



SUNNINGDALE PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk: Ruth Davies

Briony Franklin
Planning Officer
RBWM

By email

28 April 2021

Dear Briony

**21/01053/FULL: Garden Cottage, Dry Arch Road, Sunningdale Ascot SL5 0DB
Replacement dwelling with basement, sunken garden and steps and new vehicular and pedestrian access
following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuilding (part retrospective)**

The Planning Committee considered this application at its meeting on 27 April 2021 and **Strongly Object** to this application.

This application (21/01053) is associated with a previously approved and extant scheme (17/02140). A very similar scheme to this current one (19/00351) was Refused and Dismissed on Appeal in October 2019.

This house sits within the Green belt. Therefore, any considerations on this planning application must take into account the size and scale of the original dwelling on this site, as well as all the other considerations appropriate to the Green Belt, particularly whether this is appropriate development, whether this development impacts the openness of the Green Belt and whether there are any Special Circumstances.

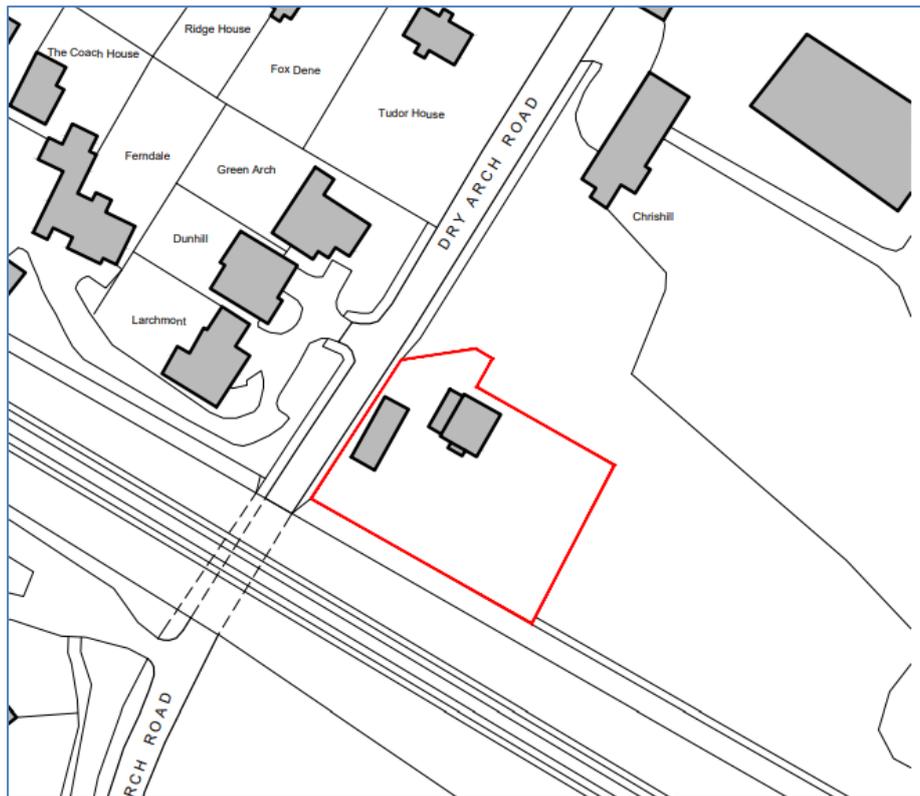
The NPPF allows for the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

The original dwelling on the site (now demolished) had a total floorspace of 118.4sq.m. There was also a detached outbuilding of 68.1sq.m. The total existing floorspace (GEA) was therefore **186.5sqm**.

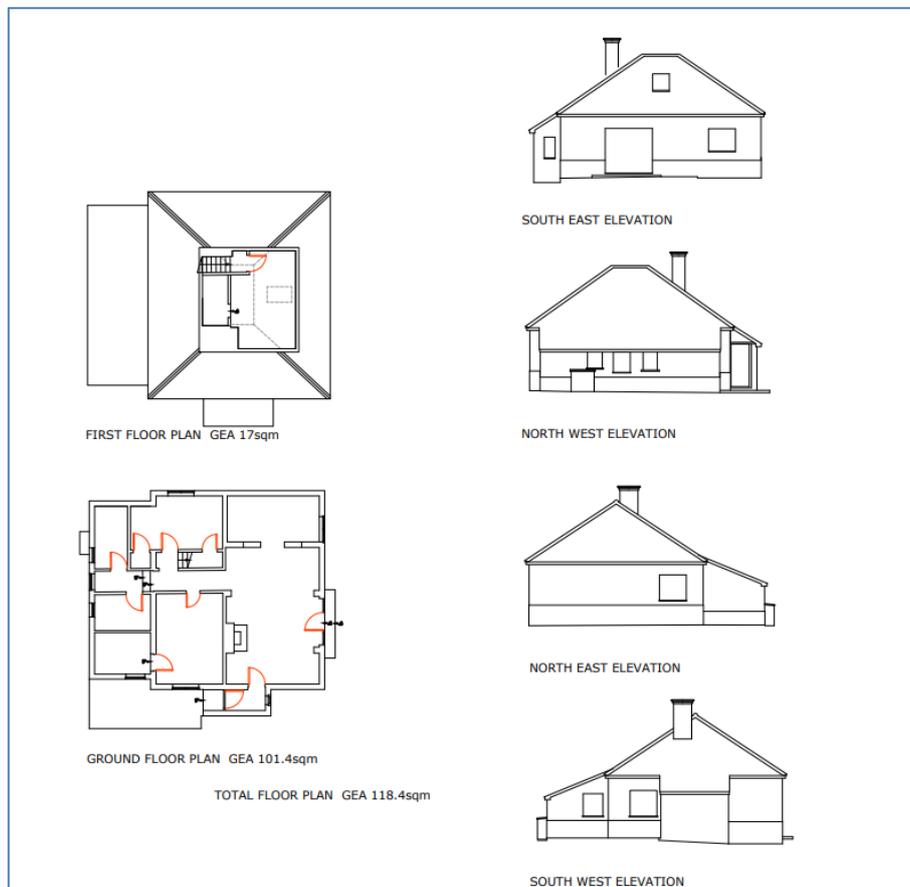
The approved replacement dwelling (17/02140) has a floorspace (above ground) (GEA) of **261sq.m**. This equates to a 40% increase in the floorspace over the existing dwelling and outbuilding (i.e., $186.5 \times 40\% = 261\text{sq.m}$).

