5h	**18/0137**	**Reg'd:**	**09.02.18**	**Expires:**	**06.04.18**	**Ward: C**
Nei. Con. Exp:	**15.03.18**	**BVPI Target**	**18 (Minor)**	**Number of Weeks on Cttee' Day:**	**6/8**	**On Target? Yes**

LOCATION: **St John Ambulance Car Park (Land Between No.64 Board School Road and Kingsoak House), Board School Road, Woking, GU21 5HD**

PROPOSAL: **Erection of single storey electrical substation to the north-west corner of existing car park, including associated ground works to provide the incoming and outgoing electric feeds across the site.**

TYPE: **Full Application**

APPLICANT: **Thameswey Developments Ltd** **OFFICER:** **Benjamin Bailey**

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The proposal is of a development type which falls outside the Management Arrangements and Scheme of Delegations.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This is a full planning application for the erection of a single storey electrical substation to the north-west corner of existing car park, including associated ground works to provide the incoming and outgoing electric feeds across the site.

PLANNING STATUS

- Urban Area
- High Density Residential Area
- High Accessibility Zone
- Priority Place
- Surface Water Flood Risk (1 in 1000 year)
- Ground Contamination suspected
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) Zone B (400m-5km)

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to recommended conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The existing application site is laid entirely to tarmac and bounded to the front by a combination of low level timber post fencing and a galvanised steel swing traffic barrier set back from the adjacent footway. x8 parking spaces are laid out and a dropped kerb exists onto Board School Road. The site is bounded by close-boarded timber fencing to the common (south-west) boundary with the adjacent end-of-terrace dwelling of No.64 Board School Road and with timber fencing to the rear boundary, beyond which is a large existing

sub-station site. The flatted building of Kingsoak House adjoins the site to the eastern side with a 2.0m high fair-faced brick wall, extending from Kingsoak House itself, and the rear elevation of the Kingsoak House bin store further to the rear, forming the eastern application site boundary.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PLAN/2004/1154 - Proposed car park on Board School Road for St John Ambulance. Permitted subject to conditions (02.12.2004)

CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Health Service:	Appears that significant brick/block building to house equipment. However, from the accompanying statement from Thameswey it is noted, "*the equipment will be silent in operation. Also, 'no mechanical ventilation, alarms or other noise emitting equipment is to be installed"*. On this basis, unless you are party to additional information, no comments/conditions to forward.
Contaminated Land Officer:	No objection subject to recommended condition 04 (and informative 04).
Drainage & Flood Risk Team:	Following a review of the submitted information, the application complies with NPPF (2012) and Woking Core Strategy (2012) Policy CS9. Therefore we have no comments on drainage and flood risk grounds as the proposed development will not increase flood risk.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)
Achieving sustainable development
Section 7 - Requiring good design
Section 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Woking Core Strategy (2012)
CS1 - A spatial strategy for Woking Borough
CS2 - Woking Town Centre
CS9 - Flooding and water management
CS16 - Infrastructure delivery
CS21 - Design
CS23 - Renewable and low carbon energy generation
CS25 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016)
DM7 - Noise and light pollution
DM8 - Land contamination and hazards

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)
Design (2015)
Climate Change (2013)

Other Material Considerations
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

PLANNING ISSUES

01. The main planning issues to consider in determining this application are:
    - Principle of development
    - Design and impact upon the character of the area
    - Impact upon neighbouring amenity (including noise and light pollution)
    - Surface water flood risk
    - Ground contamination

    having regard to the relevant policies of the Development Plan, other relevant material planning considerations and national planning policy and guidance.

Principle of development

02. Woking Borough Council owns the freehold of the site and the existing leaseholder is St John Ambulance. Application reference PLAN/2004/1154 granted planning permission for the use of the site as car parking for St John Ambulance, showing x8 car parking spaces on the approved site plan. The proposed substation would result in the removal of x3 existing car parking spaces. It is understood that terms for surrender of the existing lease have been agreed with St John Ambulance to enable the applicant (Thameswey Developments Ltd) to construct the proposed substation (subject to planning permission) and that new leases will then be granted to both Thameswey and St John Ambulance for their respective space (ie. the substation and parking spaces). There are no local planning policies which seek to protect existing car parks in private use, as in this instance. The loss of x3 parking spaces is not therefore objectionable in policy terms.

