

WEST HORSLEY PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 September at 7.30pm in the Rubin Room, West Horsley Village Hall**

Present Cllr Murray, Cllr King, Cllr Mattock, Cllr Walker, Deputy Clerk K Young, 1 resident
(Cllr King joined the meeting at 7.40pm by prior arrangement)

26.PE.120 **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Rogers

26.PE.121 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr King in respect of 26.PE.124b) 26/P/01040 Green Mead, who was excluded from discussion and decision.

26.PE.122 **Minutes of the last Planning Committee Meeting** held 17 August 2026 were approved and signed.
Public Forum: Resident addressed Councillors regarding item 26.PE.124b. Concerns were raised regarding the position of the a/c unit and intrusive noise of the unit which is more persistent, frequent and louder than needed.

26.PE.123 **Significant Correspondence** (not covered by other Agenda items):

- Surrey County Council has given notice of its intention to commence preparation of the **Minerals and Waste Local Plan** under the Government's new plan-making system which sets the strategic vision and objectives, spatial strategies and planning policies to provide for a sufficient supply of minerals and enough facilities to manage Surrey's waste.
- **Housing Needs Survey:** Surrey Community Action are currently compiling the report but have advised that there were 346 responses, a return rate of 25.3%. Whilst the report is awaited, the Parish Council would like to thank all residents who took the time to complete the survey and assist in this important piece of work for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **The New National Planning Policy Framework** has been published and is in force with immediate effect. An important change is the removal of Footnote 7 which is significant because this previously identified the specific policies that provide a clear reason for refusing development under the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It listed constraints such as Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), heritage assets, areas at risk of flooding, and other protected designations. This effectively changes how those protections are referenced and applied in planning decisions.
- **GBC are undertaking a scoping consultation**, closing 14 October, which seeks views on the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the borough and will help inform the direction of the Local Plan as it develops. It is one of the Council's most important document setting out a vision for how Guildford borough should grow and develop to 2045, guiding decisions on housing, employment, infrastructure, community facilities, the environment and heritage. It was agreed the consultation will be considered by the Planning Committee and suggested responses circulated to Full Council before submission.
- The **Roads Meeting on 24 September** has been **postponed** – further details to follow.

26.PE.124 **Consideration of applications received since the planning committee meeting** held on 17 August:

a) **Application under Section 73 of the Town and Planning Act 1990: 26/P/01077: Tyrellswood, Shere Road**

WHPC Response: No objection

Signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record: _____

Date: _____

- b) **Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning: 26/P/01040: Green Mead, Silkmore Lane**

WHPC Response: Objection to a/c unit only

- c) **Variation of Conditions (retrospective): 26/P/01074: Land adjacent to Orchard Cottage, Greta Bank**

WHPC Response: No objection

- d) **Planning Application: 26/P/01122: 125 East Lane**

WHPC Response: No objection

26.PE.125 **Consideration of Decisions Reported by Guildford Borough Council** between 25 July and 27 August (Appendix 1) Noted

26.PE.126 **Consideration of Appeals Open and Closed** as of 27 August 2026 (Appendix 1) Noted

26.PE.127 **Local Plan Update:**

- a) Allocated Site A37 – Land to the West of West Horsley: Community noticeboard now relocated to the front of the community sports hall for use by local residents.
- b) Allocated Site A39 – Land to the North of West Horsley: Cllr Murray, Deputy Clerk and Bor Cllr Young attended an online meeting with representatives from Persimmon, the developers for this approved site. Ground clearance of the site is expected to commence this month. Contact details for the site manager will be on a notice at the main entrance of the site if there are any issues e.g. excess mud on the road.
- c) Allocated Site A38 – Land near Horsley Railway Station, Ockham Road North, East Horsley: Still awaiting confirmation all drainage works have been completed. This will be raised again at the Eastern Villages Flood Forum on 25 September.