In spite of the increase in size of 40% on the original house, this 17/02140 application was considered to be *“acceptable in this instance as it still remains within visual catchment of the existing buildings and as it is not considered to be materially larger, the proposal is not considered to harm the openness of the Green Belt”*, and it was approved.

The original site layout and original buildings are shown in the two pictures below.

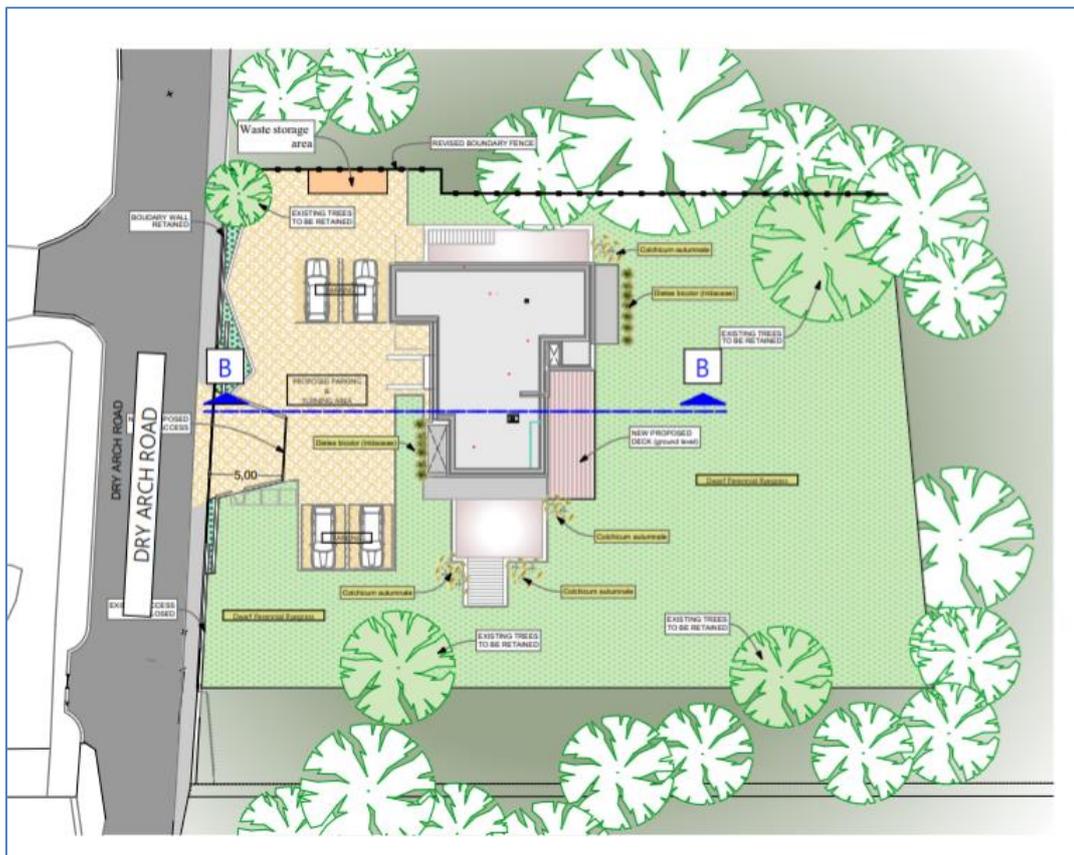


Original Site Layout



Original Dwelling

A subsequent proposed scheme (19/00351) shown in plan below was refused at Appeal.



The Inspector objected to this scheme as

1. The proposed floor area (excluding the basement) was approximately 60% greater than the demolished buildings.
2. The proposed building would be bulkier than the demolished dwelling which included upper floor accommodation within its pitched roof space. It was 2 storeys high.
3. It would introduce a building onto the site that has a greater volume than the demolished buildings, thereby spatially reducing its openness.
4. Despite being set back further from the road (versus the existing building) the proposed dwelling would visually affect the openness of the site, thereby causing harm to the Green Belt.

It is very significant that in refusing 19/00351 the Inspector continually compared that proposed scheme against the existing (demolished) dwelling and NOT the extant scheme (17/02140). It is therefore very apparent that the Inspector was placing considerable importance of the position of the house within the Green Belt and the effect any development would have on the Green Belt.

