

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250567
Site Address:	Marron Remise, Kentons Lane, Wargrave, RG10 8PD
Expiry Date:	25 August 2025
Site Visit Date:	15 July 2025
Proposal: Full application for proposed erection of 1 No. self-build dwelling with associated parking and landscaping following the demolition of the existing dwelling. Change of use of land to residential.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Green Belt
Countryside
Green Routes and Riverside Paths
Bat Roost Suitability Habitat
Green Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts
Tree Preservation Orders

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 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB09 – Residential Accommodation for Vulnerable Groups TB10 – Traveller Sites TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside SS6 – Development in the Green Belt CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development CE7 – Low carbon and renewable energy generation CE8 – Protecting renewable energy generation C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C3 – Active travel C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging H6 – Self-build and custom build FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage FD3 – River corridors and watercourses NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design NE6 – Valued landscapes DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity HC5 – Environmental protection HC7 – Light pollution HC8 – Noise pollution
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Wargrave Parish Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
062709	Application for a certificate of existing lawfulness for use of building as separate dwelling.	Approved 20/10/2006
171653	Full planning application for the proposed erection of a single dwelling following demolition of existing dwelling.	Refused 26/06/2017, Dismissed at Appeal 06/03/2018

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received
WBC Drainage – No objections
WBC Highways – No objections subject to condition(s)

WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections subject to condition(s)
WBC CIL – Development would be CIL liable
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received
WBC Ecology – No comments received
External
Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments received
Binfield Badger Group – No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objections
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Two letters of support from neighbours: - Reduction in volume and overall Green Belt impact - Use of solar panels is sustainable - Appearance is suitable for area - Dwelling would not be visible from public realm

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a large, elongated single storey dwellinghouse that resembles a log cabin. The property was regularised as an independent dwellinghouse in 2006 (application 062709) and is accessed via a long, winding and steep vehicular access that extends off from Kenton's Lane.

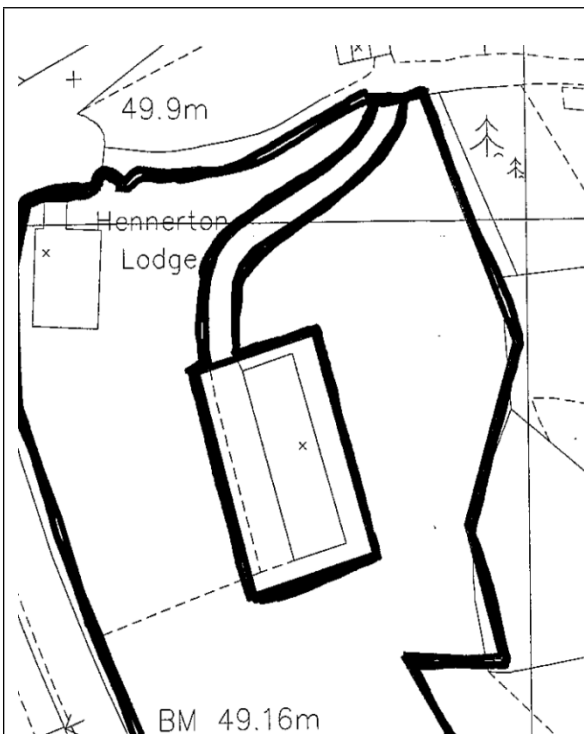
The site is characterised by densely vegetated boundaries that enclose the site. Combined with its notable position in the topography of the landscape, public viewpoints of the property and its curtilage are extremely limited. The property only becomes only slightly apparent when heading westwards along Kenton's Lane and even then, views are largely of the access drive rather than the dwelling itself.

The site is located within the designated Countryside and Green Belt.

