



Planning Statement

Section 73 Application for Variation of Consent 240832

Revised proposals for the **riverside pavilion and tunnel portals** at the Stowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham

July 2026

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Appendix I Consent 240832 Delegated Report

Report title: Planning Statement

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Reviewed by: David Williams (Associate)

Status: Draft V1

Draft date: 14 July 2026

For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

Application Procedure

- 1.1 This planning statement is submitted by Avison Young on behalf of Imperium Trust Company ('the Applicant'), the owner of the Stowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham ('the site'), otherwise known as the Conway Estate. This amendment application is submitted under the planning portal reference PP-15098875.
- 1.2 It forms part of a Section 73 Variation of Condition application, which seeks to amend the approved documents as listed under Conditions 2 and 9 of planning permission 240832 for the *"erection of a Summerhouse, walkways and private tunnel from Stowdes Estate. Following demolition of the existing summerhouse."*, as approved on 6 August 2024. The application site straddles Wargrave Road and sits on the eastern bank of the River Thames.
- 1.3 The proposed amendments primarily consist of changes to the design of the consented north and south tunnel portals to simplify the design and accommodate their timely delivery. The consented pavilion (summerhouse) remains as previously approved, but has been raised by c.0.5m to account for flood levels which have been updated by the Environment Agency since the extant consent was granted. Similarly, the landscape approach has been simplified, with removal of the riverside boardwalk. All of the proposed changes are minor in nature and therefore fall within the scope of a minor-material amendment (S73) application.
- 1.4 It should be noted that pre-commencement conditions 4 (external materials), 5 (dust) and 6 (landscaping) on the original permission have been discharged and will need to be accounted for in drafting the Decision Notice for the S73 application.

The Site and Stowdes Estate

- 1.5 The application site consists of an area to the south-west of the Stowdes Estate which sits north-east of the River Thames, east of Park Place, and west of Culham Lane and Kenton's Lane. The Estate extends to approx. 70 hectares and measures approx. 1.8km from the northern tip (the Estate's main entrance) to the southern corner (junction between Wargrave Road and Kenton's Lane). The Estate is relatively flat within the northern and central areas, before a significant downwards slope to the south and east, towards the riverbank where the application site is located.
- 1.6 The Stowdes Estate is set within the wider historic Park Place Estate, which extends over a large area to the north-west, towards White Hill. Stowdes benefits from five recent planning consents obtained by the previous owner between 2023 and 2024 (see below table), which sought to create a self-contained masterplanned private residential estate including a main house and several ancillary buildings, in line with earlier planning permissions dating from 2008 as part of a programme of enhancements to Park Place. Other new private Estates have also been established within Park Place, including Hamilton to the west.

Area	Ref	Location
Main House	213587	sited centrally within the Estate
Ancillary Gatehouse	213588	to the north of the Estate
Estate Management Building	213610	close to the eastern boundary with Kentons Lane
Staff Village Complex	240847	within the existing walled garden at the southern corner of the site
Riverside Buildings	240832	within the south-western part of the estate, west of Wargrave Road.

1.7 These planning permissions cover construction of the five built elements across the Estate (shown on the below diagram):



Figure 1: Site Location showing approved scheme. I Gatehouse, II Main House, III Estate Management Building, IV Staff Village, and V Riverside Pavilion (the application site).

Aspirations

- 1.8 The new owner and their design team are conscious of this rare opportunity to restore an active estate function to this parkland setting, and aim to provide an enhancement over the approved position across the above consents, in terms of architecture, landscape, and biodiversity, while also ensuring that the scheme is both deliverable in the short-term, and operationally fit for purpose in the long-term.
- 1.9 At the same time, it is acknowledged that this is a sensitive environment in terms of its location within the Green Belt, the majority of the Estate's location within the Park Place Registered Park and Garden (which is a statutory heritage asset), the surrounding wider landscape character of this semi-rural portion of the Borough and Region, and the existing on-site features including areas of woodland and a number of trees subject to tree protection orders. At the application site, flooding is also a key constraint given proximity to the River Thames and its location within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 1.10 Proposals across the Estate, including those subject to this application, are therefore being advanced as refinements and evolutions of the previous proposals, rather than wholesale changes and new applications.

Submitted Documentation

- 1.11 This application is submitted under the Section 73 Variation of Conditions procedure, and therefore proposes substitution of documents approved under Conditions 2 and 9 of the planning permission as below:

Document	Approved Reference
Site Location Plan	LD-033-1010-PL Issue 01
North Portal Plan	033_110_PL REV A
Riverside Masterplan	033_120_PL REV A
South Portal Ground and Roof Plans	033_130_PL REV A
Raised Ground Floor Plan	033_140_PL
North Portal Elevations - East and West	033_300_PL REV A
South Portal Elevations - South and East	033_330_PL REV A
Summer House Elevations	033_340_PL
Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement	Dated 29/07/2024
Tree Protection Plans	PR123977-03 (sheets 1-4)

- 1.12 The following table sets out the documents submitted with this S73 application which will supersede the documents listed above:

