

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250786
Site Address:	Secundus, Wargrave Road, Remenham, Wokingham, RG9 3JD
Expiry Date:	8 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	7 May 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1.8m electric entrance gate. (Retrospective)	

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 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 CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	The JMWP does not apply to the scale of development proposed.
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 C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE5 – Landscape and design NE6 – Valued landscapes DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

	CIL Guidance + 123 List
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
260070	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of land as residential dwellinghouse (Use Class C3).	Approved – 10/03/2026
250787	Full application for the proposed erection of replacement study outbuilding. (Retrospective)	<i>Under Consideration</i>
211004	Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. dwelling, following demolition of the existing buildings and reconstruction of part of the original dwelling.	Withdrawn – 07/07/2021
201306	Full planning application for the erection of a dwelling. Following demolition of the existing buildings and reconstruction of part of the original dwelling.	Withdrawn – 28/08/2020
F/2012/1846	Change of use of existing leisure mooring to residential use (retrospective application)	Conditionally Approved – 01/02/2013

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection subject to condition
WBC Enforcement: No comment
WBC Highways: No objection subject to condition

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Remenham Parish Council object on the following ground: The gate should be set back far enough from the highway to allow for safe entry and exit from the property to ensure the flow of traffic on the busy A road is not obstructed. <i>Officer's Comment: This is discussed in the 'Highway Access and Safety Matters' section of the report.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 comment received in support of the application.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is a plot of land located on the southern side of Wargrave Road

(A321) abutting the north-eastern bank of the River Thames to the west of Henley-on-Thames. The site comprises a raised chalet style building sited above a wet dock, as well as a parking area and a cluster of smaller buildings located towards its north-eastern boundary. The existing mooring benefits from planning consent for residential use.

Proposal:

This application proposes the erection of a replacement electric gate immediately adjacent to the site's vehicular access point. The proposed gate would have a total height of approximately 1.8m and width of 4.9m with a close boarded vertical timber design. The proposed gate sits forward of the originally approved gate, effectively enclosing the existing off-road parking area. The proposed development replaces the originally approved gate. The proposed development has already been carried out, hence the retrospective nature of the proposal.

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.

Development within the Green Belt and Countryside

The application site is located within designated Green Belt and outside of settlement limits in the open Countryside. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts with national policies for the protection of Green Belt land covered by Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that, "The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence". Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves 5 purposes, the one most relevant to this proposal is, "(c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment".

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that, "Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances." When considering any planning application, LPAs must ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of its inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. These principles are reflected in Core Strategy policy CP12 and MDD Local Plan policy TB01.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of eight exceptions applies. In this case, paragraph 154(d) *"the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces"*, could be viewed as a relevant exception.

The TCPA 1990 defines a “building” as any structure or erection, and any part of a building, as so defined, but does not include plant or machinery comprised in a building.

The proposal would not result in any additional volumetric increase in buildings on site with its height and width matching the existing boundary gate. Additionally, the proposed gate would adjoin the existing front boundary fence at the same height. Therefore, the proposal would not result in the replacement of a ‘building’ materially larger than the one it replaces.

Notwithstanding this, a gate of a similar design, 1m in height (0.8m less than proposed) could be installed under permitted development rights. The proposed gate would not be materially more harmful to openness than the fallback position.

Any potential impact on openness would be very limited, with the replacement gate matching the dimensions of the existing and its siting appearing as a continuation of the existing close boarded boundary treatment fronting Wargrave Road. There would be no material impact on immediate views from Wargrave Road, or from wider viewpoints.

The proposal therefore complies with the aforementioned policies and is acceptable in principle, subject to other material considerations.

Design and Character of the Area:

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high-quality design. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

In terms of its design, the proposal would be in keeping with the vertical timber boarded fencing which is the predominant boundary treatment within this section of Wargrave Road. Indeed, the proposal is very similar to a recent development at High Trees located to the north-west. The proposal is considered to enhance the appearance of the site’s frontage due to the removal of the existing, weathered boundary fencing. Moreover, due to its height not encroaching the adjoining boundary fence it would not dominate the street scene.

Therefore, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Due to the scale and height of the proposed boundary gate there are no concerns in respect of potential harm on neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light, overbearing or overlooking impact.

Highway Access and Safety Matters:

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

Core Strategy policy CP6 concerns issues relating to highway safety and access, stating that planning permission will be granted for schemes that, amongst other requirements, provide appropriate vehicular parking, enhance road safety and do not cause highway problems.

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed the proposal and is satisfied that the re-siting of the gate closer to the highway would have no adverse impact on visibility splays. The gate is electric and designed to open remotely to prevent cars waiting on the highway and minimise obstruction. Following the submission of additional information on its operation confirming that the gate shall default to an open position in the event of a power failure, the Officer is satisfied that the operation of the gate will not adversely impact on the safety and traffic flow of Wargrave Road.

Flooding and Drainage:

Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding and policy CC10 requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow. The site is located within Flood Zone 3. A gap beneath the gate has been retained to not impede water flow during a flooding event.

The Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Officer has reviewed the proposal and raised no objection, subject to a condition requiring the gap beneath the gate to remain clear to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. While this request is duly noted, the site visit confirmed that a small gap is incorporated into the design of the gate (to enable its operation) and any replacement gate would likely need additional planning consent. It is therefore not considered necessary to secure this design requirement via a condition in this instance.

Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity:

The posts for the proposed gate have been installed into existing hardstanding and as such no additional impact on the adjacent boundary hedge and tree is anticipated. Due to its scale and siting the gate will have no impact on the existing green infrastructure within and adjacent to the site or the surrounding biodiversity habitats.

Subject to conditions, the application is acceptable and is therefore 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, 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	2 April 2026
Earliest date for decision:	25 June 2025

Recommendation agreed by:	
(Authorised Officer)	
Date:	2 April 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Green Belt*
- *Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside*
- *Flood Zones 2 and 3*
- *Green Route (Wargrave Road)*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Area – Thames River Valley*
- *Ground Water Zones*
- *Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Area*
- *Tree Preservation Order no. 2/1951*
- *Tree Preservation Order no. 1903/2022*