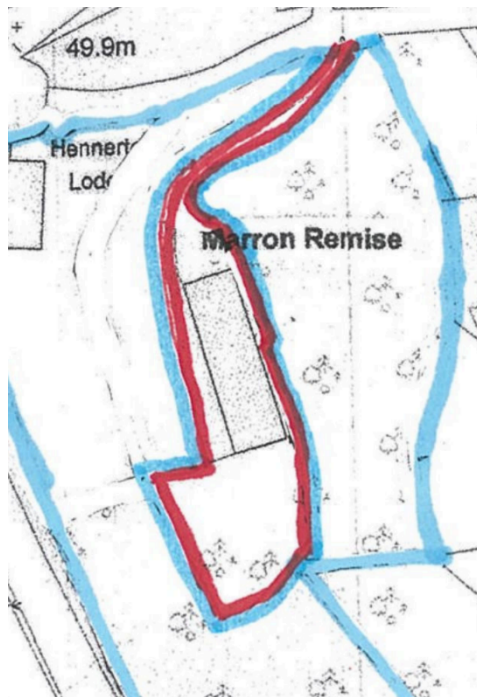
Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement self-build dwelling with associated parking and landscaping alterations.

Further to this, the application seeks to regularise the use of an area of land for residential purposes. This area of land has been used for several years as the dwelling's garden, the curtilage of which was tight around the existing terrace when the dwelling was approved as regularised as an independent dwellinghouse in 2006 (application 062709).



Location Plan for Application 062709



Location Plan for Application 250567

Principle of Development:

General:

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.

Local Plan Update (LPU):

The Council are also progressing with their Local Plan Update (LPU) which has progressed beyond the Proposed Submission Plan (Regulation 19) stage, with representations received on the plan's legal compliance and soundness between 30 September and 13 November 2024.

The Proposed Submission Plan (Regulation 19) consultation has now closed and the Council have now analysed the representations received. The Regulation 22 plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2025, and two Planning Inspectors have been appointed to examine (EiP) the plan. The examination of the local plan is ongoing, and the council responded to initial questions and requests from the Inspectors in May 2025.

As seen in High Court judgements, even when an emerging plan is at an advanced stage, it may still attract limited weight if further consultation and modifications are required, and the Inspector has yet to issue a final report. Wokingham's LPU has several stages yet to be completed, including and the examination hearings and main modifications stages, which restricts the weight that can currently be afforded to non-

substantive.

The Council however acknowledge that there are unresolved objections on substantive grounds pursuant on the majority of relevant policies listed above, meaning weight attracted to these policies is limited.

Green Belt:

Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy refers to national policy to enforce its aims, therefore attention turns to the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Policy TB01 states that... 35% increase upper limit = 'limited in scale'... see supporting text para 3.4.

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 153 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF provides a list for exceptions for development that can be considered appropriate in the Green Belt. Of particular relevance to the replacement of the dwelling is section d), which reads:

- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

With regards to the change of use of land to residential, section h) is applicable which reads as follows:

- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
 - i. Mineral extraction
 - ii. engineering operations;
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Each relevant section will be addressed in turn below.

Replacement Dwelling (Section d):

The proposed replacement dwelling would be sited on a smaller footprint to the existing dwellinghouse but still enveloped within its existing footprint. Compared to the single storey log cabin style of the existing dwelling, the new dwelling would have a much more contemporary design with staggered first and ground floor flat roof forms, plus large expanses of fenestration on the western elevation.

In total, the new dwellinghouse would be approximately 1.5 metres taller than the existing dwelling, however this is only concentrated to around a third of the dwelling's overall form, consisting of a first floor kitchen/dining area. The rest of the proposed dwelling would retain the same roof height as the existing dwelling.

The applicant has provided a breakdown of the comparisons between the existing and proposed dwellings in terms of footprint, volume, and floorspace. It is understood that the size of the dwelling has not been altered at any point in its history, meaning that the dwelling as it stands today can be classed as the 'original' dwellinghouse:

	Existing	Proposed
Footprint (m ²)	218	172 (21% decrease)
Width (m)	28	22 (21.4% decrease)
Volume (m ³)	600	768 (28% increase)

As seen above, there is a notable reduction in both the ground floor footprint and the width of the replacement dwelling. The volume increase is noted but as per TB01 of the MDD Local Plan, anything under a 35% increase is considered to be limited in scale and in the context of this proposal, the increase can be attributed to the additional first floor element that would marginally increase a third of the dwelling's height by 1.5 metres, an increase that would have no notable impact on the visual openness of the Green Belt.

