

Planning Statement

Section 73 Application for Variation of Approved Drawings

Revised proposals for the **Main House** and **Landscape Masterplan** at the Stowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham

October 2025

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Appendix I Site Location Plan

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

Application Procedure

- 1.1 This planning statement is submitted by Avison Young on behalf of Imperium Trust Company ('the Applicant'), the owner of the Stowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham ('the site').
- 1.2 It forms part of a Section 73 Variation of Condition application, which principally seeks to amend the approved documents as listed under Condition 2 of the planning permission 213587 for *"construction of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated landscaping"*, as approved on 15 September 2023.
- 1.3 The proposals maintain the broad siting and configuration of the Estate's previously approved Main House, and propose a series of refinements to the architecture and landscape treatment within the immediate curtilage, together with an update to the Estate-wide Landscape Masterplan, which proposes a more naturalistic approach to the design of the Estate grounds. This amendment application is submitted under the planning portal reference PP-14430972.

Site Context

- 1.4 The application site covers elements of the Stowdes Estate, north-east of the River Thames, east of Park Place, and west of Culham Lane and Kenton's Lane. The Estate extends to approx. 70 hectares and measures approx. 1.8km from the northern tip (the Estate's main entrance) to the southern corner (junction between Wargrave Road and Kenton's Lane). The Estate is relatively flat within the northern and central areas, before a significant downwards slope to the south and east, towards the riverbank.
- 1.5 The Stowdes Estate is set within the wider historic Park Place Estate, which extends over a large area to the north-west, towards White Hill. Stowdes benefits from five recent planning consents obtained by the previous owner between 2023 and 2024 (see below table), which sought to create a self-contained masterplanned private residential estate including a main house and several ancillary buildings, in line with earlier planning permissions dating from 2008 as part of a programme of enhancements to Park Place. Other new private Estates have also been established within Park Place, including Hamilton to the west.

Area	Ref	Location
Main House	213587	sited centrally within the Estate
Ancillary Gatehouse	213588	to the north of the Estate
Estate Management Building	213610	close to the eastern boundary with Kentons Lane
Staff Village Complex	240847	within the existing walled garden at the southern corner of the site
Riverside Buildings	240832	within the south-western part of the estate, west of Wargrave Road.

Aspirations

- 1.6 The new owner and design team are conscious of this rare opportunity to restore an active estate function to this parkland setting, and aim to provide an enhancement over the approved position, in terms of architecture, landscape, and biodiversity, while also ensuring that the scheme is both deliverable in the short-term, and operationally fit for purpose in the long-term.

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- 1.7 At the same time, it is acknowledged that this is a sensitive environment in terms of its location entirely within the Green Belt, the majority of the Estate's location within the Park Place Registered Park and Garden (which is a statutory heritage asset), the surrounding wider landscape character of this semi-rural portion of the Borough and Region, and the existing on-site features including areas of woodland and a number of trees subject to tree protection orders.
- 1.8 Proposals across the Estate, including those subject to this application, are therefore being advanced as refinements and evolutions of the previous proposals, rather than wholesale changes.

Application Scope

- 1.9 The proposals seek to maintain the overall approach established by the recent planning permissions for a large estate's Main House.
- 1.10 Continuity is provided by: an almost identical siting centrally within Estate and red line application area (approx. 200m west of the Kenton's Lane boundary and 170m east of the neighbouring Hamilton estate), accessed via a similarly aligned driveway from the northern edge of the application site; the dwelling is configured as a main 2-storey block, with a set-back second floor element, and two perpendicular single-storey wings, projecting to the north either side of the entrance courtyard; an overall design ethos of a stripped down contemporary take on a formal classical country house; a substantial basement area is provided, which includes parking, plant, operational/management functions, and domestic leisure functions, with a tunnel connection to the approved Estate Management building, 150m east; and a landscape masterplan that includes a prominent waterbody within the northern area of the site, retention of existing trees and wooded areas, supplemented with substantial new planting, and retention of the open and undeveloped southern sloped portion of the Estate.
- 1.11 Beyond these core similarities, this Section 73 application proposes the following amendments with reference to the approved Main House scheme (213587 approved 15/09/2023):

Proposed Amendments	
Main House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor increases to the above ground footprint and massing of the of 3-storey element of the house, to facilitate revised internal space planning and accounting for increased external wall thickness for building regulations. • Revised design approach to second (top) floor element, providing lightweight reflective materials, and therefore reducing perceived massing. • Subtle revisions to the main façade elevations, incorporating more contemporary detailing, fenestration articulation, and references to domestic scale. • Simplification and lightening of northern wing structures, including reduction in height and length, design refinement, and removal of extensive and tall courtyard walls. • Rationalisation of basement space to a single level, including minor increase in basement area, reduction in depth, and internal reconfiguration for operational suitability • Installation of a section of sloping garden, to create a secluded private garden area and to allow natural light into basement pool and gym area. • Revised, softer and less formal garden/curtilage design, minimising hard features and providing continuity with emerging landscape scheme.
Landscape Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More naturalistic approach to the landscape design of the northern part of the estate, ensuring gradual contouring, and a less formal estate road layout, better reflecting the historic setting. • Revised approach to tree planting, including relocation of planted Allée trees, an increase in overall tree planting, and establishment of new woodland areas around the main house. • Provision of a single and larger pond in place of the approved split ponds, which will create opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, and water management. <p>Note: the Masterplan indicates an aspiration for a new main entrance to the Estate from Culham Lane, and a relocated Gatehouse, however these elements are subject to separate approval.</p>

- 1.12 These proposed changes are highlighted within the accompanying design documentation, and assessment reports, and are discussed further in subsequent sections.
- 1.13 Ultimately, it is considered that the majority of the proposed changes have a neutral to positive impact on planning considerations, with the heritage assessment in particular highlighting some small scale enhancements in terms of the detailed design and material treatments of the house, and more substantial enhancements to the significance of the Registered Park and Garden as a result of the revised landscape proposals.
- 1.14 In terms of visual impact (relevant to landscape character and Green Belt openness), and spatial impact on Green Belt openness, the increase in massing of the main part of the house, would generate a small degree of additional impact. However, in landscape visual terms this would only be experienced within the site, rather than from any public rights of way, nearby dwellings, or from the wider Registered Park and Garden.
- 1.15 It is considered that any additional impact in this regard, when compared alongside the approved scheme, is outweighed by the heritage enhancements noted above, and the landscape treatment to the curtilage of the site, which substantially reduces hard landscape features, as part of a softer and more naturalistic approach to the parkland setting.

