

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**ERECTION OF A REPLACEMENT DWELLING AT
THE LODGE, 178 BEARWOOD ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG41 4SH**

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prepared by

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LPC (Trull) Ltd**

Our Reference: SWLC.LPC6209

December 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 LPC (Trull) Ltd have been instructed on behalf of Mrs Kay and Mr Sanders to support their planning application for the erection of a replacement dwelling as their family home, known as The Lodge, 178 Bearwood Road, Wokingham, RG41 4SH.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to be read in conjunction with the following plans and relate documentation.

641-03-01 Location Plan

641-03-02 EX Block Plan

641-03-03 EX Site Plan

641-03-04 EX Lower Ground Floor Plan

641-03-05 EX Upper Ground Floor Plan

641-03-06 EX Roof Plan

641-03-07 EX Elevations

641-03-08 PR Block Plan

641-03-10 PR Ground Floor Plan

641-03-09 PR Site Plan

641-03-10 PR Ground Floor Plan

641-03-11 PR First Floor Plan

641-03-12 PR Roof Plan

641-03-14 PR Elevations

641-03-18 PR Landscaping Concept Plan

641-03-Design and Access Statement prepared by Artel31

Whole life carbon assessment prepared by Artel31

Drainage Strategy (including Drawing No DO3) prepared by tumu

Preliminary Ecological Assessment prepared by Ellendale Environmental

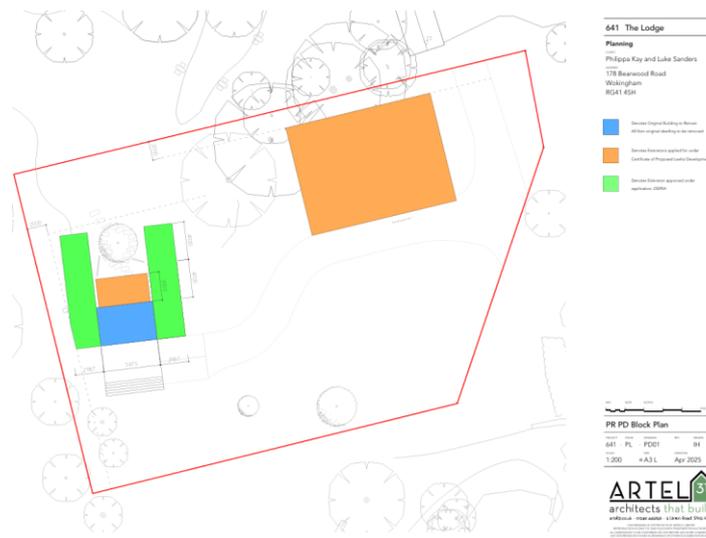
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment documentation prepared by Ellendale Environmental

Arboricultural Statement prepared by LandArb Solutions

- 1.3 The application proposal will be described in context and by reference to the relevant national and local planning policies. It will be shown that the proposal has been carefully designed ensuring the resulting property will be sensitively assimilated as a proportionate and acceptable change.

2.0 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The planning history relevant to the enclosed application is explained below. Contextually, I have also reviewed other nearby developments that underpin a consistency of approach.
- 2.2 Most recently, an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness regarding the erection of a two-storey rear extension (following the demolition of existing additions), together with the installation of dormers and the erection of a detached outbuilding was refused (LPA Reference 252054). It is noteworthy that the officer's delegated report and narrative reason for refusal helpfully explains that the refusal was triggered solely by reference to the proposed outbuilding which was not 'considered to be incidental or subordinate to the main dwellinghouse given its excessive size and, moreover, that the scale of uses/facilities contained therein have not been demonstrated to be reasonably required'.
- 2.3 It follows therefore that the potential extensions and alterations to the dwellinghouse, as shown at the top of the following page, are permitted development. Additionally, as the courts have held that the nature of the use of and the scale of the use in the context of incidental enjoyment of a dwellinghouse is a matter for objective assessment the Certificate of Lawfulness refusal does not represent an embargo on an alternative and presumably smaller structure. As a matter of fact, therefore the existing dwelling still benefits from its rights at Part 1, Class E to the GDPO, which is a material consideration.



