

DRAFT DECISION NOTICE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Expiry Date: 7 February 2018

Application Number: 173566

Parish: Finchampstead

Location: Broomfield, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3TH

Proposal: Full planning application for the proposed erection of a replacement dwelling and associated car parking following demolition of existing dwelling.

Recommendation: Approve

Conditions and Reasons

1. Timescale

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved details

This permission is in respect of the submitted drawings numbered 3424/200 Rev C (dated February 2017), 3424/201 Rev B and 3424/202 Rev C (dated 21 June 2017), 3424/203 Rev A (dated 14 June 2017), 3424/25 Rev E and 3424/206 Rev D (dated 8 November 2017), 3424/207 Rev C (dated June 2017), all received by the local planning authority on 13 December 2017 and the drawing numbered and 3424/208 (dated February 2018 and received 6 February 2018).

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. External materials

Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building/s shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

4. Sustainable drainage

Prior to the commencement of the development, details of the implementation, maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Those details shall include:

- i) A timetable for its implementation, and
- ii) A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

5. Bat mitigation

Demolition, or other works that could affect roosting bats, shall not commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England) and a copy has been submitted to the council. Thereafter mitigations measures approved in the licence shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details. Should conditions at the site for bats change and / or the applicant conclude that a licence for development works affecting bats is not required the applicant is to submit a report to the council detailing the reasons for this assessment and this report is to be approved in writing by the council prior to commencement of works.

Reason: The house hosts a bat roost which will be affected by the proposals. This condition will ensure that bats, a material consideration, are not adversely impacted upon by the proposed development, and that the Council demonstrates that the council has fulfilled its duties under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

6. Demolition required

No development shall take place on the site until the existing dwelling shown to be demolished on the approved plan has been so demolished.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the countryside. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP11 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies TB21.

7. Protection of trees

No operations shall commence on site in connection with the development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme (Project No. LC/00172, prepared by Landscape Collective and received by the local planning authority on 23 January 2017) are in place on site.

No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

8. Removal of demolished materials

All materials arising from the demolition of buildings on the site shall be permanently removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the countryside. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3, CP11 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies TB21.

9. Retention of trees and shrubs

No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are

of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

10. Permeable surfacing

The hard surfacing hereby permitted shall be constructed from porous materials or provision shall be made to direct water run-off from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area within the curtilage of the development, and the hard surfacing shall thereafter be so-maintained.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

11. Landscaping

Landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and undertaken in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s).

Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development).

12. Access and gradient details

No building shall be occupied until the access has been constructed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details should include gradients of the driveway to the basement garage to ensure that there is no scraping of vehicles.

Reason: To facilitate access into and out of the site for all users and to allow fluency in the movement of vehicles leaving the highway in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP2, CP3 & CP6.

13. Earth mounding and contouring

With the exception of the driveway access (as depicted in the plan numbered 3424/200Rev C), the basement level is to be wholly subterranean and is not to project above the natural ground level. The contours and levels of the front garden area to the south of the replacement dwelling, as hereby approved, shall not be

modified, whether by excavation, establishment of retaining walls, increased or reduced ground levels or any other similar means.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity and landscape character of the area.
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

14. Restriction of permitted development rights

Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B, E and F of Part 1 of the Second Schedule the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no buildings, enlargement or alterations permitted shall be carried out without the express permission in writing of the local planning authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the Countryside and neighbouring amenities.
Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB21.

15. Garage to be retained as such

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the garage accommodation on the site identified on the approved plans shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential use of the site at all times. It shall not be used for any business nor as habitable space.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, so as to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. *Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.*

Informatives

1. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000.

3. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must

be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see - <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>

4. The applicant is reminded that a Demolition Notice may be required to be served on the Council in accordance with current Building Regulations and it is recommended that the Building Control Section be contacted for further advice.

5. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant in terms of:

- addressing the evolving planning policy context;
- addressing concerns relating to highway safety;
- additional plans being submitted;

The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:



Date: 7/2/2018

REMEMBER

The earliest date for a decision on this application is 12 January 2018.



DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

App Number:	173566
Site Address:	Broomfield, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TH
Expiry Date:	7 February 2018
Proposal:	Full planning application for the proposed erection of a replacement dwelling and associated car parking following demolition of existing dwelling

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS
• Designated Countryside • Farnborough Aerodrome consultation zone • Minerals consultation zone • Sand and gravel extraction consultation zone • Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (5km and 7km) • Bat consultation zone • Flood Zone 1

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy 2010 (CS)	Policy CP1 – Sustainable development Policy CP3 – General Principles for development Policy CP7 – Biodiversity Policy CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Policy CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals Policy CP11 – Proposals outside Development Limits
Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 (MDD)	Policy CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping Policy CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction Policy CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks Policy CC06 – Noise Policy CC07 – Parking Policy CC09 – Development and Flood Risk Policy CC10 – Sustainable Drainage Policy TB07 – Internal Space Standards Policy TB21 – Landscape Character Policy TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY		
App No.	Description	Decision/Date
992406	New replacement dwelling	Approved on 13 October 1999
99/70338/F		
002359		Approved on 20

F/2000/1584		December 2000
010120 F/2001/3382	New vehicular access and blocking off of existing access	Refused on 10 April 2001
010422 F/2001/4245	New replacement dwelling (amendment to F/2000/1584)	Approved on 4 March 2003
011133 TP/2001/4770	Temporary vehicular access	Approved on 22 May 2005
081590 F/2008/1616	Erection of detached double garage	Refused on 4 September 2008
090071 F/2009/2547	Construction of an open-sided car port attached to the dwelling, new window to the kitchen/breakfast area on the front elevation and new open sided mono-pitch structure to create covered log store on the rear elevation	Approved on 28 January 2010
120465 VAR/2012/0526	Removal of Condition 4 of F/2009/2547 to allow the infilling of the sides of the carport	Approved on 31 May 2015
171076	New replacement dwelling	Refused on 25 May 2017
172228		Refused on 25 September 2017

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Ecology	The building has been used by at least fourteen long-eared, two common pipistrelles and one soprano pipistrelle bats. Due to potential harm, a licence for development works affecting bats will be required from Natural England. Subject to this requirement, there is no objection.
WBC Health	No objection.
WBC Highways	No objection to parking provision, access and traffic generation.
WBC Landscaping	No objection, subject to conditions.
WBC Waste	No comment.

REPRESENTATIONS

Finchampstead Parish Council	Objections on the following grounds: • Inappropriate development in the countryside • Exceeds the scale and footprint of the existing building • Excessive scale and massing relative to the plot size • Excessively dominant height • Re-positioning higher on the hill results in inappropriate scale, form and height which is out of context with other buildings and more obtrusive when viewed from the roadway • Out of keeping on a prominent corner plot <u>Officer comment:</u> The scale, form and height of the building is acceptable. It is also acceptable when compared with the original dwelling. Refer to 'Character of the Area'. • Poor environmental credentials given it involves the demolition
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	of a building built in 2001 <u>Officer comment:</u> There are no policies or restrictions against the demolition of a building based on its age. • Disturbance to bat colony <u>Officer comment:</u> Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection in relation to any impacts upon the bat colony, subject to conditions relating to mitigation measures. Refer to 'Ecology'.
Ward Member	No comments received.
Neighbours	The application was consulted to neighbours from 15 December 2017 to 12 January 2018 and five (5) submissions were received. These include: 1) Moor Green House, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TH 2) Old Thatch, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TH 3) Craigfood, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TH 4) Greenacres, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TH 5) Woodend Cottage, Dell Road, Finchampstead RG40 3TG The submissions raised the following issues: • Inappropriate development in the countryside • Exceeds the scale and footprint of the existing building • Excessive scale and massing relative to the plot size • Excessively dominant four storey height, which should be measured to the basement level • Re-positioning higher on the hill results in inappropriate scale, form and height which is out of context with other buildings and more obtrusive when viewed from the roadway, public rights of way and neighbouring properties • Dominance of terrace <u>Officer comment:</u> The scale, form and height of the building is acceptable. It is also acceptable when compared with the original dwelling. Refer to 'Character of the Area'. • Disturbance to bat colony <u>Officer comment:</u> The scale, form and height of the building is acceptable. It is also acceptable when compared with the original dwelling. Refer to 'Character of the Area'. • Water runoff problems from increased footprint and basement construction