- 1.16 It is considered that all other planning and environmental considerations can be resolved within the scope of the existing conditions, some of which have already been progressed in preparation for initial enabling and construction work (archaeology, construction environmental management and ecology, drainage, and landscape details).

Submitted Documentation

- 1.17 This application is submitted under the Section 73 Variation of Conditions procedure, and therefore proposes substitution of documents approved under Condition 2 of the planning permission for the Main House (213587):

Document	Approved Reference	Proposed Reference
Drawings for Approval		
Site Location Plan	0001 Issue P01	To be deleted (covered by below)
Site Context Plan	P-H-001-XX-003 REV 00	PCY-PBC-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1001
General Plan	P-H-001-XX-005 REV 00	PCY-PBC-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1002
Roof Plan	P-H-001-XX-010 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-RF-DR-A-1013
Ground Floor Plan	P-H-001-XX-020 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-00-DR-A-1010
Basement Mezzanine	P-H-001-XX-030 REV 00	To be deleted
Basement Plan	P-H-001-XX-040 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-B1-DR-A-1009
Sub Basement Plan	P-H-001-XX-045 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-B1-DR-A-1008
First Floor Plan	P-H-001-XX-050 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-RF-DR-A-1011
Second Floor Plan	P-H-001-XX-060 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-RF-DR-A-1012
Section E W	P-H-003-XX-010 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1016
Section N S	P-H-003-XX-020 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1015
Section E W (inc sunken garden)	N/A	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1017
North Elevation	P-H-004-XX-010 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1020
South Elevation	P-H-004-XX-020 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1022
West Elevation	P-H-004-XX-030 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1023
East Elevation	P-H-004-XX-040 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1021
Partial Elevation / Detail	P-H-007-XX-010 REV 00	PCY-PBC-MH-ZZ-DR-A-1030
Proposed Landscape Masterplan	051_1101 (APART FROM THE PROPOSED POND IN THE LOCATION OF 'PIT CLUMP', WHICH IS NOT APPROVED)	PCY-MBS-ZZ-PL-DR-L-1001
Proposed Main House Landscape GA	N/A	PCY-MBS-MH-PL-DR-L-1001

- 1.18 In addition, the application is accompanied by details that have been submitted for approval under discharge of conditions applications, which are considered to be transferable to the amended proposals subject to this application. It is therefore requested that these conditions are made 'compliance' conditions with reference to these documents:

Condition	Document
Details for Approval	
Condition 3 Archaeology	Archaeological WSI
	Archaeological Evaluation Part 1 June 2025
	Archaeological Evaluation Part 2 June 2025
Condition 4 Construction Method	Construction Method Statement July 2025

Condition 5 Electric Vehicle Charging	EVC Strategy	August 2025
Condition 7 CEMP Biodiversity	CEMP	October 2025

1.19 Finally, given the nature of the proposed amendments, which will alter the massing, elevational treatment, materiality, and approach to landscaping, the following updated assessments have been provided:

Document	Author	Date
Assessment / Information		
Planning Statement	Avison Young	October 2025
Design and Access Statement (update)	PB&Co	October 2025
Heritage Impact Assessment	Asset Heritage	October 2025
Landscape Visual Appraisal	BHSLA	October 2025
Flood Risk Assessment Update	ElliottWood	October 2025

1.20 The remainder of this Statement is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a summary of the site and wider Estate planning history
- **Section 3** sets out the application proposals;
- **Section 5** considers the proposed changes and any resulting impacts in the above context;
- **Section 6** provides a summary and conclusion.

2. Site Context and Planning History

- 2.1 The application site is located within the Strowdes Estate, north-east of the River Thames, east of Park Place, and west of Culham Lane and Kenton's Lane. The Estate extends to approx. 70 hectares and measures approx. 1.8km from the northern tip (the Estate's existing main entrance) to the southern corner (junction between Wargrave Road and Kenton's Lane). The Estate is relatively flat within the northern and central areas, before a significant downwards slope to the south and east, towards the riverbank.
- 2.2 Planning permissions granted in 2023/4 cover construction of the five built elements (shown on the below diagram):



Figure 1. Site Location showing approved scheme (i) Gatehouse, (ii) Main House, (iii) Estate Management Building, (iv) Staff Village, and (v) Riverside Pavilion.

- 2.3 The site is subject to the following key constraints and designations which have been material in the design of the approved and proposed schemes:
- Predominantly within Grade II* Registered Park and Garden – the boundary of which broadly runs along the eastern estate boundary, excluding the majority of the Estate Management Building and Staff Village/Walled Garden sites;
 - Within the Green Belt;

- The site's landscape is predominantly characterised as part of the wider wooded chalk slopes (south) and arable chalk plateau (north);
- Significant levels changes across the wider site, with the open southern half of the site sloping upwards from the riverside, to the northern part of the site which is flatter and more enclosed.
- Arboricultural and ecological infrastructure, including ancient woodland and protected trees; and
- Land adjacent to the River Thames is within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

2.4 Notwithstanding the above, the Main House application site is located centrally within the Estate, within a flat and clear portion of the site, and within Flood Zone 1, meaning that it is one of the least constrained areas of the site.

