

PD14170/TM/BD

email: tim.miles@montagu-evans.co.uk
ben.dakin@montagu-evans.co.uk

70 St Mary Axe
London
EC3A 8BE

Tel: 020 7493 4002
Fax: 020 7312 7548

www.montagu-evans.co.uk

Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

1st July 2024

Dear Sir / Madam,

PLANNING AND HERITAGE AND DESIGN STATEMENT

79 HIGH STREET, WARGRAVE, RG10 8BU

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

On behalf of our client, Hatchgate Holdings Limited (the "Applicant"), we hereby enclose an application for full planning permission for the replacement of specified windows at the former Greyhound Inn, 79 High Street, Wargrave, RG10 8BU ("the Site").

This letter comprises a Planning, Heritage and Design and Access Statement.

Site and Background

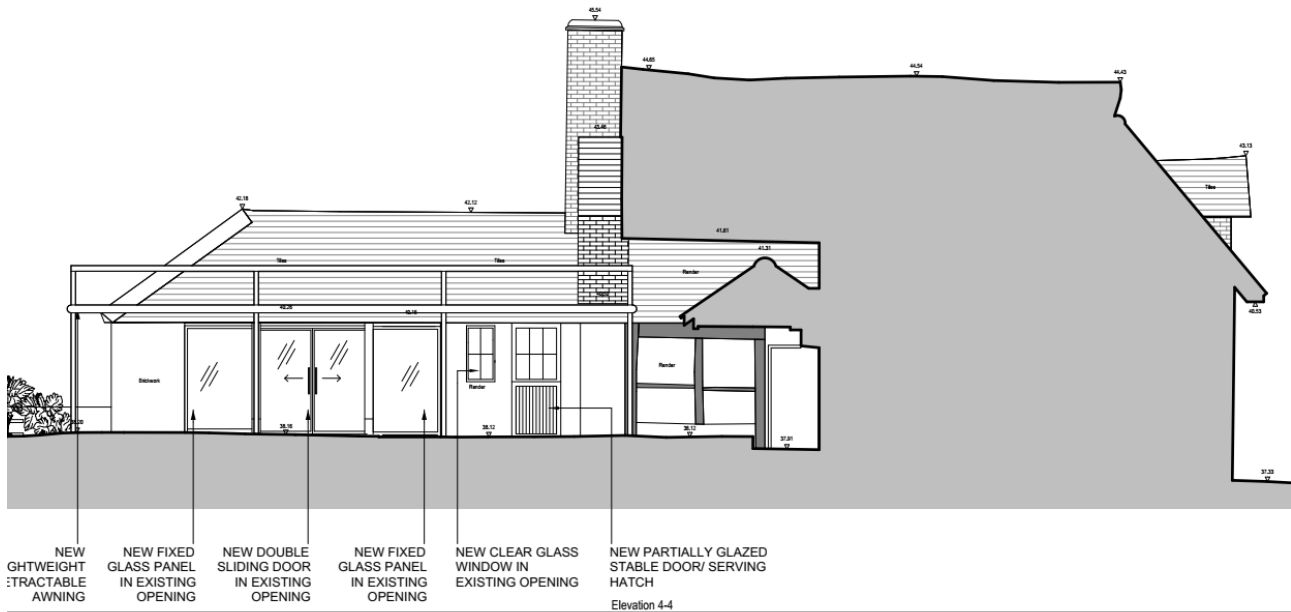
The Site is situated in the administrative authority of Wokingham Borough Council ("the Council" / "WBC") and is within the village of Wargrave. Contained within the Site is a former public house ("pub") with ancillary residential, outdoor seating, an outbuilding and associated car parking. The Site was most recently used as a pub, however this operation ceased in 2021 and the pub has been closed since.

On 12 July 2023 planning permission was granted under ref. 223795 ("the 2023 Permission"), which was approved by the Council for the renovation, alteration and change of use of the above premises along with the partial demolition and conversion of an existing outbuilding at the Site.