Hence, whilst the developer has permission to build the extant scheme (17/02140) the Parish Council will follow the guidelines as advised by the Inspector in refusing 19/00351 and compare this current scheme (21/01053) against the existing (demolished) scheme as well as the extant scheme (17/02140).

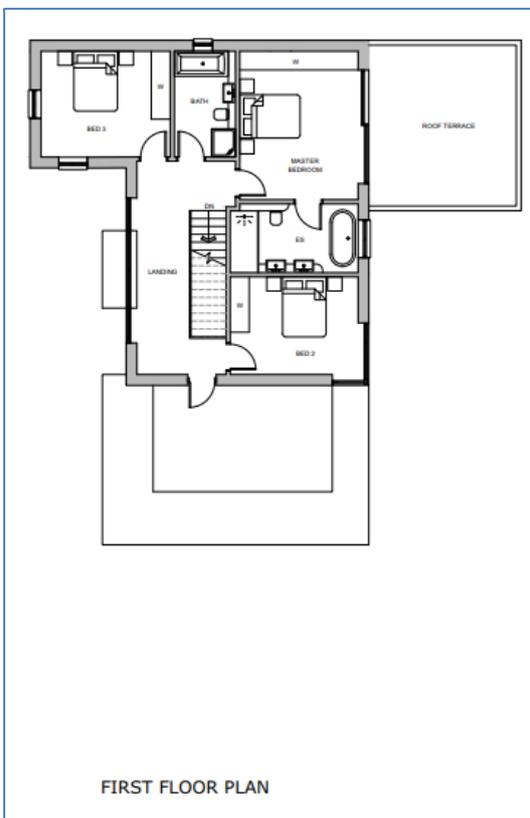
1. Impact on the Green Belt

The extant scheme is 40% larger than the existing building (main dwelling and outbuilding). Therefore, ANY increase in size over the extant scheme (17/02140) would be unlikely to receive planning consent if the Inspector's rationale is followed.

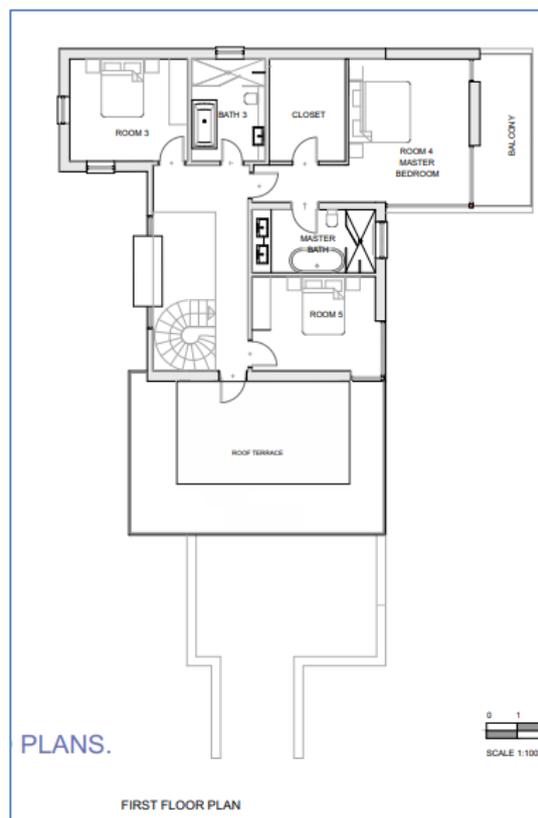
The current application 21/01053, shown below, is a larger house on the first floor along the Northern boundary than that approved in 17/02140. The differences on the first floor can be seen below. An open roof terrace on the approved scheme is now a new closet and extended bedroom 4.



21/01053

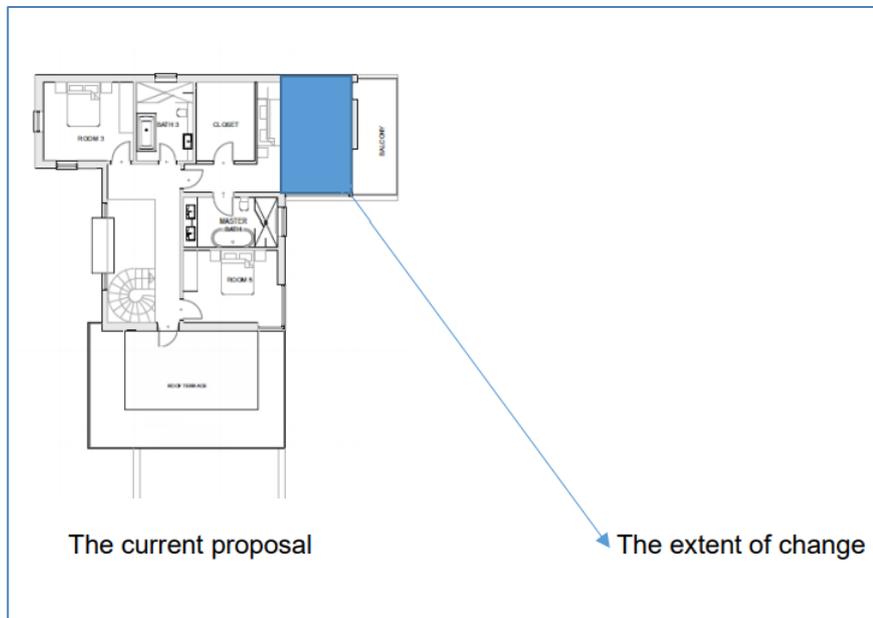


17/02140- Approved



21/01053-Proposed

This difference is outlined in the Planning Statement, an extract of which is shown below. Whilst the addition of a bedroom at the rear of the property might not normally be an issue such an extension would seem to be in contradiction of the inspector's conclusions when refusing 19/00351. The applicant states in the Planning Statement under 'The Proposal' that ***'The siting of the approved building screens the first-floor extension and obstructs any public view.'***

