

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250841
Site Address:	Springfields, Hatch Gate Lane, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8QD
Expiry Date:	4 July 2025
Site Visit Date:	10 June 2025
Proposal: Householder application for proposed erection of a two-storey side/rear extension, modifications to the roof, removal of a chimney and existing single storey elements and changes to fenestration, and demolition of existing structures.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Green Belt
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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals - Countryside CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Wargrave Parish Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application	Description	Decision &
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Number		Date
O/38/62	Outline application for detached house & garage on land adjacent	Refused 29/03/1962
1007/71	Outline application for a detached house on adjacent land	Refused 30/05/1972
140/72	To reinstate coach house	Refused 17/02/1972
1780/73	Outline application to demolish existing garage & erect new double garage with living accommodation over	Refused 25/01/1974 Appeal dismissed 13/03/1975
16981	Conversion of existing barn into a new dwelling	Refused 11/03/1982 Appeal dismissed 14/09/1982
152573	Full application for the proposed conversion of existing outbuilding to create a 3no bedroom dwelling and construction of a new vehicular access with parking	Application withdrawn 04/03/2016
162253	Pre-application advice – for the proposed development of Land at Foxsteep Farm	Replied 29/11/2016
201454	Pre-application advice for proposed erection of 2 no. buildings to create three dwellings (one detached and two semi-detached) following demolition of existing buildings	Replied 14 July 2020
210451	Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. 5-bedroom dwelling and associated landscaping, following demolition of existing dwelling.	Refuse 30 April 2021
210587	<u>Springfield Barn</u> Full application for the erection of a two-storey dwelling with external bin & bike store and associated landscaping following the demolition of the existing structure and outbuildings.	Refuse 15 April 2021
241686	<u>Springfield Barn</u> Full application for the proposed erection of a part single part two storey side/rear extension (re-build) following the partial demolition of the barn, of which is ancillary to Springfield House	Approve 04 September 2024
250525	<u>Springfield Barn</u> Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning permission 241686 dated 04.09.2024. Condition 6 relates to Ecological Enhancements/ Mitigation.	Approve 24 April 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No objection subject to conditions
WBC Highways – No objection
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection
WBC Built Heritage Officer – No comments received
WBC CIL
WBC Ecology Newts – No objection
WBC Ecology Bats – Requests further information

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL**Site Description:**

Springfield House is a red brick detached dwelling on Hatch Gate Lane, Crazies Hill, Wargrave. It is located adjacent to the Windsor and Maidenhead borough boundary, and within Metropolitan Green Belt and Countryside. The garden is mainly lawn with tall hedging and trees that provide screening around the circumference of the boundary. There is a gravel driveway for off street parking.

A derelict brick outbuilding is located within the residential curtilage and adjacent to a timber a barn with a brick lean-to extension to the side and a roof glass and timber lantern on the roof. The barn was previously used as stabling, as well as for ancillary domestic purposes and is of local historical importance. The barn has planning approval for a part single part two storey side/rear extension (re-build) following partial demolition.

Principle of Development:

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

The site is located outside any defined settlement limits (which are defined by policy CP9 of the Core Strategy). As such, the site is defined as being located within the Wokingham Countryside. It is also located within the Green Belt. As such, any development is ordinarily resisted. The principle of development is only acceptable subject to meeting exceptions in Green Belt and Countryside policy.

Proposal: Erection of a two-storey side/rear extension, modifications to the roof, removal of a chimney and existing single storey elements, changes to fenestration,

and demolition of existing outbuildings and structures. The two-storey side rear extension would measure approximately 7.4m in length, 3.8m in width and be 4.6m in height to the top of the eaves. It would have a pitch roof with gable end. The ground floor would facilitate a living room with 2 no. windows and 1 no. set of double doors on the northwest facing wall and 1 no. set of doors on the southwest facing wall. The first floor would facilitate a bedroom and have 3 no. windows on the northwest facing wall and 1 no. window on the southwest facing wall.

Existing and Proposed Elevations



Figure 1 Existing SE Elevation



Figure 2 Proposed SE Elevation

The proposed SE facing elevation will facilitate a two-storey extension. Figure 2 shows that the existing chimney and two storey gable end with 4 no. windows will be retained; the remainder of the SE elevation wall would be demolished and the wall extended forward to facilitate the living room. Modifications will also be made to the roof shape and there would be 9 no. windows and 1 no. door.



