the less than substantial harm to the conservation area needs to be considered against the public benefits of the scheme. As discussed at paragraphs 8.6-8.14, the proposed development would offer significant social benefits to the surrounding community. These benefits are given significant weight in the officer recommendation of this application and are considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm identified. In addition, subject to conditions, the proposals would not result in any adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, trees, neighbour amenities, highways, flooding, drainage, ecology and the provision of public open space.

8.86 As a result of the above, when considering the planning balance, it is considered that the benefits of the proposed development would significantly outweigh identified harm. The proposals are recommended for permission on this basis.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposals are considered acceptable in principle and, subject to conditions, would not result in any adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, trees, neighbour amenities, highways, flooding, drainage, ecology and the provision of public open space. It is considered that the social benefits arising from the proposed development would significantly outweigh the less than substantial harm identified in relation to the character of the conservation area. The proposals are recommended for permission on this basis.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

PERMISSION subject to:

1. **The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission.**
Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. **The building hereby permitted shall not be brought onto the site until samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of all external surfaces hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**
Reason: To ensure the development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interest of visual amenities in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1.
3. **The building hereby permitted shall not be brought on to the site until full details of hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include-where appropriate: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; hard surfacing materials; minor artefacts and structures. Soft landscape details shall include: planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**
Reason: To improve the appearance of the site and enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area and to enhance biodiversity in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policies E1, E2 and E5.
4. **The building hereby permitted shall not be brought on to the site until a schedule of landscape management and maintenance for a minimum period of 5 years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas and an implementation programme. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by proper maintenance of existing and new landscape features as an improvement of the appearance of the site and to enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1 and E2.

- 5. All service routes, drain runs, soakaways or excavations in connection with the development hereby permitted shall remain wholly outside the root protection areas of adjacent trees as shown in document KS 16 (Issue 2), 'Tree Statement'.**

Reason: To ensure the avoidance of damage to existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan policy E2.

- 6. The building hereby permitted shall not be brought on to the site until details of proposed biodiversity enhancements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include an implementation schedule and details of any required maintenance. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To enhance biodiversity at the site in accordance with policy E5 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016.

- 7. Within the first 3 months of any part of the development being brought into use a travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The travel plan shall include measures to improve and encourage the use of sustainable transport. The travel plan shall include details of when these measures will be introduced. To support the promotion of the use of sustainable modes the travel plan shall also include: how the travel plan will be managed; targets aimed at lowering car use, particularly single occupancy trips from/to the site; a program for monitoring the travel plan and its progress and how the travel plan and its objective of encouraging the use of sustainable transport will be implemented. The approved travel plan shall thereafter be retained throughout the lifetime of the development.**

Reason: To comply with sustainability objectives in accordance with policy T1 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016.

- 8. Details of all external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to first installing any such lighting. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area and/or in the interests of road safety in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E8.

- 9. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no external plant or equipment (including air conditioning units) shall be installed until full details of the plant or equipment including their location have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external plant or equipment shall installed in**

accordance with the approved details and any measures required by the Local Planning Authority to minimise noise from the plant or equipment shall be completed prior to the same being brought into use.

Note - Information to be submitted shall include a detailed specification of the plant to be installed including an expected noise level at 1m from the equipment, the exact location of the proposed plant, the distance(s) to the nearest noise sensitive property including gardens, the hours of use and any appropriate remedial measures to reduce the potential for noise, likely to affect nearby residential properties at any time. The applicant should be aware that following the submission of the information, the LPA may require further acoustic control measures to be implemented.

Reason: In the interest of the amenities in the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E8.

- 10. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers:**

AJ-01-KS04 P01 - OS Map

AJ-01-KS05 P05 - Block Plan

AJ-01-KS06 P04 - Proposed Elevations - Alternative

AJ-01-KS07 P05 - Proposed Plan

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

Notes to applicant:

- 1. In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.**
- 2. The proposed development would be in close proximity to and involve the removal of hedgerow that may support nesting birds. Nesting Birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird; to take, damage or destroy any nest while it is in use or being built or to take or destroy a wild bird's egg. It is highly advisable to carry out the hedge removal/building works within 5 metres of any hedgerow outside of the bird nesting season, which is generally considered as extending from March to the end of August, although may extend longer depending on local conditions. If there is absolutely no alternative to doing the work during this period then a thorough, careful and quiet examination of the vegetation within 5 metres of the works must be carried out before work starts. If occupied nests are present then work must stop and building work recommence once the nest becomes unoccupied of its own accord.**

- 3. Trees adjacent to the access to the site from the A3057 Romsey Road are protected by virtue of their location in the conservation area or by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). It is advised that any tree works required to allow access to bring the building onto the site would need to form part of tree works application and/or notice which would need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Such applications can take up to 6-8 weeks to be considered.**
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