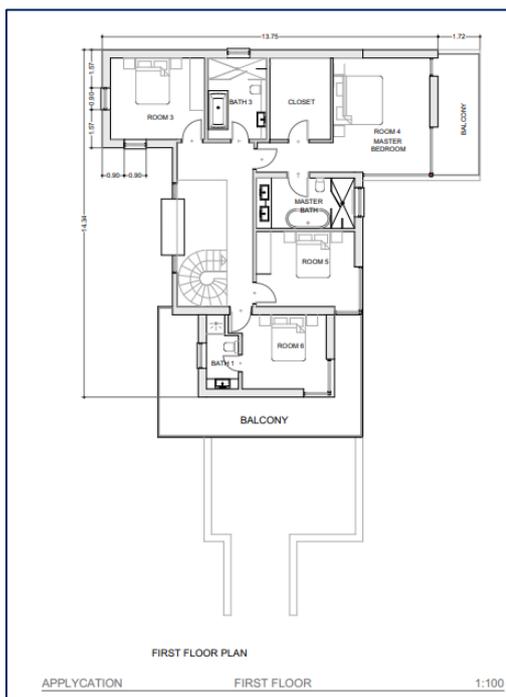


However, the public view from Dry Arch Road is very different from the public view from the footpath that runs immediately adjacent to the property and parallel with the railway line. This view is shown below of the rear of the property, photographed from the footpath.

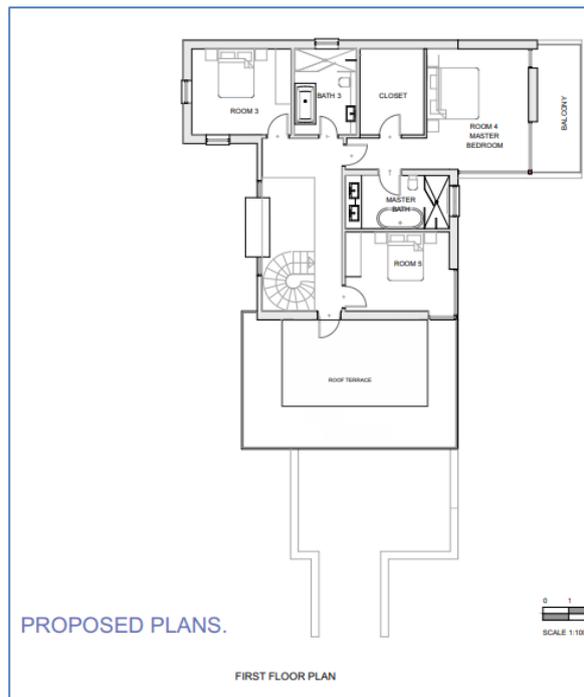


As can be seen, the property is at an elevated height from this footpath and the proposed first floor extension would be in full public view. The applicant makes reference to this footpath in the Design and Access statement.

Interestingly, the first-floor plans submitted for 21/01053 along this Northern side are identical to the first-floor plans submitted for 19/00351 which, as we know, was refused.