	<u>Officer comment:</u> Given the provision of soft landscaping on the site, there are no objections to the proposal on the grounds of water runoff or subterranean water flow, as noted in 'Drainage' and 'Flooding'. - Plans are misleading as they do not show the basement access <u>Officer comment:</u> Revised plans (section through the building) have been provided showing the driveway access to the basement. Additional information regarding the basement is also required as a dischargeable condition. - Noise and overlooking from terrace and master bedroom balcony <u>Officer comment:</u> The amenity of surrounding neighbours is not adversely affected, as noted in 'Neighbour Amenity' - Design is out of keeping <u>Officer comment:</u> There are no objections to the contemporary design of the dwelling, including the expanse of glass. Refer to 'Building Design'. - Parking to the north of the dwelling is unclear <u>Officer comment:</u> No parking structures are proposed to the north of the dwelling and permitted development restrictions prohibit any further development on the site without planning permission.
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APPRAISAL

Proposal

The proposal involves the following works:

- Demolition of the existing two storey dwelling house in the centre of the site
- Construction of a new three storey dwelling house located towards the rear boundary and comprising the following:
 - Excavation to accommodate a basement consisting of a three car garage, games room and wine cellar
 - Main entrance and living spaces on the ground floor opening onto a south facing external terrace space
 - Three ensuite bedrooms and one WIR around a central hall on the first floor
 - One ensuite bedroom and store room on the second floor/loft space
 - Passenger lift servicing each level
- Relocation of the driveway to extend to the proposed garage and parking area

- to the northern side of the dwelling
- Associated landscaping

Site Description

The site is located on the northern side of Lower Sandhurst Road with driveway access via the side laneway. The site measures 0.28 hectares (0.69 acres) which is undersized when compared against most plots on Lower Sandhurst Road.

It is located within the countryside, being 600m to the east of the village of Finchampstead. It is also located in Landscape Character Area B3 'Blackwater River Valley and Open Water' and is north of the Moor Green Lakes Nature Reserve. The landscape character of Lower Sandhurst Road is verdant, with native trees and hedges lining the road between entrances to dwellings.

Lower Sandhurst Road (and the wider locality around Finchampstead) comprises large one and two storey dwellings of varying age and architectural style on large plots of land. At least within Lower Sandhurst Road, there are some glimpses of these dwellings between vegetation (in the form of hedging and mature trees) lining the roadway. Siting of dwellings is interspersed, with some dwellings closer to the road and others setback into the plot.

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. Policy CC01 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) 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.

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires sustainable development that maintains and enhances the high quality of the environment and incorporates positive energy efficiency measures. Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy states that the scale of development must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities, services and accessibility at or in the location.

Given the proposal involves a replacement dwelling, there is no net change in the number of dwellings on the site and as the property is located amongst other residential plots, it accords with the principles of sustainable development. It is also acceptance in terms of the relevant policies in the DMM and Core Strategy, including with respect to the apparent height of the building within the countryside.

Countryside Land/Character of the Area

Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy permits development outside of development limits (including countryside) only where it is sustainable, does not lead to excessive expansion away from the original building, does not result in inappropriate increases in scale, form or footprint and would bring about environmental improvement.

