

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242813
Site Address:	Fairlands, Church Road, Farley Hill, Wokingham, RG7 1TU
Expiry Date:	22 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	24 September 2024
Proposal: Full application for the proposed realignment of existing gravel track with creation of new access off existing drive to provide access to holiday park, including partial demolition of existing wall.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Countryside
Areas of Special Character
Landscape Character Assessment Area

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
231960	Full application for the proposed change of use of land from agricultural to holiday park with the siting of 8No static caravans, 1No office cabin, 1No washing block and 4No bin stores (part-retrospective).	Approved: November 2023

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection
WBC Built Heritage Officer – No objection

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Context: The application site is located within Farley Hill, in a designated Area of Special Character within the Countryside.

The site itself is located off Church Road and is accessed by a steep, gated and tarmacked driveway.

This application seeks planning permission for the part removal of the brick wall towards the front entrance of the site, to create a new access to the recently approved holiday park (ref: 231960) from the existing driveway, facilitated by an existing gravel track. The track is currently on land under an existing equestrian use and this application would not alter the lawful use of the land.

Principle of Development: The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The application site is located outside of settlement limits, within the Countryside of Farley Hill, and is therefore subject to the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CP11. CP11, being the relevant policy for countryside impact, states that *“In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted.”*

The physical alterations associated with this proposal are limited to the part removal of a brick wall and the realignment of an existing gravel track. Neither of these changes would substantially alter the countryside setting, thus no objection is raised on CP11 grounds.

Character of the Area: The new access and alteration to the existing boundary treatment towards the front of the site would not be overly visible from the views of Church Road as it is part way along the existing driveway to Fairlands adjacent to a bend in the road, such that the impact of the development on the wider character of the

area would be minimal. In any event, the proposed works would not hinder the appearance of the site, owing to the modest scale of the changes.

Heritage: The site is situated within a designated Area of Special Character. Areas of Special Character are located where there is a consistent period or character reflecting the areas past. The proposal would not be in conflict with the intention of TB26 of the MDD Local Plan, which seeks to persevere the setting of an Area of Special Character, and therefore no objection has been raised by the Built Heritage Officer.

Neighbouring Amenity: There would be no additional impacts on neighbouring sites as a result of the development. In fact, the access would reduce the level of vehicular movements through an existing residential site, thus positively impacting upon the amenities of the residents.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposed realignment of an existing track has no impact on the public highway. On this basis, no objection is raised by WBC Highways.

Landscape and Trees: The removal of a few small trees to facilitate the new access from the existing driveway would be required. The site plan illustrates additional planting, which would appropriately mitigate the loss of the small number of trees.

The mature leylandii hedge that is situated across the northern boundary of the holiday park site provides containment to the caravans within the overall site of Fairlands and also restricts views into the site from the surrounding area. The Officer Report for the application which permitted the caravans (ref: 231960) noted the hedges importance, stating *"This visual screening would limit the impact of the proposal on the wider landscape character of the area"*. The existing gap in the hedge is noted and this should remain the same width as present, in order to retain the existing level of screening. Any further works to the hedge would conflict with condition 3 of application 231960, which is concerned with landscape retention. In any case, the accompanying Planning Statement for this application has confirmed that there would be no changes made to the existing hedge.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is 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:	22 January 2025
Earliest date for decision:	19 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	22 January 2025