

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

MR & MRS J HORSEMAN

PLANNING STATEMENT

**LINDISFARNE
HENLEY ROAD
WARGRAVE
BERKSHIRE
RG10 8PE**

**Erection of replacement dwelling, pool house and open sided car port
following demolition of existing dwelling (self-build)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

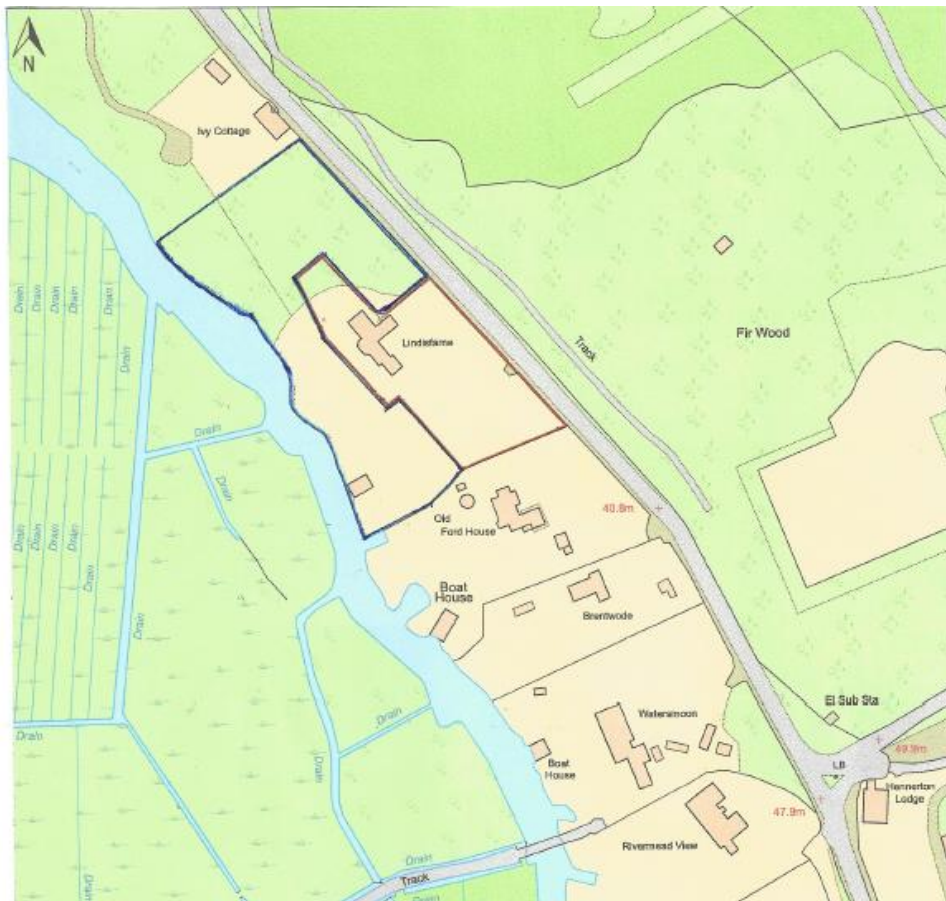
- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a planning application by Mr & Mrs Horseman for the erection of a replacement dwelling, detached pool house and open sided car port following demolition of the existing dwelling (self-build).
- 1.2 The Statement is divided into the following sections:
- Site and Surrounding Area
 - Planning History and Pre-Application Discussions
 - Planning Policy Context
 - The Application Proposal
 - Summary and Conclusions
- 1.3 This statement describes the site and its surroundings and sets out how the proposal meets the Council's Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, it will demonstrate that the proposal would be of a high-quality design and of a size, scale and design that would not result in any harm to Green Belt openness thereby meeting indent (d) of paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024). It will also demonstrate that the proposal would not result in any adverse effects on the adjacent highway, trees or local landscape.
- 1.4 The application follows an earlier pre-application submission (250917) as encouraged under Government guidance at paragraph 40 of the NPPF.
- 1.5 The application is accompanied by the following consultant reports:
- Bat Survey Report (Plan Ecology Ltd)
 - Design and Access Statement (Paul Edwards Architecture)
 - Arboricultural Report (Mark Welby)