	Ref:	Rev	Document
DRAWINGS			
PCY_LAL_ZZ_ZZ_DR_A	P0001	P03	Location Plan
PCY_LAL_ZZ_00_DR_A	P0004	P03	Approved/Proposed Comparative Plan - Site
PCY_LAL_RP_00_DR_A	P0005	P03	Ground Floor Plan - Pavilion
PCY_LAL_RP_RF_DR_A	P0006	P03	Roof Plan - Pavilion
PCY_LAL_RP_ZZ_DR_A	P0008	P03	Proposed Comparative Elevations Pavilion
PCY_LAL_RP_ZZ_DR_A	P0009	P03	Proposed Comparative Elevations Pavilion
PCY_LAL_RT_00_DR_A	P0011	P03	Ground Floor South Portal
PCY_LAL_RT_RF_DR_A	P0012	P03	Roof Plan South Portal
PCY_LAL_RT_ZZ_DR_A	P0013	P03	Section South Portal
PCY_LAL_RT_ZZ_DR_A	P0014	P03	Proposed Comparative Elevations South Portal

PCY_LAL_RT_00_DR_A	P0021	P03	Ground Floor North Portal
PCY_LAL_RT_ZZ_DR_A	P0022	P03	Proposed Elevation and Section North Portal
PCY-MBS-RP-ZZ-DR-L	P1000	05	Riverside Landscape Render Plan and Levels
FOR INFORMATION			
PCY_LAL_RP_ZZ_DR_A	P0010	P03	Perspective - Pavilion
PCY_LAL_RT_ZZ_DR_A	P0015	P03	Perspective South Portal
PCY_LAL_RT_ZZ_DR_A	P0023	P03	Perspective North Portal
REPORTS			
Design Statement			
Heritage Addendum			
Landscape Visual Appraisal			
Arboriculture Impact Assessment / Method statement			
Ecological Impact Assessment			
BNG Metric			
Flood Risk Assessment			
Community Infrastructure Levy Form			

1.13 The remainder of this Statement is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a summary of the site context and planning history
- **Section 3** sets out the application proposals;
- **Section 4** considers the proposed changes and any resulting impacts in the above context; and
- **Section 5** provides a summary and conclusion.

2. Site Context and Planning History

Site Context

- 2.1 The application site is located in the south-western side of the Strowdes Estate, to the west of Wargrave Road and the east of the Thames River. The site currently consists of an existing vacant summerhouse, wooden boathouse, woodland areas, and open garden space in the centre of the site. Access to the site is via Wargrave Road to the north. Historically, the Strowdes Estate formed part of the wider Park Place Estate.

Key Constraints and Designations

- 2.2 The site is subject to the following key constraints and designations which have been material in the design of the approved and proposed schemes:
- Within Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and setting of Grade II Listed Ivy Cottage (to the east);
 - Within the Green Belt;
 - Within Flood Zones 2 and 3;
 - The site's landscape is predominantly characterised by a flat open/wooded plateau next to the River, wooded ground that slopes upwards to the north-east, with the northernmost part of the site located within open parkland; and
 - Arboricultural and ecological infrastructure, including woodland.

Planning History

- 2.3 The planning history for the Strowdes Estate is extensive and spans several consents for a handful of built elements (main house, gatehouse, estate management building and riverside pavilion) and associated landscape works which seek to create a masterplanned private residential estate. Please see Avison Young's Pre-Application Enquiry Note, dated March 2025 and Wokingham Council's online register for a full summary of this history.
- 2.4 With specific regard to the site and proposals for a riverside pavilion, the following consents are of note:
- **Consent O/2008/1353** gave outline permission in 2008 for the demolition of several buildings across the Park Place Estate (which includes Strowdes) and for the construction of 5 new dwellings and ancillary accommodation.
 - **Consent 152813** granted consent for the demolition of the existing summerhouse, and the construction of a replacement summerhouse, walkways and private pedestrian tunnel from Strowdes. Permission was granted in December 2016.
 - **Consent 180351** for the variation of a condition 2 for the demolition of the existing summerhouse, and the construction of a replacement summerhouse, walkways and private pedestrian tunnel from Strowdes (ref: 152813). (Condition 2 relates to substitute alternative drawings for the portals and approach road.) The consent was granted in February 2018.
 - **Consent 240832** was granted in August 2024 for the demolition of an existing summerhouse along the River Thames and construction of a riverside pavilion, offering ancillary residential

accommodation to the main house. Consent was also given for an underground tunnel which would connect to the main house.

- 2.5 Taking account of the site's location in the Green Belt, which provides a presumption against inappropriate development, the above consents were justified on the basis that Very Special Circumstances exist due to the planning history of the Site and previous masterplans that demonstrated an overall net loss of dwellings and built development across the wider Park Place estate (of which the Strowdes estate is a component part), the removal of unsympathetic buildings, and the restoration of the parkland. This planning history dates to the above 2008 outline consent (ref. O/2008/1353), covering the whole of the 220 hectare Park Place Estate. As this application proposes minor amendments to the extant consent, which the applicant can and intends to enact, it should be assessed in the same way with regard to impact on the Green Belt.

Extant 2024 Riverside Pavilion Scheme

- 2.6 With specific regard to the principle of providing a new Riverside Pavilion within the Green Belt at the site, the Officer Report (see **Appendix I**) for consent 240832 notes:

"In this instance, the scheme is almost identical to previous permissions 152813 and 180351. These are no longer extant, however there are no material changes which would affect the acceptability in principle of the scheme and therefore this cannot reasonably be considered unacceptable in principle. Therefore, in this instance, the consideration of the scheme against the backdrop of the original outline permission is appropriate and this is sufficient to justify the scheme in principle, on the basis that it is part of the development which secures a public benefit through improvements to the designated heritage asset and openness of the green belt."