Planning History (Previous Ownership)

2.5 There are five separate planning consents for distinct new build elements across the estate, as set out below:

Element	Ref	Details
Main House	213587	Consent was granted on 15/09/2023 for the construction of a new, main residential property in the centre of the estate, with associated landscaping.
Gate House	213588	Consent was granted on 15/09/2023 for the construction of a gate house building to the north of the main house which would be located along and control the principal entrance route into the site.
Estate Management Buildings	213610	Consent was granted on 15/09/2023 for the construction of two-storey ancillary estate management buildings to the east of the site, including an underground tunnel that would link to the main house. This also gave consent for the demolition of dwellings, a pool house, and outbuildings.
Staff Village	240847	Consent was granted on the 13/09/2024 for the construction of 4no. single storey residential units with associated communal and welfare space to the south of the site. These would be ancillary to the main house, providing accommodation for staff who are employed at the estate.
Riverside	240832	Consent was granted on the 06/08/2024 for the demolition of an existing summerhouse along the River Thames and construction of a riverside pavilion offering ancillary residential accommodation to the main house. Consent was also given for an underground tunnel which would connect to the main house.

2.6 The above were resubmissions of previous consents for the same built elements originally approved in 2016 (staff village - 152499), 2017 (main house – 173097) and 2018 respectively (gate house – 173098, estate management buildings – 173100 and riverside – 180351), the principle of which was established under a 2008 outline consent approved under ref. O/2008/1353, covering the wider 220 hectare Park Place Estate.

2.7 Taking account of the site's location in the Green Belt, which provides a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the approved developments were justified on the basis that Very Special Circumstances exist due to the planning history of the site and previous masterplans

that demonstrated an overall net loss of dwellings and built development across the wider Park Place estate (of which the Strowdes estate is a component part), the removal of unsympathetic buildings, and the restoration of the parkland.

- 2.8 To ensure the enhancements to the parkland, which weighed in favour of the consented schemes, are delivered, conditions were attached to the main house, gatehouse and estate management building consents which restrict development from taking place until full hard and soft landscape details are submitted to and approved by the LPA in accordance with the approved Landscape Masterplan (drawing no. 051_1101).
- 2.9 An obligation was also included in the s106 agreement (dated 15 September 2023) that is associated with these three consents, requiring an Integrated Estate Management Plan ('IEMP') to be submitted to and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of development.
- 2.10 The riverside and staff village consents are not required to implement the approved Landscape Masterplan, nor are they linked to the s106 Agreement and associated IEMP obligation. However, they are subject to various conditions regarding landscaping and other improvements.

Planning History and Strategy (New Ownership)

- 2.11 The new owner is committed to the delivery of the Estate's buildings and surrounding landscape enhancements as soon as possible, and is therefore planning to undertake initial enabling work and early phases of construction, to facilitate a streamlined and efficient delivery programme.
- 2.12 As such, the Applicant has submitted details pursuant to pre-commencement conditions and Section 106 Obligations with the aim to undertake key elements of enabling work. The main element of this is the basement excavation to the Main House.
- 2.13 To ensure that the necessary planning permissions are in place to cover the basement enabling works, two Section 73 applications have already been submitted, on the basis that they introduce very limited additional planning considerations beyond the approved scheme, with the current application consolidating these earlier proposed amendments, together with changes to the above ground portion of the building, and wider Estate.

Ref	Submission	Scope	Rationale
Various Discharge of Condition Applications	March/April 2025	Covering key pre-commencement conditions	To allow early enabling works together with excavation of areas compatible with the approved scheme.
251666	July 2025	Section 73 Amendment to below ground basement envelope of Main House	To allow early excavation and construction work of the preferred basement envelope to proceed in line with planning permission
252489	October 2025	Section 73 Amendment proposing addition of a cut-away / sunken garden area to the west of the Main House	Once the main basement excavation is undertaken, to allow the excavation and structural work to include the sunken garden element
PP-14430972 (this application)	October 2025	Section 73 Amendment consolidating the above amendments, together with above ground changes to the design of the house, garden/curtilage area, and landscape masterplan	To secure permission for the full scope of proposed amendments, with the intention of building the house to this specification.

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- 2.14 In addition to the proposed amendments subject to this application, proposals are being developed for further refinements to the approved proposals elsewhere on the estate, which will be submitted in due course.

3. Application Proposals

- 3.1 This section of the statement sets out the proposed amendments to the planning permission 213587 for *“construction of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated landscaping”*, as approved on 15 September 2023.
- 3.2 These changes are broken down into amendments to the Main House and curtilage, within the red-line application site, located centrally within the Estate, and accessed via the existing main estate entrance off Culham Lane to the north; and amendments to the wider Landscape Masterplan for the Estate.

Main House

- 3.3 The Main House is to be the centrepiece of the Estate and is the most prominent building, however it is intended to integrate harmoniously within the wider landscape proposals. The executive architects Laplace, and delivery architects PB&Co, have undertaken a rigorous investigation of the design and function of the approved scheme by Fosters and Partners, which was originally designed almost 10 years ago for a previous owner.
- 3.4 The proposed amendments carry forward the overall design ethos, which was a composition of simple rectangular volumes: a 3-storey central block with front and back portico and two single-storey side wings, but provide refinement through further simplification and lightening of the appearance of the building within the landscape through detailing and material choices.
- 3.5 In addition, useability, deliverability and construction feasibility/practicality have been key considerations, to ensure that the building is designed for a long lifespan, and that its structure and configuration meets building regulation requirements.

