

Clay Court
Crazies Hill
Wargrave
RG10 8LY

19th August 2026

HERITAGE STATEMENT

CLAY COURT – SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION

PROPOSAL: *‘Proposed erection of a single storey side and rear extension to the existing dwelling. Demolition of the existing conservatory.’*

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: Wokingham Borough Council

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a householder application for a single storey side and rear extension at Clay Court, Crazies Hill. It is required because the site lies within the Crazies Hill Area of Special Character (AoSC), and is submitted to satisfy the Council’s validation requirements and paragraph 207 of the NPPF, which requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting, in a level of detail proportionate to the assets’ importance.

The proposal is a single storey householder extension which replaces a previously approved but expired permission for an extension of the same siting and description (application 163029, approved 04.01.2017). This statement is proportionate to that scale of development. It should be read alongside the accompanying Design and Access Statement (August 2026), which describes the site, the design, and the Green Belt and amenity considerations in full.

This statement draws on the Council’s Areas of Special Character assessment for Crazies Hill, including the 1994 Detailed Survey of Local Character reproduced within it; the officer report and Conservation Area Officer consultation response to application 163029; and inspection of the site and its surroundings.

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Clay Court viewed from the private drive to the east

2. HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS AND POLICY CONTEXT

The application site lies within the Crazies Hill Area of Special Character, a local designation protected by Policy TB26 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan. The site also lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and an area designated as Countryside; these designations are addressed in the Design and Access Statement.

Clay Court is not a listed building and there are no listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within the application site. The site does not lie within a conservation area. Clay Court is not identified in the Council's Areas of Special Character assessment as a designated heritage asset, a candidate undesignated heritage asset or a Building of Traditional Local Character.

3. THE CRAZIES HILL AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Council's assessment describes the Crazies Hill AoSC as sited within a largely rural landscape in the parish of Wargrave, approximately 2.8km to the northeast of Wargrave and 4.6km south east of Henley-on-Thames, with the road through Crazies Hill as the primary road within the area and its eastern extent close to the Borough boundary with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead along Hatch Gate Lane. The whole of the AoSC lies within the Green Belt.

The significance of the area rests on its linear village form and the quality of its buildings and streetscape. The Council's assessment summarises the AoSC as characterised by its

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linear layout, with built form concentrated along the primary road and including a group of Grade II listed buildings; by two storey detached buildings with brick and timber elevations and clay tile or thatched roofs; and by a streetscape of high boundary hedges and mature trees, with the narrow and winding nature of the road identified as an important feature.

The 1994 Detailed Survey of Local Character records the historic depth of the village: linear development along a country lane with strong level changes and good grouping of buildings, well connected by local footpaths, with a mixed building stock dating from the 16th and 17th centuries onwards. The survey notes historical associations including Gertrude Jekyll and Rebecca's Well, and the Arts and Crafts interest of Fox Steep (by the architect Oliver Hill, c.1921), whose influence is reflected elsewhere in the village, particularly at its northern end. Predominant materials are brick (often painted), timber cladding, thatch and clay tiles, with well-maintained open spaces and verges. The survey also records that the limited modern development within the area, principally towards the northern end, is not dominant.

The significance of the AoSC is therefore primarily architectural and historic – the grouping of vernacular and Arts and Crafts buildings along the lane – together with a strong townscape character of hedges, verges, mature trees and the winding road.

4. HERITAGE ASSETS WITHIN AND NEAR THE AREA

The Council's assessment identifies the following Grade II listed buildings within the AoSC:

The Crazies, The Horns Inn, The Old Post Office, Spring Cottage and Thatch Cottage, Rebecca's Cottage, Rebecca's Well, Yew Tree Cottage and Pear Tree Cottage are identified as Buildings of Traditional Local Character, and The Old Club House (the former village hall), Rowan Tree Cottage, Hurdlemakers, Blenheim Cottage and Orchard Cottage as undesigned heritage assets that make a positive contribution to the AoSC.

Outside but close to the AoSC, the closest designated heritage asset is the Grade II listed Fox Steep, located around 150 metres to the east on Highfield Lane. Fox Steep Cottages on Crazies Hill and Springfields on Hatch Gate Lane, with its adjacent outbuilding, are candidate non-designated heritage assets outside of, but close to, the AoSC.