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. Policies R1 and RD1 of the Borough Design SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

This is reinforced in other policies in the Borough Design SPD, including Policies R1, R9, R11 and RD5 require housing to be designed to limit height and built form in relation to the prevailing heights and built forms in the locality, to ensure a coherent street character, including in terms of scale, rhythm, proportion, height, materials and colour and to achieve a positive contribution and compatibility with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

Policy RD11 notes that replacement buildings may be appropriate in the countryside where there is no adverse increase in scale, form or footprint and where there are environmental improvements. A 50% increase in volume for a one storey development is acceptable when compared with the original building.

The site is located outside of settlement limits within open countryside east of the village of Finchampstead.

This section of Lower Sandhurst Road comprises about twenty dwellings, mostly concentrated on the northern side of the road with the open countryside predominating on the southern side. Dwellings are two storeys in height with steeply pitched roofs (although Foxglade, which is diagonally opposite the subject site, comprises a third storey loft within the pitched roof), sited on large plots with ample setbacks to the front and side boundaries and consistency in building separation when viewed from the road. The predominant character of the area is of a rural lane with interspersed dwellings and a moderate but intact landscape character consisting of laneway hedging, mature trees, open countryside and lakes to the south. Protection of this open and countryside landscape is therefore imperative.

The original dwelling on the property was a single storey cottage sited near the eastern boundary, comparable to the scale and size of Old Thatch House, which is a smaller single storey thatch house on the adjoining property to the north.

The existing building on the site was approved in 2001 (with a carport approved in 2008 and enclosed garage approved in 2012). It is sited towards the centre of the property, is two storeys in height and is largely consistent with the scale, height and form of other properties in the immediate vicinity (with the exception of the Old Thatch House). It is 45% larger in footprint, 55% higher and 268% larger in volume than the original building.

The first refused planning application (171076) was refused, in part, because of concerns with scale, measured in terms of footprint, height and volume. The second refused planning application (172228) addressed many of these issues but was still refused on the grounds of excessive height, given the basement presented as a clearly apparent floor when viewed from Lower Sandhurst Road.

The subject replacement dwelling is lower in height and comprises less volume than

planning application 171076 but still represents a further increase in height, footprint, floor area, width and length as measured against the existing dwelling. The difference is that it proposes to house the basement wholly below ground, with the exception of the garage door which will be screened behind the driveway.

When compared to the existing building, the proposal represents a 41% increase in height, 120% increase in footprint and 162% increase in floor area. However, the countryside policies for replacement buildings are to relate to the original building, which in accordance with definition in the NPPF, is the building as it was built originally. Accordingly, the proposal represents a 120% increase in height, a 220% increase in footprint and a 212% increase in volume.

The changes are summarised in the following table:

Dwelling	Height	Footprint	Floor Area	Volume	Width	Length
Original	1 storey 4.5m	100m ²	100m ²	450m ³	11.2m	11.1m
Existing	2 storeys 7.0m	145m ²	290m ²	1660m ³	12.6m	20m
Refused (171076)	3 storeys 10.5m	390m ²	840m ²	3140m ³	16m	32m
Refused (172228)	3-4 storeys 9.9m (11.2m)	350m ²	760m ²	1600m ³	16m	20.6m
Proposed (173566)	3-4 storeys 9.9m	350m ²	760m ²	1405m ³	16m	20.6m

The original dwelling was modest by comparison to other dwellings in Lower Sandhurst Road, which would ordinarily limit the scale of any proposed replacement building. However, strict application of the above policies would result in a proposed building that is undersized by comparison to other nearby dwellings. Moreover, approvals of replacement dwellings around the wider Finchampstead area indicate increases in volume over the existing building of up to 263% (see planning reference 081032).

Amendments have been made between 171076 and 172228 and the subject application, achieving a reduction in the overall volume of the building. As such, it is now viewed as consistent in scale and more in context with recent developments in Lower Sandhurst Road (and the wider area of Finchampstead). These include The Stables (approved by appeal – see APP/X0360/W/15/3140327), Foxglade (F/2014/1678), Moor Green Farm (F/2012/1104) and Green Acres (F/2008/1490). In terms of volume, it is no longer viewed as dominating in the countryside.

