SPAE NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026

THE FORMER PANTILES AND McLAREN SITES AT ASCOT STATION

The NPPF's (National Planning Policy Framework) recent changes to Green Belt policy are especially relevant to the two planning applications at Ascot Station, which together would add over ninety dwellings, roughly matching the scale of the London Square site.

SPAE has objected strongly to both developments. Their height, architectural style, density, lack of parking, and absence of amenity green space make them unsuitable for Ascot, with the design looking more suited to an inner-city setting than a village station.

There are also signs that flats, even well-designed ones, aren't selling well locally; Taylor Wimpey's decision to pause work on its new flats at the Heatherwood site is one example, although work has resumed on site.

Unfortunately, however economically questionable these schemes may be, the latest NPPF changes tip the balance of decision-making firmly in favour of developments close to a station, such as these.

We're awaiting a decision and remain confident in our grounds for objection.

You can find our objection letters on the RBWM website under applications 26/00952/FULL (McLaren) and 26/00975/FULL (Pantiles).





EVENTS CALENDAR AND LINKS TO ARTICLES

Date	Event or Link	Details
Early Spring 2027	New Website Relaunch	Launch date to be confirmed
Updated monthly	SPAE Website www.Spae.org	Includes all AGM Reports, Planning Application Performance, the Treasurer's report, and more.
October 2026	Sunningdale Missing Out on EV Charging | SPAE	See SPAE website in NEWS
May 2027	Annual General Meeting	Further details in March 2027

UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT IN ASCOT

Over the past year, the Royal Borough has permitted development on three parcels of land in central Ascot.

- Shorts Group has been given the go ahead for **127 new homes** (22% affordable) with a mix of detached houses, semi-detached houses and apartment blocks. The development will convert a former waste and recycling facility site into residential use and landscaped open space.
- CALA has been permitted for **90 dwellings** (40% affordable) again, with a mix of detached houses, semi-detached houses and apartment blocks together with open space. The site is east of the High Street, and work is currently underway.
- London Square has been granted permission for **101 dwellings** (40% affordable) with a mix of semi-detached, terraced and flats, with open space including a piazza. The housing mix includes a high proportion of 1 bed and 2 bed flats. In addition, the proposal provides over 1,000 sqm of commercial space. This site is adjacent to Station Hill.



SPAE has repeatedly opposed these developments over the past four years on several grounds. In respect of the London Square development, our opposition includes:

- Only 318 sq. of commercial space is being devoted to facilities for the community, which we view as completely inadequate. The Neighbourhood Plan envisaged a community centre to be used as a community hall and an arts space or small cinema.
- Inadequate parking is being provided for visitors and shoppers. Only 14 spaces will be provided for visitors and workers, with a paltry two for community use. Parking will spill over onto Station Hill, which is currently popular with train commuters.
- There will be a substantial environmental Impact with the loss of valuable trees that contribute so much to the character of the centre of Ascot.
- An absence of landowners and agents working together, where the Local Plan states that developers **must** work together to ensure that sites are not developed in isolation – the working together is what has not happened.

Whilst the outcome has been extremely disappointing and frustrating, SPAE will continue to hold the Council to account on what has been permitted and any subsequent new or variation applications for Ascot.

COOMBES LANE WOODLAND, SOUTH ASCOT

Beyond its community value, Coombe Lane Woods is a thriving habitat for birds, bats, owls, and deer. It performs essential ecological roles by storing carbon, absorbing rainfall, and providing a wildlife corridor. Crucially, it forms part of the last remaining green separation between Sunninghill and Ascot, a vital landscape easily overlooked, but impossible to replace once lost.

In December 2020, an Isle of Man company sold 18 plots to speculative prospectors. Since then, four applications have been submitted, which SPAE has objected to, resulting in the refusal or dismissal of three for single dwellings. The fourth was refused but upheld on appeal for the use as an allotment with associated paraphernalia.

Residents are considerably upset by the threat posed, and 300 recently gathered at Coombe Lane to register their concerns. Apart from any development being contrary to national Green Belt policy, it would also conflict with Neighbourhood Plan policies NP/EN1 Gaps between Villages, NP/EN4 – Biodiversity and NP/EN5 – Green Corridors.

The SPAE objections to the three refused housing development applications were 23/01879, 23/00065 and 22/03362.

DEVELOPMENT IS TO GET PRIORITY WITHIN 800 METRES OF A RAILWAY STATION

This statement makes sense where transport and other infrastructure already exist and can support the development.

However, for Ascot and Sunningdale stations, it means Broomhall Farm, land behind Cedar Drive, Ascot Racecourse car parks 3&4, and land below St George's Lane are now in play, jeopardising the Neighbourhood Plan “Gaps between Villages” and Green Belt policies.

Land located within a reasonable walking distance (defined as 800 metres or ~10 minutes' walk) of a well-connected station is no longer classed as inappropriate in the Green Belt.

Qualifying residential and mixed-use schemes must normally achieve at least 35 dwellings per hectare across their net developable area, rising to 45 where services meet twice the minimum frequency.

The main threats are:

- Character erosion: The quiet, spacious suburban character which typifies these areas faces pressure from high-density development requirements
- Green Belt incursion: The ability to protect Green Belt around the stations is significantly weakened
- Transport infrastructure stress: The existing rail capacity may not support major residential intensification around the stations

As covered earlier, SPAE has strongly objected to proposed developments at the former Pantiles and McLaren sites.

MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEERING

MEMBERSHIP – VITAL TO SPAE

Although building work is under way on Ascot High Street, SPAE and the Parish Council have submitted several objections to the plans. SPAE relies on its membership to fund the work we do to protect the character, heritage and green spaces of Ascot, Sunninghill, Sunningdale and Winkfield.

The more members we have, the stronger our voice becomes. We have built a reputation with RBWM as a reliable and well-informed organisation, so your support carries real weight where it matters most.

Membership is open to anyone who cares about safeguarding the area’s future, whether you have lived here for decades or have only just moved in. It costs little to join, but your subscription directly funds the planning reviews, objections and local campaigns that protect what makes Ascot and its villages special.

Already a member? Thank you. Please take a quick moment to verify that your annual membership standing order is set up for £12.

To make sure you receive the newsletter and other important updates, we need your up-to-date email and/or postal address. Newsletters can be posted if requested. If any of your contact details have changed, please let us know by emailing to secretary@spae.org

Annual membership: £12 per year

Lifetime membership: £120

Join online: www.Spae.org or scan this QR code

JOIN THE VOLUNTEER TEAM

We have growth plans for SPAE and are looking for volunteers or committee members willing to give a little time and expertise, whether that's keeping an eye on planning applications, helping with the website and PR, or joining the committee in these roles.

This coming year we’re aiming high: relaunching the SPAE website and getting our message out on local radio. Behind the scenes, our small team does a huge amount of work. Whether you can spare an hour a month or an afternoon a week, there’s a role with your name on it. Come and join us!

Planning watch: help track applications in your area and flag anything that could affect local character or green spaces.

Communications: contribute to the newsletter, help manage social media, or support the website.

Committee: get more closely involved in shaping SPAE's priorities and decisions.

Does this interest you? Get in touch with our Membership Secretary at membership@spae.org.

No experience necessary, just loads of enthusiasm and a passion for helping the community stay informed and involved.