

ITEM NO: 8

Application No.
21/00024/LB
Site Address:

Ward:
Binfield With Warfield

Date Registered:
11 January 2021

Target Decision Date:
8 March 2021

**Binfield House Terrace Road North Binfield Bracknell
Berkshire**

Proposal: **Application for Listed Building Consent for refurbishment and conversion of Binfield House into 9 retirement apartments incorporating internal and external alterations.**

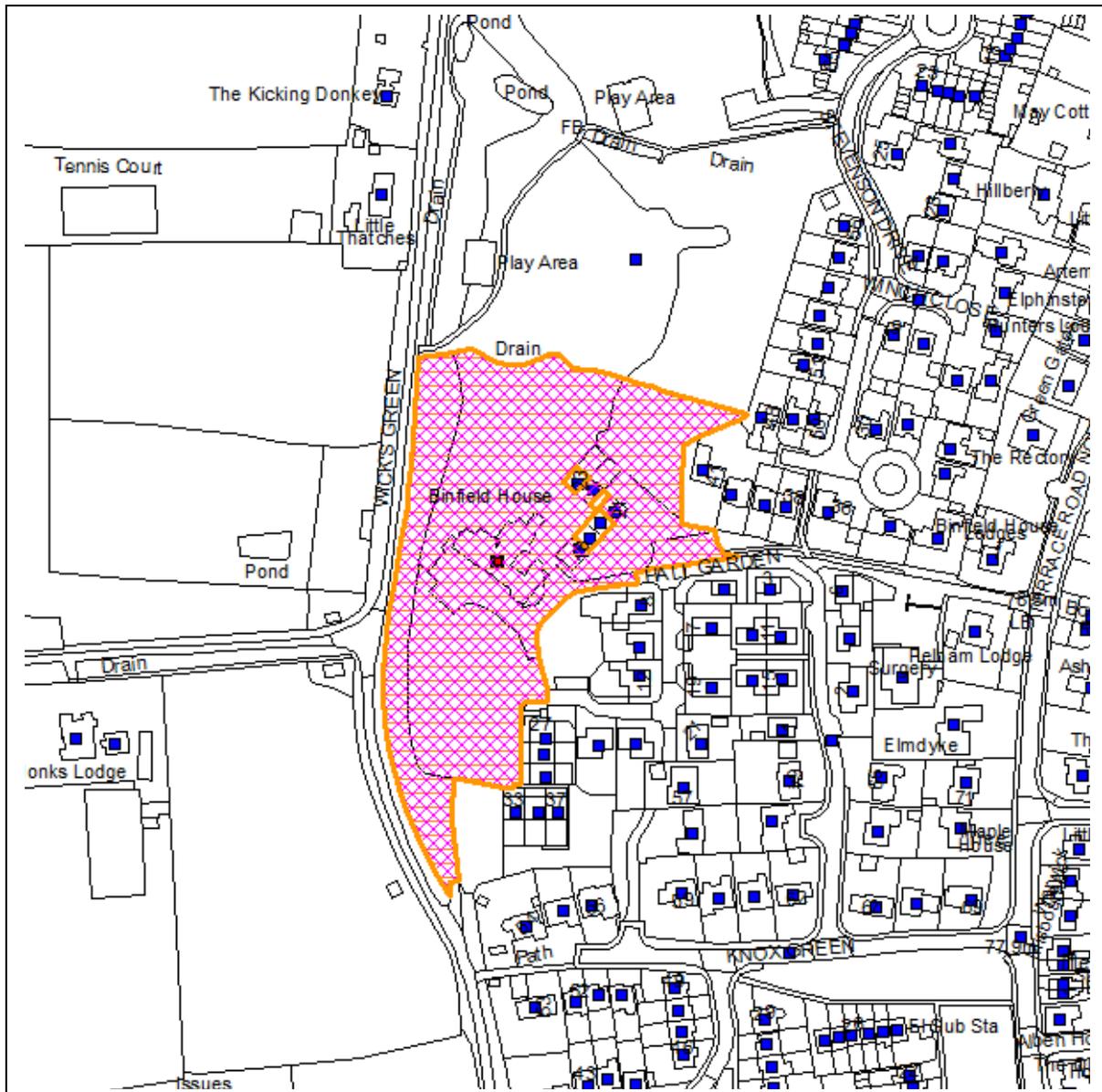
Applicant: Brett Jacobs

Agent: Mr Christopher Colloff

Case Officer: Katie Andrews, 01344 352000

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Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



OFFICER REPORT

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This application relates to Binfield House and works to the Grade II Listed Building which require Listed Building consent. The works are required in connection with the proposed refurbishment of Binfield House to provide 9 retirement apartments.