Continuity with Approved Scheme

- 3.6 As noted above, the proposals seek to maintain the key principles of the approved scheme for the Estate's Main House. These continuity elements include:
- **Siting and Access** – the proposed dwelling is positioned in an almost identical central location within the Estate and within the red line application site (proposed elevations are all between 1.2m and 2.2m of the approved positions). It is approx. 200m west of the Kenton's Lane boundary and 170m east of the neighbouring Hamilton Estate boundary. The house is to be accessed via a similar driveway from the northern edge of the application site, leading to an arrival court, with ramped basement access to the east and west.
 - **Scale and Massing** – both the approved scheme and the proposal are configured as a main 2-storey volume, with a set-back second floor element, and two perpendicular single-storey wings, projecting to the north either side of the entrance courtyard. The maximum height is set at 108.75m AOD for both approved and proposed.
 - **Basement Space** – both approved and proposed iterations include a substantial basement area, accommodating parking, plant, operational, management and serving functions, and domestic leisure functions, with a tunnel connection to the approved Estate Management building, 150m east.
 - **Design and Materials** – the overall design ethos is carried forward as a stripped down contemporary take on a formal classical country house of the late 17th and early 18th Century, including a projecting porch, clad in stone, with glazed central atrium.

Proposal Summary

- 3.7 Beyond these core similarities, this Section 73 application proposes the following amendments from the approved Main House scheme (213587 approved 15/09/2023):
- **Minor increases to the above ground footprint and massing of the of 3-storey element of the house**, to facilitate revised internal space planning and accounting for increased external wall thickness for building regulations.
 - **Revised approach to design of second (top) floor element**, providing lightweight reflective materials, and reducing perceived massing.
 - **Subtle revisions to the main façade elevations**, incorporating more contemporary detailing, fenestration articulation, and references to domestic scale.
 - **Simplification and lightening of northern wing structures**, including reduction in height, design refinement, and removal of extensive and tall courtyard walls.
 - **Rationalisation of basement space to a single level**, including minor increase in basement area, reduction in depth, and internal reconfiguration for operational suitability.
 - **Installation of a section of sloping garden**, to create a secluded private garden area and to allow natural light into basement pool and gym area, to the west of the house.
 - **Revised, softer and less formal garden/curtilage design**, providing continuity with emerging landscape scheme and minimising hard features.
- 3.8 These elements are considered below in more detail, and in the context of the approved proposal.

Architecture

- 3.9 The proposal, as shown in the accompanying D&A update document by PB&Co, would result in a proportionate increase to the massing and footprint of the main element to accommodate internal spatial requirements identified through detailed design investigation.
- 3.10 Key drivers for the spatial requirements have been increases in external wall thickness to meet building/fire regulations, achieving separation and cohesiveness between front-of-house and back-of-house functions (typical of large estates such as this) throughout the whole house, and a thorough understanding of the internal plant requirements to operate a contemporary interpretation of a 'stately home', such as this.
- 3.11 As shown on the annotated comparison drawings in the accompanying document by PB&Co, this detailed design work results in the following proposed changes to the massing envelope of the building:
- 2.4m width increase (1.2m on each side) to the main 2-storey element of the building,
 - 3.5m flank length increase (2.2m to the north/front and 1.3m to the south/rear) of the of the main 2-storey element of the building;
 - 2.5m flank length increase to the top floor element (0.7m to the north/front and 1.8m to the south/rear), with the width retained as approved;
 - 0.5m reduction of 'shoulder' / parapet hight of main element;

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- 1.1m reduction in height of northern single storey wings; and
 - 4.6m reduction in length of northern wings.
- 3.12 Submitted drawings 1020 to 1023 also illustrate the above comparisons, showing the proposed elevations and an outline of the approved building envelope.
- 3.13 The revised approach to the second (top) floor element, proposes a mix of glazing and reflective panels, replacing the solid stone treatment of the approved scheme, resulting in a more refined and lightweight upper portion of the building.
- 3.14 Subtle revisions to the main façade elevations are proposed, incorporating more contemporary detailing, fenestration articulation and references to domestic scale. This includes inset bays for the fenestration running from plinth to cornice, a slimmer portico structure, and the addition of a simple inset first floor balcony within the central section of the rear elevation.
- 3.15 A similar approach to refinement has been taken to the northern wing structures. In addition to the reduction in massing as detailed above, the amended proposals include additional full-height glazed openings and further façade articulation to break up the massing of the relatively blank stone treatment of the approved scheme. The glazed links to the main element of the house are also elongated to provide further separation between the more solid structures of the house and wings.
- 3.16 As shown on the full flank elevation drawings (1021 and 1023), the extensive blank courtyard walls of the approved scheme that are almost 6m tall and extend over 40m north from each of the wing structures are proposed to be removed as part of the simplification, rationalisation and refinement of the proposals.

Basement Space

- 3.17 An application has recently been submitted to the LPA under Section 73, which proposes amended extent and envelope of the main house basement areas, including rationalisation to provide the majority of below ground space on a single level, rather than the multi-level basement as approved under planning application 213587. This application consolidates this element within the full set of proposed amendments.
- 3.18 The proposed Basement Plan PCY-PBC-MH-B1-DR-A-1009, effectively replaces the originally approved Basement Plan and Basement Mezzanine Plan, removing the mezzanine void area and bringing the internal space to a single level, including car parking to the north, back of house areas positioned centrally, living spaces to the south, and the pool and gym area to the west.
- 3.19 The proposed reconfiguration would result in parts of the basement extending beyond the as approved envelope, most notably to the west of the house, while the extent of the basement area would be reduced to the south of the house. In elevation and section, the overall depth and maximum depth would also be reduced.
- 3.20 These proposed changes result in an increase in floor area of approximately 260sqm (GEA), equivalent to an increase of less than 5% to the basement area. This increase is principally as a result of a detailed investigation of the plant space requirements.

Landscaped Garden Area

- 3.21 The revised proposal for the main house has been designed alongside a fully integrated detailed landscape scheme by Marcus Barnett Studio. This scheme brings the naturalistic approach to landscape from the Estate-wide masterplan, into the immediate curtilage of the main house, reducing the amount

of ornamental hard features and hard surfacing, reorienting the 'private' garden area to the more secluded western side of the house, and integrating the more prominent southern area with the open parkland to the south.

