

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
213927	11/02/2022	Finchampstead	Finchampstead South

Applicant	Mrs Katy Dagnall (Finchampstead Parish Council)
Site Address	Finchampstead Memorial Park, The Village, RG40 4JU
Proposal	Full application for the proposed relocation and erection of war memorial, plinth and steps, creation of a footpath, installation of culvert and power supply.
Type	Full
Officer	Kieran Neumann
Reason for determination by committee	This planning application has been submitted in association with a Listed Building application. For completeness both applications are reported to Committee

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 9 February 2022
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place

SUMMARY
<p>This planning application is before the planning committee as the application has been submitted in association with a Listed Building application to remove the listed war memorial from its current location. This planning application proposes its re-erection at the memorial park, approximately 0.45 miles south-west of the current location. The proposed location is on a highway verge located adjacent to one of the pedestrian entrances to the Finchampstead Memorial Park and associated parking area. To the south of the site lies a number of residential dwellings along the southern side of the road known as 'The Village'. To the north lies the public park. To the west lies the Finchampstead Memorial Hall, Sports Pavilion and Tennis Courts. To the east lies a continuation of residential properties which form part of the Area of Special Character known as the Finchampstead Village.</p> <p>The application proposes a comprehensive planting and landscape plan to create an attractive setting for the memorial, a footpath connecting the existing pathway into the park, the installation of a culvert, power supply and a plinth and steps. The proposals include removal of a small section of the existing hedgerow which separates the park from the highway verge, opening up the access to the memorial and park from the north and south.</p> <p>The re-siting of the memorial in the heart of the village and adjacent to the Finchampstead Memorial Park is suitable and justified. One of the main purposes of the War Memorial was for the community to pay their respect and to be a reminder of the sacrifice made by service personnel. The new location meets these aims. The accessibility and overall safety experienced when visiting the memorial would be greatly improved over the existing location and the proposed landscaping plans would enhance the park and the character of the area. Subject to conditions 1-8 outlined below, the application is recommended for approval.</p>

PLANNING STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countryside • Farnborough Aerodrome consultation zone

- Special Protection Area – 5 and 7 km
- Groundwater protection zone
- Nuclear consultation zone

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

Conditions:

1. Timescale - The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved details - This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings titled 'Proposed South Elevation Visualisation', 'Proposed Planting Plan', 'Proposed North Elevation Visualisation', 'Proposed Elevation and Sections', 'Block Plan' & 'Planting Schedule received by the local planning authority on 30/11/2021. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. Landscaping - The hereby approved planting scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons. The plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development).

4. Prior to the commencement of development a Method Statement, including scaled drawings where necessary, and a timetable for the works, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall include details of how the War Memorial is to be dismantled, how and where it is to be stored temporarily, (if necessary), how it is to be transported to its storage area or its new location at Finchampstead Memorial Park, details of any proposed renovation, and how it is to be re-erected on site. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the character and architectural interest of the Listed Building in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) Policy CP3 and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document Local Plan (2014) Policy TB24.

5. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the lime mortar specifications to be used in the construction of the memorial shall have first been submitted to and approved

in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To protect the character and architectural interest of the Listed Building in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) Policy CP3 and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document Local Plan (2014) Policy TB24.

6. Prior to installation of the memorial, it shall be cleaned in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the so-approved details.

Reason: To protect the character and architectural interest of the Listed Building in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) Policy CP3 and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document Local Plan (2014) Policy TB24.

7. Protection of trees

a) No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement by Goodger Design Associates dated November 2021 and associated Tree Protection Plan (Goodger Design Associates, received by the Local Planning Authority on 30/11/2021) (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 amenity 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 Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

8. An application for listing of the war memorial shall be made to Historic England within one month of substantial completion, and the process shall be pursued to its completion and a listing decision is reached.

Reason: To ensure that the war memorial is re-listed in a timely manner in its new location in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) Policy CP3 and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document Local Plan (2014) Policy TB24.

Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning

policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

PLANNING HISTORY
No relevant planning history for the site.