Section 8.5.3 of the Borough Design SPD states that replacement dwellings will only be acceptable where there are appropriate increases in scale, form and footprint and environmental improvements. In this case, there is a net loss of soft landscaping via the increase in the footprint. However, the impact upon the character of the countryside is no longer as pronounced. The footprint (12%) is more appropriate as a proportion of the site area whilst the volume (about 50%) is not excessive. Furthermore, the total length of the dwelling as it is viewed from Lower Sandhurst

Road has been reduced from 32m to less than 21m, which is 38% of the site width and allows for adequate building separation.

Policy R7 of the Borough Design SPD requires a consistent and coherent building line that relates to existing buildings and Section 8.5.3 also notes that replacement dwellings will be expected to be sited in the same location as the original building, unless there are visual or environmental benefits in siting a dwelling elsewhere. There is no clear predominant building line on the northern side of Lower Sandhurst Road and in this case, the siting of the building towards the north western corner is done to allow greater access to sunlight for the southern elevation and the front garden and improved the outlook afforded from the dwelling. As such, the siting of the dwelling away from the main roadway or front boundary, would not be opposed on any planning grounds and its refusal on this basis is unjustified.

Policy R9 of the Borough Design SPD limits height in relation to the prevailing heights in the immediate area. In this respect, approvals for replacement dwellings in Lower Sandhurst Road since 2009 include:

- Foxglade (152370) is two storeys in height with a dormer loft space incorporated within the pitched roof. The ridgeline measures 9.3m-10.6m in height with an eaves height of 6.5m. An older approval (F/2014/1678) was proposed at slightly lower heights
- Moor Green Farm (F/2012/1104) is two storeys in height with a ridgeline of 7.7m and eaves height of 6.0m. It included a subterranean basement
- Green Acres (F/2009/0102) is two storeys in height with a dormer loft space incorporated within the pitched roof. The ridgeline measures 8.9m in height with an eaves height of 5.6m

Whereas the basement resulted in an apparent height of 11.2m on the southern elevation facing Lower Sandhurst Road in planning application 172228, it is no longer readily visible in views from the public domain and the dwelling is no longer apparent as a four storey dwelling. Instead, it is a 2-3 storey dwelling, with a maximum height of 9.9m, a variable ridge height of 7.5m-9m and an eaves height of 5.0m-5.8m. Whilst the second floor does not appear as a traditional loft form there is sufficient separation and contrast in the roof form such that it does not present as undue bulk from neighbouring properties, adjacent public rights of way or the roadway.

Its position higher on the site is of no significant consequence in its impression of bulk given the difference in the existing ground level is less than 500mm (51.26 where it is proposed to be sited versus 50.75 further south on the site) and it is still centrally located on the site but setback sufficiently from the roadway to soften its appearance. It is appropriately compatible with more recent approvals in Lower Sandhurst Road and is not dominating relative to the existing dwelling. It satisfies Policies CP3 and the CP11 and the relevant clauses in the Borough Design SPD and no objection is raised.

Building Design

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its materials and colours and must be of high quality design. Policy RD6 of

the Borough Design SPD states the elevations are to be well composed, proportioned and detailed and Policy RD7 requires that materials, colours and details respond to the distinctive elements of the locality.

The architectural character of the replacement dwelling is distinctly contemporary, with a prominent skillion roof form separated into two parts with one ridge higher than the other. There are also large expanses of glazing, particularly to the southern elevation. By contrast, the streetscene of Lower Sandhurst Road comprises mostly traditional timber and brick buildings with pitched roofs although there is no consistent architectural form.

As noted in the two previous refusals for the site (planning applications 171076 and 172228), there is no in principle objection to the establishment of a contemporary building of this nature on the property and there is no objection to the application in terms of its relationship with other properties on Lower Sandhurst Road and its impression in the countryside.

Housing

Density

As the application involves a replacement dwelling, there is no net change in density.