- Report on a Site Investigation (Albury S.I.Ltd)
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (Lanmor)

2 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site comprises of a large two storey detached property with attached garage adjacent to the river and set within a substantial, well screened plot. The house and its curtilage amount to an area of 0.425Ha. The site is located to the north of the village of Wargrave on ground rising eastwards away from the River Thames. The higher ground within which the property is currently sited is located within land defined in Flood Zone 1 whereas the land immediately to the west (i.e. the garden stretching towards the river where levels fall steeply) is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (see Flood Risk Assessment). All of the site and the surrounding area falls within land defined as Green Belt in the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map.

Site location plan



- 2.2 The existing property is of no architectural or historic merit being comprised of a 20th century dwelling with attached extensions (see below). The site does not fall within a conservation area. Existing materials include tile hanging, painted brickwork, and a pantile roof.

Existing dwelling

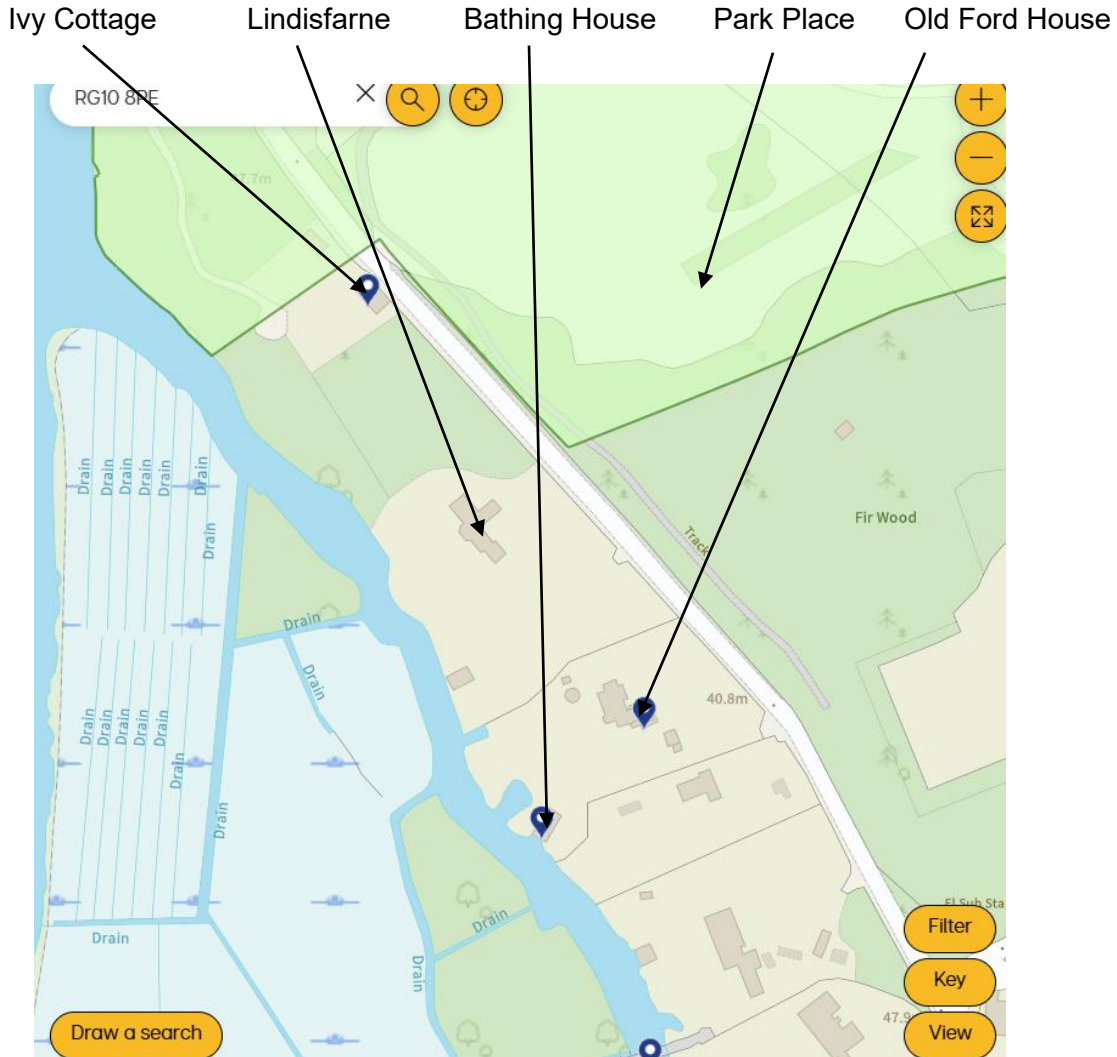


Curtilage lying to the north-west of the existing dwelling



- 2.3 According to the records provided by Historic England, the properties located immediately to the north (Ivy Cottage) and to the south (Old Ford House including the separately listed 'bathing house') are both Grade II listed buildings (see below). They are both sufficiently distant from the property at Lindisfarne (between 50-75m away) not to be directly affected by a replacement dwelling at the application site.
- 2.4 This is particularly the case as the proposal is to replace the new property in a position broadly overlapping the existing built form. The proposed dwelling would also be no closer to the boundary with the Grade II* listed Park and Garden at Park Place, and Temple Combe which covers a substantial area.

Historic England map search



- 2.5 The surrounding area generally comprises of larger dwellings set within generous plots. These dwellings are of individual designs and are mixed in character and appearance. Some of these include planning permissions for replacement dwellings and this includes the property at 'Brentwode' (Wargrave Road), approved in 2023 under planning ref.231857. This provided for some substantial increases when assessed against the original and existing dwelling amounting to a volume uplift of 40.8% when compared to the existing dwelling and 78.8% when compared to the original dwelling. It is acknowledged that footprint remained largely unchanged.

3 PLANNING HISTORY AND PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

