



Report to West Area Planning Committee

Application Number:	21/07220/VCDN
Proposal:	Variation of condition 6 (plans) attached to 19/06577/MINAMD (Proposed non-material amendment for demolition of conservatory and construction of two storey side/rear extension/annexe comprising of 2 bedrooms and living accommodation ancillary to main dwelling granted under householder planning ref: 19/05909/FUL), and to condition 4 (materials) of 19/05909/FUL to allow for the works to be carried out in accordance with drawings VLEL 03 and VLEL 04 rev.B (retrospective)
Site Location:	Vine Lodge Northend Road Northend Buckinghamshire RG9 6LF
Applicant:	Gina Brown
Case Officer:	Alexia Dodd
Ward(s) affected:	Chiltern Villages
Parish-Town Council:	Turville Parish Council
Date valid application received:	22nd July 2021
Statutory determination date:	16th September 2021
Time extension:	
Recommendation	Approve

1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 This is an application to vary the approved plans and materials conditions of planning permission 19/05909/FUL, namely the use of hand finished flint blocks instead of hand-set and hand knapped flint. The Flint has been finished with lime mortar. The development also includes the raising of the ridge height over the extension.
- 1.2 The development was commenced at the time the application was submitted. The work has now been completed and the application is thus, retrospective.
- 1.3 Turville Parish Council object to the proposal.

1.4 Cllr Mark Turner has called the application in due to community and Parish concerns over the flint work.

1.5 Recommendation – approval

2.0 Description of Proposed Development

2.1 When application 19/05909/FUL for Householder application for demolition of conservatory and construction of two storey side/rear extension/annexe comprising of 2 bedrooms and living accommodation ancillary to main dwelling was permitted, it was subject to a number of conditions. In particular plans and flint work. The flint work condition (4) states that:

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the flint work shall be constructed in the following manner:

- a) The flint work shall be laid on site, not constructed of pre-made blocks
- b) The flints shall be laid in a lime mortar mix with slightly recessed pointing, the joints brushed, rubbed or bagged prior to hardening off to avoid a smooth finish
- c) The flints shall be random coursed and tightly packed to avoid excessive mortar proportions

Reason: In the interests of reinforcing the local character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through the use of traditional building techniques.

2.2 In addition to the above the plan condition (6) of 19/06577/MINAMD (which replaced the original plans condition when this non-material amendment was approved) stated that:

The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with plan numbers WDC1; 3013.PLN.101; 3013.PLN.102/A; 3013.PLN.103; 3013.PLN.104/B and 3013.PLN.105 as approved under planning permission 19/05909/FUL as amended by drawing number WDC1 approved under this application reference 19/06577/MINAMD; unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing. Reason: In the interest of proper planning and to ensure a satisfactory development of the site.

2.3 From when the application was submitted there have been changes to the scheme. These include

- Introduction of single window to en-suite (North Elevation & Floor Plan)
- Construction of single storey rear extension under permitted development (East Elevation)
- Correction to ridge detail of original roof. (introduction of apex roof and higher ridge to extension)
- Flint constructed by different method from that required by condition

2.4 The applicant has explained that the original details of the existing dwelling were not drawn accurately enough to order the correct size of steels. The dwelling was re-surveyed it was found that in order to build as per the footprint maintaining the general proportionality the ridge height over the extension needed to be raised. When this was discovered construction nevertheless continued.

2.5 With regards to the flint work the panels on the rear were completed first. The flint detailing on the front then followed.

2.5 The application is accompanied by photos of the finished flint work.

2.6 Site constraints:

- AONB
- North End Turville Conservation Area
- Open Countryside Beyond the Green Belt
- Parking Standards Zone C
- Corrected Elevation Plans were sought and received VLNE /04 rev.B

3.0 Relevant Planning History

Reference	Development	Decision	Decision Date
19/05909/FUL	Householder application for demolition of conservatory and construction of two storey side/rear extension/annexe comprising of 2 bedrooms and living accommodation ancillary to main dwelling	PER	28.05.19
19/06577/MINAMD	Proposed non-material amendment to permission for application for demolition of conservatory and construction of two storey side/rear extension/annexe comprising of 2 bedrooms and living accommodation ancillary to main dwelling granted under householder planning ref: 19/05909/FUL	PER	26.07.19

4.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation

Development Plan Policies and Guidance:

Wycombe District Local Plan (2019)

CP1 (Sustainable Development)

CP10 (Green Infrastructure & the Natural Environment)

CP9 (Sense of place)

DM20 (The NPPF)

DM30 (Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

DM32 (Landscape Character & Settlement Patterns)

DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation)

DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development)

DM35 (Place-making and Design Quality)

DM36 (Extensions & Alterations To Existing Dwellings)

DM44 (Development In The Countryside Outside Of The Green Belt)

The Adopted Delivery & Site Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development (2013)

DM1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development)

DM13 (Conservation and enhancement of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance)

DM14 (Biodiversity in development)

CSDPD

CS17 (Environmental Assets)

OTHER

Buckinghamshire County Parking Guidance

Principle and Location of Development

- 4.1 The principle of the extension was approved under application 19/05909/FUL.
- 4.2 There is no increase to the foot print of the development from that approved in 2019.
- 4.3 This application does not include the single storey rear extension that is shown on the plans. This was built under permitted development.

Impact on Conservation Area

- 4.4 Vine Lodge dates from the mid -1960's. It is located within the North End Turville Conservation Area.
- 4.5 Officers acknowledge the views and comments from the Conservation Officer and accept that flint work to the extension was not carried out in accordance with condition number 4 of planning permission 19/05909/FUL.
- 4.6 Flint set into regular pre-cast blocks has been used. This is contrary to the Chilterns Design Guide, because there is a higher ratio of mortar to flint. While the flints tend to have a regular pattern.
- 4.7 Although the existing flint work is less than ideal it is not so bad as to warrant refusing planning permission in this instance. The modern dwelling dates from the 1960's the extension and materials in this instance have added a degree of texture and interest to the property. As such officers are of the view that in this instance a refusal could not be sustained at appeal.
- 4.8 If the property had been a period dwelling with traditional hand set flint. The contrast with the work carried-out would have been noticeable and there would have been harm to the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.9 It is also noted that the bricks are not an exact match. However, when viewed from the applicants drive and public realm the finish appears 'bright' within the conservation area as it is new. This will weather, blending in with the location.
- 4.10 Vine Lodge is brick built dwelling. The existing bricks have been weathered and have algae growth causing discolouration. As such in this instance it would very hard to find an identical match for a 1960s weathered brick. The applicant has explained that this was the most practical match they could find.
- 4.11 The new materials will weather and soften in appearance.
- 4.12 The approval included a half hip to the flank elevation of the side extension. The eaves of the extension continue to be set below those of the original dwelling. On the flank elevation there is a porch to the new 'back-door'.
- 4.13 The SPG guidance recommends that subservience can be achieved lowering the roof heights of extensions. However in this instance the extension remains set back from the original front elevation. There is articulation to the front elevation that retains a sense of

subservience. Although the roof of the extension is no longer set down, it is only marginally above the existing ridge.

- 4.14 Thus, it is concluded that the departure from the original plan and the subsequent retrospective application has not had a demonstrable and detrimental impact upon the 1960's dwelling.

Impact on AONB

- 4.15 The development as built does not have a detrimental impact upon the AONB and its special landscape.
- 4.16 The proposal being within the limits of an existing village would not harm the rural amenities of the open countryside.

Impact on Character and Appearance of Dwelling

- 4.17 The proposal remains subservient to the host dwelling.
- 4.18 The 2-storey side extension is set back from the front elevation of the original dwelling.
- 4.19 A new apex has been introduced to the roof to accommodate the higher ridge over the extension.
- 4.20 This remains in keeping with the property.
- 4.21 Therefore, for the above reasons the development is in accordance with policy and SPG.

Impact on Street Scene

- 4.22 Vine Lodge is set back from the public realm of the village by a private drive and a mature front boundary hedge.
- 4.23 The development as finished does not have a detrimental impact upon the public views across the village green and the public realm.

Impact on Amenity

- 4.24 The property is detached. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity.
- 4.25 The development has introduced two new first floor windows in both the north and south elevations. These windows serve bathrooms and have been finished with obscure glazing. It is reasonable to retain this glazing at all times. This will ensure the continued amenity of surrounding occupiers.

Impact on Bio-diversity

- 4.26 Policy DM34 requires all development to protect and enhance both biodiversity and green infrastructure features and networks both on and off site for the lifetime of the development.
- 4.27 No assessment has been provided with this proposal so it falls to the Local Planning Authority to consider what would be proportionate for the development proposed.
- 4.28 In this case the extension would not have a negative impact upon biodiversity or green infrastructure and, given the limited scope of the proposal in comparison to that with extant permission, enhancement is not considered proportionate

Impact on Transport and parking.

- 4.29 There is ample parking on the existing front drive for the dwelling.