- 2.7 With regard to character and appearance, the Officer Report further notes that the consented pavilion *"would, by way of being lightweight, frameless and largely glazed would have minimal presence within the landscape, especially when viewed from the river. There would be no other views of the structure from within the park, except limited views from the west when walking along the river frontage."* Additionally, the *"northern portal would be set in to the hillside. There are no views of this location from the riverside, or elsewhere within the estate due to the sudden fall of the land as it approaches the river. The tunnel itself would be underground and as such would have no impact in terms of appearance on the green belt or the countryside etc."*
- 2.8 In relation to impact on heritage assets, including the Registered Park and Garden to the north, the Berkshire Gardens Trust raised some concerns in relation to *"the cut and fill off the tunnel and potential for earth mounding"*. As the design was a repeat of the previously approved scheme, the Planning Officer considered this acceptable and the Council's Built Heritage Office confirmed there was no objection to the proposal.
- 2.9 In terms of neighbouring amenity impacts, highway access and flooding and drainage, the Planning Officer confirmed that all the relevant consultees were consulted, and it was concluded that there were no objections to the proposal. A condition was imposed to limit construction noise outside of normal construction hours, alongside the requirement for a dust management plan.
- 2.10 The above consents and planning history for the wider estate therefore establish a baseline planning position whereby the riverside proposal, including pavilion and tunnel portals, are considered acceptable in principle in the proposed location.
- 2.11 The proposed amendments are minor and should be considered in the same context as the extant and other consents at the site as set out above.

3. Application Proposals

3.1 This section of the statement sets out the proposed amendments to planning permission 240832 for:

"Full application for the proposed erection of a Summerhouse, walkways and private tunnel from Strowdes Estate. Following demolition of the existing summerhouse.(Re-submission of ref 180351, amendment to ref 152813)."



Figure 2: Site Layout Plan approved under extant consent 240832

3.2 The Applicant is committed to creating a long-term home for their family, becoming custodian of the wider landscape and finally moving towards delivering an outstanding example of a contemporary country estate, as evidenced by commencement of construction on the Main House. They have appointed a design and construction team to facilitate this, with a significant degree of work currently being undertaken to develop high quality proposals, while also ensuring that the construction work is feasible, and that the estate can operate efficiently once complete. To achieve this, the Applicant is proposing a series of amendments to the approved built elements across the site, including the Riverside.

3.3 In designing the amended scheme, the Applicant and their project team have been mindful of the development principles established under previous consents and key constraints including impact on the Green Belt, potential flood risk considerations and limiting visual impact on the site and wider estate.

3.4 The proposed amendments can be summarised as follows, please see the submitted drawings for further detail:

- **South Portal** - the treatment of the south tunnel portal has been simplified and softened to mitigate its visual impact, this includes a reduction in volume by removing previously proposed earthworks. This approach would be closer to that approved in 2016, with a partially exposed structure.

- **North Portal** – a minor change to the sunken entrance area, proposing a planted wall with a smaller entrance (to match the proposed south portal treatment), rather than the sloped approach and larger tunnel entrance as approved.
- **Pavilion** – the design, location and volume of the pavilion and associated deck is unaltered, however, their height has been increased by approximately 50cm to account for new Environment Agency (EA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) flood levels which have been specified since the previous consent was granted. This is the minimum level required to make the pavilion safe from the most extreme of flood events and will have a negligible visual impact on the pavilion and green belt.
- **Landscaping** – the route of the walkway from the south portal to the pavilion has been altered to make it more recessive in views as it will be further set back from the river against the backdrop of existing woodland and proposed planting. A large section of walkway which previously led to the boathouse has also been removed, reducing built development in this area and creating a more naturalistic approach to soft and hard landscaping.

- 3.5 These amendments have been subject to pre-application review by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) under reference 252744 and in their written response they did not object to the principal of the above subject to there not being greater impact on the Green Belt or Registered Park and Garden, and satisfying other technical constraints such as flooding.
- 3.6 The pre-application enquiry also set out proposals for an increase in the size of the pavilion/associated decking, including a mechanism which would allow it to rise and fall with river levels, a new boathouse and additional river pontoons. Following receipt of the LPA's advice, the Applicant and their design team are further considering these elements, and have excluded them from the current proposals in order to prioritise amendments which are integral to a timely delivery of the estate masterplan works, namely the north and south portals.
- 3.7 It should be noted that the Applicant tried to engage the EA in pre-application discussion regarding these amendments prior to submission of this application. However, the EA did not have the necessary resource at the time.

4. Planning Assessment

- 4.1 This section considers the key planning considerations, in the context of the Development Plan Framework, and the baseline provided by the 2023 planning permission for the Riverside scheme.
- 4.2 The relevant policy framework includes the Wokingham Borough Development Plan, formed by the 2010 Core Strategy (CS), and the 2014 Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan. Consideration is also given to the emerging Local Plan Update, which was submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2025, and is to be subject to Examination from November 2025. However, in their pre-application response (252744) the LPA have confirmed the draft policies are afforded limited weight in decision making.
- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last subject to a significant update in December 2024, and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance is also an important material consideration.