SUMMARY INFORMATION	
Site Area	Approximately 175 sqm
Previous land use(s)	Highway verge
Proposed floorspace of proposed use	N/A
Change in floorspace (+/-)	N/A
Number of jobs created/lost	N/A
Existing parking spaces	N/A
Proposed parking spaces	N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Historic England	Recommend conditional approval
WBC Highways	No objections
WBC Built Heritage Officer	Recommend conditional approval
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objections

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council:

The Parish Council fully supports the proposal to relocate the War Memorial as detailed in this application. This will safeguard the Memorial and it will continue to be highly visible, maintaining the context of the original location for the Memorial, which is also known as the Wayside Cross. The new location will allow safe and easy access by visitors for quiet contemplation or for larger events such as Remembrance services. The relocation is also supported by a majority of the people of Finchampstead, evidenced by a public consultation undertaken by the Parish Council in early summer 2021.

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours:

Three letters of concern received outlining the following:

- As the memorial is a Christian religious monument, we don't feel that it is appropriate to place it on a still busy road its not an area of suitable for quiet reflection.
- Site proposed it totally unsuitable
- The memorial would block views of the park from the houses on the opposite side of the road.
- A hedge proposed to be removed belongs to the memorial park and this was not mentioned to the Finchampstead Memorial Park Committee.
- Sampling bias in the public consultation undertaken by the Parish Council in early summer 2021 (**Officer comment: This consultation does not have an influence on the determination of their applications.**)
- Children will be climbing all over it showing no respect what so ever as it is close to the playground (**Officer comment: This is not a material planning consideration**)

- Suggestions of alternative locations (***Officer comment: This application cannot assess other potential sites as part of their determination, rather the Local Authority's duty is to assess the proposed site applied for.***)

APPLICANTS POINTS
The applicant believes that the Memorial setting will provide a peaceful contemplative space for people to stand and sit (timber benches could added at a later date) through the year and especially during Armistice Day events. The Memorial will be sited at a central location in the village and will be highly visible to local residents both from the Village and the Park. This location was also chosen for the evocative distant view to the rear of the park of a line of regimented Poplar trees. The opening up of the park to the Memorial will enable large numbers of people to be accommodated at events.

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP2	Inclusive Communities
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC06	Noise
	CC07	Parking
	CC09	Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide – Section 4
		DCLG – National Internal Space Standards

PLANNING ISSUES

Site and Surroundings:

1. The proposed location of the Memorial is on a highway verge located adjacent to one of the pedestrian entrances to the Finchampstead Memorial Park and associated parking area. To the south of the site lies a number of residential dwellings that line the southern side of the road known as 'The Village', whilst to the north lies the majority of the public park. To the west lies the Finchampstead Memorial Hall, Sports Pavilion and Tennis Courts, whereas to the east lies a continuation of residential properties which form part of the Area of Special Character known as the Finchampstead Village.
2. Finchampstead Memorial Park was purchased by the people of Finchampstead in 1946 to commemorate those lost in the two World Wars. Following the transfer of the land to the Parish Council in 1947, it is understood that at this time the park was named the 'Memorial' Park.

Description of Development:

3. This application seeks approval for the proposed re-erection of the War Memorial on the highway verge located adjacent to one of the pedestrian entrances to the Finchampstead Memorial Park and associated parking area.
4. To accommodate the memorial's relocation, the applicant has proposed a comprehensive planting and landscape plan, a footpath connecting to the existing pathway into the park, the installation of a culvert, power supply and a plinth and steps. The proposals include removal of a small section of the existing hedgerow which separates the park from the highway verge, opening up the access to the memorial and park from the north and south.

Principle of Development:

5. 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 (MDD) 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.
6. Policy CC02 of the MDD sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map and therefore replaces the proposals map adopted through the Core Strategy, as per the requirement of policy CP9. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. The site is situated outside of development limits in the designated Countryside and is therefore subject to assessment under Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy which seeks to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment.

