

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250644
Site Address:	56 Robin Hood Lane, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5NQ
Expiry Date:	20 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	8 April 2025
Proposal: Full application for the change of use of existing residential dwelling to a mixed use of residential and childminding business including the erection of an outbuilding and widening of the existing access (Retrospective).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP15 – Employment Development
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB12 – Employment Skills Plan
Joint Minerals	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species

and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM10 - Flood Risk DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
120604	Proposed erection of outbuilding in rear garden as pool change area and bicycle store.	Approved 22/06/2012

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection.
WBC Highways – No objection.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection.
WBC Health and Wellbeing – No comments received.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Four third party letters of support. One letter of concern relating to vehicles parking on the private lane.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a two-storey detached property set within a relatively large plot on the eastern side of Robin Hood Lane. The site is a corner plot located on the entrance to a private lane (which also forms part of Robin Hood Lane). The property is accessed via the private lane.

The dwelling is sited centrally within the plot with access via the southern site boundary. There is a carport and large driveway providing off-street parking.

The local area mainly consists of residential properties with several commercial businesses, Winnersh Train Station and Forest Secondary School towards the southern end of the road.

Proposal:

This application seeks retrospective approval for the erection of a detached outbuilding and change of use of the land from residential to a mixed use comprising residential and a childminding business. The outbuilding is in the rear garden and serves as an commercial space in the form of an arts and crafts room for the children.

Principle of Development: The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy sets out that new development should contribute to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities. In particular, proposals that address the requirements of, amongst other things “children, young people and families, including the co-ordination of services to meet their needs”. The provision of childminding does accord with this policy as it provides a service for children.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Local Plan Update

The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040: Proposed Submission Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28 February 2025.

Character of the Area:

The application site is located on a B classified road which leads from Winnersh crossroads northwards towards the Village of Hurst. The road is a well utilised and is particularly busy during morning and evening rush hour periods and school drop off and collection times. Externally, there are no changes proposed to the facades of the main house. The visual appearance of the property therefore would remain acceptable. Retrospective approval is also sought for the erection of a detached single storey outbuilding to serve an arts and craft area.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

The outbuilding measures approximately 4.85m in width, 6.1m in length and 2.38m (maximum) in height. The structure has a flat roof form with entrance hall, toilet and storage area. The outbuilding is constructed from timber cladding and is accessed either from the rear of the host dwelling or access path to the side of the property.

By virtue of the size, form and timber clad external walls, the structure has a visual appearance similar to a traditional garden shed or outbuilding. The outbuilding is

comparable to other garden structures found locally within the area. Examples include at nos. 35a, 36, 39 and 41 Robin Hood Lane. In addition, due to the siting of the outbuilding in the southeastern corner of the plot and to the rear of the host dwelling, there would be limited views of the structure from the public realm. The outbuilding is positioned along the common boundary with no.50 and adjacent to the private access road. It is set back more than 32m from Robin Hood Lane and largely screened by the existing established hedging along the southern site boundary. Therefore, whilst the use of the outbuilding for non-residential use is out of character with the established residential character, the use is relatively low key in nature and well screened. As such, no objection is raised with regards to the impact on the character and appearance of the area in visual terms.

The application also proposes the removal of the existing pedestrian gate to increase the width of the driveway access. The existing pedestrian gate adjoins the existing vehicle entrance gates. The change would be a relatively minor to the southern boundary treatment. No trees or hedges would be removed to facilitate the change. The proposed changes are located on the site boundary shared with the private access road and set back approximately 18m from Robin Hood Lane. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed widening of the existing driveway entrance would have no discernible impact to the character of the host dwelling or public realm.

Building Sustainability: Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require sustainable design and conservation and R21 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that new development contribute to environmental sustainability and the mitigation of climate change.

The outbuilding has been constructed to incorporate opportunities to take advantage of sunlight and natural ventilation through a large opening window in the northern elevation and additional high-level windows in the eastern and western elevations. The extended driveway also includes permeable paving which allows water to drain through it. These are welcomed features that follow sustainable development principles.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity and R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that extensions relate to neighbouring properties.

Overlooking, Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The use of the host dwelling for childminding purposes does not result in any physical alterations to the main house and thus does not have an adverse effect on the neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, overbearing or loss of light.