1.2 The proposed works to Binfield House, following their amendment, are considered to be acceptable and justifiable in returning Binfield House to a sustainable economic use which is compatible with its long-term conservation.

RECOMMENDATION

Listed Building Consent be granted subject to conditions in Section 11 of this report

2.0 REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

2.1 The application has been reported to the Planning Committee following the receipt of more than 5 letters of objection.

3.0 PLANNING STATUS AND SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 This application site relates to Binfield House which is a Grade II Listed Building.

3.2 The Listed Building currently includes 16 flats/bedsits and its conversion and refurbishment would result in eight, two bedroom flats and one, one bedroom flat.

3.3 On the ground floor, the principal reception rooms contain 20th century neo-Georgian fireplaces, doors and ceilings in rooms dating from the remodelling works of Cachemaille-Day in the 1920s. A curved stone staircase with wrought-iron balusters is also part of the 1920s remodelling. These features which add to the value of the Listed Building, are largely well-preserved on the left-hand side of the building. However, the right-hand side of the building has suffered from sub-division although the residential flats on the ground-floor are largely confined to the modern extensions to the rear of the building.

3.4 The interior of the upper storeys has been converted to separate flats within the building, which has led to a great deal of sub-division within the historic building, particularly on the first and second floors.

3.5 There have been a number of incongruous alterations and extensions to the Listed Building resulting in changes to the historic plan form and a large number of original decorative features being removed from the property. In particular, a number of the rear extensions to the Listed Building have altered its plan form and eroded the original aesthetic.

3.6 Along the rear elevation this includes a number of incongruous alterations including a two storey extension to house a lift. There is a mid-20th century single-storey extension to the rear which would be demolished as part of the proposals better revealing the rear mid-19th century extension.

PLANNING STATUS
Grade II Listed Building

4.0 RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

4.1 601097: Conversion of house into flatlets for old people with wardens flats and separate self-contained flat on second floor. Also provision of steel fire escape and replacement of some old windows for new. APPROVED 1975

4.2 601871: Erection of six old people's bungalows with six parking bays. APPROVED 1978

4.3 21/00023/FUL Refurbishment and Conversion of Binfield House into 9 retirement apartments incorporating internal and external alterations and erection of new buildings containing 9 retirement dwellings, following demolition of existing single storey buildings, together with associated parking and landscaping (amended description). Appears elsewhere on this agenda.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL

5.1 Listed Building consent is require as the proposal involves internal and external works to Binfield House, a Grade II Listed Building.

5.2 The Listed Building currently includes 16 flats/bedsits and its conversion and refurbishment would result in eight, two bedroom flats and one, one bedroom flat.

5.3 Externally it is proposed to remove an external fire escape and to build two rear terraces accessed through sliding doors; to replace an existing sash window; and to introduce a new window to the northeast elevation.

5.4 Internally the Listed Building currently includes 16 flats/bedsits and its conversion and refurbishment would result in eight, two bedroom flats and one, one bedroom flat. The interior of the upper storeys have been converted to separate flats within the building, which has led to a great deal of sub-division previously within the historic building, particularly on the first and second floors. The proposal is therefore for the removal of the stud wall sub-divisions on these floors to create five flats at the first and second floor.

5.5 Consent for these works is sought in connection with the refurbishment of Binfield House to provide 9 retirement apartments and the erection of 9 dwellings to the rear with associated access and parking, following the demolition of the existing bungalows under planning application 21/00023/FUL which is considered elsewhere on this agenda.

5.6 The application has been amended during the course of its consideration to:

- Remove a lift from the central hallway
- Remove a projecting rear extension which replaced a fire escape.
- Keep in place a doorway to flat 13 without alteration and retain an original door on flat 12 but fix it shut.

6.0 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Binfield Parish Council

6.1 Recommends refusal however states that these are the same comments submitted for the full planning application 21/00023/FUL and that Binfield Parish Council has no objection to the proposed sympathetic refurbishment to Binfield House.