- 3.22 This integrated proposal includes a sloped private garden to the west of the house, which would provide a glazed lower-ground frontage to the internal swimming pool. The proposed location is considered to be the most secluded and private area around the main house, with tree screening to the west, and is therefore considered appropriate for a more private garden function.
- 3.23 The proposed landscape design for the curtilage is shown on drawing PCY-MBS-MH-PL-DR-L-1001, to highlight how this design approach will help to soften the presence of the house, and better integrate it within the parkland setting.
- 3.24 In particular, the approved scheme includes extensive hard surfacing materials within the arrival court, very large shallow stone ornamental pools surrounding the house, and a network of substantial patio and courtyard areas. It is estimated that the amended proposals deliver a reduction of approximately 5,000sqm of 'hard' landscaping features within the curtilage (red line area) when compared to the approved proposal (a reduction of over 50%).

Landscape Masterplan

- 3.25 The Main House planning permission approved drawings include an approved Landscape Masterplan (051_1101), covering the wider Strowdes Estate. This ties together the approved areas of built form with a network of Estate tracks, areas of new planting, waterbodies, and landscape contouring.

Continuity with Approved Scheme

- 3.26 The proposed Landscape Masterplan (PCY-MBS-ZZ-PL-DR-L-100) retains and adapts a number of the approved elements including the feature waterbody within the northern area of the site, a generally similar arrangement of internal tracks and access points, retention of existing trees and wooded areas, supplemented with substantial new planting, and retaining the open and undeveloped southern sloped portion of the Estate.

Proposal Summary

- 3.27 The proposed Masterplan includes the following main revisions:
- **More naturalistic approach to the landscape design of the northern part of the estate**, ensuring gradual contouring, and a less formal estate road layout, better reflecting the historic setting.
 - **Revised approach to tree planting**, including relocation of planted Allée trees, and establishment of new woodland areas around the main house.
 - **Provision of a single and larger pond in place of the approved split ponds**, which will create opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, and water management benefits.
- 3.28 The Masterplan also indicates an aspiration for a new main entrance to the Estate from Culham Lane, and a relocated Gatehouse, however these elements are subject to separate approval.

Naturalistic Approach

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- 3.29 The Applicant recognises that any works to alter the landscape must be carefully designed due to the majority of the site being designated within the wider Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, the remainder being within the setting of the asset, and the entire site being within the Green Belt.
- 3.30 During determination of the extant consents, it was established that the sloping lower half of the estate (south of the main house) is more sensitive to change than the relatively flat upper half (north of the main house).
- 3.31 Consequently, the amended Landscape Masterplan seeks to contain the proposed works and amendments primarily to the northern half of the site, with a view to preserving the most sensitive elements of the Registered Park and Garden and the openness of the Green Belt.
- 3.32 The revised Masterplan for the Estate, is a modern interpretation of the design principles established by landscape architect Lancelot "Capability" Brown in the mid to late 18th Century, moving away from more formal and ornamental 17th Century landscapes and towards more natural, practical (manageable), and functional English estates of the later period.

Waterbodies

- 3.33 The need for multiple waterbodies to the north of the main house in the form of two substantial ponds/lakes was required due to the location of underground services which run east to west across the site. The design team have since agreed a diversion strategy for these services, creating the opportunity for a single waterbody which will provide significant ecological and drainage benefits, while being better integrated within a more naturalistic landscape strategy.
- 3.34 The proposed enlarged lake is sited in the centre of the northern half of the site, similar to the approved position. However, the proposed form extends further to the west, and is combined with a revised main approach to the house that follows the organic plan form of the lake and reinterprets the allée approach as less rigid and formal.

Trees and Woodland

- 3.35 The approved landscape scheme would necessitate the replanting of the formal allée of trees due to the previous planting locations being mis-aligned with the approved Main House footprint and closer to the western site boundary.
- 3.36 This provides an opportunity to transplant and disperse the allée trees throughout the site and to introduce a revised, more naturalistic planting strategy which is considered to deliver a landscape enhancement beyond the approved scheme.
- 3.37 This will be supplemented with additional areas of denser woodland planting to the east and west of the main house, and to the east of the lake, which would be similar in scale and coverage to the existing ancient woodland clumps within the southern slopes. Further tree planting is provided along the Estate tracks and boundary areas.

Access

- 3.38 As noted above, the Estate tracks are proposed to be reconfigured, but following a similar functional hierarchy, including a curved main access drive to the house from the north, routing to the west of the lake, and joining the red line application site for the Main House in the same location as the approved. This is proposed to replace the approved formal allée configured in a straight line.
- 3.39 A proposed eastern management/maintenance track, broadly follows the eastern Estate boundary in a similar alignment to the approved. It joins the as approved Estate management access points on

Kenton's Lane, with a minor amendment to the alignment at the northern site boundary of the Estate Management Building.

- 3.40 There is an aspiration to relocate the as approved gatehouse (located within the 'pinch point' between the northern and central areas of the Estate) to establish a new main Estate access from Culham Lane to the north, which is considered to be logical and will better reflect the gatehouse's role from an estate security perspective. This is indicated on the amended Masterplan, however, it is made clear that this both these elements will need to be separately approved.

4. Planning Assessment

- 4.1 This Section considers the key planning considerations, in the context of the Development Plan Framework, and the baseline provided by the 2023 planning permission for the Main House and Landscape Masterplan.
- 4.2 The relevant policy framework includes the Wokingham Borough Development Plan, formed by the 2010 Core Strategy (CS), and the 2014 Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan. Consideration is also given to the emerging Local Plan Update, which was submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2025, and is to be subject to Examination from November 2025. It is therefore afforded some weight in decision making. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last subject to a significant update in December 2024, and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance is also an important material consideration.