03. Policy CS1 sets out the Spatial Strategy for Woking Borough and although it states that most new development will be directed towards previously developed land in the Town, District and Local Centres, the policy does not preclude development on other sites within the Urban Area subject to an assessment of impacts. Policy CS2 sets out that the Council will support the development of Woking Town Centre as the primary source of economic development in the Borough and as a primary economic centre in the South East, being the preferred location for town centre uses and high density residential development. Policy CS16 sets out that the Council will work in partnership with infrastructure service providers and developers to ensure that the infrastructure needed to support development is provided in a timely manner to meet the needs of the community and that the Council will support in principle the development of infrastructure projects if they can be justified to support the delivery of the Core Strategy and meet all other requirements of the Development Plan for the area. Policy CS23 provides in principle support for forms of renewable and low carbon energy generation.

04. The applicants supporting statement sets out that "*the new metering substation is required to provide a main grid connection point between the local electricity network operated by the District Network Operator (DNO) UK Power Networks (UKPN) and*

new High Voltage (HV) electricity supply cables to a number of major developments in Woking Town Centre, including the Victoria Square scheme".

05. The applicants supporting statement further states that "*planned growth through major redevelopment in Woking Town Centre requires new essential infrastructure to meet the increase in demand for energy. Thameswey is building new heat and power generating and distribution infrastructure to meet this demand through low carbon, secure and sustainable energy sources, and has been granted planning consent for a new energy centre in the west of the Town Centre at Poole Road (Ref: PLAN/2016/1444). The Poole Road energy centre will serve major new developments in the Town Centre including sites with planning consent in the Goldsworth Road area and the proposed 'Gateway' schemes, as well as the Victoria Square scheme. Poole Road energy centre will operate in tandem with the existing energy centre at Victoria Way car park, whilst also providing additional resilience in supplies of energy to the buildings that are connected to the Victoria Way network. New HV electricity cables will connect the Poole Road energy station to the buildings to be supplied with energy, and enable inter-connection between the existing HV electricity network operated by Thameswey in Woking and the new network, reducing the risk of loss of supply to buildings in the Town Centre".*

06. It is further stated that *"whilst Poole Road will generate most of the energy it supplies, a permanent connection to the national grid is essential to enable off-peak and top-up power to be provided without interruption in supply to customers. The grid connection also enables Thameswey to export electricity to the national grid at times of 'surplus' power generation. The metering substation at Board School Road will provide this point of connection and enable switching and metering of electricity flows between the national grid and the power generated at Poole Road".*

07. Taking the above into account the development of the electrical substation proposed clearly qualifies as a form of infrastructure intended to support the delivery of the Core Strategy, and in particular the development targets for Woking Town Centre set out by Policy CS2, and forms an integral part of the provision of renewable and low carbon energy generation. Subject to an assessment of impacts, the principle of development is therefore afforded support by Policies CS1, CS2, CS16, CS23 and CS25 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Supplementary Planning Document 'Climate Change (2013)' and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

<u>Design and impact upon the character of the area</u>

08. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) requires development proposals to "*respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area in which they are situated, paying due regard to the scale, height, proportions, building lines, layout, materials and other characteristics of adjoining buildings and land*".

09. The proposed substation building would be located at the rear of the application site, in excess of 21.0m from the footway along Board School Road. The building would form an 'L' shaped footprint and be of a relatively utilitarian appearance, typical of electrical substation housing, and as required by other regulatory standards. The building would be of a relatively modest scale, measuring approximately 2.9m to maximum (flat roofed) height and externally faced in brick with front and side access doors, hazard signage and a rear ventilation grille. Having regard to the relatively modest scale, and simple design, of the proposed building, combined with its set back location from Board School Road, it is not considered that it would harm the character and appearance of the street scene. Adjacent Kingsoak House and No.64 Board

School Road demonstrate fair and red facing brick respectively; accordingly the proposed use of facing brick is considered to be appropriate and would also remain commensurate with materials apparent at the existing substation site to the rear located on the corner Boundary Road and North Road. Furthermore the proposed building would be screened by adjacent Kingsoak House and No.64 Board School Road in oblique views from Board School Road and therefore the 'arc' of visibility would be limited.

10. In views from North Road the proposed building would be screened by the existing bin store building serving adjacent Kingsoak House and the existing substation housing to the rear. In views from Boundary Road the proposed building would appear at distance (circa 45.0m) and in the intervening context of the existing large electrical substation site on the corner of Boundary Road and North Road, which is enclosed by palisade fencing.

