



Planning Statement

Site: Mulberry House, Cockpole Green

**For: Planning application for the
provision of a swimming pool and pool
building**

May 2026

Introduction

1. This statement has been prepared by JPPC Chartered Town Planners to support an application for householder development at the dwelling known as Mulberry House. The site is a residential property situated in Cockpole Green, Wargarve. The site is situated at the south-east of the village, fronting onto Hatchgate Lane. The existing dwelling on the site was erected as a replacement dwelling, granted planning permission on 10th July 2017.
2. The proposed development comprises the demolition of an existing play house and the provision of a swimming pool and associated pool building. While the proposed works would normally be permitted development, condition 10 of the 2017 planning permission for the dwelling (WBC ref: 171525), removed permitted development rights for alterations to the dwelling and its roof, in addition to outbuildings.
3. The condition does not explicitly remove the provision of swimming pools under class E of the permitted development order, so this application is made without prejudice to our view that the permitted development right for the provision of swimming pools remains at the property. In addition, for completeness, the associated pool building is also proposed in this application.



Figure 1 - Indicative site location

Site context

4. The dwelling is situated in the Green Belt.
5. The dwelling is not in the National Landscape (formerly AONB). The site is not in a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or a Registered Park and Garden (RPG).

6. The site is not in a flood zone, in accordance with Environment Agency mapping. The front area of the site has a 1 in 30-year probability of surface flooding water each year.
7. The dwelling is not in a conservation area. The nearest listed building is situated 300 metres to the south.

Planning History

WBC ref.	Short description	Decision	Notes
162149	Replacement dwelling	Approve Jan 2017	Restrictive garage condition and removal of PD rights
171525	Vary condition 2 of 162149	Approve July 2017	Restrictive garage condition and removal of PD rights
182580	Non-material amendment to 171525	Approved Oct 2018	
180377	Discharge drainage of 171525	Approved March 2018	
181085	Discharge of materials of 171525	Approved May 2018	

Relevant Planning Policy

8. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. In the case of this application, the Development Plan consists of the Wokingham Core Strategy (2010) and the Wokingham Managing Development Delivery (2014).

Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) (Adopted 2014)

CC03 – Green Infrastructure, trees and landscaping
 CC09 – Development and flood risk (from all sources)
 CC10 – Sustainable drainage
 TB01 – Development within the green belt
 TB23 – Biodiversity and development

Wokingham Core Strategy (CS) (Adopted 2010)

CP1 – Sustainable development

CP3 – General principles of development

CP7 – Biodiversity

CP12 – Green Belt

The site is not in an area with a made neighbourhood plan

Borough Design Guide SPD (2010)

Section 4.11 - Alterations and extensions

9. National planning policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ("the NPPF") is also a material consideration in planning decisions. Policies and decisions should ensure that development functions well, adding to the overall quality of an area, is visually attractive and is sympathetic to local character and history (NPPF, Paragraph 135)
10. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies: b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. (the other criteria in this section are not relevant.)

Planning Assessment

Principle of development

11. Policy CC01 of the Managing Development Delivery (MDM) states that planning application that accords with the policies in the development plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
12. Below we demonstrate how, in our view, the proposal accords with the relevant development plan policies and should be approved.