4.30 The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon transport and parking.

5.0 Working with the applicant / agent

- 5.1 In accordance with the NPPF the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.
- 5.2 The Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.
- 5.3 In this instance the LPA sought and received amended plans for the development as built
- 5.4 An extension of time was sought and agreed with the Applicant/ Agent.
- 5.5 The applicant was determined in accordance with LPA procedures and Members engagement.

6.0 Consideration of condition in respect of planning application 19/05909/FUL

1	This condition is no longer required. Application 19/05909/FUL has been implemented.
2	condition superseded by condition 6 on 19/06577/MINAMD, This condition would need to be reworded to reflect the new plans and re-imposed.
3	This condition is no longer required as the work has been completed.
4	This condition is no longer required as the work has been completed.
5	This condition is no longer required as the work has been completed.
	NEW CONDITION Notwithstanding any other details shown on the plans hereby approved, the window(s) and any other glazing to be inserted in the south elevation at first floor of the dwelling shall, up to a minimum height of 1.7 metres above finished floor level, be fixed shut (without any opening mechanism) and glazed in obscure glass. The window(s) shall thereafter be retained as such. Reason. In the interests of the amenity of neighbouring properties.

7.0 Recommendation: Approve

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be maintained in accordance with the details contained in the planning application hereby approved and plan numbers VLEL 01 rev.A, VLEL 03 and VLNE 04 rev.B unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing.
Reason: In the interest of proper planning and to ensure a satisfactory development of the site

- 2 The bathroom window and any other glazing to be inserted in the south elevation at first floor of the dwelling shall, up to a minimum height of 1.7 metres above finished floor level, be fixed shut (without any opening mechanism) and glazed in obscure glass. The window(s) shall thereafter be retained as such.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of neighbouring property.

Informative

1. In accordance with the NPPF the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.

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APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations

Councillor Comments

Cllr Mark Turner

If planners are minded to approve, please can this be decided by planning committee. Northend is a conservation area and hand knapped flint is a condition in any building using flint. I believe this is a retrospective application for changes, already built, not to the original approved plans.

Parish/Town Council Comments

Turville Parish Council

The parish council object to this application. The flint work that has been used are not traditional flints in-keeping with Northend Conservation Area and as recommended by the Chilterns Conservation Board Design guide, and were also not what were permitted as a condition in the original planning permission. If permitted this would set a worrying precedent that would damage the character of the AONB and Conservation Area that is so central to the Chilterns. The Ward Councillor has requested for the application be decided at Planning Committee should the Officer be minded to approve.

Consultation Responses

Conservation Officer

The use of flint blocks is contrary to all advice we usually give for development within CAs & the AONB/Chilterns DG and directly contravenes condition 4 of the original consent. Contrary to the agents email, the flints are not knapped and the outline of the blocks are clearly visible.

The ridge of the extension is also higher than the original proposal and the bricks are not a good match.

I'm afraid I can't support this.

Representations

Chilterns Conservation Board

It has been brought to my attention that an informal conversation I had with the applicant, Dr Gina Brown, on the above application to vary a planning condition may have been misinterpreted in support of the works that are currently under your consideration.

I am raising this because the interpretation currently presented appears to suggest a change of policy for the Chilterns Conservation Board, which is not the case. I emphasise that I do not hold any particular view on the application in question – I have not seen the details of the case and I am not familiar with the character of the Northend conservation area. As is our normal practice, CCB does not have the capacity to engage on individual householder applications and other small-scale schemes, and we rely on planning officers to make good use of our design guidance when balancing the issues in the consideration of such cases.

The statement that is of concern to me is contained in Dr Brown's supporting statement (listed on your system as "neighbour comment (support)"), as follows:

"Advice from Dr Matt Thomson of the Chilterns Conservation Board was also sought. He commended the amount of research and care that the owner was taking in terms of considering how the flint was used and also pointed out that over the ages, the nature and appearances of flint walls changed and varied tremendously - there is no set appearance that is wrong or right. It was agreed that using hand knapped flint hand laid onto backing

blocks was entirely in keeping with the aim of its use in Chilterns conservation areas. Therefore, the flint with hand pointing with lime mortar will achieve the result required.”