3.1 The planning history relating to the site is set out below:

LPA Reference	Description	Decision
29966	Extension and alterations to provide annex for aged parents and additional kitchen, cloakroom and ensuite.	Approved 06.07.1998
10762	Two storey extension and garage.	Approved 08.06.1979
31591	Extension and alteration to provide annex for aged parents.	Approved 23.12.1988

3.2 The application site was the subject of a pre-application submission earlier this year for a larger replacement property. The main comments made by officers were as follows:

- The area is comprised of a limited number of large, detached dwellings located within generous plots. The site is obscured from view from Henley Road due to the change in ground levels but is visually prominent from the Hennerton Backwater;
- On the basis that the site is in the Green Belt and that the proposal is for a replacement dwelling, the important assessment is whether the replacement dwelling is 'materially' larger than the existing. What is considered material is not defined by local or national policy and is ultimately based on the context of the relevant site;

- The 10.4% increase in footprint is considered to be negligible given that the overall proposals would concentrate development more centrally in the site. The increases in volume (43.35%) and floorspace (39.9%) are relatively significant in the context of the site. However, the concentration of development and lack of spatial harm to Green Belt openness leads to the conclusion that these figures are broadly acceptable;
- The increase in volume/massing would be noticeable from the Hennerton Backwater due to the increase in the ridge height and a reduction in massing/height of the two storey side elements should be considered.
Response: The volume/massing has been reduced particularly in terms of the ridge height by an overall 0.9m. As a result the volume of the main dwelling is reduced from 2089m³ to 2051m³;
- The proposed architectural form is acceptable given the extremely varied character. Subject to the dwellings massing at first floor level being reduced, the impact on the character of the area would likely be acceptable;
- A proposed dwelling in the same location as the existing property is unlikely to have any negative impact on the setting of the heritage assets;
- Given the distance to neighbouring properties there is unlikely to be any adverse impact on amenity;
- There were no objections from WBC Highways;
- Consultant reports for trees, ecology, flooding and contamination will be required with an application submission. **Response:** The application is accompanied by all relevant reports.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Relevant planning policy guidance falls within the National Planning Policy Framework and the RBWM Local Plan.