Green Belt

13. TB01 of the MDD states that within the Green Belt development for the purposes set out in para 89-90 (now listed under para 154) of the NPPF (exceptions to inappropriate development) will be permitted where they maintain the openness of the green belt.
14. CP12 of the core strategy states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the green belt. Inappropriate development is defined in the NPPF.
15. In our view the proposed development meets two of the identified exceptions to inappropriate development in the green belt, being exceptions b) outdoor recreation in connection with the existing use of land and c) the extension and alteration of a building providing it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling.
16. In accordance with exception b, the pool building and swimming pool will be for ancillary use to the main dwelling. Their provision will be for private enjoyment by occupiers of the dwelling only i.e. outdoor recreation for the dwelling. In our view the proposed development meets the criteria of not comprising inappropriate development in the green belt.
17. In accordance with exception c) the proposed pool building measures 21.9 cubic metres in volume. The existing playhouse is being removed, which measures 31.9 cubic metres. This comprises an addition amounting to a 1% reduction in the volume of built form on the site.
18. The existing dwelling measures 1310cu. m (as approved in application 171525), which has not undergone any alterations since its construction. In our view this extension to the dwelling does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
19. With regard to the pool, we refer to planning appeal decision¹ issued in 2014, which agreed with our assertion that a domestic pool and associated amenities (in this case the pool house) were considered to be appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation when assessed as to their appropriateness in the green belt.
20. In the appeal decision the inspector found that the subterranean pool, by virtue of being underground and well related to the main house, both features applicable to this proposal, would preserve the openness of the green belt.
21. As above, we feel the total addition of buildings in the green belt would not amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original

¹ APP/M1520/D/14/2226967

dwelling. Additionally, we feel the proposed development comprises outdoor recreation in connection with the existing use of the land and that the openness of the green belt will be safeguarded.

Design, visual amenity and landscape

22. CP3 of the CS states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are a) of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high-quality design without detriment to adjoining land uses and f) contribute to a sense of place in the way they integrate with their surroundings, including the use of appropriate landscaping. (the other criteria in this policy are discussed below/ not relevant).
23. The Borough Design Guide is silent on outbuildings. However, the guidance in Section 4.11 is also applicable to development within the curtilage of existing dwellings, in our view. 4.11 states that extensions to residential buildings should be well designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to the local character and relate well to neighbouring properties.
24. In this instance the pool building, and pool will not be visible in the street scene. Nonetheless, the pool building will be in keeping with the rhythm of built form seen in the street scene. The buildings have a general rectangular footprint with dual pitched roofs. The pool building will be situated behind the dwelling, not visible in the street scene. The building will be single storey with a flat roof. The building will have a subservient scale to the main house.
25. The building will be constructed from Corten steel and will appear of a high quality, with a textured weathered finish. The pool is subterranean and will not be readily apparent within the site, and not visible outside of the site. The associated paving surrounding the pool will match that which is existing. The entire pool area will be enclosed by new landscaping, to screen and soften its appearance.
26. The plant room will be sited up to the shared boundary with the neighbouring dwelling to the north "The Forge". The boundary treatment is mature hedging. The building is proposed to be single storey and non-habitable, ensuring no harm to the neighbouring property through overlooking, shadowing or harm to outlook.
27. In our view the proposal meets the requirements of CP3 and the relevant design guidance.

Ecology and trees

28. CP7 of the CS relates to designated biodiversity sites, which this site is not.
29. TB23 of the MDD states that states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which comply with CP7, in addition must demonstrate the following: a) provide opportunities through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing. (Criteria b & c are not relevant to this proposal.)
30. CC03 of the core strategy states that development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieved the following criteria within the scheme: a) protect the Borough's green infrastructure networks, including need to mitigate potential impacts. d) protect and retain existing

trees, hedges and other landscape features. e) Incorporate high quality, ideally native planting and landscaping. (the other criteria of this policy are not relevant to the development.

31. The development is not subject to the Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements, as it is a householder development, which is exempt.
32. The plant building will be sited on existing hardstanding beyond the north (side) elevation of the dwelling. The pool and surrounds will be sited on existing grassed lawn. The siting of the plant building will not result in loss of habitat, as the adjacent hedge and trees will be retained.
33. Through the provision of the pool additional planting is proposed. The additional planting will provide new biodiversity features, in accordance with CC03.
34. A tree survey and report has been submitted with the application. The report states that of all eight trees surveyed, they can all be retained through the development. The plant building will be constructed within the root protection area of the tree T1, however bespoke foundation design will ensure the tree is safeguarded.
35. The proposal will be compliant with the requirements of CP7, TB23 and CC03.

