

Response to Letter from Complainant: EDGELL
Application APP/15/00240

27th March 2015

We have addressed each of the complainants comments in turn, as they are noted in the complainants letter.

NB: The cess pit on site is emptied monthly, not fortnightly.

NB: The nearby 'Wellness Centre' does not offer any form of exercise, rehabilitation or sports therapy. The range of treatments offered there are vastly different to those at the new facility, and we believe this objection is irrelevant. We do not believe an objection can be lodged on the basis of competition between businesses, and one which is based on opinion, rather than fact. We intend to create jobs for locals, and provide a significant asset that will vastly improve the health of the local population.

2.1 All users of the Wren Centre are respectful of the current residents of both Bourne House, and any other surrounding residential areas. We believe having extended opening hours at the facility will be of benefit to all users, ensuring that there is access to these much-needed healthcare and fitness services for all. This will reduce the need for visitors to take time off from their employed jobs in order to attend the facility, and will instead be able to utilise the facility at times convenient to them. The other nearby facilities, such as St John the Baptist church, do not cease operation on a Sunday, and we believe these create significantly more disturbance than the visitors to the Wren Centre.

2.3 We are unsure why 200 extra visitors would equate to 400 extra vehicular movements and ask that proof is provided that this would be the case. This objection is based purely on speculation.

As a musculoskeletal healthcare expert, current guidelines recommend that we incentivise physical activity in all back pain patients. The concerns expressed over those with back pain or motility problems show a clear lack of knowledge regarding the management of back pain patients and we respectfully ask that these comments are disregarded as speculative and based on a poorly-founded opinion.

2.5 We are disappointed that wheelchair users and disabled visitors would be considered a hazard and would hope the council would assist both 360 Health and Fitness, and the Wren Centre, in ensuring the facility remains as wheelchair friendly as it currently is. As the letter states, there is a disabled toilet already in place, and this facility has previously been deemed acceptable by all disabled users and provides them with full access to the facility. We therefore we do not believe the concerns over "turning into this facility from the access ramp" is valid.

2.4 Expected visitors to the facility are local residents, as are the employees of the facility, all of whom live within walking or cycling distance of the unit. We therefore will not add to the number of commuters attending the facility. We also believe that having a facility located in a more convenient location will reduce the number of vehicles on the roads around Emsworth and Westbourne, as residents and employees do not have to commute to other neighbouring towns in order to seek healthcare treatments or use fitness facilities.

We respect the residents of Bourne Bridge House and their right to access of their property. We are unsure why the risk of pedestrians "wander (sic) over this access" has now been raised as an issue, when it has not been one previously. The letter of objection does not clearly state whether their concern is regarding access for the tenants of Bourne Bridge House, or for those using the facility, none of whom have expressed concerns over their ability to park in their designated areas. This objection is based purely on speculation.

3.1 There will be no amplified music during working hours. All users of the facility are respectful of the surrounding business and residential units. We believe the objection of noise generated by “slamming doors and people calling to each other on a Saturday afternoon and a Sunday” is speculative and irrelevant, as the towns of Westbourne and Emsworth are busy, thriving communities and therefore the degree of environmental noise would not be increased by a quiet unit based to the rear of the Wren Centre.

3.2. This minor flooding was during “exceptional” weather conditions, we assume this is referring to the flood event in Winter 2010/2011, which affected 21 properties in Bridge Road and Selangor Avenue, which lie 1.2mi and 1.8mi from the Wren Centre, respectively. We believe this risk has been alleviated by the Emsworth Flood Risk Strategy (2013), and subsequent Emsworth Flood Risk Strategy Review (2015) developed by Havant Borough Council- it is of note that in these areas of exceptional weather, the principally affected areas did not include Westbourne Road (Emsworth Flood Risk Strategy, 2013. Section 1.02). We understand the flood risk strategy measures will “help to reduce the frequency of flooding events in Emsworth from 1 in 2 years, 50% probability, to a desired return period of 1 in 75, a 1.33% probability.” (Emsworth Flood Risk Strategy, 2013. Section 3.03). The summary table included in the Emsworth Flood Risk Strategy Review (2015) clearly outline a range of improvements made to existing infrastructures (Appendix 2) which have been deemed sufficient by the Council to help alleviate the flood risk concerns, and we therefore believe are sufficient to negate any need for concerns over flooding in the Wren Centre. The Wren Centre is not under risk of flooding.