26.PE.128 **Special Projects Update:**

- a) Site A35 – Land of Former Wisley Airfield: Taylor Wimpey's Community Update Newsletter is attached as Appendix 3 on the PC's Planning Committee Meeting website page.
- b) Site A25 – Gosden Hill Farm, Merrow Lane, Guildford GU4: Stakeholders continue to submit documents, the most recent are from Active Travel England and Network Rail, who have listed improvements to be made to both Clandon and London Road (Guildford) Stations.

26.PE.129 **To agree any requirement for external advice in relation to applications considered.** None

26.PE.130 **To consider and agree response to NALC Survey on Neighbourhood Plans** (Appendix 2) Responses were agreed and are included in an updated Appendix 2 on the PC's Planning Committee Meeting website page.

26.PE.131 **Date of the Next Meeting Agreed:** Thursday 24 September at 7.30pm in the Rubin Room, West Horsley Village Hall.

Meeting Closed: 8.15pm

Appendices and objection responses are available on the WHPC website: www.westhorsley-pc.gov.uk
Electronic or hard copies can be requested from the Deputy Clerk at: deputyclerk@westhorsley-pc.gov.uk

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Objections and/or Comments submitted by the Parish Council in response to the following applications. Please note that there may be a delay in these responses being uploaded to the GBC Planning Portal.

26.PE.124 b) Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning: 26/P/01040: Green Mead, Silkmore Lane

Summary

West Horsley Parish Council objects to application 26/P/01040 in respect of the wall-mounted air conditioning (AC) unit shown on the side (north-west) elevation of Green Mead. The Parish Council does not object to the rooflight or window changes, and it accepts the principle of an ASHP being relocated where amenity is protected.

The objection is limited to the AC unit for the reasons set out below. In summary, the AC unit as proposed:

1. Is sited on the side elevation within a narrow alleyway between Green Mead and the neighbouring dwelling (Windrush), which is the worst possible location in acoustic terms;
2. Is wall-hung at first-floor level, so its noise projects directly at habitable-room windows and outdoor amenity space at Windrush;
3. Has already been installed and is generating persistent noise complaints from the adjoining occupier, confirming that the position and specification proposed are unacceptable in practice, not just in theory;
4. Conflicts with Policy D5 (Protection of Amenity), Policy D11 (Noise Impacts) and Policy D15 (Climate Change Adaptation cooling hierarchy) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies (LPDMP, 2023).

The Parish Council asks the Local Planning Authority either to refuse the application in respect of the AC unit, or to permit it only subject to conditions that require (i) relocation away from the alleyway boundary with Windrush, (ii) full acoustic enclosure and attenuation, and (iii) a BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 verification report demonstrating a rating level of at least 5 dB below the existing background level at 1 m external to the nearest noise-sensitive premises.

The proposal on the site:

The Section 73 Planning Statement dated 30 July 2026 by Warren Rosing Architects (Ref: 2127/3.1/PS05) confirms that the changes sought under this application include:

AC unit added to the side elevation to satisfy Part O (Overheating) under the building regulations.

The Proposed Site Plan and the Proposed North-West Elevation drawing show the AC unit as a **wall-hung unit** fixed to the side (NW) elevation of the dwelling, at first-floor level, within the narrow gap between Green Mead and the boundary shared with Windrush to the north-west. That is the same narrow alleyway used for waste and recycling access.

The application form itself identifies the installed unit as the **Mitsubishi Electric MXZ-6F122VF**, described by the applicant as “a high performance unit ... chosen with very low noise levels”. The manufacturer’s published data for this outdoor condenser is:

- Sound pressure level 55 dB(A) in cooling mode and 57 dB(A) in heating mode, measured at 1 m;
- Sound power level 69 dB(A);
- A 12.2 kW cooling / 14.0 kW heating six-port multi-split outdoor unit, 950 × 330 × 1,048 mm, 87 kg.