i) National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.2 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states that in achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. Paragraph 10 states that *'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11).*
- 4.3 Paragraph 39 states that Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.4 Chapter 12 is concerned with achieving well designed places. Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.5 Paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure developments:
- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

- c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- e) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.6 Chapter 13 of the NPPF is concerned with protecting Green Belt land. Paragraph 143 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.7 Paragraph 154 sets out the specific categories of development that will be acceptable in the Green Belt. These are:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds;

- Extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- Replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages;
- Limited affordable housing for local community needs;
- Limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land;
- Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it (numbered i-vi).

4.8 Development that is 'inappropriate' can only be approved where there are 'very special circumstances'

4.9 Section 16 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 202 confirms that these assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

ii) The Development Plan

Wokingham Core Strategy (2010)

4.10 Policy CP1 requires that a number of criteria are met. These include: maintaining or enhancing the high quality of the environment; providing attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes; demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel particularly by the car; and contribute towards reaching zero – carbon development as soon as possible.

4.11 Policy CP3 requires, amongst other matters, that new development is of an appropriate scale, mass, activity, built form, height, materials, character and design quality. Proposals should not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring land uses. Paragraph c) requires that sites are used to their full potential.

4.12 Policy CP11 applies specifically to proposals outside of settlements and within the countryside. It states as follows:

- Proposals outside of development limits will not be permitted except where:
 - 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural communities within the borough, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and
 - 2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;
 - 3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement;
 - 4) (Not applicable)
 - 5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must
- Bring about environmental improvements; or
- Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The main factors to take into account are considered to be paragraphs (2) and (5).

4.13 Policy CP12 (Green Belt) states that permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Managing Delivery Development Local Plan (2014)

4.14 Policy CC03 is concerned with Green Infrastructure, trees and landscaping. It states that development proposals should protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features.

- 4.15 Policy TB01 states that proposals for development will only be permitted where they maintain the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. The policy sets a 35% limit for extensions above that of the original dwellinghouse but is silent in respect to replacement dwellings.
- 4.16 Policy TB24 states that the Borough Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets and their settings.

5 THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The application proposal is for a replacement dwelling, detached pool house and open sided car port following the demolition of the existing property which is lawfully used as a residential dwellinghouse. The proposal is for full planning permission and follows the submission of a pre-application enquiry earlier this year which was broadly supported subject to reducing the volume/massing and in particular reducing the massing/height of the two storey side elements.
- 5.2 Planning law and the NPPF (para 2 and para 11) requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 15 of the NPPF states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Therefore, the Development Plan should be the starting point for decision making and development that conflicts with the development plan should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 5.3 This chapter assesses the proposal in relation to the following matters:
- i) Whether the proposed development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and its effect on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - ii) The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area including adjoining heritage assets;
 - iii) Living conditions of occupiers of adjacent properties;
 - iv) Parking and Highways;
 - v) Trees and landscaping;
 - vi) Biodiversity;

vii) Contamination;

viii) Flooding and drainage.

i) Whether the proposed development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and its effect on the openness of the Green Belt

