

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242664
Site Address:	Foxhaven, Remenham Church Lane, Remenham, Wokingham, RG9 3EX
Expiry Date:	17 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	27 October 2023 (ref 233130)
Proposal: Application to vary condition 2 of planning consent 221887 for the proposed erection of 1 no. 5 bedroom dwelling with associated access and parking, following demolition of existing 3 no. dwellings. Condition 2 refers to the approved details and the variation is to replace the proposed drawings with those approved under subsequent planning consent 233130 (as amended by application 242283).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside
Green Belt
Adjacent to Ancient Woodlands
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Ground Water Zones
Adjacent to Local Wildlife Site
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Tree Preservation Orders
Borough Wards
Radon Affected Area
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
PRoW Within WB Consultation Zone

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 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 TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	The site is not located in an area where geological data suggests there are potential sand and gravel reserves. Subsequently the policies of the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan do not apply to this proposal.
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
242283	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 233130 for changes to fenestration and chimney stacks, removal of staircase tower and replacement with bay window, plus revision of external materials, oak framing and buttresses.	Approved – 01/10/2024
233130	Full planning application for the proposed erection of 1No 5 Bedroom dwelling with associated access and parking, following demolition of the existing 3No dwellings (Part retrospective).	Conditionally Approved – 26/06/2024
232099	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 221887 dated 11/10/2022. Condition 3 relates to external materials, condition 6 to drainage details, condition 10 to hard and soft landscape proposals and condition 11 to a Woodland and Landscape Management Plan.	Split Decision – 22/12/2023
223612 APP/X0360/W/2 3/3323960	Full application for the proposed demolition of the existing dwellings and erection of a replacement 5 bedroom dwelling with basement.	Refused – 20/04/2023 Dismissed at Appeal – 08/02/2024
223780	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 221887 dated 11/10/2022. Condition 4 relates to submission of a bat licence, condition 5 to a	Approved – 29/03/2023

	Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), condition 8 to an updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment and condition 9 to an Arboricultural Method Statement.	
221887	Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. 5 bedroom dwelling with associated access and parking, following demolition of existing 3 no. dwellings.	Conditionally Approved – 11/10/2022
220465	Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. 5 bedroom dwelling with a detached outbuilding consisting of a 1-bedroom annexe/car port/shed, plus associated access and parking, following demolition of existing 3 no. dwellings.	Refused – 21/04/2022
F/2002/6231	Single storey extension to form conservatory to Whitewoods	Refused – 20/05/2002 Dismissed at Appeal – 13/03/2003
F/2001/3282	Subdivision to form 2 dwellings	Application withdrawn – 11/09/2001
39898	Conversion to 3 residential dwellings	Approved – 07/04/1993
35133	Change of use to residential nursing home	Approved – 14/03/1990
33190	Change of use to health club	Refused – 07/06/1989
31253	Change of use to health club	Refused – 03/08/1988 Dismissed at Appeal – 15/11/1989
16046	Conservatory to children's home	Approved – 30/07/1981
15602	Internal, structural and elevational alterations to convert the existing dwelling to children's home	Refused – 04/06/1981
14972	Residential children's home	Approved – 12/03/1981
4/68	Detached house and double garage	Approved – 18/01/1968
139/65	Detached house and double garage	Approved – 13/12/1965

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health: No comments received
WBC Drainage: No objection subject to conditions
WBC Enforcement: No comment
WBC Highways: No objection subject to conditions
WBC Landscape and Trees: No comments received
WBC Public Rights Of Way: No comments received
WBC CIL: Advice on CIL matters.
WBC Cleaner and Greener: No comments received
WBC Ecology: No comments received

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Remenham Parish Council raised no outright objections but wish to check that the area increased was within norms for a Green Belt site, there would be no inappropriate levels of lighting and no parking on Remenham Church Lane during any construction.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is a recently cleared piece of land on a plot off Remenham Church Lane. The existing building, prior to its demolition, was a two storey terrace of 3no. residential dwellings constructed in the 1960s. The planning history for the site suggests that the original building was permitted in 1965 for use as a single dwellinghouse, it was then converted to a children's residential home in the 1980s before consent was granted in 1993 for the conversion to 3no. residential dwellings, Beech View, Foxhaven and Whitewoods. The existing dwellings were demolished following the commencement of planning consent ref 221887.

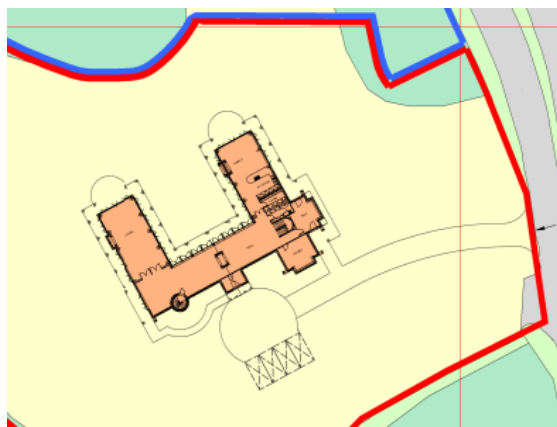
The site benefits from two existing accesses onto Remenham Church Lane and is surrounded by broadleaf ancient woodlands. The residential curtilage of the existing properties did not formally encroach into the ancient woodland, nevertheless there is currently no residential use of the site. A public footpath runs along the south of the site.