- 2.4 Prior to the above submission an application for the prior approval for the erection of 2 No. single storey rear extensions, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 7.98m, for which the maximum height would be 4.00m and the height of the eaves 3.80m was agreed by application 250954.
- 2.5 Prior to the above applications a Certificate of Lawfulness was also approved by application 242499 to confirm the use of the associated incidental residential garden land. The enclosed application of course is restricted to the evidenced lawful residential plot.
- 2.6 Over and above the established development parameters addressed by the planning history outlined above, directly relevant to the current application is the pre-application submission (LPA Reference 242591), regarding the erection of a replacement dwelling for The Lodge. The response received on 8th December 2024 raised the following key issues and development parameters.
- The site is located outside the settlement boundary and in the countryside. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy does not permit development outside of development limits unless, within, inter alia, the following criteria.
 - '5 In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must
 - i) Bring about environmental improvements; or

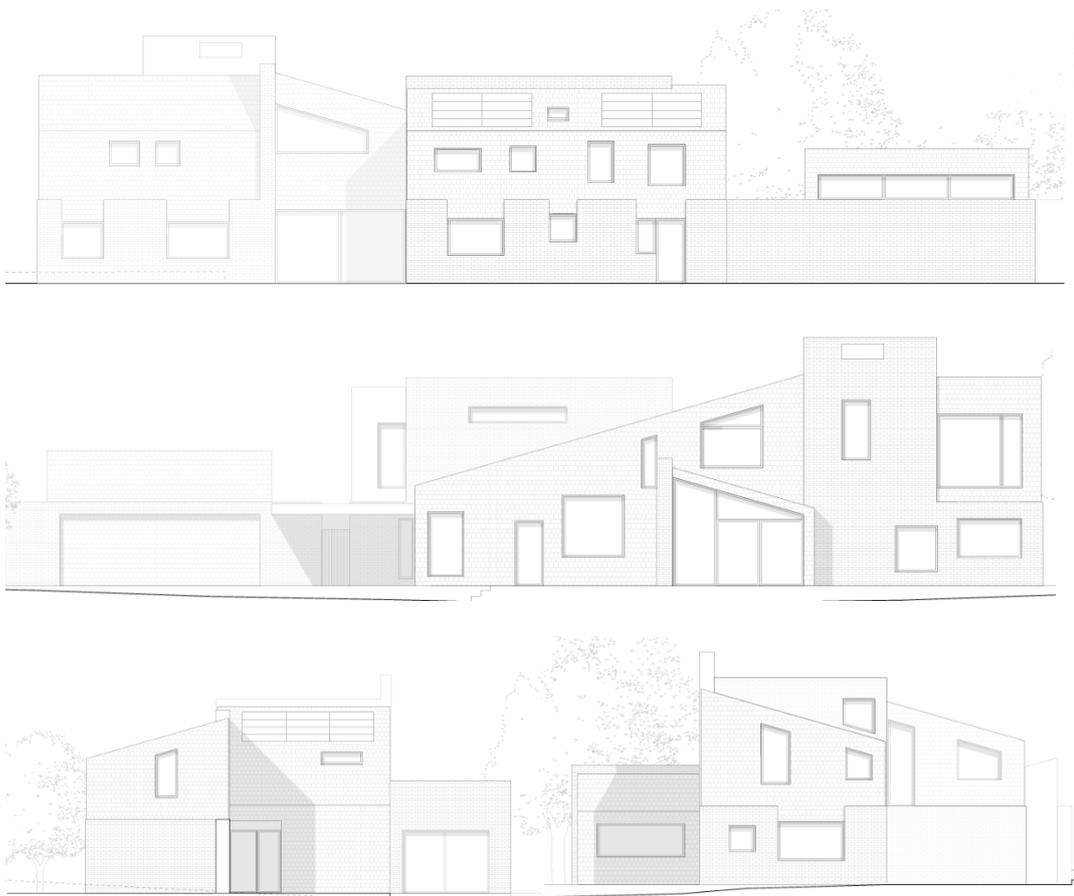
ii) Not result in inappropriate increase in scale, form or footprint of the original building'