- 5.4 Paragraph 154 of the NPPF sets out the exceptions for the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt which are not deemed to be ‘inappropriate’. This includes at indent (d) the ‘*Replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces*’. Policy CP12 of the CS indicates that the Council will apply national policy to proposals for development in the Green Belt as it doesn’t expand upon what would amount to ‘inappropriate development’. MDDL PolicyTB01 relates solely to extensions and not to replacement dwellings.
- 5.5 The proposed replacement building would clearly be in the same use as the existing building to be demolished (i.e. residential). Therefore, for the purposes of this application, the existing building on the site is clearly the relevant starting point when determining whether a new dwelling is ‘materially larger’ than the existing building.
- 5.6 In this regard neither the NPPF nor the Development Plan define ‘materially larger’ in respect to replacement buildings. It should therefore be considered in its widest terms and not just based on a mathematical calculation of floor space / footprint increase. This accords with the Court of Appeal judgement of *Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2016] EWCA Civ 466 (18 May 2016) which concluded as follows:

‘The concept of ‘openness of the Green Belt’ is not narrowly limited to the volumetric approach suggested by Mr Rudd. The word ‘openness’ is open textured, and a number of factors are capable of being relevant when it comes to applying it to the particular facts of a specific case. Prominent among these will be factors relevant to how built up the Green Belt is now and how built up it will be if redevelopment occurs (in the context of which, volumetric matters may be a

material concern, but are by no means the only one) and factors relevant to the visual impact on the aspect of openness which the Green Belt presents'.

- 5.7 This is consistent with other more recent established case law and the decision reached in the Supreme Court in R. (oao Samuel Smith Old Brewery) v North Yorkshire County Council [2020] UKSC3 [1] which confirmed that matters relating to openness are a matter of planning judgement and not law. The ruling re-confirms that, while not a legal requirement, consideration of visual openness is a relevant issue to consider when making judgements on Green Belt openness are made. In determining whether the proposed replacement dwelling would be 'materially larger' the proposal should therefore be considered against a range of criteria comparing the existing built form against the proposal. This includes siting, floorspace, footprint, volume and height amongst a range of considerations.

Existing and proposed floorspace

- 5.8 The existing floorspace is 404.65sq.m and the proposed floorspace is 522.4sq.m (GIA). This represents a modest 29.1% increase. The proposed floorspace generated by the two detached outbuildings amounts to the following:

Detached car port – 42.25sq.m

Pool house – 135sq.m

- 5.9 On the basis that both of these detached buildings could be built under the property's permitted development rights under Class E in the locations indicated (i.e. they would both be incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse and would not exceed a height of 3m), it is considered that they should not be included within any mathematical calculations or assessment of openness as there is essentially a valid fallback position for both of these structures.
- 5.10 In terms of how fallback positions should be considered, it was established in Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling BC & Others [2017] EWCA Civ 1314 that there should be a "real prospect" of a fallback development being implemented and that the decision maker should exercise their planning judgement as to whether that

would be the case depending on the particular circumstance. There is no legal requirement for a landowner or developer to say precisely how any available permitted development rights would be utilised although on this occasion both detached buildings have been clearly shown and form part of the proposals.

Existing and proposed built footprint

- 5.11 The existing footprint is 255.15sq.m and the proposed footprint is 272.25sq.m equating to a 6.7% uplift.

Changes in mass, bulk and height of buildings including roof form changes and features

- 5.12 The volume will increase from 1457m³ to 2051m³ representing an increase of 40.8%. The height of the main ridge will be 8.1m, which is only 25cm above that of the existing dwelling.
- 5.13 In addition, as set out in the table below, this application submission would have a lower volume uplift than the pre- application submission and in particular would lower the main ridge and the two storey side elements by almost 1m in height which were changes requested by officers. As a result, volume is also reduced which in turn would reduce the building's prominence from the Hennerton Backwater thereby dealing with the officer's main concern.