Figure 3 Existing NW Elevation



Figure 4 Proposed NW Elevation

The proposed NE facing elevation will retain the 2 no. existing gable features that would serve the reception room and kitchen on the ground floor and a bedroom on the first floor. The 1 no. proposed additional gable feature will facilitate the living room on the ground floor; and 1 no. bedrooms on the first floor as shown in Figure 4. There would be 5 no. windows and 1 no set of double-glazed doors.



Figure 5 Existing SW Elevation



Figure 6 Proposed SW Elevation

Figures 3 & 4 show that the existing portico entrance on the SW facing wall would be moved to a new central position. The two-storey gable end would be retained and the small gable details to the pitch roof would be removed and the roof line simplified. The SW elevation would have 7 no. windows.



Figure 7 Existing NE Elevation



Figure 8 Proposed NE Elevation

Figures 7 and 8 show that no alterations are proposed to the NE Elevation.

Modifications to the Roof, chimney and single storey elements

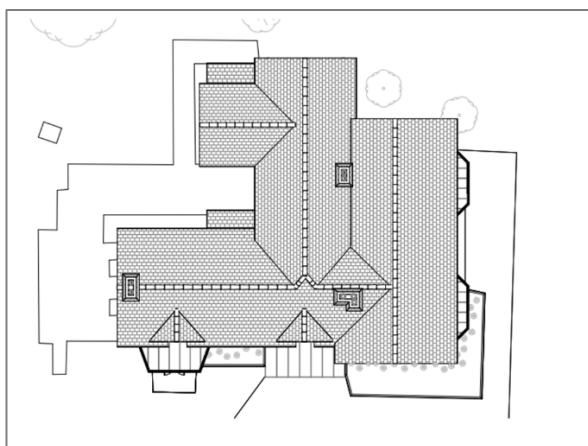


Figure 9 Existing Roof

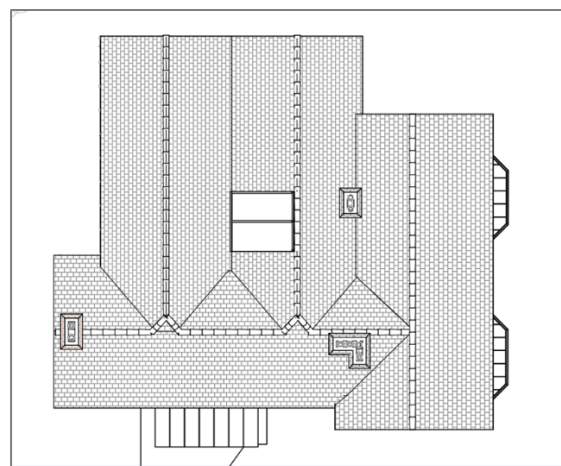


Figure 10 Proposed Roof

Figures 9 and 10 show proposed roof modifications.

Demolition of existing structures

The brick foundations (previously the base for greenhouses) to the rear of the main dwelling and adjacent to the barn would be removed.

Location in Green Belt The application site is located within designated Green Belt and outside of settlement limits in the 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 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. Paragraph 153 further states that, “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.”

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of eight exceptions applies. In this case, the most relevant exception is “c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.”

Paragraph 155 of the NPPF states that, “The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a) The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.
- b) There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed.
- c) The development would be in a sustainable location.
- d) Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements”

In this case, it is considered that the proposal, comprising the erection of a two-storey side/rear extension, modifications to the roof, removal of a chimney and existing single storey elements, plus changes to fenestration, and demolition of existing structures would not fall within the exceptions set out in paragraph 155 and therefore they are not relevant to this proposal.

In returning to the assessment of paragraph 154, similar principles over proportionate increases are reflected in Core Strategy policy CP12 and MDD Local Plan policy TB01. The NPPF does not define what can be considered a “disproportionate addition” in size. Policy TB01 defines a “limited” addition as one that is cumulatively 35% or less in volume compared to the original building, and as such could be viewed as not “disproportionate” in size. Although the supporting text to Policy TB01 is

specifically directed towards proposal for residential extensions, it remains a useful comparative tool to assist in assessing harm to the Green Belt. Policy TB01 further clarifies that with regard to the construction, alteration or extension of buildings ancillary to a dwelling, changes should not result in disproportionate additions to the original building(s) or cause a detrimental to the scale of the dwelling or to the scale of development on the site.