In relation to the application site, the nearest listed building is the Horns Inn, which lies to the northeast of Clay Court beyond the intervening neighbouring property Rosedale, which in itself is well screened by mature hedge. The remaining listed buildings and identified undesigned assets are concentrated in the village core to the southwest, well

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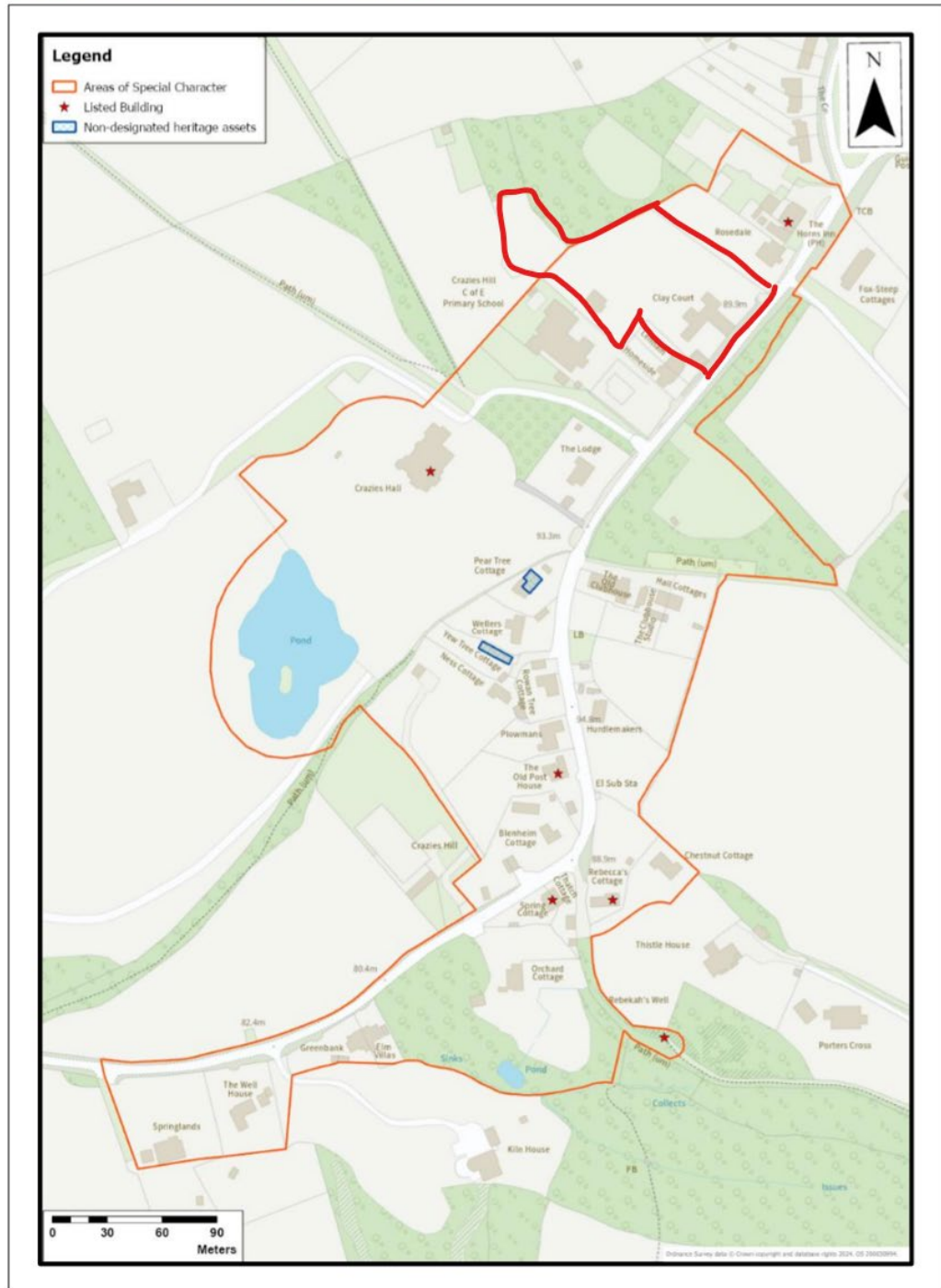
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separated from the site. None of the identified heritage assets adjoins the application site.

Crazies Hill Area of Special Character



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5. CLAY COURT AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SIGNIFICANCE

Clay Court is a substantial, detached, L-shaped two storey dwelling with a single storey ancillary annex stretching up to the brick wall fronting the street. Constructed in red brick with a gabled roof of plain clay tiles and sprocketed eaves. Despite its convincing Georgian-styled appearance, the house was built in the 1960s. It contains no historic fabric, is not listed, and is not identified in the Council's assessment as a heritage asset of any category. The existing conservatory to be demolished is a modern addition permitted in 2002.