Scale of buildings

- 5.14 The proposed scale and mass of the building compare favourably with the existing building. It is acknowledged that the footprint and floorspace will be increased to a modest degree, but the uplifts are not excessive. Importantly, the existing built footprint will be fully respected.
- 5.15 The volume uplift will be 40.8%, which again is not excessive and reflects those of other planning permission granted in the local area. This is important as it is frequently determined to be the main measurement of whether a proposal is 'materially larger'.

- 5.16 At the nearby property at 'Brentwode' (Wargrave Road), approved in 2023 under planning ref.231857 the Council granted permission for a volume uplift of 40.8% when compared to the existing dwelling.

Table 1 – Comparison between existing and proposed

	Existing	Pre-application submission 250917	Proposed
Footprint (GIA)	255.15m ²	281.82m ² 10.4% increase	272.25m ² 6.7% increase
Volume	1457m ³	2089m ³ 43.4% increase	2051m ³ 40.8% increase (Pool house and car port amount to a total of 552.25m ³)
Floorspace (GIA)	404.65m ²	563.64m ² 39.3% increase	522.4m ² 29.1% increase (Pool house and car port amount to a total of 177.25m ²)
Ridge Height	7.85m	8.6m (side elements) and 9m (main ridge)	7.7m (side elements) and 8.1m (main ridge) (Pool house and car port are 3m high)

Siting

- 5.17 The siting of the proposed dwelling reflects that of the existing dwelling to be demolished (see proposed site plan for a comparison).
- 5.18 In conclusion on this issue, having regard to all of the above factors, the proposed replacement building would not be materially larger than the one it would replace. It would not therefore be 'inappropriate development' and accordingly would comply with paragraph 154 of the NPPF. The siting of the replacement dwelling will reflect that of the existing property with almost the entire footprint of the new dwelling overlapping the existing property.
- 5.19 As stated above, the volume uplift is the same as the most recent local decision which was not opposed on Green Belt policy grounds.

ii) The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area including designated heritage assets

- 5.20 The site is located within the countryside although as set out in the officer response provided under the pre-application, the site is almost completely obscured from view from Henley Road to the east due to the changes in ground levels. The design of the proposed new dwelling reflects the established character of the area which is comprised of traditionally designed two storey dwellings located within large plots as set out in the pre-application response. Further details on the design including materials are provided in the Design and Access Statement (Paul Edwards Architecture).
- 5.21 It is acknowledged that the site lies adjacent to the Grade II* listed Park Place Historic Park and Garden comprising Park Place, and Temple Combe. However, the proposed dwelling would not be any closer to the boundary than the existing property and therefore any impact would not be material and not sufficient to affect its setting. The same case can also be made in respect to the Grade II listed dwellings and bathing house lying to the north-west (Ivy Cottage) and to the south-east (Old Ford House). As a result, paragraph 215 of the Framework is not

considered to be engaged as any harm identified would be below the 'less than substantial harm' impact. There is therefore no requirement to consider any public benefits arising from the proposal.

iii) Living conditions of occupiers of adjacent properties

- 5.22 The replacement dwelling is located within the same position as the existing dwelling, ensuring that the privacy of adjoining properties is protected. Distances to neighbouring properties will still be substantial.
- 5.23 The proposal therefore meets Policy CP3 as the amenity of nearby occupiers would not be materially affected. It is worth noting that a practical identical relationship to neighbouring dwellings on the pre-application submission did not attract any concern from the Council.

iv) Parking and highways

- 5.24 The proposal would utilise the existing access and driveway with the three existing parking bays immediately to the south-west of the entrance being retained. New timber gates, inset 6m from the highway, would be constructed at the entrance. The proposal also includes a double open-sided car port to replace the existing attached garage.

v) Trees and landscaping

- 5.25 The Arboricultural Report (Mark Welby) confirms that the proposals will result in the removal of one tree. Due to the unmanaged state of the overall stock, a further six other trees will be removed as good practice.

vi) Biodiversity

- 5.26 The application is accompanied by a Bat Survey Report which confirms that there are bat roosting opportunities in the house and garage within the loft space, roof tiles and hanging wall tiles. Three bat activity surveys were carried out on the house and garage during which one bat access point and one roosting area were

identified. The recommendation is that an application for a bat licence and a bat mitigation plan will be required.