The 2023 Permission, was for:

"Full application for the proposed change of use of the existing building to a flexible use within Classes E, C1 and sui generis (drinking establishment) with changes to fenestration, demolition of a single storey structure and provision of an awning, plus partial demolition and conversion of the existing outbuilding including erection of a part two storey part first floor extension to create a two storey outbuilding for a flexible use within Classes E, F1 and F2; associated landscaping, addition of 2 no. Air Source Heat Pumps, parking alterations, removal of old access and provision of new access off School Lane with a dropped kerb."

The approval included new windows and doors on the north elevation, as shown on the approved elevation below:



The permission also allowed for the alteration of windows on the west elevation install clear glass:

PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION



This application now proposes the replacement of the remaining windows and doors to designs identical to those existing, in double glazing. The existing windows have reached the end of their useful life and do not provide the necessary energy

performance nor acoustic qualities which will be expected by guests in the high-quality visitor accommodation that will be delivered on site under the 2023 Permission.

The proposed Windows

The windows to be replaced are shown on drawing references P01-P04. These are summarised as follows:

- On the west elevation facing High Street, a new door (D16) and first floor casement windows (W1, W5)
- On the South elevation facing School Lane, replacement first floor casement windows (W7-W10) and at ground floor two replacement bay windows (Bay1 and Bay2), a new door (D15) and replacement fixed pane windows W14, W20, W11-13)
- On the east elevation facing the courtyard, First floor casement windows (W2-W4 and W6), a ground floor casement (W21) and fixed pane windows (W17).
- The north elevation facing the courtyard, a new door (D19 – already permitted) and new fixed pane window (W18).

The proposed windows will match the mouldings and frame profiles and dimensions of the existing windows. The details of each window are shown on drawing references P10-P18.

The windows are to be formed in timber.

Trickle vents are proposed for windows facing the courtyard only.

The new windows will be coated and coloured Farrow and Ball Card Room Green 79. They will have the appearance of painted timber. The colour has been discussed with the planning officer who has indicated that this is acceptable. This is the same colour as used on other windows within the High Street, at H'Artisan Speciality Coffee Company:





It is important to note that the current applicant also owns and operates H'Artisan, which opened in January 2021. The popular speciality coffee café specialises in high quality healthy food sources, ingredients where possible from sustainable and local suppliers alongside speciality coffee and tea from some of the leading businesses in the hospitality industry. The café makes a significant contribution to the vitality of Wargrave High Street. The development at the former Greyhound will similarly contribute to the appearance of the High Street, bringing a vacant building into use with a business similarly contributing to the vitality of Wargrave.

Planning Policy Framework

Statutory Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that where making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with that plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory development plan relevant for the Site comprises the following documents:

- Core Strategy (2010);
- Managing Development Delivery Local Plan: Enhancing the Borough's environmental character through exceptional development (2014);
- Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (1995); and

According to the adopted Proposals Map, the Site has the following policy designations:

- Modest Development Location
- Local Centre
- Green Route runs along High Street
- Wargrave Conservation Area
- Area of High Archaeological Importance
- Area with a strong presumption against allowing sharp sand and gravel extraction

An unsuccessful nomination for the building to be allocated as an Asset of Community Value was made in 2021 (refused December 2021). The Reason for Refusal was:

- *Its current use, and use in the recent past does not further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community / It is not realistic to think that there will be a use which furthers social wellbeing and interests within the next 5 years*

Planning Policy Assessment

Design & Heritage

Relevant Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("the 1990 Act") provides the legislation that is used to assess the impact of proposals on conservation areas and settings of listed buildings.

With respect to this application, the applicable statutory provisions are:

- *'Section 72(1): With respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

Section 72(1) is applicable given that the Site lies within the Wargrave Conservation Area.

Local Plan

WBC's relevant policies on local character and heritage are summarised below.

CP3 ('General Principles for development') confirms that planning permission will be granted for proposals that (a) are 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 space or occupiers and their quality of life.