- The WBC design guide under RD11 clarifies the footprint of a building is an indication of its size. 'Generally, the footprint of a replacement dwelling should not be significantly larger than that of the existing dwelling. Additionally, a 50% increase in volume only is appropriate'.
- Notwithstanding that items i) and ii) reproduced above are not both applicable interdependently, the pre-application response indicated, 'it would be expected that any formal application explains how the proposal would bring about significant environmental improvements in respect of lowering carbon emissions produced by the site as well as securing the long-term functionality of the site in response to climate change.
- Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy refers to maintaining or enhancing the high quality of the environment.
- Policy CP3 states that development should be of 'an appropriate scale of activity, mass layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life'.
- The site is located in the countryside, off Bearwood Road, and opposite the Local Wildlife Site known as 'Bearwood Estate Woods and Lakes'. The site is surrounded by woodland and populated by individual trees and a garden orchard. The site is protected by a Woodland TPO (0087/1978). An area of Priority Habitat consisting of improved grassland and a traditional orchard covers part of the site.
- The site is located in Area L1 'Bearwood and Gravel Hills of the Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment which is a high quality landscape of moderate sensitivity and a limited capacity for change.
- R12 of the WBC Design Guide states that boundary treatments should contribute positively to the character of the area.
- An up-to-date Ecological Appraisal with a UK Habs habitat plan and further species and habitat surveys must be provided together with habitat and species mitigation and management strategies. The latest

version of Statutory Biodiversity Metric must be completed in line with the latest guidance; a degradation statement and UK Habitats habitat plans should be provided too.

- Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require sustainable design and conservation, and R21 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that new development contribute to environmental sustainability and the mitigation of climate change. A Sustainability Statement should form part of the Design and Access Statement/Planning Statement and should include measures related to water, drainage, energy and carbon emissions in accordance with Policies CC04.
- It should consider building design that takes advantage of sunlight and uses recycled or sustainable building materials, building insulation, energy efficient and water saving appliances (such as an energy efficient gas-powered boiler), photovoltaic panels, compost facilities and cycle storage as well as water butts and soak-aways for rainwater reuse, permeable car parking surfaces and maximisation of soft landscaping for natural infiltration
- Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding. The site and access thereto is located within Flood Zone 1 and the proposal represents no additional flood risk or vulnerability. It is therefore acceptable in terms of Policy CC09.
- Policy CC10 of the MDD Local Plan requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow. Foul drainage will discharge into an existing foul network while surface water runoff will be managed via SuDS. Council's Drainage Engineer has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection, subject to full details of the drainage system via a pre commencement condition. It is therefore acceptable in terms of Policy CC10.
- R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD notes that parking spaces in front gardens must be paved with permeable surfaces to avoid any increase in surface water runoff and should include for soft landscaping. This is applied by condition.

2.7 Details of the pre-application plans submitted are inserted on the following page, and further to which, based on the key issues identified above it was concluded that the proposal constituted an inappropriate increase of volume and mass/built form on the site in comparison to the original dwelling. The piecemeal design of the building together with the sprawling layout would have a harmful impact on the character of the area by reason of the significant increase in built form, garden, curtilage, hard surfacing and walls. Additionally, The BNG Assessment and Ecology and Biodiversity Statement demonstrated that the development proposals would not comply with CP11. The landscaping proposed would not bring about environmental improvements either and would expand development away from the original building and encroach on biodiversity habitat and habitat which supports wild fauna.



2.7 Over and above the planning background outlined above, and which has informed the scope of the formal planning application enclosed, I indicated earlier that attention should be given to the nature of development permitted

nearby that helps to demonstrate the area's sensitivities and capability to accommodate change, evidenced by the large, detached properties that define the area. Indeed, the surrounding detached housing defines the local distinctiveness and context. These points are well captured in the architect's Design Statement, and consequently, for ease of reference I have simply duplicated the information therein to highlight the degree of changes and scale approved.