Principle of Development (Green Belt)

- 4.4 The MMD Policy TB01 (Development within the Green Belt) essentially defers to the NPPF's Green Belt policy under Chapter 13, which seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development (most types of development aside from a limited range of exceptions), unless there are very special circumstances, and maintain the key facets of the Green Belt including its open character. Emerging Local Plan Update Policy SS6 does not fundamentally alter the LPA's policy approach to the Green Belt.
- 4.5 The principle of development of a pavilion, tunnel portals and hard and soft landscaping at the site has been established through a number of previous planning permissions, including the original outline permission 0/2008/1353, consents RM/2011/2274, 180351 and 152499 (no longer extant), and finally consent 240832 which was granted in August 2024 and remains extant.
- 4.6 Subsequently, various discharge of condition applications have been submitted and approved in relation to the extant consent, in preparation for the applicant to commence works at the application site and across the wider estate.
- 4.7 The proposed amendments to the consented scheme do not fundamentally alter the form, scale, or nature of the development or increase impact on the Green Belt. The principal changes from the 2024 approved iteration are to the:
- form of the tunnel portals, reducing the proposed embankment around the south portal and recessing it further into the landscape to reduce external built form and introduction of natural flint walls and green ivy planting which will better blend the portals with the surrounding landscape and retain the existing land form;
 - finish floor level height of the pavilion and decking by approx. 50cm to accommodate a 1 in 100 flood event, as required to make the development safe in line with updated EA flood levels. The dimensions (height, width, depth), form, volume and materials of the pavilion and decking are unchanged from the consented position; and
 - reduction / reorientation of the decking and soft landscaping between the tunnel and pavilion to create a more naturalistic soft and hard landscape scheme.
- 4.8 These proposed changes do not alter the impact of the development from a Green Belt policy perspective. In fact, the changes to the tunnel portals and decking are considered to reduce the impact on the Green Belt, while the amendment to the pavilion's finished floor level is negligible.

- 4.9 As shown below, the volume of the proposed south portal built element is reduced slightly when compared to the proposed.

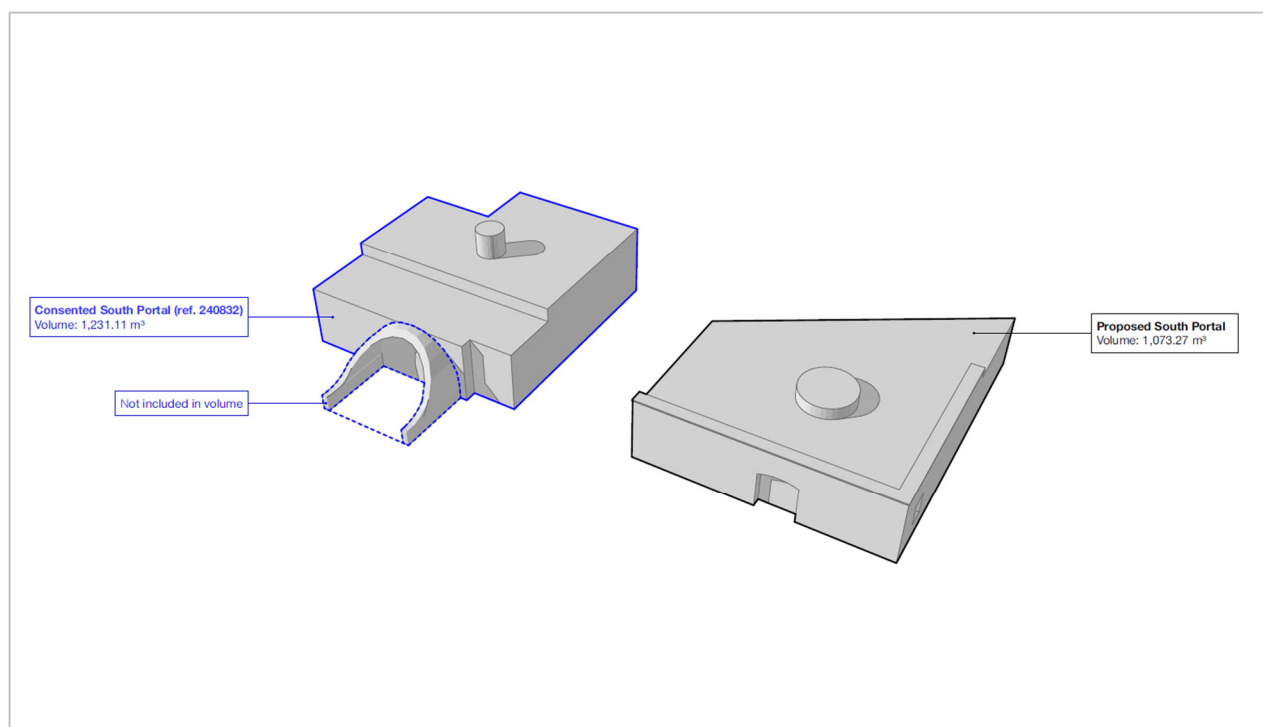


Figure 3: South Portal volume comparison

- 4.10 While a greater degree of the proposed structure of the portal is now to be visible, the simple natural flint treatment to the structure, the smaller and less prominent tunnel opening, and the omission of the previously permitted land-forming to cover the portal (as shown in the below extract), are in combination, considered to be a more appropriate design response in this riverside location.