19/00351, First floor



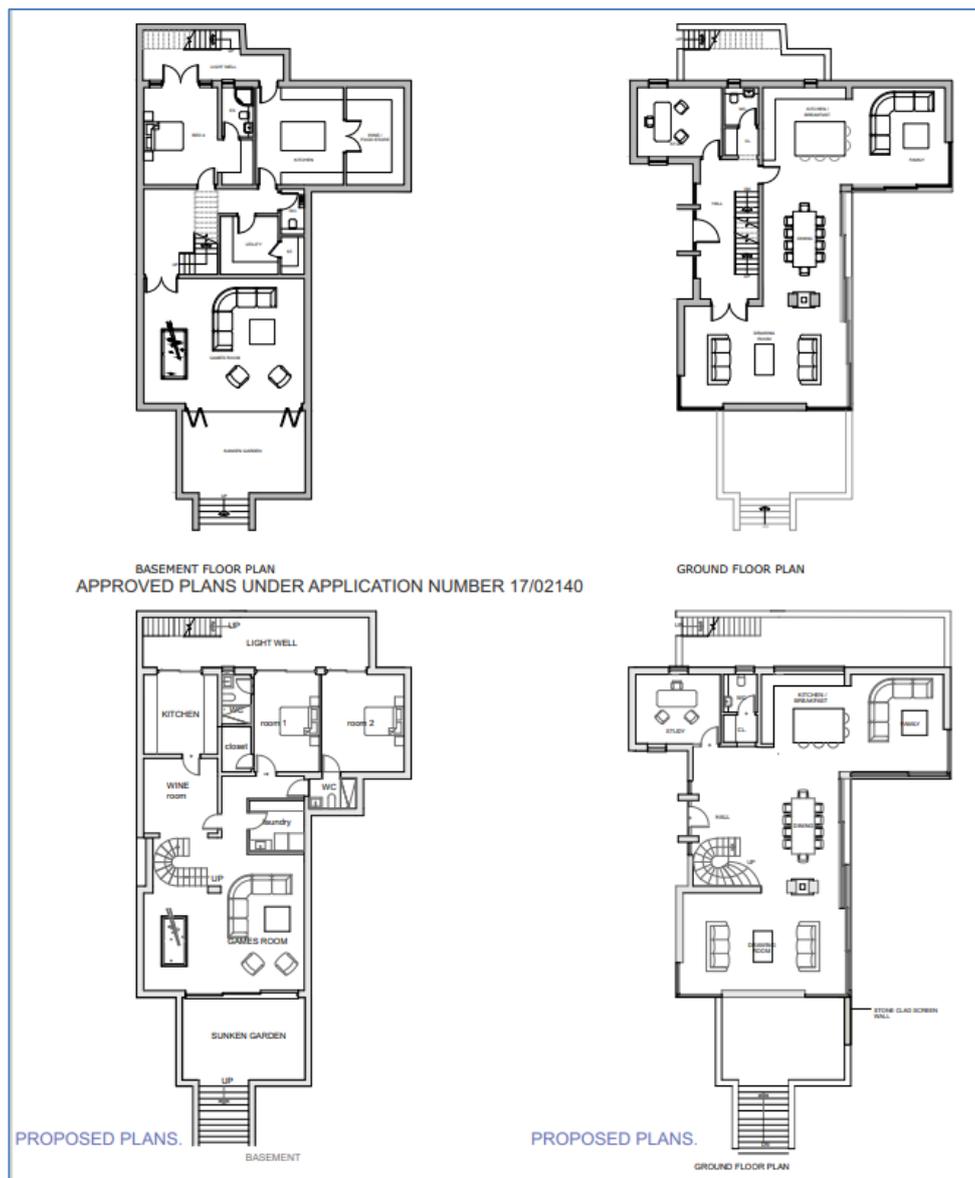
21/01053, First floor

2. Trees

Directly to the North East of the site of the proposed new build are mature trees in the adjoining property. These are shown below.



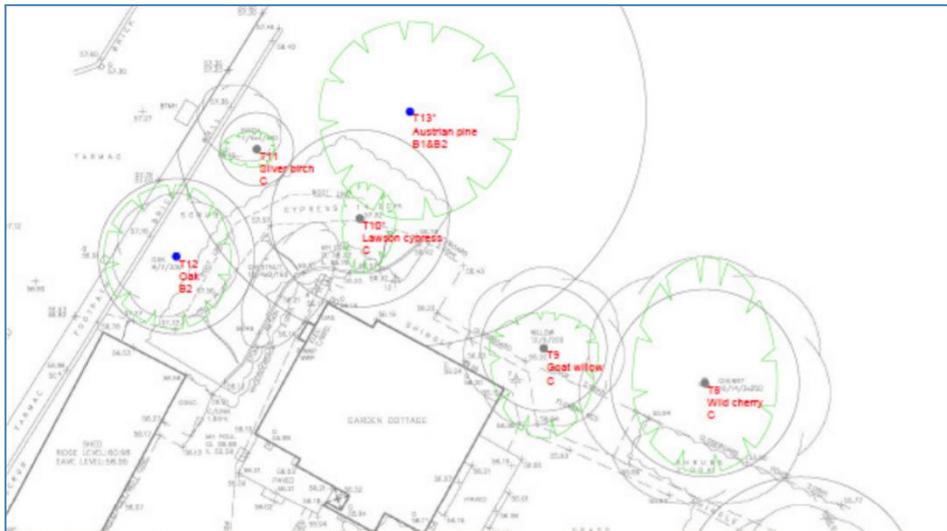
As can be seen in the submitted plans below, comparing the basement and ground floor of the approved 17/02140 with the proposed scheme with 21/01053 the building now extends further along the boundary with the adjacent property.



17/02140 (shown on the left);

21/01053 (shown on the right)

Significantly, the proposal is to extend the basement and the ground floor further along the Northern boundary in an Easterly direction than on the approved plan. The plan drawing shows the new basement and ground floor extensions just abutting the RPA of T9 (Goat willow). The RPA of T9 (wild cherry) does not appear to be affected. Excavating on site to create an enlarged basement is likely to also involve digging out at an angle to prevent any earth wall collapse. However, there is no arboricultural report accompanying 21/01053 which might have commented on how the construction of this enlarged basement may affect the RPA of any nearby trees. It is believed that the RPA of the Austrian pine is unaffected. The RPA of that tree (T13) is shown below.



A photograph of the Austrian pine (extracted from the 17/02140 arboricultural report) and the former, now demolished building, is shown below.