The threshold for the appropriateness of the development is whether it is materially larger than the building it is replacing. Whilst the modest volume and height increases are acknowledged, the notable reductions in both footprint and width would both reduce the encroachment of built development in the Green Belt. Overall, the proposed replacement dwelling is considered compliant with paragraph 154 d).

Change of use of land to Residential (section h):

The area of garden land proposed for regularisation totals approximately 250sqm of external grassland that includes raised planters and is enclosed by dense vegetation to the south, east and west. It is a small area of garden space for the current dwelling and would be proportionate for the dwelling it would be replaced by.

Criterion v of section h) is most applicable to this development. Whilst the increase in lawful residential land would increase the potential for additional residential paraphernalia and further built structures, it is a very modest area of land that garners no public views due to its dense enclosure, resulting in no harm to the visual openness of the Green Belt.

Overall, the change of use of the land to residential would adequately preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land

within it. Compliance with paragraph 154 h) is therefore achieved.

Countryside:

The site lies within the Countryside as designated in the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Core Strategy policy CP11 states, 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 except in certain circumstances. This criteria is as follows:

- 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.

Criterion 5 is applicable to the replacement dwelling; it has already been concluded above that the dwelling would not be materially larger than the dwelling it is replacing. Therefore, in the context of CP11, it is not considered that the development would result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building and subject to conditions, would bring about environmental improvements. Compliance with criterion 5 is therefore achieved.

Criterion 4 is considered relevant to the change of use proposed. Similar to the above, it has already been concluded that the use of the land for residential purposes has no notable harm on the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, it is considered that in the context of the Countryside, the development would not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original dwelling. Criterion 4 is therefore complied with.

Character of the Area:

Policy Context:

Paragraph 187(b) of the NPPF requires that planning applications enhance the natural and local environment by 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.'

Policy CP11 supports development in the countryside only where it maintains the

high quality of the rural environment. Policy CP1(1) similarly only supports development that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment, with policy CP3 supporting development of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height and character to the area CP3(a) and which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place contributes to the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings CP3(f).

The Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document provides further guidance for developers with general guidance that development should respond positively to its site and local context (G1) and respond positively to the local character of the area (G2).

The National Design Guide section B1, paragraph 67 also states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Assessment:

The surrounding context of the application site (Wargrave Road and Kentons Lane) is predominantly residential, consisting of large, detached dwellings located within generous grounds and enclosed by dense vegetation. Architectural styles vary from traditional rural cottages, manor houses and more modern 21st century properties. Generally, there is no uniformity.

The replacement dwelling would be of a contemporary style, with staggered flat roof forms and the elevations finished with rurally appropriate horizontal timber cladding. In the context of the site's varied street scene, its design is considered acceptable. Furthermore, the overall scale of the dwelling, notwithstanding the height increase, would remain proportionate to the scale of the site itself and the surrounding area.

There would be minor changes to ground levels on the dwelling's northern elevation to accommodate a new area of vehicular parking and the entrance door for the property. This alteration would have no discernable impact on the character of the site or its wider context.

As outlined above, views of the application site from the public realm are severely limited to oblique views of the site's steep vehicular access. Despite the increase in building height, the development would have no discernable impact on the character of the area which is acceptable. The change of use of the area of garden land to residential would also have no discernable impacts on the character of the area and is also acceptable.

Subject to a landscaping condition, the development would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The closest neighbouring property is Hennerton Lodge which would be sited at least 25 metres away from the new dwelling. The property is also physically separated from the application site by a dramatic change in topography and dense areas of vegetation screening.

As a result of the above, there are no anticipated neighbouring amenity impacts.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The development involves a replacement dwelling with five habitable rooms. The building footprint will be set back, resulting in an enlarged driveway. Three driveway parking spaces are proposed within the red line.

The amount of parking provision is acceptable and sufficient turning space is provided for vehicles to exit the site in forward gear. The existing access is to be retained and slightly enlarged, providing a betterment for vehicle manoeuvres and visibility.