Suitability of New Location:

7. There are several objections on the grounds that the proposed location is unsuitable for the relocation of the War Memorial.
8. One of the purposes of the War Memorial is for the community to pay their respect and to be a reminder of the sacrifice made by service personnel. The proposed location in

the heart of the village meets these aims. Furthermore, whilst common locations for such memorials are in the grounds of a church, the location of the memorial in Finchampstead Memorial Park, named (or at least inspired by this structure), is suitable. Traffic passing the memorial would be as frequent as the current location, however this is not considered sufficient to warrant a reason for refusal in this instance, as ultimately the visibility of the site is one of the key characteristics of the current location which would be retained by the proposed site.

9. There are more houses in the heart of the village than when the memorial was first erected. Whilst there would be a degree of harm to the significance of the memorial through locating it, this is outweighed by its new central location closer to the community.
10. The harm to the memorial through its relocation would not be substantial. Whilst the dismantling would technically be demolition, it is the sort of structure than can be moved without physical harm. Whilst it is important that the memorial is located in a prominent position within the village the precise spot is not key to its significance. Therefore, the level of harm would be relatively low.
11. Once the Memorial is dismantled and removed from its current location, the structure will lose its listing status. Condition 8 requires an application for listed status once relocated.
12. The act of dismantling, re-erection and cleaning should be controlled so as to avoid damage to the memorial. This is secured by conditions 4-6.

Character of the Area:

13. The northern side of 'The Village' is largely comprised of open fields and recreational facilities and significantly contributes to the distinctive open and verdant feel of the heart of Finchampstead Village.
14. The memorial, associated landscaping and infrastructure would have a footprint of approximately 175^{sqm}. The structure itself is approximately 4.7 metres tall including the plinth and steps, but its general visual prominence is not considered to be overbearing or dominating within the largely rural and open surroundings. Rather than being at odds with the prevailing character of the village, it positively enhances visual amenities and the overall character of the Memorial Park.
15. Furthermore, the landscaping plans submitted in support of this application positively enhance the historic importance of the structure itself and verdant character of the village.
16. An objection has been received on the grounds that the memorial would block views of the park from the houses on the opposite side of the road. This would be minimal and not sufficient to warrant a reason for refusal.
17. The applicant proposes to remove a small section of hedgerow which would not adversely impact the visual amenity of the park.

Access and Movement:

18. The proposed landscaping facilitates multiple access points and ample space to congregate for annual remembrance events.
19. WBC Highways have raised no objections to the proposals on highway safety grounds and consider the proposals to be safely designed. The presence of the small car park immediately east of the site and the Memorial Park car park situated just east of this would be sufficient to accommodate a significant number of users of the park during events.

Landscape and Trees:

20. A Tree Survey Schedule, Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement including a Tree Constraints and Protection Plan has been submitted and are acceptable and compliant with Policy CC03d) and BS5837:2012. The Tree Survey identifies T3 as a Veteran Oak tree. All recommendations within the AIA section of the report including tree-works will be required to be carried out as itemised.
21. The Relocation - General Arrangement Plan shows the relocated Memorial in its setting between T1 and T2 trees surrounded by a gated access and picket fence to memorial area from inside the park Whilst the picket fence and gated access will need to be confirmed, it is considered in principle that these are supported. Cedec pathways over root protection areas is also acceptable and is considered an attractive solution. Lastly, access over the culverted infilled ditch with new brick headwalls and proposed section drawings are also acceptable.
22. The Tree and Landscape Officer has concluded that the mitigation, landscaping and turfing proposals are acceptable and comply with Local Plan Policies CC03 and TB21, and Policy CP3 of the CS.

Residential Amenities:

23. There will be no unacceptable adverse neighbouring amenity impact.

CONCLUSION:

24. In summary, despite the minor harm that would result in the proposed relocation of the War Memorial, the re-siting of it in the heart of the village and adjacent to the Finchampstead Memorial Park is suitable and justified. One of the main purposes of the War Memorial is for the community to pay their respect and to be a reminder of the sacrifice made by service personnel. The new location meets these aims. The accessibility and overall safety experienced when visiting the memorial would be greatly improved upon the existing situation and the proposed landscaping plans would actively enhance both the park it would be situated in and the prevailing character of the area. Subject to the conditions outlined above, the application is recommended for approval.

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 the protected groups 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 upon protected groups as a result of the development.

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