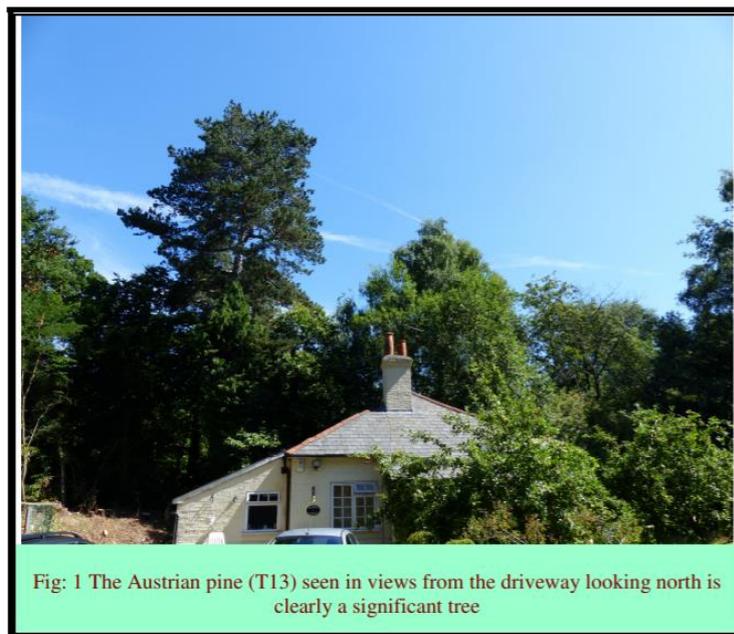
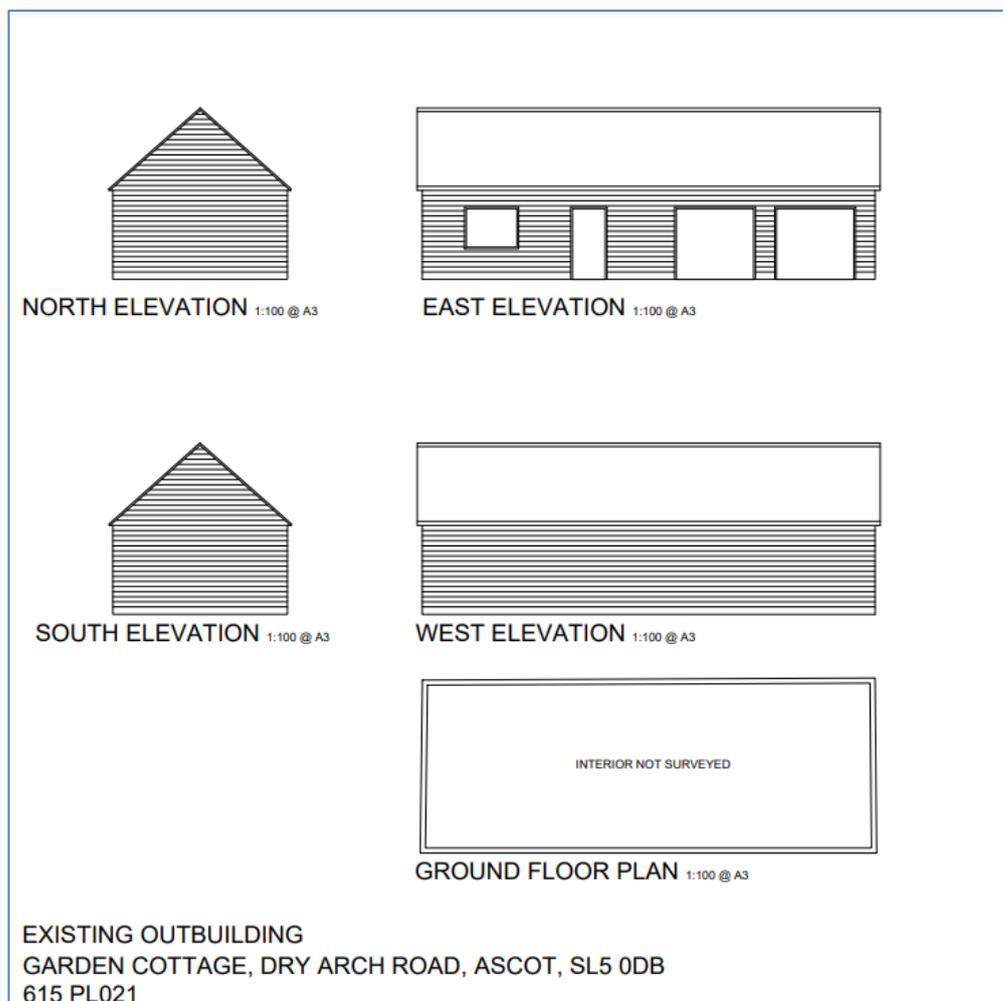


Fig: 1 The Austrian pine (T13) seen in views from the driveway looking north is clearly a significant tree