11. Overall it is not considered that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, particularly having regard to the existing large electrical substation site on the corner of Boundary Road and North Road. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Supplementary Planning Document 'Design (2015)' and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

Impact upon neighbouring amenity (including noise and light pollution)

12. Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) advises that proposals for new development should achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjoining properties, avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, loss of daylight or sunlight, or an overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or loss of outlook and be designed to avoid significant harm to the environment and general amenity, resulting from noise and light. Further guidance on assessing neighbouring amenity impacts is provided within SPD 'Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)'. Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) provides a framework to help mitigate the impact of new noise and light-generating development.

No.64 Board School Road

13. No.64 Board School Road is a two storey end-of-terrace dwelling situated to the west. The proposed building would be located between 406mm and 464mm from the common boundary with No.64, which is formed of close-boarded timber fencing which varies between approximately 1.7m and 2.3m in height. There is a relatively large flat roofed outbuilding within the rear garden of No.64 within close proximity to the common boundary.

14. The proposed building would be of a relatively modest scale, measuring approximately 2.9m to maximum (flat roofed) height, and would therefore project above the existing common boundary treatment by between approximately 0.6m and 1.2m. Whilst sited within close proximity to the common boundary with No.64, taking account of the limited level of projection above the existing common boundary treatment, and the siting of the proposed building away from the rear elevation of No.64, it is not considered that a significantly harmful impact, by reason of potential loss of daylight or sunlight, or overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or loss of outlook, would occur to the dwelling or rear garden area of No.64 contrary to Policy CS21. The proposed building would not contain any openings facing directly towards the common boundary with No.64, and would only be entered by personnel for occasional safety inspection and maintenance purposes, and therefore no harmful

loss of privacy would occur to No.64.

Kingsoak House

15. The flatted building of Kingsoak House adjoins the application site to the eastern side with a 2.0m high fair-faced brick wall, extending from Kingsoak House itself, and the rear elevation of the Kingsoak House bin store further to the rear, forming the eastern site boundary. The proposed building would be sited approximately 11.5m from the rear elevation of Kingsoak House at its closest point although would be partially screened by the intervening 2.0m high fair-faced brick wall and the adjacent Kingsoak House bin store. Taking into account these factors no significantly harmful impact, by reason of potential loss of daylight or sunlight, or overbearing effect due to bulk, proximity or loss of outlook, is considered to occur to Kingsoak House contrary to Policy CS21. Whilst a personnel door would directly face towards the common boundary this doorway would be entirely screened by the blank rear elevation of the Kingsoak House bin store, and would only be entered by personnel for occasional safety inspection and maintenance purposes, and therefore no harmful loss of privacy would occur to Kingsoak House.

Noise and light pollution

16. The applicants supporting statement sets out that "*the principal function of the substation is to contain circuit protection equipment and switchgear, along with metering. All the equipment is capable of operating automatically, and in normal operation will not require any personnel to enter the building other than for occasional safety inspection and maintenance purposes. As this will be a metering substation and will not contain transformers, the equipment will be silent in operation. No mechanical ventilation, alarms or other noise emitting equipment is to be installed*".

17. The applicant has also submitted a letter from the District Network Operator (DNO) UK Power Networks (UKPN) which states that "*we would like to confirm that you plan to construct a brick build substation which will house switchgear which be adopted by UK Power Networks…the DNO Substation will house two 11kV Ring Main Units and associated control equipment. This is the same type of equipment (switchgear) that we install within GRP substations, which are often sited within residential areas under permitted development rights. Such substations operate with no adverse noise impact".*

18. The Environmental Health Service has been consulted on the application and raise no objection on the basis that a brick/block building is proposed to house equipment and that the accompanying statement sets out that the equipment will be silent in operation and that no mechanical ventilation, alarms or other noise emitting equipment is to be installed. Conditions 05 and 06 are recommended to prevent any potential future installation of transformers or other noise emitting equipment within the building, or lighting external to the building, without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Subject to these recommended conditions the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm to the environment and general amenity, by reason of from noise and light pollution and therefore accords with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012) and Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016).

Surface water flood risk

19. Part of the application site is identified as being at a 1 in 1000 year risk of surface water flooding. The Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Team has been consulted on

the application and comment that, following a review of the submitted information, the application complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012). Therefore the Drainage and Flood Risk Team have no comments on drainage and flood risk grounds as the proposed development will not increase flood risk.

Ground contamination

20. The site is adjacent to a former contaminative use although previous residential redevelopment (now Kingsoak House) has resulted in ground contamination at this adjacent site being remediated through the planning process. Whilst this is the case there remains the potential for contamination to have migrated towards the site. Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016) require that proposals for new development should ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use, which in this instance is an electrical substation, a non-sensitive use.