148 Bearwood Road, planning reference: 192473, Floor Area = 265m² and Volume = 1,890m³ increased by 32%

174 Bearwood Road, planning reference: 141362, Floor Area = 540m² and Volume = 1,680m³.

176 Bearwood Road, planning reference: 223742, Floor Area = 322m² and Volume = 1,043m³.



2.8 It should be noted that with regard to No 178 an appeal was recently allowed for the erection of 1No four bedroomed dwelling, as a replacement and which varied application ref- 242719. Much appeared to centre on the disputed impact of the physical changes to the approved development. Despite finding that the site and surrounding area should be regarded as a valued landscape

in terms of paragraph 187 of the Framework, the Inspector recognised at paragraph 17 that the site is an integral part of the surrounding landscape and the area of protected deciduous trees and rhododendron along the frontage that contribute positively to it, but that it would not be adversely impacted. In the following paragraph it is concluded that the development would, 'extend built form into a part of the garden which is currently predominantly covered by hardstanding, lawn, rhododendron and ornamental bushes, and as such it would not unduly encroach into open countryside. Consistent with the guidance in the 'Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document' (2012), the dwelling would relate well to its immediate residential context.' Furthermore, and also relevant to the enclosed application, the Inspector noted that the absence of visibility does not mean the absence of harm, but concluded at paragraph 20 that, 'views of the dwelling would be largely screened by the mature landscaping and rhododendrons along the site frontage. Existing views along the distinctive 'Rhododendron Drive', which contributes to Bearwood Road's secluded character, would not substantively change. I acknowledge that the retention of this landscaping cannot be ensured in perpetuity, but I can see no reason why it would be removed given it provides privacy and reduces noise from the busy road.'

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Having considered the pre-application comments, outlined in the previous section, together with the established scope to extend the property within its permitted development tolerances (including an alternative Class E incidental residential outbuilding), and the consistent application of the same development plan policy framework nearby, the application proposal seeks permission for a much reduced replacement dwelling. By comparison with the permitted scale of development for the existing dwelling's extension (without an incidental outbuilding), which results in a volume of 566m³, the application proposes a replacement with a volume of 1040m³ and which is believed to adopt a more considered singular design.



- 3.2 It is not proposed to repeat the design explanation provided by the project architects in their Design and Access Statement. It is however maintained that the changes made since the pre-application submission and the narrative provided help to demonstrate that the new dwelling is of an appropriate scale, height and mass and will be finished with a construction palette drawn clearly from those locally distinctive finishes identified.
- 3.3 The new dwelling sits comfortably within the recognised domestic setting, and the landscape led design information provided reinforces the attention to detail to ensure the sensitive assimilation the new dwelling without harm to the nearest trees and as part of the area’s wider ecological management and enhancement. The concept landscape plan extract on the following page highlights the appropriate approach to be adopted, showing parking closely related to the house and its public facade together with additional diffusing planting along the western side of the existing garden.



4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.1 The NPPF highlights that planning law (section 70 [2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38 [6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan relevant to this application include the following key documents:-

Core Strategy 2010 (CS)

CP3 – General Principles for Development

CP6 – Managing Travel Demand

CP7 – Biodiversity

CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 (MDD Local Plan)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC02 – Development Limits

CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction

CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks

CC07 – Parking

CC09 – Development and Flood Risk

CC10 – Sustainable Drainage

TB05 – Housing Mix

TB07 – Internal Space Standards

TB21 – Landscape Character

TB23 – Biodiversity

- 4.2 The National planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's planning policies for England and explains how they should be applied. Together with the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) it is a materials consideration, as are the following documents

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

5.0 PLANNING ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 In light of the policy framework and background considerations outlined the key issues raised by this application area as follows:

Principle of development in this location

Design

Landscape context

Amenity

Highways

Drainage

Ecology

Building sustainability and land contamination

5.2 Principle of development in this location

5.2.1 The site is located outside the settlement boundary and in the countryside. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy does not permit development outside of development limits unless it falls within one of the following exemption criteria (item 5):

5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:

i) Bring about environmental improvements; or

ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

5.2.2 In terms of footprint, the proposal would obviously result in an increase over the existing dwelling. In terms of volume, the replacement dwelling is 1040m³. Consequently, and mindful of course of the permitted development tolerance for change, this demonstrates that the proposed dwelling would not represent a significant increase in the mass of built form on the site. WBC design guide under RD11, states that the footprint of a building is an indication of its size. Generally, the footprint of a replacement dwelling should not be significantly larger than that of the existing dwelling and suggest that a 50% increase in volume only is appropriate. The benchmarked permitted extensions represent an undisputed 'existing' position, so that the replacement reflects tenant of the policy. The acceptable assimilation of the replacement dwelling cannot be guided solely by any mathematical tools, and the above policy's desire for environmental improvements highlights the need for a balanced decision.