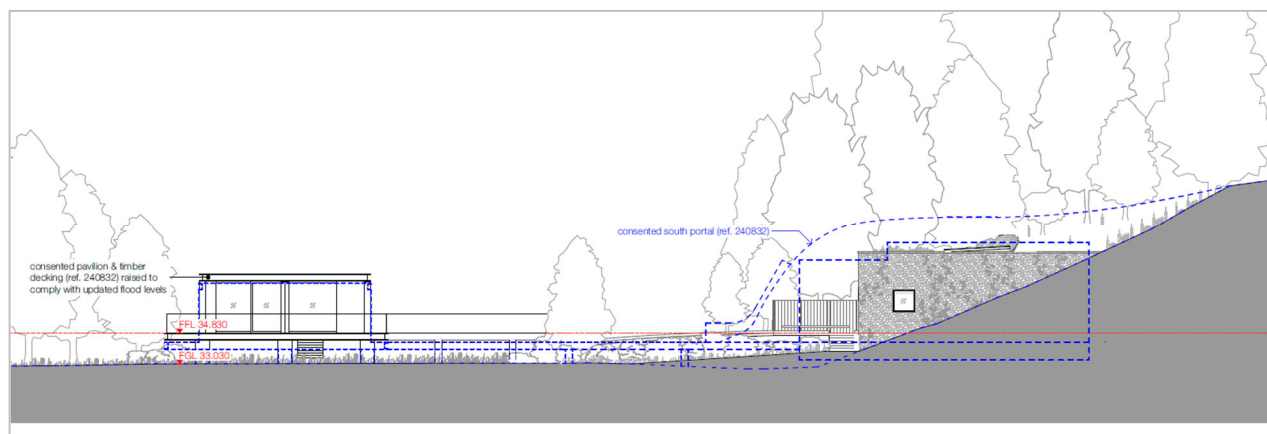


Figure 4: Section Comparison – extract from proposed drawing P0014

- 4.11 Please see the Design Rationale document by LA Architects for further information regarding the amendments to the consented built elements.
- 4.12 In the context of the approved proposal, which is extant and provides a material consideration and baseline for consideration, the proposed changes to the development are minor, and in the majority of cases, provide enhancements that will reduce physical and visual impact. The amended proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local and National Green Belt policy.

Landscape and Visual Impact

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- 4.13 The NPPF 187 part (a) requires that valued landscapes are protected and enhanced. The MDD Policy TB21 (Landscape Character) echoes this requirement, while also referencing the need to address the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Emerging Local Plan Policy NE6 (Valued Landscapes) also seek to ensure that within the Borough's valued landscapes development should have regard to its key attributes, including quality and rarity.
- 4.14 The amended proposal is accompanied by an updated Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA). This document builds on the conclusions from the Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Appraisal which was submitted under the previous extant consent for the riverside scheme. It considers the impact of the amended scheme on the site and surrounding landscape.
- 4.15 The LVA concludes that:
- The north portal development is contained within the existing wooded landscape and will not affect the openness of the lower parkland to the north.
 - The riverside development sits low in the landscape and is contained by the adjacent cliffs. It is largely screened by dense woodland, although brief glimpsed views are available from the Thames Path on the opposite bank to the south- west, and also from passing boats which may be using the river.
 - The introduction of the pavilion and associated connections to the existing boathouse reflects the incremental evolution of historic estates, where new elements are added in response to changing functional requirements. This approach also supports the continued use and enhancement of the existing boathouse as a heritage asset within the riverside setting.
 - The proposed Landscape Masterplan will safeguard and enhance the Valued Landscapes, aligning with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 174(a).
- 4.16 On the above basis, it is considered that the proposed amendments mean that the scheme remains in accordance with the requirements of Policy TB21 (Landscape Character), and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

Flooding and Drainage

- 4.17 The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and also contains minor areas of surface water flooding. Although there is a national and local policy presumption against development within flood zones, the significant planning history for the site, including the extant consent, is an important material consideration which establishes that the principle of this development is acceptable in these flood zones. The extant consent could be commenced and enacted by the Applicant without submission of further flood information, therefore providing a valid fall-back position.
- 4.18 Notwithstanding the above, the proposed amendments will improve the scheme, namely the pavilion, and make it more safe in a flood event. This is through an increase in the finished floor level of the pavilion building and decking to accommodate a 1 in 100 flood event (responding the LLFA's pre-application advice) and changes to the landscape scheme which will reduce hard materials and improve drainage.
- 4.19 The EA were invited to provide pre-application advice regarding the proposals, but declined to offer this given lack of available resource. In the absence of this, a robust Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with this application which assesses the amended proposals. It concludes that mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that the development can be implemented without increasing flood risk both within the site boundary and downstream of the proposed development. Flood levels will be

raised above the design fluvial flood level; the development will receive emergency alerts to notify residents in advance of a flood event allowing them to evacuate via the raised boardwalks.

- 4.20 Where the development impedes on existing floodplain storage, site levels will be locally lowered to provide compensation for the lost storage. Flooding from groundwater has been identified as a low risk subject to the mitigation measures. Flooding from all other sources is classified as low and the proposed uses are water compatible. Details of the proposed drainage strategy have been submitted with the application.
- 4.21 In this regard, the development complies with Section 14 of the NPPF and policies CC09 and CC10 of the Local Plan.