- 5.27 As a self-build, the site is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain. Ecological enhancements in line with national and local planning policy can be secured through conditions.

vii) Contamination

- 5.28 The application is accompanied by a site investigation report (Albury S.I Ltd) which provides a geochemical analysis of the site. The results confirm that there are no elevated levels of contamination that would pose a long-term risk to end-users of the site and as such there are no remedial measures considered to be necessary.

viii) Flooding and drainage

- 5.29 The FRA and Drainage Strategy (Lanmor) confirms that foul drainage will be collected via a network of pipes and treated on site via a package treatment plant before being discharged to the adjoining watercourse (Hennerton Backwater). In terms of surface water, the proposed drainage strategy is to install permeable paving for the access road which will provide storage of the surface water runoff to allow a restricted discharge to an attenuation tank that will also serve the building's roof and hard standings. The paving and tank will attenuate the runoff from the site to allow the discharge rate to the ditch to be reduced.

ix) Summary and conclusions

- 5.30 The application proposal is to replace an existing property. The proposed volume increase is within the normally applied thresholds applied in the local area. The height will broadly reflect that of the existing property. The design will ensure that the amenities of neighbouring properties are maintained.
- 5.31 The application proposal will be occupied by the self-builder and their children as a family home. The existing property is tired and does not make a positive contribution to the surrounding area. By comparison, the architect designed replacement

dwelling will reflect the site's location, maintain Green Belt openness as well as providing a property with a significantly higher level of sustainable construction.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The application should be supported for the following reasons:

- i) The application site falls within the Green Belt and the proposed building would be in the same use as the building it replaces. The proposal takes into account the size, scale, bulk, mass and height of the existing building to be demolished, and the proposed replacement building would not be materially larger than the one it replaces equating to a volume uplift of 40.8%. Importantly, the Council did not object to a higher volume uplift at pre-application stage identifying only one issue which related to the volume/massing of the dwelling in terms of the ridge height of the two side elements and the overall prominence from the Hennerton Backwater. This full application has reduced the main ridge and two storey side elements by almost 1m thereby reducing its volume/massing and overall prominence from the west. Accordingly, the proposal is not 'inappropriate' and is in accordance with paragraph 154 of the NPPF.
- ii) The two outbuildings (pool house and car port) are included within the application submission even though similar structures could be built under the property's permitted development rights in the same location. They therefore represent a fallback position and have accordingly not been included within the main volume/floor area calculations as they are detached buildings that meet the provisions of Class E.
- iii) The proposed building is of a traditional design and appearance and would be constructed in appropriate materials (red brick and render) which would ensure that the development would harmonise with the appearance of other buildings within the wider area. The proposal would not harm the significance of nearby designated heritage assets as the replacement dwelling will reflect the current siting of the property. There is therefore no requirement to consider any public benefits.

- iv) The proposed development provides a high standard of amenity for future residents in terms of internal space meeting local and national standards. The proposal has taken into account the siting of adjacent buildings and ensures that no material loss of amenity would occur to the occupiers of neighbouring properties all of whom are distant from the replacement dwelling.
- v) The proposal maintains the same access onto Henley Road and retains the 3no. existing parking spaces as well as providing two further spaces in a new carport. No objections were raised by the Council under the earlier pre-app. scheme on parking/highway grounds.
- vi) The proposal results in minimal tree loss, limited to mainly 'U' category and one Grade C category trees which should not be a limitation to development.
- vii) The applicant acknowledges that a bat licence will be required following a survey of the house and garage.
- viii) The contamination report has not identified any elevated levels of contamination.
- ix) The FRA and Drainage Strategy provides for both foul and surface water drainage strategies.