Proposal & Preamble:

This application seeks to vary the wording of condition 2 of planning permission 221887 to substitute the approved details with revised drawings. The site has a fairly complex recent planning history (see summary above), with an amended scheme (ref 233130) receiving consent following the original approval (ref 221887). Non-material amendments to the revised scheme were then agreed under application ref 242283.

Following discussions with Planning Officers and the Council's Developer Contributions team on CIL matters, the applicant has confirmed that they no longer wish to proceed with the amended scheme and instead continue with the implementation of the original permission, which has lawfully commenced following the demolition of the existing buildings on the site. This application seeks to substitute the originally approved plans with the amended plans later approved by the Council.

The drawings and plans submitted under this application match what has previously been approved by the Council under application refs 221887 and 242283. In comparison to the originally approved drawings, the main differences comprise the slight relocation of the replacement dwelling, the reconfiguration of its footprint with the reduction in total depth, fenestration changes, changes to external materials, the omission of a staircase tower and changes to the internal layout.



Approved Proposed Block Plan (ref 221887)



Proposed Block Plan (current scheme)

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 principle of the redevelopment of the site and the erection of a replacement dwellinghouse has already been established by the grant of permission 221887 dated 11/10/2022. The proposed variations to the approved plans, namely changes to the siting, form and design of the replacement dwelling, should be acceptable in principle subject to the below assessment on the relevant material planning considerations.

Development within the Green Belt and Countryside

The application site is located within designated Green Belt and outside of settlement limits in the open 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 National Planning Policy Framework (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. ‘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 states that the LPA should consider development, including the construction of new buildings, as inappropriate, however stated exceptions apply including:

- (d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.*

Subject to the proposed amendments remaining compliant with the exceptions above, the proposal would remain acceptable in principle. In this case, the amended scheme, which have previously been approved by the council under application ref 233130, would not be of a larger scale or size than the original scheme (ref 221887). A comparison of the relevant volume calculations is summarised in the table below:

Parameters	1968 Building	Existing Building	Original Permission (221887)	Current Proposal
Approximate Volume (m3)	2050	Dwelling: 2154	Above Ground: 2766.6	Above Ground: 2766.6
		Garage: 86.1	Below Ground: 0	Below Ground: 0
Total (m3)	2050	2240.1	2766.6	2766.6
% Increase over and above 1968 dwelling		9.26%	35%	35%

As demonstrated above, the proposal would not quantitatively expand the form of redevelopment of the site beyond what was deemed to be an appropriate increase in size under the original permission, i.e. above 35%. As discussed, the material differences between this scheme and the extant permission are limited to changes to the design of the replacement dwellinghouse and a slight repositioning of its footprint.

In terms of impact on the openness of the Green Belt, there would be no greater impact in comparison to the original permission. Indeed, the amended plans propose a reduced total depth of the dwelling which would have less impact. The proposed layout results in a more uniform, rectangular shaped dwelling in contrast to the previous ‘winged’ design which would subsequently reduce the encroachment of the dwellinghouse into the surrounding open countryside. This is a clear improvement in comparison to the original scheme. The proposed slight readjustment to the siting

towards the eastern boundary of the site is not significant and the proposal would remain well positioned in the centre of the plot.

Overall, the proposed amendments to the approved scheme would not result in any additional impact on, or harm to the openness of, the Green Belt and the proposed development would remain acceptable in principle.

Landscape and Character of the Area:

The site is located in Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (WDLCA) – Area D1 ‘Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes’. Key issues in this landscape type include loss of traditional management methods such as coppicing, hedgerow loss and the lack of recruitment of young trees in parkland landscapes. Woodland including Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland is one of the key landscape attributes of the area. The landscape strategy is to ‘conserve and enhance’ including restoration and conservation of the hedgerow network, and to conserve and manage the woodland including the ancient woodland.

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.

As discussed above, the proposed amendments are limited to changes to the design of the replacement dwellinghouse and a slight repositioning of its footprint. The size, scale and form of the proposed amendments would remain appropriate for the context of the site. The original permission included conditions to restrict Permitted Development rights for additional buildings and hardstanding to prevent further expansion of development with the Green Belt and countryside and to protect the neighbouring ancient woodland.

While the proposed reconfiguration of the proposed layout and the ‘squaring off’ of the dwelling at the rear results in 4 no. large gable features, this would not significantly alter its Arts and Crafts style which is considered acceptable. The reduced depth of the dwelling also respects the transition between the built form and the adjoining woodland, promoting the spaciousness of the site as a whole.

Other proposed changes to the appearance and form are largely de minimis and would not materially change the approved scheme or introduce any additional impact upon the visual amenity of the area. The replacement of the approved staircase tower with a bay window on the principal (south) elevation would result in a very modest reduction in the size and would not alter the overall appearance of the approved dwelling. While the proposed use of Portland stone would be lighter in colour than the approved external brickwork, the external finish would remain acceptable and would not significantly detract from the overall appearance of the approved dwelling.

Overall, the proposed amendments would not result in any additional harm to the visual amenity of the street scene and wider area as well as the verdant landscape character in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Other:

The proposed amendments would have no impact on any other material planning considerations, subject to the approved mitigations and further details previously agreed being secured under this varied permission. As such, while this application is for the variation of condition 2 only, it is recommended that the wording of other conditions is varied where appropriate to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the details approved by the Council after the original consent (ref 221887) was granted.

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:	Approved
Date:	14 January 2025
Earliest date for decision:	2 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	15/01/25