

PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 24 April 2025

Application Number: 250604

Location: Sulby Croft, Heathlands Road, Wokingham, RG40 3AR

Proposal: Permission in principle application for the proposed erection of up to 5 no. dwellings, following demolition of the existing dwelling.

Recommendation: Refused

Reasons

1. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance, permission in principle must not be granted for development which is habitats development. The application site lies within 2.3km of Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, which is a qualifying European site. The proposal fails to provide avoidance measures for the adverse effect on the integrity of the European protected site which renders the proposal as habitats development. As such, the LPA is unable to satisfy itself that the proposals include adequate mitigation measures to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in line with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. The proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

2. The site is not sustainable in transport terms with regards to its location and access to day-to-day services and facilities. Future residents of the development would also not have access to a good standard of bus service and would have an attractive walking or cycling routes/ environments when outside the site. The proposal will therefore result in high dependence on private vehicle use and represents an unsustainable development, contrary to policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 of the Core Strategy and policy CC01 paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF.

3. The proposal represents inappropriate development within designated countryside. By virtue of their cumulative quantum and density, along with car parking and hardstanding that fails to integrate with the surrounding countryside, the proposal for up to 5 dwellings will have detrimental visual and urbanising impacts on the landscape and the character and appearance of the area in general and surrounding countryside in particular. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies CP1, CP3, CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, policies CC01 and TB21 of the MDD, the Borough Design Guide and the NPPF.

Informatives

1. In reaching its decision, the LPA considered the following

submitted plans and documents:

Planning Statement prepared by ET Planning

Bat Emergence Survey, Report no. ASW/MPIL/103/28/2024, prepared by ASW Ecology Ltd, dated September 2024

Arboricultural Report, Report ref. 2024005 v2.0, prepared by Harper Tree Consulting

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Issue 3, prepared by Arbtech, dated 17/01/24

Application Form

CIL Form

02-31 - Site Location Plan

02-30 - House replacement, site plan

02-31 - House replacement, Elevations NTS - indicative

Proposed Elevations (with extended dwelling)

CGIs prepared by Etherion Design Studio

Pedestrian Accessibility, Bus Routes and Cycle Accessibility contour drawings

Received 13th, 14th and 20th March 2025 and 11th April 2025

2. The Council engages with all applicants in a positive and proactive way through specific pre-application enquiries and the detailed advice available on the Council's website. On this particular application, no pre-application advice was sought before the application was submitted. As the proposal was clearly contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, it was considered that further discussions would be unnecessary and costly for all parties.

Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:



Date: 23/04/25

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **11 April 2025**