

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261187
Site Address:	Stablehouse Barn, White Hill, Remenham Hill, Wokingham, RG9 3HN
Expiry Date:	19 October 2026
Site Visit Date:	14 September 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed installation of 20 No. JA Solar PV panels to south east elevation and 1 Telsa Powerwall 3 battery to north east elevation.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP7- Biodiversity CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside SS6 – Development in the Green Belt CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development CE4 – Supporting a circular economy CE5 – Embodies carbon CE6 – Reducing energy consumption in existing buildings CE7 – Low carbon and renewable energy generation CE8 – Protecting renewable energy generation C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
041618	Application for a screening opinion prior to an application for restoration and redevelopment of Park Place.	EIA Development 14.01.2005
991177	Details To Comply with Condition 06 Of Consent 36074 For the Approval of Landscaping	Approve 26.05.1999
081748	Application for a Screening Opinion for the proposed modernisation of the mansion, other residential and associated developments on land withing the Park Place Estate.	Replied 25.07.2008
051101	Restoration and redevelopment of mansion, stables, pleasure grounds buildings and boathouses to provide club and leisure facilities with associated fractional club accommodation (47 units), 34 new dwellings, retention of 25 dwellings, construction of 18 hole & 9-hole golf course, equestrian centre with manege, staff accommodation, access and parkin g for 236 cars.	Refused 05.07.2006
961248	Proposed Single Storey Extension for Garage and Extension of Roof on Main Barn.	10.09.1996

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Environmental Health- No comment WBC Energy Manager- No comment WBC Ecology- Request further information WBC Green Infrastructure- No comment
External
None

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL
Site Description:

The dwelling is a converted barn within the countryside, accessed via private road off White Hill (A4130). It is also in the green belt. The dwelling is single storey, with converted roof space, and has a conservatory to the rear. It has a traditionally rural character, in line with its neighbour Park Place Farm.

Proposal:

Installation of 20 No. JA Solar PV panels to south east elevation and 1 Telsa Powerwall 3 battery to north east elevation.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Countryside:

The application site is located within the Countryside. Consequently, consideration must be given to the relevant provisions of the NPPF together with Policies CP11 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy.

The site lies within the Countryside as designated in the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Core Strategy policy CP11 states, in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except in certain circumstances. Relevant criteria is as follows:

4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;

Design and Character of the Area:

Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states proposals 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.

DP3(1) of the NPPF states proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.

R21 of the Borough Design Guide states that the layout of new residential development must contribute towards environmental sustainability and in particular towards mitigating climate change. Where solar panels are proposed on existing buildings, careful consideration should be given to their potential visual impact on the character of the area.

In this case, the solar panels comply with CP3, DP3 and R21 as they are of an appropriate scale and material for a dwellinghouse and do not detract from the character of the area.

Location within the countryside:

The site is in the Countryside where Core Strategy Policy CP11 applies and criteria 4 copied below is relevant in this case.

4. In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The solar panels cover an area of approx. 30 square metres on the rear elevation of the dwelling. No increases in the scale or footprint of the dwelling are proposed. In addition, the EV battery is a minor addition to the east facing side elevation.

The development does not contribute to the loss or fragmentation of green infrastructure and integrates well with the surrounding countryside, in accordance with CC03.

Location within the green belt:

The site lies outside any defined settlement and within the Green Belt. While Policy S5 governs development outside settlements, paragraph 5 expressly provides that, in the Green Belt, proposals should instead be determined under Policies GB7 and/or GB8, as appropriate.

Policy GB6 of the NPPF outlines that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt should not be approved unless the benefits of the scheme outweigh any harm to the openness of the Green Belt. For renewable energy, the environmental benefits may outweigh any harms. Policy GB7 of the NPPF outlines development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt.

GB7 (b) includes the reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the original building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

In this case, the proposal is an alteration to an existing building which does not increase the size of the existing building. The proposal therefore complies with GB7(b). As the proposal is not considered to be inappropriate within the Green Belt, there is no harm proposed that needs to be weighed against the benefit of approving a scheme for renewable energy.

The proposal would therefore not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt when assessed against Policy GB7. Accordingly, paragraph 5 of Policy S5 is engaged. Under that policy, where development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, planning permission should be granted unless the benefits of doing so would be

substantially outweighed by the adverse effects of the proposal, assessed against the National Decision-Making Policies and paragraph 2 of Policy S5.

Paragraph 2 identifies circumstances in which the adverse effects of development may substantially outweigh its benefits. These include, but are not limited to, situations where a proposal fails to comply with a National Decision-Making Policy that expressly requires planning permission to be refused. In this case, no adverse effects of the development have been identified and there is no contradiction with any other relevant NPPF policy.

CP12 within the Core Strategy outlines that permission for inappropriate development within the green belt will not be granted. TB01 of the MDD local plan outlines that development will only be permitted where they maintain the openness of, and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in, the Green Belt. It is not considered that the addition of solar panels and an EV battery will harm the openness of the Green Belt as the dwelling in itself is not being extended.