For complete clarity:

- I did commend the care and attention that Dr Brown was putting in to the design, and the concern she evidently had for maintaining the character of the conservation area and the Chilterns AONB.
- I did note the wide variety of different styles and forms of flint construction in the Chilterns – even within single villages – which is illustrated in CCB’s Design Guide and our technical note on the use of flint. I did not, however, state that no set appearance is wrong or right: clearly there are problematic uses of flint, and this is why so much attention is paid to its use in our guidance.
- I did emphasise the importance of using hand-knapped flint and lime mortar, but I did not state that using backing blocks would be “entirely in keeping” with the character of the Chilterns. Dr Brown’s view was that the result of using this technique would be indistinguishable from the traditional methods recommended in CCB’s guidance. I was very clear that, not being familiar with the technique being proposed, the building itself or the locality, I would not be in a position to comment as to whether it was appropriate in this case.
- I noted that, in principle, if the outcome was as authentic as was being claimed, then the specific requirement of our guidance (p.33 – “Do not use pre-cast flint blocks...”) might be interpreted flexibly, but I emphasised that this would be a matter for the relevant planning and conservation officers to consider.

It should be noted that the main purpose of the “Do not use pre-cast flint blocks” clause in our guidance is a reflection of the fact that manufactured flint panels do not tend to result in the appearance that our guidance seeks. In particular, such panels:

- often use machined flints, which have an artificially smooth surface;
- often use ordinary cement, rather than lime mortar, frequently with a greater proportion of pointing than flint;
- lay the flints in a more regular pattern than is typical of hand-laid flints (although there are some examples of very regularly laid flints in traditional walls in our guidance, so this is a matter for judgement in some locations); and
- tend to result in obviously regular blocks of panels of flint, often separated by wider bands of pointing, creating an artificial outward appearance.

A further rationale for the policy is that using pre-cast panels is not an authentic Chilterns construction method, and that by moving away from traditional construction methods, the overall character of the Chilterns, and the significance of a particular heritage asset, could be undermined.

It is clearly a matter for you, and any officers advising you on design or heritage, to come to a view on the extent to which Dr Brown’s current technique for applying flints to this particular development results in an outcome that is sufficiently consistent with CCB’s guidance and the character of the conservation area, balanced with the value of the authenticity that would be achieved by requiring traditional building methods in relation to this particular building.

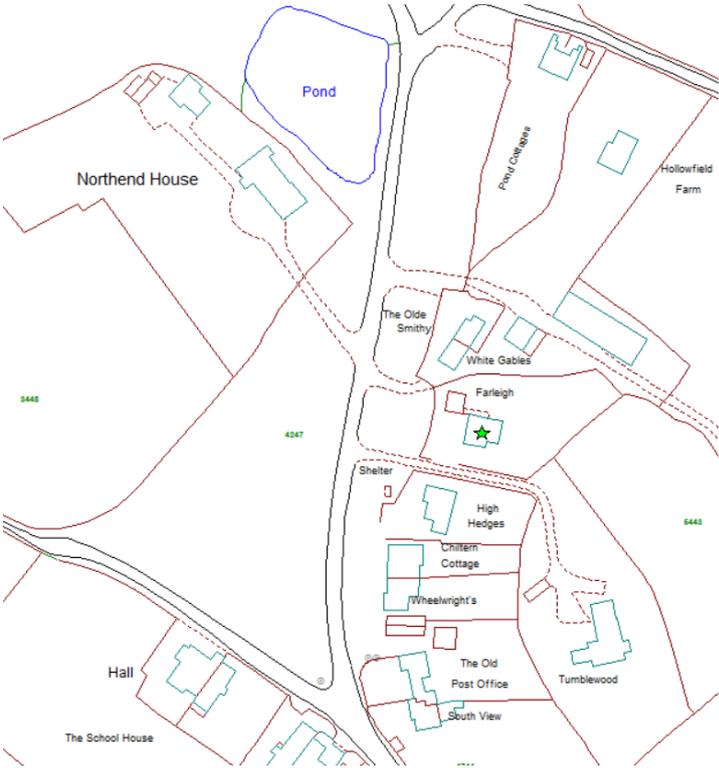
The following objections to the application have been received:

- This is out of keeping

- The development is contrary to policy
 - This does not comply with the 2019 application
 - The materials are not consistent with the Chilterns SPG
 - Should have used traditional hand-set flints
 - The extension is now dominate
 - The LPA were wrong to approve the 2019 application
 - Have the chimneys changed
-
- Trees could be removed (The site is within a Conservation Area, additional consent is would be required)
There is an extra side extension (On the west and east elevations there is a view of the porch in profile)
Window are UPVC and not painted wood (The windows used match the existing)
There is a rear extension (This was built under permitted development. It is not part of this application)

However, a number of representations have also been received raising no objections expressing the view it would cause unnecessary disruption for the work to be undone and put back to what was originally approved.

APPENDIX B: Site Location Plan



★ Site (Vine Lodge)

APPENDIX B: Site Location Plan

21/07220/VCDN
Scale 1/1250