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These are typical mid-range noise figures for a domestic multi-split condenser of this capacity, not “very low”. The “silent” or “low” noise modes marketed for this product line apply to the indoor wall units, not to the outdoor condenser installed in the alleyway. The applicant has submitted no acoustic calculation, correction, or verification derived from these manufacturer values, and no BS 4142 rating-level assessment against the background level at Windrush has been provided.

Two facts are already on the case file and are not in dispute:

- The AC unit and the relocated ASHP are already installed and operational. This is confirmed by the Environmental Health Officer’s consultee response dated 19 August 2026, which records that the AC unit has been in place and operational since December 2025 and that a noise complaint has already been received about it.
- The adjoining owner has submitted a public objection dated 4 September 2026 describing intrusive, frequent and persistent noise from the AC unit affecting the front and rear gardens, the rear terrace, the front entrance, the conservatory, and a first-floor bedroom whose window can no longer be opened without disturbance.

The application is therefore being determined against a real, evidenced noise impact, not a theoretical one.

Grounds of objection

1. The position of the AC unit in the alleyway is unacceptable in principle

The AC unit is sited on the north-west side elevation, in the narrow alleyway between Green Mead and Windrush. This is a confined, hard-surfaced, largely enclosed corridor between two buildings. Alleyways of this kind act as an acoustic funnel: reflections from parallel walls and the boundary elevate perceived sound levels at the neighbouring windows and garden well above what the unit’s free-field rating would suggest.

Placing external mechanical plant in such a location is the worst option available on this plot. The site is a detached dwelling with side, front and rear elevations available and, on the plans submitted, the applicant has already demonstrated that an alternative location exists on the opposite side of the house (the ASHP has been moved to that side under the same application). There is no functional justification for keeping the AC unit in the alleyway.

2. Wall-mounted at first-floor level, directly opposite a habitable-room window

The Proposed North-West Elevation drawing shows the unit as “wall hung ac unit” at first-floor level. The public objection from the immediately adjoining occupier states that the unit sits in very close proximity to a first-floor bedroom window on the side elevation of the neighbouring property, and that the bedroom window cannot be opened without intrusive noise entering the room.

A wall-mounted, first-floor-level position transmits noise horizontally straight into the neighbouring habitable rooms and outdoor amenity space. It also structure-borne couples vibration into the wall on which it is mounted. This is a materially worse arrangement than a ground-mounted, screened unit sited on a different elevation.

3. Conflict with Guildford Local Plan Policy D5 (Protection of Amenity)

Policy D5(1) of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies (2023) requires that:

Development proposals are required to avoid having an unacceptable impact on the living environment of existing residential properties ... in terms of: ... (e) Noise and vibration ...

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The AC unit as proposed and installed is already causing an unacceptable impact on the living environment of the neighbouring property, as evidenced by the neighbour's dated and timed recordings, the noise complaint on file, and the EHO's consultee response acknowledging that complaint. This is a straightforward conflict with Policy D5.

4. Conflict with Policy D11 (Noise Impacts)

Under Policy D11 the applicant is the "agent of change" and is responsible for identifying all potential Observed Adverse Effect Levels of noise emanating from the development, and for implementing prevention, avoidance and/or mitigation measures. No Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted with this Section 73 application, despite:

- the AC unit being a noise-generating item of plant with a manufacturer-declared sound pressure of 55–57 dB(A) at 1 m and a sound power of 69 dB(A)
- the immediately adjoining dwelling being a noise-sensitive receptor within a few metres, with the unit wall-hung at first-floor level and projecting into a hard-surfaced alleyway that will further raise levels at the neighbouring façade;
- a documented complaint having already been received; and
- the rural background level in this part of West Horsley being very low, which materially reduces the acceptable rating level under BS 4142.