Amenity

Policy TB07 of the MDD Local Plan and Policy R17 of the Borough Design SPD require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity. A minimum standard of 100m² applies for 4+ bedroom houses. Additionally, double bedrooms should have a minimum area of 12m², living spaces should have a minimum area of 31m² and there should be provision for storage. The proposal achieves full compliance with all of the above.

Policy R18 of the Borough Design SPD requires sufficient sunlight and daylight to new properties, with dwellings afforded a reasonable dual outlook and southern aspect. The proposal will have an uninterrupted southern outlook and will receive ample direct sunlight and provide a good outlook. It is acceptable in terms of Policy R18.

Policy R16 of the Borough Design SPD requires a minimum depth of 11m for rear gardens and a 1m setback from the boundary to allow access thereto. The siting of the dwelling towards the northern end of the site will allow for a large expanse of amenity space and garden area to the south of the dwelling, well in excess of the minimum requirement and with ample access to sunlight, sufficient space for activities and good connectivity from the terraces and interior of the dwelling. It also retains and incorporates existing landscaping elements, including boundary hedging and mature vegetation. It is satisfactory with respect to Policy R16.

Accessibility

Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy 2010 seeks to ensure that new development

contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities, including for aged persons and the disabled.

A passenger lift has been incorporated in the design of the dwelling, connecting all four levels of the dwelling. Level access is also likely from the rear of the ground floor. Due to the open plan layout and sufficient clearances, it is also easily adaptable for accessibility purposes. In this regard, no objection is raised.

Neighbour Amenity

Overlooking

Policy R15 of the Borough Design SPD requires the retention of reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms, with separation of 22m to the rear and 10m to the street.

The property maintains separation of 21m to the western boundary and 24m to the southern boundary, as well as 21m across the laneway to the adjacent property to the east. Furthermore, it is well in excess of 22m to all other dwellings in the immediate vicinity. With existing mature landscaping retained along the boundary and the predominant outlook from the dwelling towards the south where there are no dwellings, there is no clear perception of overlooking and the proposal is acceptable on visual privacy grounds.

Loss of Light

Policy R18 of the Borough Design SPD aims to protect sunlight and daylight to existing properties, with no material impact on levels of daylight in the habitable rooms of adjoining properties. With ample separation to any adjoining dwellings, there is no issue in terms of loss of daylight or sunlight.

Overbearing

Objections were received from adjoining properties in relation to the dominance of the dwelling, including from the property to the rear (Old Thatch), which raised concerns of a loss of outlook and excessive built form due to the proximity, height and siting of the dwelling higher on the site.

There is ample separation to adjoining dwellings and no particular issue of building dominance or sense of enclosure whilst the wider outlook of the countryside will remain satisfactory. On this basis, no objection is raised.

Noise

Policy CC06 and Appendix 1 of the MDD requires that development protect noise sensitive receptors from noise impact.

Objections were received from adjoining properties in relation to a loss of acoustic privacy from the use of the terrace. It measures 108m² in area and extends along the length of the southern elevation of the ground floor. Whilst it could be viewed as

expansive, there is ample separation to any adjoining dwellings and the replacement dwelling involves only a minimal increase in bedroom density. As such, there is no issue in terms of noise disturbance to adjoining properties, whether through construction activities, use of the property or traffic movements and no objection is raised in terms of Policy CC06 of the MDD.

Highway Access and Parking Provision

Parking Provision

Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards. A garage is proposed within the basement with adequate space for three vehicles. The driveway also extends around the northern side of the dwelling to the main entrance to the dwelling, allowing for additional parking. The proposal therefore accords with Policy CC07, which requires at least three car spaces, and Policy P1 of the Borough Design SPD, which specifies minimum design specifications. A condition has been included to prohibit the construction of any additional outbuildings without first obtaining planning permission.

Access

Policy P3 of the Borough Design SPD notes that parking spaces should be safe and convenient, close to the dwelling and sited to minimise impact upon safety. There will be a minimal change in the number of traffic movements to and from the site due to a negligible increase in the density of the dwelling. Access remains via the private laneway leading from Lower Sandhurst Road and vehicles will still be able to leave the property in a forward motion. The proposal is therefore acceptable.