The property nonetheless makes a positive contribution to the character of the AoSC. In assessing application 163029, the Council's Conservation Area Officer identified the southeast boundary wall, entrance gates and gabled south east range, all in red brick, as a distinctive and rather dominant element along this stretch of the Area of Special Character. It is these frontage elements, addressing the road, that carry the property's contribution to the streetscape; the house itself faces northwest into its large plot, and its rear garden is enclosed by mature woodland and planting with no public views into it. The rear garden makes no contribution to the setting or significance of any listed building or other identified heritage asset.

The northern end of the AoSC, in which the site sits, already accommodates twentieth century development, including Clay Court itself and the adjacent Crazies Hill C of E Primary School, which is a recent, modern building. This is consistent with the Council's own survey, which records that modern development in this part of the area is not dominant. The character of this stretch derives principally from the road frontages, boundary walls, hedges and mature trees, all of which are unaffected by the proposal.



Existing Rear View from West with the dark grey solid roofed conservatory

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6. THE PROPOSED WORKS

It is proposed to demolish the existing black, solid roofed conservatory and to erect a single storey side and rear extension. The rear element measures 11.2m wide by 5.8m deep with a height of 3.1m and the side element 2.25m wide by 7.5m deep with a height of 3.2m, both with concealed flat roofs behind parapets and sitting well below the 5.3m eaves of the host dwelling. The rear elevations are largely glazed with charred timber cladding, whose dark palette echoes the existing black conservatory it replaces, while the front elevation of the side extension is finished in brick to match the existing dwelling with a decorated brick-banded parapet. The rear extension with its dark grey flat roof and natural charred timber cladding has been designed to not compete visually with the rear of the main house and can not be seen from the front of the property, nor from any point outside of the site.

The extension is contained within the existing patio area to the rear of the dwelling. The proposal replaces, in a smaller footprint and volume, the extension previously approved by the Council under application 163029, to which the Conservation Area Officer raised no objection. A full description of the design is provided in the Design and Access Statement.



Proposed rear Elevation

7. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Direct impact: the proposal affects no historic fabric. Clay Court is a 1960s building and the conservatory to be demolished dates from 2002. No designated or non-designated heritage asset lies within or adjoins the application site.

The Area of Special Character: the elements of the property that contribute to the character of the AoSC – the southeast boundary wall, entrance gates and gabled south east range – are wholly retained and unaltered. The extension sits beyond the gates and boundary walls, faces northwest into the enclosed rear garden, and is not visible from the road, the footpath network or any public vantage point. The high hedges, verges,

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mature trees and the narrow winding road that define the streetscape are untouched. The only element with any relationship to the frontage side of the property is finished in matching brick with a brick-banded parapet drawn from the host dwelling. Although this element can be seen from the front of the property, due to its single storey nature and 16m set back from the high boundary wall to the front, will not be visible from the street.

In determining application 163029 the Conservation Area Officer concluded that an addition of this scale and siting, set beyond the gates and boundary walls and facing northwest, preserved the character of this part of the AoSC; the current proposal is smaller than that approved scheme. The traditional, historical, local and special character of the area and its setting is retained, in accordance with Policy TB26.

Settings of listed buildings: the nearest listed building, the Horns Inn, is separated from the site by the intervening property Rosedale and by mature boundary planting, and there is no intervisibility between it and the proposed single storey extension to the rear of Clay Court. Fox Steep lies around 150 metres to the east, outside the AoSC, screened by intervening development and vegetation. The remaining listed buildings lie in the village core to the southwest. The extension is single storey, well below the eaves of the host dwelling, and concealed within an enclosed rear garden. The settings of all listed buildings are preserved. Non-designated heritage assets and Buildings of Traditional Local Character: none adjoin nor are intervisible with the application site, and the proposal has no effect on the significance of any of them. Applying the balanced judgement required by paragraph 216 of the NPPF, there is no harm to consider.



Existing Rear View from West with the dark grey solid roofed conservatory

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8. CONCLUSION

The significance of the Crazies Hill Area of Special Character, and of the heritage assets within and near it, has been described above in a level of detail proportionate to this modest householder proposal. The proposal retains unaltered the frontage elements through which Clay Court contributes to the character of the area, confines its contemporary elements to a secluded rear garden with no public views, and preserves the settings of all listed buildings. It replaces, in a reduced form, an extension the Council has previously found to preserve the character of this part of the AoSC.

The proposal causes no harm to the significance of any designated or non-designated heritage asset and retains the traditional, historical, local and special character of the Area of Special Character and its setting.

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