

PLANNING REF : 252407
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Apartment 10 North Court
: The Ridges, Finchampstead, Berkshire
: RG40 3SJ
SUBMITTED BY : Dr Rebecca Khanna
DATE SUBMITTED : 21/06/2026

COMMENTS:

1. Introduction

1.1 I strongly object to this application.

1.2 North Court is an historic Victorian estate dating from the late 1850s and forms an important part of Finchampstead's heritage. 1.3 During the twentieth century North Court was home to the Bramwell Booth sisters, descendants of the founder of the Salvation Army, and it remains an important part of Finchampstead's history.

1.4 My objection is based on the impact this proposal would have on the historic character and setting of North Court. In my view, the proposal would introduce an entirely new dwelling into the grounds of an historic estate dating from the 1850s, changing the nature of the estate, diminishing its setting and contributing to its gradual urbanisation. The significance of North Court is not confined to the buildings themselves.

2. The Historic Character of North Court

2.1 Following the fire which destroyed the original manor house, North Court underwent significant redevelopment. However, the estate retained its identity as a distinct historic estate centred around the Main House, the Coach House and the Lodge.

2.2 Today these three buildings form the historic core of North Court and continue to define its character and appearance.

2.3 The significance of North Court is not confined to the buildings themselves. It also lies in the space around them, the mature trees, the landscaped setting and the long-established relationship between the principal estate buildings.

2.4 It is this combination of buildings, landscape and setting that makes North Court a distinctive and historically important part of Finchampstead.

2.5 The open land between and around these buildings is not incidental. It forms part of the historic estate setting and contributes to the sense of space and separation that characterises North Court.

3. Impact of the Proposed Development

3.1 My principal objection is that this proposal is not the redevelopment of an existing building. It is the construction of an entirely new dwelling within the grounds of a historic estate.

3.2 The proposed dwelling would introduce a substantial new building into an area that has historically remained open.

3.3 For well over a century North Court has been defined by three buildings: Main House, the Coach House and the Lodge. This proposal would add an entirely new building, which has no historic connection

to the estate.

3.4 In my view, this would alter the character of North Court estate and surroundings.

3.5 This may appear to be a single dwelling, but it would represent a further step away from the historic form of the estate. In my view, the proposal does not respect the character, history or setting of North Court.

3.6 Once built, this development cannot be undone. The loss of part of the estate setting would be permanent and the historic character of North Court would be diminished for future generations.

4. Impact on Landscape and Wildlife

4.1 North Court remains a unique and attractive estate characterised by mature trees, established planting and a rich variety of wildlife.

4.2 The construction of a substantial new dwelling, together with associated parking, substantive vehicle movements and residential activity, would inevitably change the character of this part of the estate.

4.3 This is a countryside location and the proposal would place further pressure on the trees, hedgerows, shrubs and wildlife habitats that contribute to the character of the estate and are valued by local residents and visitors alike.

4.4 The loss of openness and increased activity would have a detrimental effect on the landscape setting that currently form part of North Court's character.

5. Access and Traffic

5.1 Additional residential traffic, service vehicles and construction traffic would intensify and place further pressure on the access arrangements within the North Court estate.

6. Drainage and Infrastructure

6.1 The application does not fully explain how foul water, surface water drainage and other services will be provided.

6.2 Given the current limited drainage infrastructure in the surrounding area, this information is essential before the impact of the development can be properly assessed.

6.3 Until this information is provided, it is difficult to understand the effect that the proposal may have on neighboring properties, including North Court.

7. Conclusion

7.1 North Court is an historic Victorian estate dating from the 1850s whose significance derives not only from its buildings but also from its setting and history.

7.2 The proposed development would introduce an entirely new dwelling into the grounds of that estate. In my view, this would change the historic core of the existing estate.

7.3 This proposal is not the redevelopment of an existing building. It is a new build. As such, it would contribute to the gradual urbanisation of the estate.

7.4 Once built, this change cannot be undone. In my view it would result in the gradual erosion of an historic estate that remains an important part of Finchampstead's heritage. For that reason, I strongly object and I respectfully request that Planning Application 252407 be refused.