- (i) Over development of the site with 12 two storey houses replacing 6 single storey bungalows. This is not in line with the BNP policy BF1 Backland and infill development.
- (ii) Significant harm to the setting of the Grade II Listed Binfield House by taking away the open aspect at the rear.
- (iii) Significant detrimental impact on the conservation area with the addition of 12 two storey properties.
- (iv) Whilst the proposal is to use Knox Green/Hall Gardens for construction traffic access, and it is recognized this will create significant disruption to residents, if this does change to be routed along Wicks Green this will have a serious detrimental impact on the verges and the amenity nature of the lane

Binfield Parish Council on amended plans

6.2 Binfield Parish Council previously objected to this development – and has reconsidered in the light of the revised plans. It is noted that this is a major improvement on the previous plans and Beechcroft should be thanked for their efforts.

However, whilst still has no objection to the proposed sympathetic refurbishment to Binfield House, Binfield Parish Council wishes to RECOMMEND REFUSAL of this application, as it is re-presented for the following reasons:

- (i) Over development of the site with 9 x 1.5 storey houses replacing 6 single storey bungalows. This is not in line with the BNP policy BF1 Backland and infill development.
- (ii) Whilst less harm than the last plan, there is still significant harm to the setting of the Grade II Listed Binfield House by taking away the open aspect at the rear.
- (iii) And therefore, it remains that this development has a detrimental impact on the conservation area.
- (iv) Should the development go ahead the parish would welcome a conversation about a pedestrian accessible route to Wicks Green/Silver Jubilee Open Space.

6.3 Seven joint letters of objection have been received in connection with the full planning application 21/00023/FUL raising objection to the redevelopment. These have been considered under the report for 21/00023/FUL. Of these letters, 1 raised objection to the Listed Building application on the following grounds:

- Given its architectural importance a Condition Survey and an outline schedule of works (for alterations/accrued repairs) should accompany the floorplans
- Limited information provided by the plans which seem insufficient to make a decision.
- Access should be off Wicks Green.

6.4 Within one of the seven letters, support was given for the Listed Building application on the following grounds:

- Wonderful to see sympathetic conversion to Grade 2 Listed Building
- Support principle of the proposed conversion of Binfield House to retirement apartments

7.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Heritage Consultee

7.1 No objection on amended plans subject to conditions

8.0 MAIN POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

8.1 The primary strategic planning considerations applying to the site and associated policies are:

	Development Plan	NPPF
Heritage	CSDPD Policies CS1 & CS7	Consistent (paras. 189 to 197)

8.2 In addition, the Binfield Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2016. The relevant policies from this which are considered consistent with the NPPF are:

Policy BF2: Protection of Heritage Assets

9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Impact of the proposed works to the listed building.

Listing

9.1 Binfield House is Grade II Listed and was added to the statutory list in December 1972. It was converted to use as a care home for the elderly in the 1980s and is now empty. The house dates from the late 18th century and was altered and extended in the 19th century with the addition of Gothic features and was further altered in the late 20th century. It is two storeys in height with an attic level and has a rectangular plan with extensions at rear. The house is built of red brick in Flemish bond under hipped tiled roofs of different heights and several chimneys, some with clay pots.

9.2 The site had an associated walled kitchen garden which formed a garden nursery and now contains housing with the Hall Garden development.

Setting

9.3 The area of the old kitchen gardens and surrounding area, to the south and southeast of the main house, have been developed as a housing estate. To the northeast of the main building is an L-shaped, single storey range of buildings which formed additional sheltered accommodation within the grounds of the house. The design and materials of the range is unsympathetic to the character of the Listed Building and detracts from its setting. The setting of Binfield House is now characterised by residential properties set within smaller garden plots to the south and east, with open, green space to the north and west. The residential development at Binfield House Nursery, abutting the Site to the east, has eroded the original garden setting of the designated heritage asset, which had been separated on acquisition of the property by the Local Authority in the late 1970s.

9.4 During the late 19th century there was a glasshouse and range of outbuildings to the rear of the gardens in a location now occupied by the site of the current sheltered accommodation bungalows.

9.5 The Listed Building was remodelled extensively internally by Cachemaille-Day in the 1920s adding many of the surviving interior features which contribute to the building's Listed status.

9.6 In 1977, Listed Building Consent was granted to demolish the disused barns and outbuildings to the north east of the house and in 1978 the single-storey range of sheltered accommodation

was constructed. The ownership of the house was transferred to Bracknell Forest Homes in 2008 including the walled garden to the east used as the Council's plant nursery.

9.7 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that "in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

9.8 The NPPF (paragraph 194) requires that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

9.9 Paragraph 199 states that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

9.10 Paragraph 200 states:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

9.11 CSDPD Policy CS1(ix) states that development will be permitted which protects and enhances historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance. Policy CS7(i) states, inter alia, that development proposals will be permitted which respect the historic environment.