Character

Policy P2 of the Borough Design SPD ensures that parking is provided in a manner that is compatible with the local character and Policy R23 requires that garages be well designed, respond to the original building and contribute to the local character. There are no external parking structures and the garage will be concealed from any readily apparent views due to its subterranean location. Vehicles are also likely to be parked within the curtilage of the dwelling, which is also an acceptable arrangement.

Cycle Parking

Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum cycle parking standards and Policies P2 and P3 of the Borough Design SPD ensure that it is conveniently located, secure and undercover and provided where it is compatible in the streetscene. There is space within the garage to accommodate bicycles and motorcycles in accordance with Policies P2 and P3 and the proposal is acceptable.

Landscaping and Trees

Policy CC03 of the MDD states that development should protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages and integration between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees, establish appropriate landscaping and minimise

flood risk. This is reinforced by Policy TB21 of the MDD, which requires consideration of the landscape character and Policy R14 of the Borough Design SPD, which allows for well-designed hard and soft landscaping that complements the housing.

The wider area of Finchampstead has moderate landscape significance with pockets of high quality landscape in views across the area. The following characteristics are evident in the area:

- Informal recreational landscape with footpath connections to Trilakes Country Park and trails
- Small linear rural settlement confined to the edge of the floodplain comprising buildings of mixed traditional and modern character
- Valley landscape loosely enclosed to the north within the setting of wooded ridges of Finchampstead
- The appearance of an attractive natural landscape created by the presence of fringing aquatic wetland vegetation and carr
- Small area of river landscape comprising a lowland alluvial floodplain focussed around the River Blackwater

Only one Category B tree is proposed to be removed, which is a small apple tree in relative proximity to the dwelling. An existing hedge alongside the driveway will also be removed. Both elements contribute little to the landscape character of the site. Six other Category B trees and one Category A tree will be retained, which will ensure the overall retention of the landscape character of the site. Council's Trees Officer has also reviewed the Tree Protection Plan and raises no objection, subject to the submission of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS5837:2012 once the design/construction layout is confirmed and additional protection to Tree T10 during the construction phase. It will need to be reviewed and ground protection installed for the duration of the demolition and construction phases.

Inclusive of the outdoor terrace space, the footprint of the dwelling accounts for 12% of the site. A further 9% comprises the driveway, with the balance of the site (2200m² or 80%) comprising soft landscaping. When accounting for the net reduction in the footprint from the previous refusal, subject to a permeable driveway surface and as Council's Trees Officer no longer raises any concern, the proposal is considered to achieve a satisfactory landscape outcome and is acceptable with respect to the above policies.

Ecology

Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy 2010 requires the conservation of sites for nature conservation in accordance with national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans. Policy TB23 of the MDD requires the incorporation of new biodiversity features, buffers between habitats and species of importance and integration with the wider green infrastructure network.

The property is within Council's Bat Validation Model. An initial Daylight Bat Survey was undertaken in February 2017. It found evidence of five small-sized bat droppings, of size and shape typical of pipistrelle bats (*Pipistrellus* spp.) in the eaves space, which suggests that the house is likely being used by pipistrelle bats. Externally,

numerous gaps under curved and misplaced roof tiles on all elevations, and gaps at the eaves in places also provided potential opportunities for roosting. Evidence of bird nests was also found in the eaves space.

Due to a lack of any further survey data and the likely loss of this habitat, 171076 was refused as it failed to satisfy Policy TB23 of the MDD. As a result, an additional bat survey report from July 2017 was completed and submitted with the subject application. It confirmed that the building has been used by at least fourteen long-eared (likely maternity roost), two common pipistrelles and one soprano pipistrelle bat (day roosts).

It is therefore very likely that the proposed works will disturb or harm roosting bats. As such, a licence for development works affecting bats will need to be obtained from Natural England to compensate for the derogation from the provisions of the Habitat Regulations. It is required before works which could impact upon the roost can commence.