The applicant's assertion on the application form that this is a "high performance unit ... chosen with very low noise levels" is not evidenced. The MXZ-6F122VF is a standard 12 kW six-port multi-split condenser and its published figures are mid-range for its class. Guildford LPDMP Table D11b sets an internal target of 30 dB LAeq (8 hr) in bedrooms at night. A 55–57 dB(A) source mounted at first-floor level in a narrow reflective alleyway a few metres from Windrush's habitable rooms is well capable of exceeding that target once distance correction, façade reflection and any BS 4142 character penalty are applied. Without a Noise Impact Assessment, that gap between the applicant's assertion and the manufacturer's own data is unresolved.

Policy D11(7) is explicit:

Where there will be an unacceptable adverse effect on sensitive receptors which cannot be adequately prevented, avoided, and/or mitigated, the planning application will be refused.

In the absence of a Noise Impact Assessment demonstrating compliance, the Parish Council considers that the AC unit element of the application fails Policy D11.

5. Conflict with Policy D15 (Climate Change Adaptation and the cooling hierarchy)

Policy D15 requires new buildings to be designed and constructed to provide for comfort, health and wellbeing, and to "incorporate passive heat control measures, and the exclusion of conventional air conditioning, in line with the cooling hierarchy." The cooling hierarchy at paragraph 5.231 places passive design first, passive/natural cooling second, mechanical ventilation third, and active cooling systems such as air conditioning fourth and last. Paragraph 5.233 states that mechanical cooling should be "an option of last resort" and, where applied, "should be localised to only the parts of the building that are likely to overheat."

The Planning Statement offers no evidence that the cooling hierarchy has been applied. There is no explanation of what passive measures were considered, why the two side windows to the first-floor bathrooms are now being omitted (a change that reduces natural cross-ventilation), why mechanical ventilation was ruled out, or why the AC

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unit's location on the alleyway elevation is the only workable option. Simply stating that the unit is required to satisfy Part O of the Building Regulations is not sufficient. Part O compliance can typically be achieved through a combination of shading, glazing specification, opening area and purge ventilation before active cooling is added.

6. West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan and rural character

West Horsley is a designated rural village with a very low ambient background noise level, which the West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan 2016–2033 seeks to protect through its emphasis on the distinctive rural character of the Parish. A continuously operating item of mechanical plant, sited to project noise into an adjoining garden and habitable room, is out of character with the acoustic environment the Neighbourhood Plan is intended to preserve.

The Parish Council asks that the application, in respect of the AC unit only, is either refused or permitted only subject to conditions that jointly deliver the following outcomes:

1. **Relocation.** The AC unit is relocated off the north-west side elevation and away from the alleyway boundary with Windrush. A central or opposite-side position, at ground level, would be materially preferable and is demonstrably feasible (the ASHP has been moved to the opposite side under this same application).
2. **Enclosure and attenuation.** The unit is enclosed within a purpose-designed acoustic housing and fitted with attenuation to the manufacturer's specification, with details submitted to and approved by the LPA before continued use.
3. **BS 4142 verification, adopting the EHO's advised standard.** A noise condition is imposed in the terms already advised by the Council's Environmental Health Officer in the consultee response dated 19 August 2026:

The A/C unit installed in connection with the carrying out of this permission shall be so enclosed and/or attenuated so that the rating level of noise emitted shall be 5dB LAeq below the existing background level when measured according to British Standard BS4142:2014+A1:2019, at a point one metre external to the nearest noise sensitive premises and thereafter maintained. A report demonstrating this shall be undertaken and submitted within 8 weeks of the date of this permission.

4. **Interim measure.** Given that the unit is already installed and generating noise complaints, the Parish Council asks the LPA to consider whether the AC unit should be required to cease operation, or to operate only within restricted hours, until the above conditions are discharged and verified.

The Parish Council does not object to the proposed rooflight change, the omission of the first-floor bathroom windows in principle (subject to Policy D15 cooling-hierarchy considerations noted above), or the relocation of the ASHP to the opposite side of the dwelling.

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