Cycle parking provision is provided and welcomed. A bin store is also provided and the applicant has confirmed that the existing refuse collection servicing will be retained.

Subject to conditions, WBC Highways have no objections to the proposals.

Amenity Space:

External:

The enlarged garden space resulting from the proposed change of use would provide sufficient outdoor garden space for the occupants of the dwelling. No objections are raised in this regard.

Internal:

Policy TB07 of the MDD and R17 of the SPD require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity.

The overall GIA, bedroom sizes and the cumulative living, kitchen and dining spaces all meet the minimum standards outlined in TB07 which is acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage:

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of surface water flooding.

The application is supported by a drainage strategy. WBC Drainage have reviewed this and have no objections to the strategy. Subject to compliance with it, no objections are raised in this regard.

Landscape and Trees:

Landscape Character:

The proposals are located in LCA D1 – Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes that run down to the Thames corridor to the south of Henley. The Site itself is set within woodland that is defined as Ancient. There are no national landscape designations such as National Park or National Landscape to consider but the Site is located within an Area of Landscape Value called Remenham Chalk as defined in the Wokingham Valued Landscape Assessment – September 2024. This adds to its value and makes consideration of overall landscape effects critical to ensure the character of the area is conserved and ideally enhanced.

The new building would appear more contemporary given the nature of its flat roof and window form. To achieve this relatively minor tree and shrub felling is required and pruning works to the access drive. The overall character of the woodland in which the building is located would not change and there is no increase in visibility from Henley Road anticipated.

The landscape proposals to plant a bed of shade tolerant species and water them via the rainwater harvesting tank is acceptable. However simple detail on the planting in terms of numbers, plant sizes, planting centres and method of irrigation should be provided. Likewise the definition of shingle as a surfacing material is not sufficient and a fuller specification is recommended to ensure a suitable surfacing material and method of retention on the Site is detailed. These details will be secured via the landscaping condition previously mentioned.

Overall, WBC Landscape and Trees consider that the proposals would conserve the appearance of the immediate landscape setting and the wider Remenham Chalk Area of Landscape Value.

Arboricultural Matters:

The specific tree groups identified in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) by Tree Surveys of Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire indicate:

- G33 – Category B group of Beech, Ash, Yew, Holly & Sycamore;
- G31 – Category C group of Laurel.

These two groups of trees are internal to the Site and do not appear to contribute significantly to the edges of the woodland. Laurel is an introduced species and non-native within a British Ancient Woodland. Their removal would not have any significant amenity effect on the appearance of the woodland.

The AIA also refers to pruning along the access drive. This is considered too vague a description of these works and could result in excessive and unbalanced canopy loss to the trees lining the drive. The description for these works needs to be expanded to allow control of it as necessary and redress if over pruning takes place. Final details will be secured via an Arboricultural Method Statement, secured via condition.

Overall, subject to conditions, WBC Landscape and Trees raise no objections on arboricultural grounds.

Ecology:

Bats:

This application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, April 2025).

The report concludes that the dwelling and the site's garden habitats are considered to be of negligible ecological value and are unlikely to support notable and protected species recorded in the search area.

Subject to a bat informative, there are no objections raised on these grounds.

Great Crested Newts (GCN):

The application site is located within a Green Risk Zone for GCNs, the lowest risk zone. As the development is almost exclusively located on existing development footprints, there are no anticipated impacts on this protected species.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

As this application is for a self-build dwelling, the application is exempt from a mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

Notwithstanding this, paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that plans should pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. As such, a condition will be imposed on the development to secure biodiversity enhancement on site prior to the occupation of the approved development.

Conclusion:

Overall, the development complies with the development plan and no objections are raised on any material grounds. Subject to conditions, this application is recommended for approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

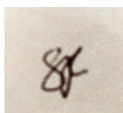
When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed 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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	8 August 2025
Earliest date for decision:	23 July 2025

**Recommendation
agreed by:
(Authorised Officer)**



Date:	8.8.25
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