9.12 Binfield Neighbourhood Plan Policy BF2 states that development proposals should demonstrate that negative impacts of heritage assets have been either avoided or minimised. Where the harm of any residual impacts of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided, it will not be supported. Development proposed will be required to sustain and enhance the setting of heritage assets in their vicinity, including views from historic parks and gardens, through the careful choice of building heights, layout and materials, use of landscape buffers and placement of green open space. These should avoid placing incongruous tall buildings in prominent locations in views that contribute to the significance of these heritage assets.

9.13 These policies are considered to have significant weight as they are consistent with section 16 of the NPPF.

9.14 The Listed Building currently includes 16 flats/bedsits and its conversion and refurbishment would result in eight, two bedroom flats and one, one bedroom flat.

9.15 On the ground floors the principal reception rooms contain impressive 20th century neo-Georgian fireplaces, doors and ceilings in rooms dating from the remodelling works of Cachemaille-Day in the 1920s. The impressive curved stone staircase with wrought-iron balusters are also part of the 1920s remodelling and these features are to be retained and preserved. The removal of intrusive stud wall sub-divisions on the first and second floors is proposed to create 5 flats on these floors. The removal of these intrusive stud wall sub-divisions on these floors will make better use of the original historic architectural features, such as the windows.

9.16 Within the main Listed Building the majority of the changes refer to alterations or removal of later partitions which would not have any adverse effect on the fabric of the building. The amended proposals omits the provision of a new lift as previously proposed as this would have affected the existing plan and obscure some of the architectural interior features as well as cause damage to the ground and first floor ceilings and floors.

9.17 The ground-floor interior features affected include a neo-Georgian ornate doorway described as:

Detail of the neo-Georgian interiors of Cachemaille-Day's redesign of the house for the Knox's. These details make a positive contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

9.18 The doorway to flat 13 is retained at the same width without alteration, retaining the architectural symmetry of the corridor and the doorway to flat 12 would be retained and fixed shut and will become part of the dining room to the ground floor flat.

9.19 The plans have been amended to remove a projecting rear extension from the north east elevation, which replaced an existing fire escape. However, the double doorway has been retained and instead a Juliette balcony is proposed. Given there was previously a fire escape in this location, there is not considered to be an objection to the retention of the doorway with a Juliette balcony. Two further terraces are proposed to the north east elevation which are sympathetic to the building.

Conclusion

9.20 Following the removal of the service lift within the historic core of the Listed Building and the alterations to the doors within the central hallway of the building the proposals are considered to be acceptable and justifiable in returning Binfield House, a Grade II Listed Building, to a sustainable economic use which is compatible with its long-term conservation.

10. RECOMMENDATION

10.1 That the Assistant Director: Planning be recommended to **APPROVE** the application subject to the following conditions amended, added to or deleted as the Assistant Director: Planning considers necessary: -

01. The works hereby approved shall be begun before the expiry of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

02. The works hereby approved shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans:-

3607.P.111 F Proposed Floor Plans

3607.P.112 C Proposed Elevations

Heritage Statement (Updated May 21)

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

03. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in a proper workmanlike manner appropriate to the age and character of the building and using traditional materials and techniques except where the use of modern materials and techniques have specifically been approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]

04. All new works, and works of making good to the retained fabric, whether internal or external, shall be finished to match existing, original or adjacent work (as deemed appropriate by the Local Planning Authority) with regard to the methods used and to materials, colours, textures and profiles.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]

05. All existing internal decoration features, including plaster work, ironwork, fireplaces, doors, windows, staircases, staircase balustrade and other woodwork, shall remain undisturbed in their existing position, and shall be fully protected during the course of works on site unless expressly specified in the approved drawings.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]

06. The following, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant part of the work is begun:

a) Sample facing bricks to be used in repair of areas of brickwork and new brickwork where applicable.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]

07. No related works shall be carried out unless further drawings showing the retention of the ground-floor doors to Plot 13 at a scale of not less than 1:20 and including elevation, plan and section details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out as approved and thereafter retained.

REASON: The submitted drawings are inadequate in this matter and further information is needed in order to protect and preserve the character of the listed building

08. No works shall be undertaken until details of the methods of providing insulation to the walls, floors and windows frames, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]

09. No new or replacement windows or doors shall be inserted in the building unless further details at a scale of not less than 1:20 and including elevation, plan and section details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out as approved and thereafter retained.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy.

[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy CS1]