5.2.3 CP11 emphasises the importance for replacement dwellings in the countryside to bring about environmental improvements. Within the Design and Access Statement, it confirms that the replacement dwelling will include solar panels, thus demonstrating sustainability measures as part of the overall enhanced modern sustainable construction methods. A whole life carbon assessment is included too. The practice of demolishing an existing dwelling for the erection of a larger property is not a neutral change, although adding extensions, such as those permitted, or supported by policy can be similarly impactful. The documentation enclosed explains how the proposal

would bring about material environmental improvements in respect of lowering carbon emissions produced by the site as well as securing the long-term functionality of the site in response to climate change and environmental management gains.

5.2.4 Overall, the application represents an acceptable form of rural development in principle and does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original, and brings about environmental improvements in terms of sustainable design, drainage and biodiversity so that it satisfied policy CP11. The site's suitability to accommodate change has also been reinforced by the recent appeal referred to at paragraph 2.8 earlier.

5.3 Design

5.3.1 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy refers to maintaining or enhancing the high quality of the environment. Policy CP3 states that development should be of 'an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life'.

5.3.2 The architect's Design and Access Statement provides a very clear rationale for the principle of the replacement and the careful assimilation on the established residential site. As the NPPF notes at paragraph 131, 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development'. There is also no intention to stifle innovative design, as in this case, promoting sustainability and drawing from the evidenced constructional palette and general house massing.

5.3.3 The application development carefully orientates the new dwelling on the residential site to accommodate a family house in scale and harmony with the wider mix of properties that combine to create the area's local distinctiveness and satisfy the site's relevant development parameters tolerance for change. The replacement dwelling will result in a unapologetically modern dwelling but nestled into the treed setting and with a subtle and vernacular styled use of materials. It will not diminish the amenity

of the nearest neighbours as the spacing and window relationships are not materially different.

5.4 Landscape context

5.4.1 The site is located in the countryside, off Bearwood Road and opposite the Local Wildlife Site known as 'Bearwood Estate Woods and Lakes'. The site is surrounded by woodland and populated by individual trees and a garden orchard. The site is protected by a woodland TPO 0087/1978. An area of Priority Habitat consisting of improved grassland and a traditional orchard covers part of the site.

5.4.2 An Arboricultural Statement has been provided as part of the application. The statement contains a Tree Survey Schedule, and Tree Protection Plans for demolition and construction phases of the project. The pre-application assessment reported that no trees will be removed to facilitate the development, although notes that the proposed dwelling is close to the tree canopies of 2 trees T23 B and T17 and to avoid the trees the dwelling needs to be moved westwards or the footprint re-drawn. This has been actioned and the enclosed application therefore ensures there is no cause for concern regarding potential loss of the site's sylvan setting.

5.4.3 The access driveway approach to the house is proposed in a permeable gravel material, but previously the path showed incursion into the RPAs of T13, and trees T15-T18. The gravel path has been amended which also avoids this previous point of concern.

5.4.4 Again, over and above the retained sylvan setting and new planting to soften the change proposed, the appeal referenced at paragraph 2.8 provides an agreed position in respect of the wider landscape importance and makes it clear that there are man-made elements within that context that combine where glimpsed with the natural features to create the unique landscape, and more importantly, the overall seclusion is sufficient to satisfactory accommodate the change of open areas, as part of the established residential spaces. The application development is entirely commensurate with the established setting, but if glimpsed will in fact benefit from the recognised landscape buffering noted in respect of the adjacent site.

5.5 Amenity

5.5.1 Given the nature of the application site set back from Bearwood Road and the significant separation distance from 178 Bearwood Road, the proposal would not have any adverse impacts upon neighbouring amenities.

5.5.2 Policy TB07 of the MDD and Policy R17 of the Borough Design Guides requires adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity. The proposed dwelling's internal gross floor area and bedroom sizes comply with the relevant requirements.