The erection of an outbuilding to provide personal and business use, is in the southeastern corner of the plot to the rear of the host dwelling. The outbuilding would have a flat roof form which would have a gentle slope with a height between approximately 2.03m and 2.36m. The outbuilding would have two high level windows in the rear elevation. These would be set in from the boundary by approximately 1.25m and would face towards the existing 1.8m tall rear boundary fence. To the rear of the site is the front parking area of no 50 Robin Hood Lane, therefore, no detrimental loss of privacy would be generated to neighbouring residential amenity.

There are two high level windows proposed in the front and side elevation. These would face into the rear and side garden space of the host dwelling. Therefore, no adverse overlooking impacts would be generated.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

Due to the single storey nature and siting of the outbuilding (more than 5m from neighbouring properties), no detrimental overbearing or loss of light impacts would be generated to neighbouring properties.

Noise:

Policy CC06 and Appendix 1 of the MDD Local Plan requires that development protect noise sensitive receptors from noise impact.

The use of the outbuilding and main property for childminding services is a relatively small-scale activity and is unlikely to have a detrimental impact in terms of noise on surrounding properties. The business currently provides childminding services for six children. The hours of operation are not considered a cause for concern on grounds of noise nuisance and in the event of an approval, can be secured via condition.

The Council's Environmental Health officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal for up to 10 children. They summarise that the application site is large enough for the proposed use, and that noise will likely be no more than would be expected from a family.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CP6(f) and (g) of the Core Strategy 2010 require mitigation against any adverse effects upon the local and strategic transport network and the enhancement of road safety.

The site is acceptable in terms of access to sustainable modes of travel. The site also has good access to pedestrian and cycle networks and Winnersh Train Station is within 500m walking distance.

The property benefits from a relatively large on-site driveway. The submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS) confirms that the occupants of the host dwelling form two of the childminding staff members. There is one additional staff member who uses public transport to travel to the site. Therefore, no additional parking spaces are required for staff members.

The application proposes the widening the driveway access by removing the existing pedestrian gate. According to the WBC Parking Standards, one cycle parking allocation shall be provided per five full time equivalent staff. On-site cycle parking provision is also proposed as part of the application.

One third party raised concern relating to the shared private driveway. The proposed changes include widening the vehicle entrance which would ease accessing and exiting the site which is supported by the concerned party by way of the changes facilitating safer vehicle manoeuvrability.

The children accessing the childminding services are dropped off and collected at varying times each weekday. The submitted swept path plan shows that children will be dropped off and collected via short stay on-site parking spaces with adequate space on site for turning.

The council's Highways officer was consulted and was satisfied that the number of clients accessing the site during the week is unlikely to have a significant impact on the local highway network. They noted the private access road, and as such, advised that the turning area had to be provided within the red line. A swept path analysis was requested and submitted. The Highways officer reviewed the plan and was satisfied that the proposed on-site parking and turning circle was adequate to ensure any traffic generated will be managed within the red line and unlikely to lead to encroachment of public highway or lead to negative impacts to highway safety. A condition relating to drop off and collection timings will be conditioned.

Amenity Space:

The application site benefits from a large front, side and rear garden. The erection of the outbuilding would remove a section of garden in the southeastern corner of the plot, however, there would still be sufficient private garden space remaining to serve the residents of the dwelling.

Landscape and Trees:

Robin Hood Lane is semi-verdant with much of the road lined with mature trees and front boundary treatments comprising hedging and soft landscaped frontages. The unconventional layout of the plot results in access to the site via a side entrance, rather than from the front. The western site boundary which is adjacent to Robin Hood Lane is dense with established trees and hedging. The proposal would not alter the front boundary treatment.

The Council's Landscape and Trees officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal. They commented:

"The site is on a mature residential street. The property is set back within the plot, behind tall, mature hedging.

The application form states there are no trees or hedges on land adjacent to the proposed development site that could influence the development or might be important as part of the local landscape character and none on the site. Looking at the site photos there are trees in the vicinity, but not of a size such that they could have influenced the outbuilding. It's size and location mean it will offer few external realm views to impact the character of the area.

It appears from images as though the parking changes will not unduly harm existing green infrastructure".

Conclusion:

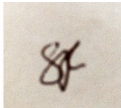
For the reasons set out above, and subject to conditions, the proposed change of use from residential to a mixed use of residential and provision of a childminding service would not result in a detrimental impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties or upon highway safety and is acceptable.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	12 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	15 April 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	15.5.25