Flood risk

36. CC09 of the core strategy states that a site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) is required for all development proposed in historic areas of flood risk.
37. CC10 of the core strategy states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development is managed in a sustainable manner. All development proposals must incorporate sustainable drainage systems must reproduce greenfield runoff characteristics and run-off volumes reduced to as near greenfield as possible.
38. As can be viewed in figure 2 below, the development is outside of the area identified on the environment agency flood risk mapping known to be at risk of surface water flooding. The site is also not in flood zone 2 or 3. As such, in our view, an FRA is not required for this proposal.
39. In accordance with the site topographical survey submitted with this application, the additional hardstanding area of with the pool will be sited toward the south-east of the garden, the area of lowest elevation. The pool and surrounds will be sited on the existing grassed lawn. Due to the relative land levels and lawn surrounds, excess surface water will soak into the ground, attenuating to green field levels.
40. The pool building will be sited on existing hardstanding. The pool building will not exacerbate surface water runoff.

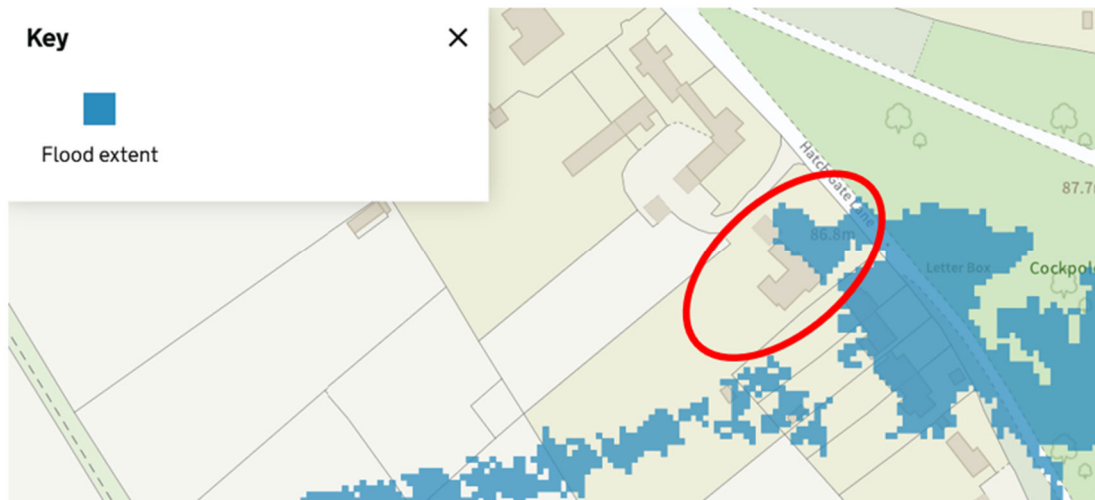


Figure 2 - Extent of surface water flooding (site in red outline)

Other matters

41. The building and pool are single storey and subterranean structures, respectively. They will be sited close to the main house and within an enclosed, landscaped garden. As the site is not in a conservation area, and the nearest listed building is 300 metres away, in our view no heritage assets will be affected by the proposal.
42. The development is not providing any accommodation. The existing parking and access arrangements at the property is not proposed to be altered. As such the proposed will not impact highway safety.

Conclusion

43. The proposed development is not inappropriate development in the green belt due to comprising outdoor recreation in connection with the existing use of land and an extension to an existing building that does not comprise a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. In our view the proposal will not harm the openness of the green belt.
44. The single storey building will not be visible from outside of the site and will be constructed of a high-quality design and materials. The pool will be sunk into the ground and surrounded by attractive paving and enclosed in landscaping. The proposals will appear attractive in their setting and will not harm neighbours, per our assessment.
45. The scheme will not result in significant loss of habitats, which will be mitigated through additional planting. All trees on the site can be retained.
46. The proposal will not significantly exacerbate surface water flood risk, which can be mitigated.
47. In our view the proposal is compliant with all material considerations. We trust officers will agree with the above assessment and will be able to recommend the grant of planning permission. We are happy to discuss any element of the proposal.