In this case, the original building proposes enlargement through the erection of a two-storey side/rear extension, modifications to the roof, removal of a chimney and existing single storey elements, plus changes to fenestration, and demolition of existing structures. Volume calculations for the existing dwelling and proposed development have been submitted as part of this application (see Table 1 below). The proposed volume increase for this application is 33.8% above the size of the original dwelling, and this is within the 35% limit imposed under Policy TB01. Therefore, the proposal would not amount to 'inappropriate' development in the Green Belt when assessed under Policy TB01.

Table 1 – Comparison between original and the proposed volumes and area.

	Original	Proposed
Volume	490m ³	655.5 ³ +33.8%
Footprint	109m ²	129.5m ² +18.9%

To summarise, in spatial and visual terms, the height mass and bulk of the proposal would comply with Policy CP12 and would not harm the openness of the Green Belt.

Countryside and Character of the Area:

Countryside

The site is in Countryside and Core Strategy Policy CP11 states that to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

- 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises 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; and
- 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; or
- 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
- 5) In the case of replacement dwellings, the proposal must: i) Bring about environmental improvements; or ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the

scale, form or footprint of the original building.

6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building.

7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

In this case, the proposal would not promote recreation or facilitate the increase of rural enterprises. However, it would not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion away from the original building. Therefore, although the scheme does not fully comply with CP11, it would not cause significant harm to the Countryside.

Character of the Area

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Maximum eaves height and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.
- The rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages is often important to the character of the area.
- The eaves and/or ridge height should not be raised in height unless buildings in the local context are significantly taller.

The site is northeast of Reading and adjacent to Crazies Hill, Holly Cross and Cockpole Green. It forms part of the Clayton Park Estate. Hatch Gate Lane is a rural road bordered by grass verges, trees and vegetation. The front boundary of the site is a tall hedge with a metal gate that overlooks open countryside. Neighbouring properties (Foxsteep Cottages and stables) are located approximately 30 metres distant from the site and clustered around The Crescent and junction with Crazies Hill.

The proposed two storey rear/side extension would not face onto the public realm and would be screened by tall hedging. The relocation of the front entrance porch, changes to the window design and roof shape would not have a significant impact on the principal elevation and would facilitate a more symmetric appearance to the front façade. Therefore, the proposal would not have a significant impact on the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. In this case, there would be no increase in overshadowing, loss of privacy or overbearing to neighbours because of this proposal.

On the rear elevation, the ground floor living room will have double doors, and the first-floor bedroom will have one 1 no window facing. On the side elevation, the ground floor living room will have 2 no. windows and one set of double doors; and the first-floor bedroom will have 3 no. windows. However, the site is a relatively isolated plot, and the rear/side extension will not face onto neighbouring habitable rooms. Therefore, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring property in terms of overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policy CP3 in relation to neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer has raised no objection and commented *“The proposal will not have a significant impact in respect of the overall number of habitable rooms and the councils parking standards. The existing access and level of parking will be unaffected, and this remains acceptable to serve the development.”*

Flooding and Drainage: The Drainage Officer has commented *“We have reviewed SuDS drainage strategy report SD2502127 dated February 2025, together with its appendices and have the following comments to make: The existing dwelling is within flood zone 1 and the 0.019ha site’s runoff rate has been calculated at 2.45l/s. The development proposes controlled discharge from a detention basin at 1l/s, as represented on drainage layout drawing 201 P1 dated 10/02/2025, with the attenuation basin requiring 5.8m3 to cater for the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change, as indicated on micro-drainage calculations dated 11/02/2025. We note that maintenance will be carried out in accordance with section 6 of the drainage strategy report. As a basement is proposed and actual groundwater monitoring has not been carried out, we would recommend the condition below.”*

Recommended Condition

Development should be carried out in accordance with the SuDS drainage strategy report SD2502127 dated February 2025 after confirmation of seasonal groundwater levels for the site have been signed off, in writing by the LPA.

This is to prevent increased flood risk from ground water. Relevant policy: NPPF (2023) Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.”

Officer comment: It should be noted that most of the proposed extension would be built on an existing hard surface or within the footprint of the existing building. Hence, as the proposal does not significantly increase the risk of surface water runoff, it would not be reasonable or necessary in planning terms to impose an approved drainage strategy should this application be approved.

Landscape and Trees: The Landscape and Tree Officer has raised no objection to the scheme and commented *“Tree matters are catered for in the arb submissions. The root protection area of trees near the Lane are not adjusted away from this surface and I accept this as the road is low grade. Given the demarcations I have suggested conditions to protect the trees. Unlike refused application 243048 this application borrows structures from an adjacent site to increase the volume of the*

existing house. By removing some of these structures and remodelling the house the volume calculation can be skewed in favour of the proposal. In this way the proposed increase in built form and then impact on the landscape demarcations can be seen to be acceptable.