Principle of Development (Green Belt)

- 4.3 The MMD Policy TB01 (Development within the Green Belt) essentially defers to the NPPF's Green Belt policy under Chapter 13, which seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development (most types of development aside from a limited range of exceptions), unless there are very special circumstances, and maintain the key facets of the Green Belt including its open character. Part 3 of TB01 also includes provisions for limited scale extensions of dwellings in the Green Belt. Emerging Local Plan Update Policy SS6 does not fundamentally alter the LPA's policy approach to the Green Belt.
- 4.4 The principle of development of a new house including a substantial basement element at the application site has been established through a number of previous planning permissions, including the original outline permission 0/2008/1353, subsequent reserved matters approvals in 2010 and 2011, and a further proposal that secured planning permission in 2018 (173097), which was re-submitted in 2023, forming the basis of the most recent permission.
- 4.5 Notwithstanding this, impact on the openness of the Green Belt has been a key consideration in the planning history of the site and the wider Park Place Estate. When assessing the proposal in 2023, the LPA concluded that the approx. 10,800m³ Main House, still resulted in a substantial reduction in volume from the position in 2008, and this, together with the wider landscape enhancements, remained sufficient to justify the proposal in Green Belt Policy terms.
- 4.6 As detailed in the preceding section, the amended proposals for the Main House include relatively minor increases in massing in the form of an enlarged footprint to the main 3-storey element. While there are height reductions to some elements of the building, and reductions in footprint to the wings, the overall massing increase of the house when compared to the approved proposal is estimated at 1,600m³ or 12%.
- 4.7 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) elaborates on the NPPF's approach to development in the Green Belt, advising that impact on Green Belt openness can be considered in terms of a combination of factors, including spatial impact, visual impact, and the intensity of use. As a result, a pure quantitative volumetric increase, does not automatically result in a greater impact on openness, and it is appropriate to undertake a finer grain assessment considering the detail of proposals and their context.
- 4.8 As noted above, it is considered that the proposed increases in massing to the main portion of the house would be balanced by a series of factors:

- The proposed amendments omit the solid stone material treatment to the upper floor level of the house, and propose replacement with glazing and reflective panelling, to provide a lightweight element of the building that softens its impact on the open setting.
- The approved main house design also includes predominantly stone clad northern wings, which are attached to almost 6m high courtyard walls, extending some 40m further north of the buildings, creating an enclosed courtyard. The amended proposals reduce the height and footprint of the wings, introduce a more articulated lightweight structural approach with increased glazing, and separation to the main element of the house, and also dispense with the extensive and dominant courtyard walls.
- Similarly, the revised approach to the landscape design around the house significantly reduces the amount of hard surfacing and unnatural ornamental features, in favour of green space and planted areas. It is estimated that there will be a reduction of approximately 5,000sqm of 'hard' landscaping features. This enhancement has both a visual and spatial component.

4.9 These factors are considered to reduce the visual impact of the proposal in terms of Green Belt openness, so that when considered alongside the increase in spatial impact, the amended proposal would result in an impact on openness that is not materially greater than the approved position.

4.10 In the context of the approved proposal, which provides a baseline for consideration, the proposed changes to the building are considered to be relatively minor, and in the majority of cases, provide enhancements that will reduce physical and visual impact. The amended proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local and National Green Belt Policy.

Heritage Impact

4.11 Wokingham Managing Development Delivery DPD Policy TB24 (Designated Heritage Assets) requires that works affecting heritage assets and their setting, at least conserve and where possible enhance the important character and special architectural interest of the asset. Emerging Policy DH5 (the Historic Environment) seeks to bring forward this requirement. It also expands on the process to achieve this aim, requiring proposals to provide a proportionate heritage assessment. In addition, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF's Chapter 16 (paras 212-215), provide further policy tests in the event that harm to designated heritage assets is identified.

4.12 The 2023 Officer's Report to the approved application 213587 notes that there were no objections from Historic England, Berkshire Gardens Trust, WBC Built Heritage, or Berkshire Archaeology.

4.13 This amendment application is accompanied by a Heritage Assessment of the proposed amendments by Asset Heritage. This was informed by visits to the site in June and September 2025, it considers the site's context within the surrounding landscape and heritage assets, noting the following:

- Due to the distance and intervening landscape features and dense vegetation, the significance of the Park Place Registered Park & Garden (RPG) as a designated heritage asset is the only relevant heritage consideration, with no visual relationship between the site and other assets;
- The RPG is of architectural interest for its development from the 18th century as a landscape garden and substantial estate around a significant country house, and includes naturalistic features such as lakes, woodland and parkland, with varied topography;
- A range of built features are present, including built changes in topography, such as grottos and bridges, which are considered characteristic features of the Park Place RPG; and

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- The grant of planning permission for a new house and associated buildings fundamentally alters the historic character of this part of the site, which was formerly peripheral parkland to the wider Park Place Estate.

4.14 The Asset Heritage Report then goes on to consider the scope of the proposed amendments and undertake an impact assessment, drawing the following conclusions on individual elements and the proposals as a whole:

- **Massing and footprint** – changes are minimal, with the overall design composition of the approved scheme being largely unchanged, as a stripped-down modern take on a classical country house. It remains a substantial house designed with classical principles, to be constructed in the approved location. In the context of the existing consent, these changes are of limited importance in heritage terms. While the house will be slightly wider than that consented, this is considered a minimal change, with the two designs clearly being in the same order of magnitude, in terms of scale and massing;
- **Upper Floor Materials** - The proposed lightweight upper floor element is considered an improvement over the *“solid stone...somewhat heavy, fortress-like appearance”* of the approved upper floor element. While more contemporary, the proposal is consistent with the broad design ethos of the building, and in comparison with the consented scheme, the use of lightweight materials succeeds in identifying the second floor as part of the roofscape, creating a more harmonious relationship with the main body of the building.
- **Elevational Details** – The elevational changes exhibit improvements in detailing. This is a refined, *“more effective”* approach to articulation and fenestration through the plinth to cornice inset bays on the principal elevation, compared to the punch-hole windows of the consented scheme.
- **Sunken Garden** – This feature is placed in a discreet position between the house and northern tree belt/boundary and is a contemporary take on the tradition of grottos and similar features in the RPG. The formation of pleasure grounds around the house and the cut-away sunken garden is considered: in keeping with landscape design of the Edwardian and Victorian periods; a characteristic feature of the Park Place RPG as a built levels change; and discrete, not being experienced beyond the immediate surroundings.
- **Conclusion on Built Form** – No harm is identified to the significance of the RPG through these changes to the massing and elevational treatment, or garden design of the consented country house.
- **Landscape Masterplan** - The revised approach to landscape design draws directly on the principles of the mid-late 18th century, which underpinned the development of the wider Park Place Estate. The formal, tree-lined avenues of the consented scheme, including the long allée onto the house, have been replaced with a curving pathway, following a topographical scheme designed to appear natural. This facilitates a curving gradual reveal of the main house, around the serpentine lake. This is considered a material improvement on the landscape masterplan submitted with the approved scheme on the basis that it gives full consideration to the historic form, character, and development of Park Place and this site’s role within that.
- **Conclusion on Landscape Design** – When compared to the consented scheme, which sought a more formal approach, the revised proposals are a marked enhancement to the RPG.

4.15 Taken as a whole, the assessment concludes that the proposed amendments to the existing consent would not result in any harm to what is significant about the RPG and, in relation to the landscaping

proposals, would represent an enhancement to its significant historic character over the approved scheme. As such, the Assessment considers that there is no reason in built heritage terms to withhold consent for the proposed amendments.

- 4.16 The proposed amendments are therefore considered to satisfy Wokingham Managing Development Delivery DPD Policy TB24 (Designated Heritage Assets) and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 4.17 The NPPF 187 part (a) requires that valued landscapes are protected and enhanced. The MDD Policy TB21 (Landscape Character) echoes this requirement, while also referencing the need to address the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Emerging Local Plan Policy NE6 (Valued Landscapes) also seek to ensure that within the Borough's valued landscapes development should have regard to its key attributes, including quality and rarity.
- 4.18 The 2023 Officer's Report to the approved application 213587 notes that there were no objections from WBC Trees and Landscape, or Berkshire Gardens Trust.
- 4.19 The amended proposal is accompanied by an updated Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Appraisal by Bradley-Hole Schoenaich Landscape Architects (BHSLA). The document summarises the appraisal methodology as: a review of policy and designations; analysis of topography and establishment of a zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) informed by a desk based assessment and desk-based appraisal and site visits in September and October 2025; assessment of landscape character of the site and its sensitivity to change; identification of viewpoints and their sensitivity; and consideration of potential likely landscape and visual effects that might result from the development.
- 4.20 The document considers the site context, acknowledging the location within the Grade II* Listed RPG, and within the Chiltern Chalk Valued Landscape, an area recognized for its high scenic and historic landscape quality. It highlights that the Valued Landscape incorporates two Landscape Character Areas (LCA), which are: D1 'Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes' and E1 'Remenham Arable Chalk Pasture' as categorised in the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (WBLCA) (2019).
- 4.21 The document clarifies that the Main House application site lies within the Remenham Arable Chalk Plateau, and that the parkland area to the south, lies within the adjacent Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes. It highlights that the former area has a moderate sensitivity to change, with the overall strategy being to enhance the existing character.
- 4.22 The on-site appraisal highlights that the Estate is enclosed behind a well-maintained 3.5m high beech hedge, set within a mature landscape of deciduous and evergreen trees that provide substantial enclosure. Considered in the context of the local topography, the site is very well screened from surrounding public and private viewpoints, including the road network and public rights of way, together with the remainder of the RPG.
- 4.23 Moving on to evaluation of the proposals, the LVA concludes that:
- there is very limited visual connection between the Site and the surrounding landscape character area. It considers that construction activities are expected to result in some temporary adverse noise effects within areas closest to the Site. However, at greater distances, these effects would diminish significantly due to the minimal visual and acoustic connectivity.
 - the development will slightly reduce openness in the midsection of the parkland, but this area is visually contained within the Estate and already has a more enclosed character.

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- The development will not affect the Registered Parks and Gardens of Park Place and Temple Combe. The addition of a new 'dower house' follows the historic pattern of incremental change within historic parks, reflecting a natural and historically consistent evolution.
 - The proposed Landscape Masterplan will safeguard and enhance the Valued Landscapes, aligning with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 174(a).

4.24 On the above basis, it is considered that the proposed amendments mean that the scheme remains in accordance with the requirements of Policy TB21 (Landscape Character), and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

Other Matters

4.25 The red line application site is centrally located within the wider Estate ownership, and while there are physical environmental constraints in the wider estate area (including existing and protected trees, ecological habitats, neighbouring dwellings, flooding and drainage, and interaction with the surrounding highways network), the specific application site is relatively unconstrained in these terms, as open grassland.

4.26 Neither the proposed changes in basement extent, nor the increase in massing, are not considered to create any additional impacts on these factors, many of which are already covered by conditions to ensure that these elements are adequately mitigated or managed.

4.27 A written scheme of archaeological investigation has already been agreed with the Council, which involves trenching of the broader site, including elements of the main house basement, while we have provided a brief updated flood risk addendum as part of this amendment application, which confirms that the proposals would not alter the flood risk position at the site. Similarly, construction management documentation has been submitted to ensure that transport, amenity and ecological impacts can be appropriately managed as the development progresses.