3. Existing outbuilding

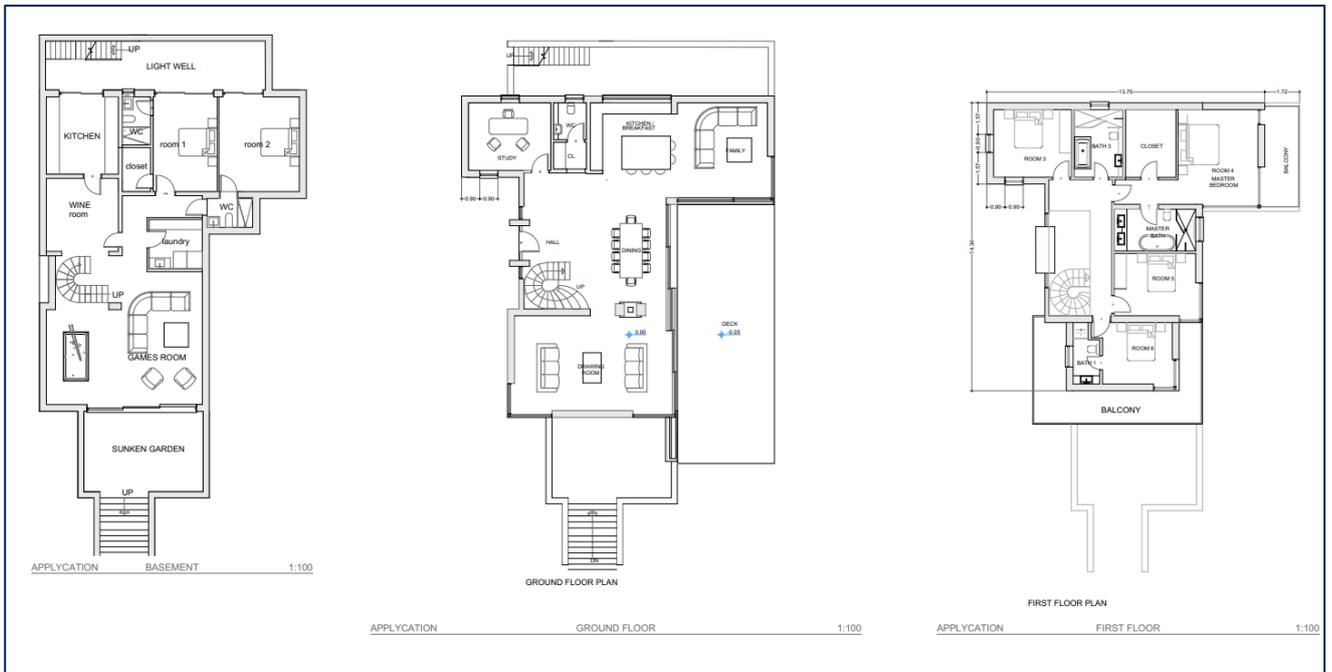
The Parish Council are unsure why the applicant has included details and illustrations of the existing outbuilding. It is referenced in the Design and Access statement as having been demolished and does not appear on any plans or drawings associated with this application. We can only deduce that this was sent in error.



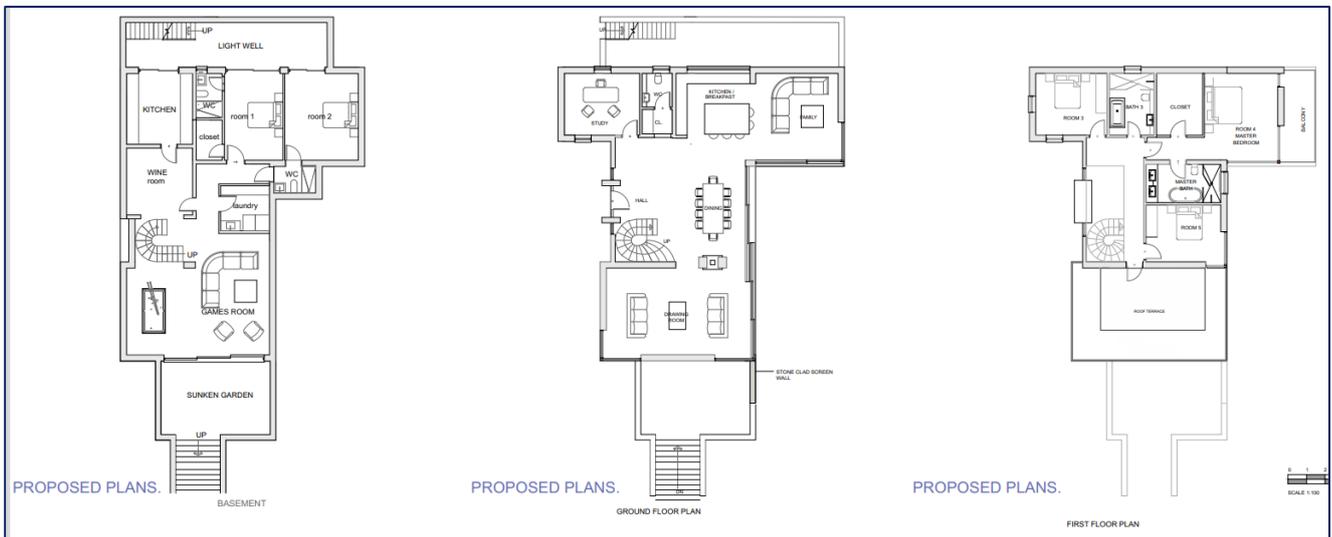
4. Comparison with 19/00351 Refused at Appeal

The applicant has made limited reference to the differences between the refused scheme and the current proposal. Comparing the plans (shown below) the Parish Council note the following:

- a. **Basement**
Identical to the refused scheme
- b. **Ground floor**
Removal of outside decking area on current scheme
- c. **First floor**
Removal of 1 x bedroom on Southern end of floor on current scheme



19/00351- refused at Appeal



21/01053- proposed

The applicant claims in their Design and Access statement that the proposed dwelling is now only slightly larger than the approved scheme. The equivalent floorspace in m² is not quoted.