Heritage

- 4.22 The site is within the Park Place Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and within the setting of Grade II Listed Ivy Cottage to the east. Heritage is therefore an important policy consideration.
- 4.23 The proposed amendments will not increase the impact of the extant consent on the significance of these designated heritage assets. This is supported by the submission of a Heritage Addendum by Asset Heritage. This assesses the associated impacts of the amendments and concludes that the scheme will not result in harm to the significance of the Registered Park and Garden or setting of Ivy Cottage. These findings are consistent with those of the Council's Built Heritage Officer in the determination of applications refs.152813 and 180351. Council officers again agreed with this view in the determination of application 240832 (which this S73 seeks to amend).
- 4.24 The proposed amendments therefore comply with Section 16 of the NPPF and policies CP3 and TB24 of the Local Plan.

Ecology and Trees

Ecology

- 4.25 The documents accompanying the 2024 planning permission prescribed a series of measures to protect habitats, species and ensure BNG net gain. This included recommendations for further survey work, a sensitive lighting scheme, seasonal restriction and ecological supervision of works, good practice working methods, habitat management and new/enhance habitat. It was concluded that the approved scheme would result in a 5.49% net gain in habitat units and 15.6% gain in river units through creation of new wetland and woodland areas and the enhancement of existing habitat to be retained.
- 4.26 A new Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and BNG Metric are submitted with this S73 application. The EclA details further survey work which has been undertaken to date, and assesses the impact of the amended proposals on ecology and habitats. It sets out various avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures which should be implemented and can be secured via planning condition.
- 4.27 The submitted Metric confirms that, subject to on and off-site habitat gains and enhancements, the development could secure a 24.18% net gain for habitat units and 15.6% net gain for watercourse units. This will be an improvement over the consented position. Final details of the habitat to be provided and managed within and outside of the site will be submitted post-determination in line with the statutory BNG conditions set out in the Environment Act 2021.
- 4.28 Subject to implementation of the mitigation measures in the latest EclA, and provision of the habitat gains and enhancements, the scheme would be acceptable with regard to impact on ecology and

biodiversity, and comply with policies CP7 and TB23 of the Local Plan, Section 15 of the NPPF and the provisions of the Environment Act 2021.

Trees

- 4.29 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement submitted with the extant application set out various measures to ensure the protection and health of retained trees. It also stated that tree loss to accommodate the development, particularly where the north and south portals are to be located close to or within woodland, would be required. Consequently, some trees/groups of woodland have been removed within the Site since the previous consent was granted in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Report.
- 4.30 An updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement are submitted with the application which assess the impact of the amended S73 scheme and note necessary tree loss. These losses have been based on detailed design of the proposals and the report is clear where removal has already taken place. The proposed landscaping scheme sets out a comprehensive strategy for replacement planting once the proposals have been constructed. Implementation of this can be secured via condition, as can the mitigation and protection measures.
- 4.31 In this regard, the proposed development complies with policy CC03 of the Local Plan and Section 15 of the NPPF.

Conclusion

- 4.32 The proposed amendments are therefore considered to satisfy Policies CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping) and TB23 (Biodiversity and Development) of the Local Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Other Matters

- 4.33 The consented development will remain ancillary to the main house and will not introduce any new development contrary to the development description, or outside of the approved red line boundary.
- 4.34 The proposed amendments are not considered to create any additional impacts on amenity or environmental factors, many of which are already covered by conditions to ensure that these elements are adequately mitigated or managed.

5. Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 This Section 73 Variation of Condition application seeks to amend the approved documents as listed under Conditions 2 and 9 of the planning permission 240832 for the *“erection of a Summerhouse, walkways and private tunnel from Strowdes Estate. Following demolition of the existing summerhouse.”*, as approved on 6 August 2024.
- 5.2 The new owner and design team are aiming to restore an active estate function to the Strowdes Estate, and provide an enhancement in terms of architecture, landscape, and biodiversity, while also ensuring that the scheme is both deliverable in the short-term, and operationally fit for purpose in the long-term.
- 5.3 Rather than wholesale changes, the proposals include minor amendments to the consented scheme elements of the scheme including the tunnel portals, pavilion building and hard and soft landscaping. In almost every regard, the proposed amendments will result in a reduced impact on the Green Belt and countryside location, and improved safety from a flood perspective. Improvements for ecology, biodiversity and trees will continue to be secured and the scheme will continue to support the overarching aim of the original 2008 in providing improvements for both the Green Belt and Registered Park and Garden.
- 5.4 Continuity with the extant scheme is provided by: maintaining the dimensions, form, volume and materials of the pavilion building and associated decking; similar configuration of underground elements including the tunnel and portals; similar hard and soft landscape proposals; and retention of the ancillary use of the Riverside scheme to the Main House. The development description and red line will not need to be altered as a result of the proposed amendments.
- 5.5 Ultimately, it is considered that the majority of the proposed changes have a neutral to positive impact on planning considerations.
- 5.6 It is considered that all other planning and environmental considerations can be resolved within the scope of the existing conditions, some of which have already been progressed in preparation for initial enabling and construction work.
- 5.7 On the above basis, the proposed amendments sought under this Section 73 application are considered to result in no material impacts over and above those already considered acceptable when permission 240832 was granted in September 2024.