4.28 The proposal is therefore considered to satisfy Wokingham Managing Development Delivery DPD Policies CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping), CC09 (Development and Flood Risk), TB23 (Biodiversity and Development), and TB25 (Archaeology), and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

5. Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 This Section 73 Variation of Condition application principally seeks to amend the approved documents as listed under Condition 2 of the planning permission 213587 for “*construction of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated landscaping*”, at the Strowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham, as approved on 15 September 2023.
- 5.2 The new owner and design team are aiming to restore an active estate function to this parkland setting, and provide an enhancement in terms of architecture, landscape, and biodiversity, while also ensuring that the scheme is both deliverable in the short-term, and operationally fit for purpose in the long-term.
- 5.3 Rather than wholesale changes, the proposed amendments include series of refinements to the architecture and landscape treatment within the immediate curtilage of the house, together with an update to the Estate-wide Landscape Masterplan, which proposes a more naturalistic approach to the design of the Estate grounds.
- 5.4 Continuity is provided by: almost identical siting of the house centrally within Estate, configuration as a main 2-storey block, with a set-back second floor element, and two perpendicular single-storey wings; an overall design ethos of a stripped down contemporary take on a formal classical stone country house with a substantial basement; and a landscape masterplan that includes a prominent waterbody, retention of existing trees and woodland, supplemented with substantial new planting, and retention of the open and undeveloped southern sloped portion of the Estate.
- 5.5 Beyond these core similarities, this Section 73 application proposes the following amendments with reference to the approved Main House scheme (213587 approved 15/09/2023):

Proposed Amendments	
Main House	Minor increases to the above ground footprint and massing of the of 3-storey element of the house , to facilitate revised internal space planning and accounting for increased external wall thickness for building regulations.
	Revised approach to second (top) floor element , providing lightweight reflective materials, and therefore reducing perceived massing.
	Subtle revisions to the main façade elevations , incorporating more contemporary detailing, fenestration articulation, and references to domestic scale.
	Simplification and lightening of northern wing structures , including reduction in height and length, design refinement, and removal of extensive and tall courtyard walls.
	Rationalisation of basement space to a single level , including minor increase in basement area, reduction in depth, and internal reconfiguration for operational suitability
	Installation of a section of sloping garden , to create a secluded private garden area and to allow natural light into basement pool and gym area.
	Revised, softer and less formal garden/curtilage design , minimising hard features and providing continuity with emerging landscape scheme.
	Minor increases to the above ground footprint and massing of the of 3-storey element of the house , to facilitate revised internal space planning and accounting for increased external wall thickness for building regulations.

**Landscape
Masterplan**

More naturalistic approach to the landscape design of the northern part of the estate, ensuring gradual contouring, and a less formal estate road layout, better reflecting the historic setting.

Revised approach to tree planting, including relocation of planted Allée trees, an increase in overall tree planting, and establishment of new woodland areas around the main house.

Provision of a single and larger pond in place of the approved split ponds, which will create opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, and water management.

Note: the Masterplan indicates an aspiration for a new main entrance to the Estate from Culham Lane, and a relocated Gatehouse, however these elements are subject to separate approval.

- 5.6 Ultimately, it is considered that the majority of the proposed changes have a neutral to positive impact on planning considerations.
- 5.7 The updated Heritage Assessment by Asset Heritage concludes that there would be no harm to the Registered Park and Garden (RPG) as a result of the proposed amendments, highlighting enhancements in terms of the detailed design and material treatments of the house, and a marked enhancement to the significance of the (RPG) as a result of the revised more naturalistic approach to the Landscape Masterplan.
- 5.8 In terms of visual impact (relevant to both landscape character and Green Belt openness), the increase in massing of the main part of the house, would generate a small degree of additional impact. However, the updated Landscape Visual Appraisal by BHSLA confirms that this would only be experienced within the site, rather than from any public rights of way, nearby dwellings, or from the wider Registered Park and Garden, and would therefore would protect and enhance the wider valued landscape area in line with policy requirements.
- 5.9 In Green Belt policy terms, the overall increase in massing of the building creates a degree of additional spatial (or volumetric) impact on openness. However, refinements to the design including the use of reflective/transparent materials at the upper level, the removal of the substantial courtyard enclosure, and a substantial reduction in hard landscape features surrounding the house in favour of enhanced planting combine to soften and reduce the visual impact of the house on openness in particular, resulting in no material change to impact on the Green Belt when compared to the approved version of the house.
- 5.10 It is considered that all other planning and environmental considerations can be resolved within the scope of the existing conditions, some of which have already been progressed in preparation for initial enabling and construction work (archaeology, construction environmental management and ecology, drainage, and landscape details).
- 5.11 On the above basis, the proposed amendments sought under this Section 73 application are considered to result in no material impacts over and above those already considered acceptable when permission 213587 was granted in September 2023.

Appendix I

Site Location Plan

Avison Young

St Catherine's Court, Berkeley Place, Bristol BS8 1BQ

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Relevant Information:
This document shall be read in conjunction with the following:

28.10.2020	PCY	MH	Main House Planning Submission	DB
13.10.2020	PCY	MH	Shrodes Garden Planning	DB
Date	Rev	Description	App. by	

pb+co.
Pexton Bradbury + Co Architects

Project Title:
Project Conway

Drawing Title:
Main House Site Plan

Scale	1:2500	@ A0
Code	PCY	

Drawing No:	PCY-PBC-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1001	PD2
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Drawing Notes
Indicative landscape scheme shown, subject to separate details.
Any hardstanding beyond Planning Boundary it is subject to separate approval.

General Notes:
1. All dimensions are to be checked on site prior to construction.
2. Use figured dimensions only. Do not scale from drawings.
3. Discrepancies between drawings are to be reported to the Site Agent / Contract Administrator immediately.
4. All Levels unless stated otherwise are above Ordnance datum (AOD).
5. Construction issue drawings are to be read in conjunction with the Package Summary Document

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