Subject to a mitigation plan, the proposed works would pass the three tests of The Habitat Regulations, and as such receive a licence from Natural England, because:

- a) The development is for an imperative reason of overriding public interest of an economic nature as the development will contribute to a social and economic need of the local community for better housing (this is assuming that it is in compliance with other planning
- b) There is no satisfactory alternative to the development as without carrying out the works the aforementioned need would not be met - therefore Regulation 53(9)(a) can be met
- c) Appropriate mitigation can be provided which will ensure that there will not be a detrimental impact to the favourable conservation status of the bat species concerned - therefore Regulation 53(9)(b) can be met

Subject to the acquisition of the licence (as required by condition), there are no objections to this application on ecology grounds.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

Policy CP8 of the Core Strategy states that where development is likely to have significant effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA), it will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered. As the proposal involves a replacement dwelling with no increase in density, there is no perceived impact upon the TBH SPA and no obligation to provide mitigation measures.

Building Sustainability

Policy CC04 of the MDD and Policy R21 of the Borough Design SPD (as well as the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD) require sustainable design and conservation in the mitigation of climate change.

A Sustainability Statement was submitted with the previous planning applications,

stating that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards (equivalent to Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes). This is below Level 4, which is required under the Borough Design Guide SPD and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

The Statement also includes the use of locally sourced, recycled materials, water efficient devices, 'A' rated electrical appliances and light fittings, double glazing and cycle parking and notes the large expansive windows.

Notwithstanding the Level 3 shortfall and whilst the proposal represents the premature demolition of a 15 year old building, the proposal would satisfy the relevant building regulations and any sustainability concerns are insufficient to warrant refusal of the application. Indeed, there is no planning grounds to oppose the demolition of the building regardless of its age.

Boundary Treatments

Policy R5 of the Borough Design SPD requires a clear distinction between the public and private areas and Policy R12 states that boundary treatments contribute positively to the character of the area.

There are no significant changes to existing boundary fencing although measures are established by condition to protect against any damage to existing hedging and trees on the boundary and to retain the framing that this establishes to Lower Sandhurst Road. In this respect, no objection is raised in relation to Policies R5 and R12.

Waste Storage

Policy CC04 of the MDD requires adequate internal and outside storage for the segregation. Waste storage has not been nominated but there is sufficient space within the dwelling, including the basement, for the storage of waste, recycling and compost bins. Accordingly, there is no objection to the proposal on the grounds of Policy CC04 and no necessity to provide any post consent details.

Flooding

Policy CC09 of the MDD requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding. The property is located in Flood Zone 1 and the proposal includes a basement level although the areas within the basement will not be used for ongoing habitation such as sleeping. Accordingly, there is no perceived flood risk to this area. Furthermore, the increased finished floor level of the ground floor sits above the natural ground level. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CC09.

Drainage

Policy CC10 of the MDD requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow, via a Flood Risk Assessment or Surface Water Drainage Strategy.

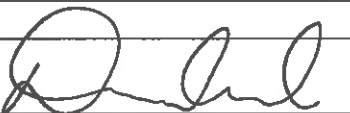
The footprint of the dwelling, inclusive of the terrace, measures 350m² (an increase of 205m²) with the driveway measuring a further 250m² although this space could be conditioned to comprise permeable materials. The remainder of the site (2230m² or 80%) will comprise soft landscaping and existing boundary vegetation. The basement will alter subterranean water flows across the site but given it has a depth of only 2.5m and covers less than 37% of the property width, there are no in principle objections to its construction because of any perceived interruptions to the natural water flow. As such, subject to the submission of further details as a post consent condition, the drainage provisions on the site are acceptable and in accordance with Policy CC10.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The application is liable for CIL payments because it involves a net increase of more than 100m² in floor area.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation:	Approval
Case Officer:	Simon Taylor
Date:	7 February 2018
Earliest date for decision:	13 January 2018

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	7/2/2018