Appendix I

Consent 240832 Delegated Report

Avison Young

St Catherine's Court, Berkeley Place, Bristol BS8 1BQ

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DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	240832
Site Address:	Strowdes Estate, Culham Lane, Remenham, Berkshire, RG10 8NU
Expiry Date:	7 August 2024
Site Visit Date:	29/05/2024
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a Summerhouse, walkways and private tunnel from Strowdes Estate. Following demolition of the existing summerhouse.(Re-submission of ref 180351, amendment to ref 152813).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Green Routes and Riverside Paths
Heathrow Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Green Belt
Ground Water Zones
National Historic Parks and Gardens
Tree Preservation Orders
Radon Affected Area
Within 8m of River Thames
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
Main Rivers DRN Consultation Zone
Ordinary Watercourses Consultation Zone
Local Wildlife Sites Consultation Zone
N Historic Parks and Gardens Consultation Zone
Ordinary Watercourse
PRoW Improvement Plan
JCEB Areas of Search for Sand and Gravel
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas
Flood Zones 2 and 3
Flood Zone

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability

	CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals 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 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB02 – Development adjoining the Green Belt TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM4 - Protection of Designated Landscape DM5 - Protection of the Countryside DM6 - Green Belt DM7 - Conserving the Historic Environment DM8 - Restoration of Minerals and Waste Developments DM9 - Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity DM10 - Flood Risk DM11 - Water Resources DM12 - Sustainable Transport Movements DM13 - High Quality Design of Minerals and Waste Development DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
O/2008/1353	Outline application for the demolition of 8 dwellings and erection of 5 new dwellings. Change of use of 3 dwellings to form 2 boathouses and guest accommodation. Conversion of 2 dwellings to form 1 dwelling. Alterations to the barns and the bungalow to form a single residential unit plus alterations and extensions to existing buildings.	GRANTED 09.12.2008

RM/2010/1237	Erection of one dwelling (Conway Park House)	GRANTED 04.08.2010
RM/2011/2274	Erection of one dwelling (Bell House)	GRANTED 20.12.2011
LB/2014/1431	Application for listed building consent for the proposed installation of one conservation rooflight, minor external amendments to windows and materials to the facade of building extensions (1977 & 2009) and the construction of new partition wall in extension.	GRANTED 12.09.2014
F/2015/0045	Proposed erection of a timber pavilion following the demolition of existing structure in the meadow garden of Ivy Cottage.	GRANTED 02.04.2015
153077	Erection of 3 no estate buildings to serve as estate management, security offices and stores with associated parking and alterations to access (Hatchgate and Kentons, ancillary to Stowdes) <i>S106 agreement for 173097 revoked this permission</i>	GRANTED 16.12.2016
152499	Erection of 4 no single storey staff residential units, together with a machinery shed / parking and associated estate management store / office, at Bell House, ancillary to Stowdes <i>S106 for 173097 subsequently required that this only be occupied by staff employed on site</i>	GRANTED 06.12.2016
152813	Full application for the demolition of the existing summerhouse, and the construction of a replacement summerhouse, walkways and private pedestrian tunnel from Stowdes.	GRANTED 22.12.2016
160131	Erection of one dwelling (Stowdes) <i>S106 agreement for 173097 revoked this permission</i>	GRANTED 05.07.2016
173097	Erection of one dwelling (Stowdes) <i>S106 required permissions 173098 and 173100 to be ancillary to 173097 and not sold off or disposed of separately to this dwelling</i>	GRANTED 13.04.2018 Permission expired
173098	Erection of gatehouse with associated parking ancillary to Stowdes	GRANTED 13.04.2018 Permission expired
173100	Erection of estate management buildings including gardeners' accommodation and underground tunnel linking the estate buildings, ancillary to the main house on Stowdes estate	GRANTED 13.04.2018 Permission expired
180351	Application for variation of a condition 2 for the demolition of the existing summerhouse, and the construction of a replacement summerhouse, walkways and private pedestrian tunnel from	GRANTED 12.02.2018

	Stowdes. following grant of planning permission. (152813). Condition 2 relates to substitute alternative drawings for the portals and approach road.	
213587	Proposed erection of 1no. detached dwelling with associated landscaping.	GRANTED 15.03.2023
213588	Erection of a gatehouse ancillary to Stowdes	GRANTED 15.03.2023
213610	Erection of two-storey estate management buildings including gardeners accommodation and underground tunnel linking the estate buildings and ancillary to the main house on Stowdes estate, following demolition of 3No dwellings, 1No pool house, garages and outhouses, stables and hay barn	GRANTED 15.03.2023
240847	Full application for the proposed erection of 4no. single storey staff residential units, together with 1no. single storey outbuilding for staff communal and welfare space and storage, to be ancillary to the Stowdes Mansion.	Undetermined.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection.
WBC Drainage – No objection.
WBC Highways – No objection.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection.
WBC Ecology – No response received.
WBC Built Heritage Officer – No response received.

External

Historic England – No objection.
The Environment Agency – No response received.
Historic Parks & Gardens – Objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description and Proposal:

The application site forms part of 'Strowdes', which is an as of yet unbuilt large house within the Park Place registered Park and Garden. Permission for the house and a separate ancillary building are extant under 213610 and 213588, which themselves were re-submissions of previous applications.

The current application is a very similar application to one which is no longer extant – approved under 152813 and varied by 180351. It relates to the provision of a 'summerhouse', private walkways and a tunnel into the site. This is because it is on the other side of the Wargrave Road to the main part of 'Strowdes'. A concurrent application for new staff units has been submitted and is currently under consideration.

Park Place is a historic landscape, which has been subdivided into several plots, of which Strowdes is one. 'Hamiltons' is to the west. The application site forms Strowdes river frontage, there being a small boathouse present. There are larger boat houses along the river associated with other large dwellings within the estate. An aerial view of the site is below:



19/07/2024, 15:23:02

Approved/proposed staff building



0 395 790 1,580 ft
0 120 240 480 m

Current application site.

