

## DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

|                                                                                                                                             |                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Application Number:</b>                                                                                                                  | 241844                                                                       |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                                                                                                                        | Our Ladys Preparatory School, 19 The Avenue, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6PB |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>                                                                                                                         | 4 October 2024                                                               |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>                                                                                                                     | 15 August 2024                                                               |
| <b>Proposal:</b> Full application for proposed erection of west boundary fence following partial demolition of the existing boundary fence. |                                                                              |

### **PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**

Modest Development Location – Pinewood (Crowthorne)  
Water Utility Consultation Zones  
Archaeological Site (part) – The Devils Highway Roman Road  
Landscape Character Assessment Area – Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands  
SSSI Impact Risk Zones  
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation 5km Zone

### **PLANNING POLICY**

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Policy</b>                      | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<br>National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)                                                                                                    |
| <b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>                   | CP1 – Sustainable Development<br>CP2 – Inclusive Communities<br>CP3 – General Principles for Development<br>CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals                            |
| <b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b>                 | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development<br>CC02 – Development Limits<br>CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping<br>CC06 – Noise<br>TB21 – Landscape Character |
| <b>Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)</b> | The JMWP does not apply to the nature and scale of development proposed.                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Other</b>                                | Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<br>CIL Guidance + 123 List<br>Crowthorne Village Design Statement                                                                   |

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

| Application No. | Description | Decision & Date |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|

|              |                                                                                                                           |                        |   |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 231784       | Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a front boundary fence and waste enclosure area. | Approved<br>24/09/2023 | – |
| 210806       | Proposed part replacement and upgrade of existing North boundary fencing.                                                 | C/A<br>04/05/2021      | – |
| 161892       | Proposed erection of single storey outbuilding (retrospective)                                                            | C/A<br>02/11/2016      | – |
| 161891       | Erection of a single storey rear extension (retrospective)                                                                | C/A<br>02/11/2016      | – |
| F/2013/0508  | Alterations and erection of single storey and first floor extensions to existing school.                                  | C/A<br>19/07/2013      | – |
| F/2009/0151  | Proposed erection of canopy on side elevation over existing play area.                                                    | C/A<br>01/06/2009      | – |
| F/1997/66243 | Proposed single storey extensions to school                                                                               | C/A<br>10/10/1997      | – |
| 29998        | Addition of three classrooms at first floor level                                                                         | C/A<br>29/04/1988      | – |
| 13245        | Linking building for use as school hall/classrooms                                                                        | C/A<br>02/05/1980      | – |
| R/307/62     | Extension of existing planning permission to incorporate “Meadhurst” with “Aldworth” as a single school.                  | C/A<br>27/12/1962      | – |

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection

### External

Bracknell Forest Council: No objection, provided that the relevant Local Planning Authority's Development Plans are complied with.

## REPRESENTATIONS

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parish/Town Council | Wokingham Without Parish Council raised no objection.<br><br>Crowthorne Parish Council (adjoining parish) 'note' the application and made no observations.                                                                                                                                            |
| Ward Member(s)      | No comments received                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Neighbours          | 1 comment received which supports a new boundary fence on noise and privacy grounds but would like assurance that no damage would be caused to their planted trees and shrubs adjacent to the boundary. <i>Officer's Comment: This is discussed in the Landscape and Trees section of the report.</i> |

## APPRAISAL

### Site Description:

The application site is an independent preparatory school founded in 1961 which benefits from several extensions. It is located within a dense suburban area predominately two storey detached residential dwellings to the north-west of Crowthorne Village Centre. The site straddles the administrative boundaries of Wokingham Borough and Bracknell Forest Borough.

The parking area for the sites fronts the main building with access off The Avenue, the playground is located to the rear (west) and backs onto the rear gardens of properties on The Avenue, New Wokingham Road and Aldworth Gardens. A number of mature trees and more recent shrubs and planting adjoin the boundary, some of which are coniferous.

### Proposal:

This application proposes the erection of a 2.6m high acoustic fence on the site's western boundary to replace the existing 1.7m timber closed panel fence. Its design would be in keeping with the 2.4m boundary fencing recently erected on the site's northern boundary (approved under consent ref 210806). The applicant has advised that the replacement fence offers up to a 28dB reduction in noise.

**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 within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

### Design and Character of the Area:

The design of the proposal is largely reflective of its intended function. While a considerable increase in height compared to the existing 1.7m high boundary treatment, the proposal would be a marginal increase in height above the 2.4m high boundary fencing recently erected on the site's northern boundary. The proposed use of timber panels would be in keeping with the existing boundary treatment adjacent to the site's side and rear boundaries, and sufficiently softens the visual impact of the increased height.

The proposal would not be visible from the public realm, while the increased height would have an acceptable visual impact. The proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

**Neighbouring Amenity:**

Due to the nature of the proposal, there are no overlooking or loss of light concerns.

*Overbearing:* The proposal would be sited adjacent to the site's western boundary which backs onto the rear gardens of properties on New Wokingham Road. The proposal would result in a considerable increase in fence height from approximately 1.7m to 2.6m. It is typical for boundary fencing to 1.8m in height; 2.6m as a proposed height may be seen as overbearing in some circumstances.

In this case, the affected properties on New Wokingham Road benefit from considerably deep rear gardens, with the closest neighbouring property sited approximately 28m from the proposal. The intervening distances from these neighbouring properties to the boundary would sufficiently mitigate any additional overbearing impact and would not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining private amenity space.

*Noise:* The proposal would likely reduce noise impact from the use of the school on the adjoining properties to the west which is a welcomed positive of the scheme.

Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3.

**Landscape and Trees:**

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping.

There are several mature trees and more recent planting adjacent to the site's western boundary within the adjoining gardens. Following discussion with the Council's Trees and Landscape Officer, more detailed drawings have been submitted which confirms that the works will re-use the existing fence posts and be carried out in accordance with a method statement to avoid impact on existing trees and shrubs. This approach has been agreed with the Officer, who raises no objection to the scheme.

The proposal would therefore not impact on the existing green infrastructure in accordance with MDD Local Plan policy CC03.

Subject to conditions, the application is acceptable and is therefore 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.

| <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>              |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Conditions agreed:</b>          | Not required   |
| <b>Recommendation:</b>             | Approve        |
| <b>Date:</b>                       | 3 October 2024 |
| <b>Earliest date for decision:</b> | 19 August 2024 |

|                                  |                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Recommendation agreed by:</b> |  |
| <b>(Authorised Officer)</b>      |                                                                                     |
| <b>Date:</b>                     | 04/10/24                                                                            |