21. The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has been consulted on the application and raises no objection subject to recommended condition 04 (and informative 04). On this basis the proposal is considered to accord with Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2016).

LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

22. The proposed development is Nil rated within the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

CONCLUSION

23. Overall, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable, it is not considered that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, particularly having regard to the existing large electrical substation site on the corner of Boundary Road and North Road. Furthermore, subject to recommended conditions, the proposal is not considered to give rise to significant harm to the environment and general amenity, including to the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers, and is not considered to increase flood risk. Ground contamination implications can be addressed via recommended planning condition.

24. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable form of development that complies with Policies CS1, CS2, CS9, CS16, CS21, CS23 and CS25 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policies DM7 and DM8 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016), Supplementary Planning Documents 'Outlook, Amenity, Privacy and Daylight (2008)', 'Design (2015)' and 'Climate Change (2013)', Sections 7, 10 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions as set out below.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Site visit photographs
Site Notice (General)
Consultation response from Environmental Health Service
Consultation response from Contaminated Land Officer

Consultation response from Drainage & Flood Risk Team

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

01. The development for which permission is hereby granted must be commenced not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

    Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and particulars numbered/titled:

    1:1250 scale Site Location Plan, titled 'Board School Road', dated 31 January 2018 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    1:200 scale Block Plan, titled 'Board School Road', dated 31 January 2018 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    23008/005 Rev D (Proposed Substation Layout), dated 07.02.18 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    23008/010 Rev C (Proposed Substation Floor Plan), dated 07.02.18 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    23008/015 Rev B (Proposed Substation Roof Plan & Elevations), dated 07.02.18 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    Supporting Statement by Thameswey Energy Ltd (2pp), unnumbered and received by the Local Planning Authority on 08.02.2018.

    Letter from UK Power Networks (Ref: 8600009425), dated 12 February 2018 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 22.02.2018.

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

03. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the external materials and boundary treatments as set out within Section 9 (Materials) of the submitted application form unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

    Reason: To protect the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Supplementary Planning Document 'Design (2015)' and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

04. If, prior to or during development, ground contamination is suspected or manifests itself then no further development (unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted an appropriate remediation strategy to the Local Planning Authority and the written approval of the Local Planning Authority has been received. The strategy should detail how the contamination shall be

implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved and a remediation validation report shall be required to be submitted to Local Planning Authority to demonstrate the agreed strategy has been complied with.

Should no ground contamination be readily identified during the development, confirmation of this should be provided in writing to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In accordance with Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016) which require that proposals for new development should ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use.

05. Other than as set out within Section 22 (Industrial or Commercial Processes and Machinery) of the submitted application form no plant, transformers or similar noise emitting equipment shall be installed within the building hereby permitted until details (including acoustic specifications and any noise mitigation) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and permanently maintained as such unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the environment and general amenity, and the residential amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties, from potential noise and disturbance in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

06. No lighting external to the building hereby permitted shall be installed on the site until details of any such external lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and permanently maintained as such unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the environment and general amenity, and the residential amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties, from potential light pollution in accordance with Policy CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM7 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016) and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

Informatives

01. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012). The application was considered to be acceptable as initially submitted.

02. The applicant is advised that Council officers may undertake inspections without prior warning to check compliance with approved plans and to establish that all planning conditions are being complied with in full. Inspections may be undertaken both during and after construction.

03. The applicant is advised that, under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, site works which will be audible at the site boundaries are restricted to the following hours:-
08.00 – 18.00 Monday to Friday

08.00 – 13.00 Saturday
and not at all on Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays.

04. In seeking to address and discharge the "contamination remediation" (condition 04) above, the applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that the application site is situated on or in close proximity to land that could be potentially contaminated by virtue of previous historical uses of the land. Visual and olfactory evidence of contamination can take many forms including hydrocarbon or solvent odours, ash and clinker, buried wastes, burnt wastes/objects, metallic objects, staining and discolouration of soils, oily sheen on ground water and fragments of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) (Note: this list is intended to be used as a guide to some common types of contamination and is not exhaustive).

In seeking to address condition 04 a photographic record of works should be incorporated within the validation report. Should no ground contamination be identified then a brief comment to this effect shall be required to be provided in writing to the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority cannot confirm that the condition has been fully discharged until any validation report has been agreed.