TB24 ('Designated Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas')) sets out that the Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:

- *(a) Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.*
- *(b) Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk.*

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Chapter 16 of the 'NPPF' sets out the Government's policies relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In determining planning applications, Paragraph 200 specifies that:

- *"local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."*

The proportionality approach arises from the methodology that the protection afforded to heritage assets is relative to that asset's significance; in other words the higher the significance of the heritage asset, the greater weight will be given to its protection. Significance is defined in the NPPF as:

- *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."*

Paragraph 205 sets out the principle affording great weight to the conservation of heritage assets:

- *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

This is followed by Paragraph 206 which stipulates that:

- *"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (in this case, the conservation area) (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification."*

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF affords weight to public benefits of a proposal when considering the allocation of harm. It states:

- *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF advises that proposals that help to enhance or better reveal an asset's significance should be treated favourably:

- *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”*

The National Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”)

The PPG adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents should be read together. The chapters relevant to the proposals are Design: process and tools (updated October 2019); Determining a planning application (updated June 2021); and Historic environment (updated July 2019).

Wargrave Conservation Area Leaflet (1993)

Wargrave Conservation Area was designated in June 1971. The village has a rich and varied history. Wargrave developed as a settlement in about AD 900 at the confluence of the Thames and Loddon Rivers. The medieval settlement of Wargrave is likely to have developed around the church, with a manor house and to the east a village green and pond. Other early buildings are sited on the High Street.

In the late 18th century, the village witnessed a sudden growth in population. Many of the larger houses in the village were built during the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, when the river became the focus of this summer resort and commercial traffic on the Thames declined.

In 1900 the Henley Branch of the Great Western Railway opened with a station in Wargrave. This allowed the village to expand further and become a residential village with no industries of note.

The character of Wargrave is formed of various distinct elements, these include the High Street which is dominated by the narrow road and its wide variety of building styles tightly packed to create an intimate space. This is particularly evident at the junction of Church Street and High Street, the focus of the village. The area around the church has a special character.

In particular, the Conservation Area draws its special character from a variety of sources, including the age of buildings with an eclectic mix of 18th, 19th and early 20th century buildings. The former pub building takes its appearance from the early 20th century. The fine grain of buildings further enhances the character of the Conservation Area, particularly along the High Street to the north. As does the variety in roofs, with a variety of different gable ends, pitches, dormers and parapet heights as well as varying styles of frontages in terms of relationship with the streets. Additionally, the Area is characterised by variety in the window alignment.

The dominant materials are traditional local Berkshire orangey-red brick and orange clay tiles. There are also a number of rendered buildings as well as buildings with timber boardings located close to the Site. The significance of Wargrave Conservation Area can be summarised by its character as a historic village centre of eclectic character with architecture from different periods. The attractive centre is one of variety in grain and form, but unified by the consistent use of brick, render and timber as vernacular building materials.

The former pub building itself makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, but this is diluted by its vacancy and unkempt position.

Design and Heritage Assessment

The windows proposed at the rear will have no effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area by virtue of extremely limited visibility, only to users of the courtyard.

The street facing windows proposed for replacement will be to the same design and configuration as the existing windows, replicating the existing frame and mouldings.

We do not identify any harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area from the replacement windows and identify some enhancements to the appearance of the building (and thus its contribution to the conservation area).

The new windows are necessary as part of the transformation of the building permitted under permission reference 223795. The appearance of the windows will be improved, by replacing the unkempt existing windows which are at the end of their useful life, and unsuitable for a high quality business within the village centre. The use of colour on the windows will establish a relationship with another business within the High Street (H'Artisan) which makes a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of the village centre.

The proposals would also generate other benefits – the windows offer excellent noise attenuation, necessary for the delivery of high quality visitor accommodation, and double glazing will significantly improve the energy performance of the building.

The applicant would welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposals with the LPA further.

Administrative Matters

In order to validate this application, please find enclosed the following documentation:

- Application form (submitted via Planning Portal ref. PP-13203294);
- This Planning and Heritage Statement;
- Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence Survey dated 27th May 2023
- Newt Avoidance Method Statement;
- CIL Form 1;
- Drawing references 2401 P01A-04A, P10B-P18B

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal under reference PP-13203294. We trust the above and enclosed is in order and will allow you to issue confirmation of the validation of the Application. However, if you have any outstanding queries or should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Tim Miles (07818 012 444 / tim.miles@montagu-evans.co.uk) of this office in the first instance.

Yours faithfully



MONTAGU EVANS LLP