However, in the Planning Inspector’s Appeal Notice for 19/00351, the floorspace for this refused scheme is 295m². As mentioned above, this current application is identical to the refused scheme except for the removal of a bedroom on the first floor.

The approximate size of the bedroom being removed is 6m x 4m = 24m², which would result in a floorspace of 295-24 = 271m² for this application.

As a direct comparison, and as mentioned above, the area of the house area under the approved scheme (17/02140) is 261m² (+ 40% of original). Now, under the proposed scheme (21/01053) the area increases to 271m² (+ 45% of original).

The removal of this bedroom is really the only difference between the refused and the proposed scheme. Therefore, the Parish Council would have thought that if the current scheme was reviewed again by the same Inspector his conclusion would not be any different when refusing 19/00351.

5. Height

There is minimal reference made to the height of the proposed building. In the Design and Access statement (Section 4.3) it is stated that ***'Whilst the proposed dwelling is marginally higher than the existing dwelling, this must be balanced against the fact that it is sited further back from the road frontage and would have a reduced visual amenity.'***

The Parish Council were unable to find reference to specific measured heights of the proposed building in comparison to (1) the refused scheme, (2) the existing building or (3) the approved scheme. More factual evidence of comparative building heights is therefore required.

It is noted that the Inspector had referenced the building height in his refusal statement: ***'..... despite being set back, the full width of the upper floor of the building under construction can be clearly seen from the road over the boundary wall. As such, the proposed dwelling would visually affect the openness of the site, thereby causing harm to the Green Belt.'***

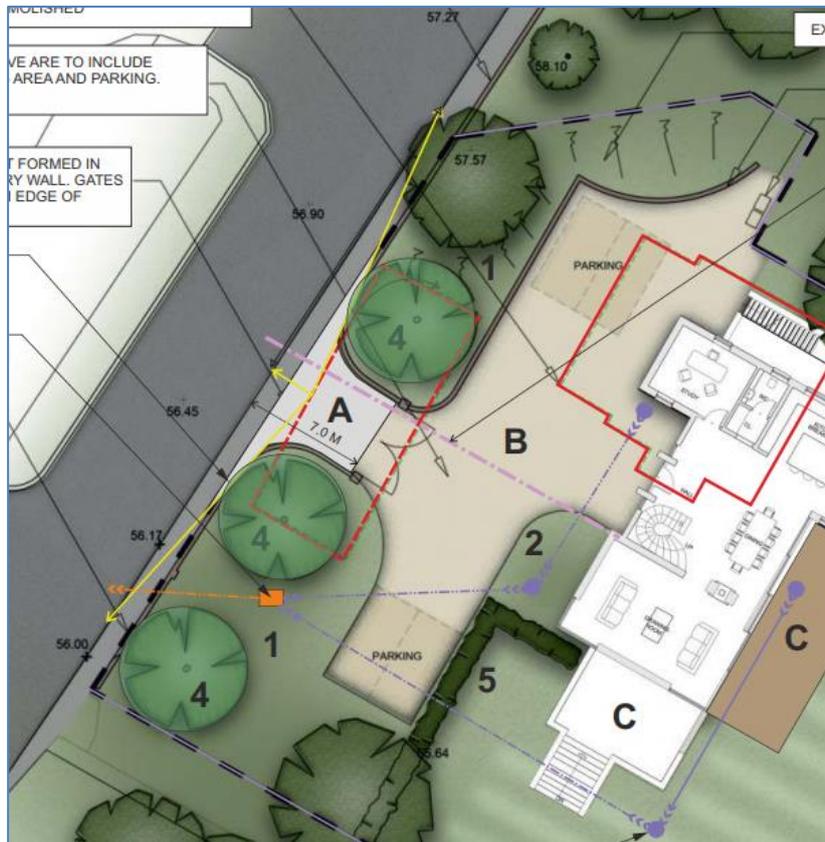
6. Access to the site

Currently, there is an old red brick wall that extends along the front of the property which is a characteristic feature of this section of Dry Arch Road. The current site access point, closer to the railway bridge is proposed to be changed with a new access point created in this red brick wall.



There is a plan showing the new proposed access, but we were unable to locate any street scene pictures of this proposed access point. The plan shows that gates will be installed and set back 7m from the edge of the highway but there is no indication of gate materials or design.

This removal of an old brick wall to make way for increased visibility splays (which is noted was approved under 17/02140) will also affect the openness of the Green Belt as the new two storey building will now be much more visible from the road.



7. Conclusion

Even just looking at the proposed floor plans it is clear that the proposed application is not only larger than the approved plans but far in excess of what would be an acceptable increase in space for a house within the Green Belt.

In summary, we object to this application following the arguments put forward by the Inspector in his refusal of 19/00351 - that this application is contrary to the Green Belt policies in the NPPF, as follows:

- the replacement dwelling is materially larger or result in a material alteration to the scale of development on the site.
- the development would introduce a building onto the site that has a greater volume than the demolished buildings, thereby spatially reducing its openness.
- the development causes an additional small loss of spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt when compared to the approved development.
- the appeal scheme represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

We request you **REFUSE** this application.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Jacklin and Michael Burn
Co-Chairs of the Planning Committee