Approved house location

Approved staff accommodation.

The application site is in the Green Belt and has significant history, which will be discussed in more detail in the 'principle of development' section of this report.

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.

The site is in the green belt and therefore policies CP12 of the Core Strategy and TB01 of the MDD Local Plan apply. The proposal does not fall under one of the exceptions relating to development, as outlined in the NPPF. However, development across the wider Park and Garden has been justified by very special circumstances. An approach was agreed under permission ref: O/2008/1353 which agreed the principle of new dwellings, offsetting the volume against the demolition of various buildings across the site. Improvements to the Park and Garden would also be sought.

There is a long and complex history across the wider site and previous demolition has been used to justify a number of permissions. The original outline permission – while not fully implemented has been used by the Local Planning Authority to Justify additional permissions, including Strowdes on the basis that these permissions fell within the volumes originally agreed under the 2008 plan. The applicant has provided a breakdown of the demolitions compared to the permissions granted, which indicates that the proposal still falls within the traded volume when compared with the 2008 permission. The Local Planning Authority does not dispute this document or the traded volumes. While the traded volumes hold weight in the planning balance, the overall justification for the re-development of the Park and Garden was to provide an overall public benefit in terms of the designated heritage assets and openness of the Green Belt (through the signing of a maintenance plan and through removal of volumes). The outline permission was granted over 10 years ago and the improvement of the estate has been largely achieved. The traded volume is therefore not the sole consideration.

In this instance, the scheme is almost identical to previous permissions 152813 and 180351. These are no longer extant, however there are no material changes which would affect the acceptability in principle of the scheme and therefore this cannot reasonably be considered unacceptable in principle. Therefore, in this instance, the consideration of the scheme against the backdrop of the original outline permission is appropriate and this is sufficient to justify the scheme in principle, on the basis that it is part of the development which secures a public benefit through improvements to the designated heritage asset and openness of the green belt.

Character of the Area:

CP3 of the Core Strategy indicates that planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

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...

...

Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.

Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan relates to landscape character.

As has been previously noted, the scheme is very similar to that proposed under 152813 and varied by 180351. The assessment of 152813 was as follows:

The proposed pavilion would measure 8m x 8m with an overall height of 4m. The structure would steel framed with a steel roof, all elevations would be frameless and glazed. The pavilion would be atop raised decking. The pavilion would, by way of being lightweight, frameless and largely glazed would have minimal presence within the landscape, especially when viewed from the river. There would be no other views of the structure from within the park, except limited views from the west when walking along the river frontage.

The southern portal would be set in to the hill, the tunnel opening would be faced in flint (the same as an existing Victorian tunnel to the west that serves Park Place House, as well as the consented Strowdes Mansion) although limited (if any) views of the opening would be present from the riverside. In any case the appearance of the southern portal opening would not be out of character with existing arrangements, such as the tunnel adjacent to the 'museum' and boat house associated with the Park Place mansion.

The northern portal would be set in to the hillside. There are no views of this location from the riverside, or elsewhere within the estate due to the sudden fall of the land as it approaches the river.

As the northern portal building is replacing existing volume, is not visible from within the estate or wider views and the pavilion and southern portal opening having limited impact on the character of the estate and riverside setting, the proposed structures would have no negative impact on the character of the estate, wider landscape nor adversely affect the openness of the green belt.

The tunnel itself would be underground and as such would have no impact in terms of appearance on the green belt or the countryside etc.

The applicant has submitted a tree protection plan and arboricultural impact assessment, which demonstrates adequate protection for existing trees and this is supported by the Council's trees and Landscapes Officer

Heritage:

The application site is within Park Place registered Park and Garden. The heritage assessment submitted with this application is of poor quality. The Berkshire Gardens Trust has some concerns with the scheme, including relating to the cut and fill of the tunnel and potential for earth mounding, which appears to avoid taking material off site.

While this is acknowledged, this is a repeat of a previously approved scheme and therefore is considered acceptable. The Council's Built Heritage Officer has no objection to the proposal.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposed development would not be visible from any neighbouring residential dwellings. As such there are no impacts in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing issues.

Notwithstanding this, the nearest dwelling is Lindisfarne which is approximately 80m to the east of the proposed southern portal and tunnel off of the A321, conditions requiring that no noise be audible beyond the site boundary outside of normal construction hours and a scheme to deal with dust management would ensure that neighbouring amenity is retained during the construction phase of the development.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

CP6 of the Core Strategy relates to highway safety and CC07 of the MDD Local Plan relates to parking. It is noted that the proposal includes a tunnel which passes underneath the main road to the north of the site.

The Council's Highways Officer has no objection to this scheme and therefore it is acceptable in this regard.

Flooding and Drainage:

CC09 of the MDD Local Plan relates to flood risk, CC10 relates to sustainable drainage. It is noted that this building is adjacent the river Thames, within flood zone 3 and therefore there are significant associated flood risks. However, the applicant has submitted a flood risk assessment, which is the same as that submitted for previous applications. The Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Officer has raised no objection to the scheme.

The Environment Agency has not responded to this application, after the completion of the statutory consultation period.

For the above reasons, the scheme is acceptable in terms of flood risk and drainage.

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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership,

pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	06 August 2024
Earliest date for decision:	11 July 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	06.08.2024

Contact details

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