I suggest that the additions' location, design, complementary external materials, additional landscaping, as well as retention of existing green infrastructure will all help the proposed building to integrate onto the landscape.

Overall, the application appears to comply with the T&L parts of the policies and guidance listed above.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

CL4: Landscaping

CL6: Retention of trees and shrubs

CL7: Protection of trees"

Officer comment: There are no protected trees within the application site and given the scale of the proposal, the submitted Landscape Plan and Tree Protection Plan are sufficient, and it would not be reasonable to attach a separate pre commencement condition were the proposal to be approved using CL4. Nevertheless, conditions CL6 and CL7 would be applied to protect existing trees and shrubs.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer has raised no objection to the scheme in relation to newt habitat and commented *"The application site lies in the amber impact zone as per the modelled district licence map, which indicates that there is suitable habitat for great crested newts (GCN) within the area surrounding the application site. There are nine ponds within 500m, but the nearest is approximately 300m away. Given the above, it would be unreasonable to require the applicant to submit a GCN survey because this could be considered disproportionate to the scale and the likely impacts of the development. The supplied Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Arbtech, December 2024) shows that the main habitat which will be impacted is closely mown amenity grassland. Given the distance to nearby ponds and low suitability of habitats which will be impacted, the proposed development is considered unlikely to impact great crested newts."*

The Ecology Officer has commented in relation risk to bat roosting habitat as follows: *"The Springfield Barn Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys assessed the barn as having high roost potential. One Brown long-eared bat was seen during the PRA and further emergence surveys identified Common pipistrelle and Brown long-eared day roosts and a Soprano pipistrelle maternity roost. Prior to implementation of 241686 a copy of the European Protected Species Licence which was issued to the Owner should have been submitted to the LPA to discharge 241686 conditions 5.*

Summary: PEA and Emergence surveys fail to rule out or confirm evidence of any roosting bats in the outbuilding. As advised by Arbtech's ecologist the outbuilding has bat roost potential and further surveys are needed. The application must not be approved until a roost assessment and where necessary bat emergence surveys and

method statements have been submitted.

When the impact of the demolition of the outbuildings and clearance and landscaping works have been assessed, conditions are likely to need to include (but may not be limited) to those recommended below.”

Officer comment: The applicant has considered the Ecology Officers concerns and removed the demolition of outbuilding B3 from the proposal. In addition, the applicant has amended the red line of the site plan to exclude the proposed cycle and bin storage areas in the barn from the proposal. Therefore, bat roosting and emergence surveys of the outbuilding would not be required prior to the application being approved and the Barn would not be significantly impacted by the development.

Requested Conditions

a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with 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 are in place on site.

c) 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.

d) 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 wildlife 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.

Officer comment: The submitted Landscaping Plan specifies the trees to be retained and if the application were to be approved, it would be conditioned, along with tree protection measures using CL6 and CL7.

Condition: Prior to occupation, a site-wide lighting design strategy for biodiversity or areas to be lit designed in accordance with best practice including in accordance with

Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats, birds, and amphibians and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
 - b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.*
- Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals.*

Condition: Prior to commencement of the development, a scheme of native and wildlife friendly landscaping and biodiversity enhancements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancement scheme will accord with the detail of the proposals and recommendations outlined in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Arbtech, December 2024). The scheme shall include at least 3 integral Habitat, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar suitable alternatives in addition to the follow enhancements for birds:

- Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box*
- Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace*
- Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes (trees)*
- Schwegler Robin Boxes (trees)*

To benefit hedgehogs the habitat creation and enhancement opportunities will also include:

- Planting of fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland.*
- Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.*
- Installation of hedgehog gaps.*

The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved.

Reason: To ensure that wildlife is maintained and incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 187 of the NPPF. Relevant policies Local Plan Core Strategy policy CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery policy TB23.

Condition: Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the council works are to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations and biodiversity enhancements given in Section 4 Table 2 of the submitted Barn Bat Ecological Mitigation, Enhancement and Management Plan (Arbtech, Ref 241686, January 2025).

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Condition: Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the council works are to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations and biodiversity enhancements provided in the submitted Springfields Landscape Strategy (March 2025).

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely

affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:

Yes

Recommendation:

Approve

Date:

10 June 2025

Earliest date for decision:

31 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by:

(Authorised Officer)



Date:

02/07/25