Renewable energy:

CC05 (3) of the Managing Development Delivery local plan states that proposals for renewable energy must demonstrate that:

- a) They are appropriate in scale, location and technology type;
- b) Are compatible with the surrounding area, including the impact of noise and odour;
- c) Do not have a damaging impact on the local topography and landscape;
- d) There is no significant impact upon heritage assets, including views important to their setting;
- e) In the case of wind turbines, take account of their cumulative effect and properly reflect their increasing impact on the landscape and on local amenity.

It is considered that proposed solar panels and EV battery are of an appropriate scale, location and technology type with no substantial impact on the surrounding area either through noise and odour, or impact on the landscape. The proposed additions are acceptable alterations to a dwellinghouse, even in the countryside and Green Belt.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states proposals should not result in detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

The installation of solar panels and EV battery does not generate concern on overlooking, loss of light or overbearing as no increase in scale of the dwelling is proposed.

Amenity Space:

No reduction in private residential amenity space is proposed.

Ecology:

Policy CP7 outlines that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation will be conserved and enhanced and will only be permitted if the need for such development outlines any harm, and any harm would be mitigated. Policy TB23

outlines that development should accord with CP7 of the Core Strategy and must also demonstrate how they:

- a) Provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing
- b) Provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation
- c) Ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network.

The proposal is located in an area where a bat survey is required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the dwelling identified a number of features with potential to support roosting bats, including gaps associated with the weatherboarding, soffits and barge boards. Whilst no evidence of bat occupation was identified during the initial inspection, the building was assessed as having moderate suitability for roosting bats. Accordingly, bat emergence and re-entry surveys were undertaken during the 2026 survey season to establish the likely presence or absence of roosting bats.

The bat emergence and re-entry surveys recorded no bat roosts or emergences and conclude that the proposed development can proceed without the need for a bat licence. The Local Planning Authority is satisfied with these findings. Whilst the report recommends ecological enhancements in the form of bat boxes and wildflower planting, these measures are not considered necessary or reasonable in this instance, having regard to the limited scale of the proposal, which comprises the installation of solar panels to an existing dwelling. The proposed enhancements are considered disproportionate to the nature and scale of the development, and the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in ecological terms.

Ecology comments were received requesting the preliminary roost assessment before further comments could be made. This information was provided, yet no further comments were received. However, in light of the result of the bat surveys, it is not considered that harm to bats will occur.

The site is also in a red zone for Great Crested Newts. This is the zone where there is the greatest likelihood for newts to be found. However, in accordance with guidance from NatureSpace, this site is in a location that does not require consultation with NatureSpace for householder scale development, despite being in the red zone.

Accordingly, no harm to protected species is anticipated.

Conclusion:

For the reasons stated above, the proposal is acceptable in local plan policy terms and therefore is recommended for approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as

practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	
Date:	8 September 2026
Earliest date for decision:	16 September 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	12/10/26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 1**

#	NAME
1	Outside Development Locations

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Countryside	Countryside

Green Belt | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Green Belt	The Metropolitan Green Belt (inside borough)

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site	AWE: Special Case Zone	ONR also requests to be consulted on planning applications, irrespective of distance from nuclear sites, for special cases. Developments that either introduce a new hazard or change the existing external hazards posed to nuclear sites.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 2

#	Height Band	Wind Turbine	Aviation
1	All works exceeding 90 metres (295.3 feet)	YES	YES
2	All works exceeding 90 metres (295.3 feet)	YES	YES

EA Groundwater Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Groundwater Consultation Zones	Groundwater Consultation Zone 2	Environment Agency (only if application involves contaminated land) – see separate sheet: When to consult the Environment Agency

BGS Radon Affected Areas | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Maximum radon potential is 1-3% of houses	Public Health England

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 6

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SE176	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
2	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SE177	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
3	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SF176	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
4	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SF177	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
5	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SG176	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
6	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	SG177	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	For Householder applications check HH Layer. Consult NatureSpace for all other types of development

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones - Householder | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone - Householder Applications	Red	This Amber/Red Zone is within 50m of a known pond. Consult NatureSpace for Householder applications

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones - Minor | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	Consult NatureSpace for any minor development that intersects a red or amber zone in this layer

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 2

#	SSSI Impact Risk Zone Advice Hyperlink
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0101000322302&notes=&location=478628,184365%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)
2	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0301000530000&notes=&location=478085,182384%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Potentially Contaminated Land Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	OBJECTID
1	Potentially Contaminated Land Consultation Zone	1

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Remenham Arable Chalk Plateau

National Historic Parks and Gardens Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	ListEntry
1	National Historic Park and Garden	PARK PLACE, AND TEMPLE COMBE	1000588

Wards | Total count: 1

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Thames Ward	0 m

Parishes | Total count: 1

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
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1	Remenham CP	0 m
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