5.5.3 Policy R18 of the above referenced SPD requires sufficient sunlight and daylight to new properties, with dwellings afforded a reasonable dual outlook and southern aspect. The proposal therefore takes advantage, more than the existing dwelling of the spaces and outlook around the resulting property, allowing windows and habitable spaces to enjoy reasonable access to direct sunlight through the day. All the habitable rooms have plenty of windows allowing for sufficient light and outlook.

5.5.4 Policy TB08 of the MDD Local Plan relates to the provision of onsite open space, sport and recreational facilities within residential development. R16 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires a minimum depth of 11m for rear gardens and a 1m setback from the site boundary to allow access thereto. It should receive direct sunlight and be capable of accommodating play, clothes drying and storage. The proposal would comply in all these regards.

5.6 Highways

5.6.1 The pre-application submission indicated that no additional traffic was anticipated from the larger replacement dwelling, and moreover, as the proposal is a replacement there was no concern with regard to the site's established locational sustainability. Indeed, the severity test in respect of highway matters arising at paragraph 116 to the NPPF underpins the lack of any highway related objection.

5.6.2 With regard to the access for emergency vehicles the pre-application advice confirmed the proposed turning area was likely to be sufficient and of course there is no proposed intensification of use. The enclosed Design Statement

highlights the extent of the manoeuvring space available and which as a turning area can be conditionally controlled to be kept clear.

5.6.3 The submitted site layout plan indicates the full extent of the available parking and vehicle manoeuvring space, and the intended EV charging point in accordance with Building Regulations. As there is now no garage proposed a separate and secure cycle storage 'shed' is included with the application details, referring to the existing outbuilding to the south east of the house.

5.6.4 With regard refuse collection there is of course no new use proposed so that the established collection will simply be applicable to the site. Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan requires adequate internal and external storage for the segregation of waste and recycling as well as provision for green waste and composting and an appropriate area for ease of collection. The submitted plan extract referred to in the enclosed Design Statement further confirms the above referenced outbuilding will provide the facilities required, and which can be conditionally controlled.

5.7 Drainage

5.7.1 Policy CC10 of the MDD Local Plan requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow. In this case foul drainage will discharge into an existing foul network while surface water runoff will be managed via SuDS. No objections were raised in respect of the drainage strategy presented at the pre-application stage and for the avoidance of doubt full details of the drainage system have been included as part of the enclosed application. It is therefore acceptable in terms of Policy CC10.

5.7.2 R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD notes that parking spaces in front gardens must be paved with permeable surfaces to avoid any increase in surface water runoff and should include for soft landscaping. This is usually applied by condition and can be cross referenced with the submitted site plan. The site is located in Flood zone 1

5.8 Ecology

5.8.1 As already indicated the replacement dwelling will bring about significant environmental enhancements, noticeably captured within the BNG

assessment enclosed, despite of course the fact that as a self-build housing proposal the replacement dwelling would normally sit outside this regime.

5.8.2 The ecologists maintain the view that the site provides low suitability to support protected species. Over and above the PEA's suggested enhancements at section 4.3 the BNG assessment describes the 26.29% net gain to be achieved, and which can of course be conditionally controlled as a long term enhancement.

5.9 Building sustainability and land contamination

5.9.1 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF requires local plans to “take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change...” which footnote 53 makes clear should be in line with the Climate Change Act 2008 and Paragraphs 157 -158 deal with individual development and emphasise the importance of energy efficient, low carbon development.

5.9.2 Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require sustainable design and conservation, and R21 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that new development contribute to environmental sustainability and the mitigation of climate change.

5.9.3 A sustainability assessment runs through the Design and Access, referencing measures related to water, drainage, energy and carbon emissions in accordance with Policies CC04 of the MDD. This is accompanied by the Whole life carbon assessment document.

5.9.4 It is not practical to retrofit the sustainable construction enhancement, which sits at the acceptable heart of the replacement dwelling strategy. The new dwelling will clearly adopt a building design that takes advantage of sunlight and uses sustainable building materials, building insulation, energy efficient and water saving appliances, photovoltaic panels, compost facilities and cycle storage as well as water butts and soak-aways for rainwater reuse, permeable car parking surfaces and maximisation of soft landscaping for natural infiltration. The sustainable exemplar strategy sits full square with the Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement made by Wokingham Borough Council (December 2022).