

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260179
Site Address:	Westwood Cottage, Sheerlands Road, Arborfield, RG40 4QX
Expiry Date:	22 March 2026
Advert Publication Date:	27 January 2026
Site Notice Date:	27 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	4 March 2026
Proposal: Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed renovation works including minor adjustments to internal layout, new electrics and heating, repair of windows and front door, replacement staircase along with internal and external redecoration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Listed building

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets (where site is within a Conservation Area)

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
R/263/65	Demolition of garage and outbuildings and erection of two bedrooms and new garage.	Approved: October 1965
35339	Change of use from garage to office and part of the garden to storage.	Refused: April 1990
40052	Refurbishment works.	Approved: February 1993
172689	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of site for B1(a) business and ancillary storage uses	Not proceeded with: November 2017
241639	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed temporary stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes.	Approved: September 2024
241969	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for the use of Buildings 1 & 2 as storage and workshop use; Building 3 as office use, and land as storage use.	Approved: February 2025

251921	Pre-application advice for the proposed erection of a two-storey extension and link to the main house following demolition of the existing single storey extension, plus erection of a detached outbuilding to form a triple garage with first floor accommodation following demolition of the existing outbuildings.	Replied September 2025
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Conservation	No objection subject to conditions
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REPRESENTATIONS

Finchampstead Parish Council: No comment.

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Originally built as a three-bay thatched open hall circa 1500, Westwood Cottage was later altered and extended in the mid-18th century with further alteration and extension in the mid-20th century. Historically part of the wider Westwood farmstead, the house was likely built by a yeoman farmer, being of fairly high-status construction, but was superseded as the main residence by the construction of the larger Westwood Farmhouse just to the south-west. With the open hall floored over, the cottage was subdivided and later altered and extended in the mid-18th century. A carved brick apparently puts these alterations at 1742. Given the re-facing to a more ‘polite’ appearance – as compared to the original rudimental late medieval elevation, this may also have been the time the building and associated land was separated from the main Westwood farmstead, becoming known as Little Westwood Farm.

Historic maps show additional structures surrounding the building, likely agricultural barns, as would be typical and expected, however none of these structures survive. The site further developed post-war with a single storey addition to the north-west and the construction of a linear garage/workshop building.

Assessment:

The application for listed building consent proposes the following alterations and repairs:

- The repair and refurbishment of all historic windows and the replacement of unsympathetic modern windows with appropriately designed timber windows
- Replacement of existing staircase.
- New kitchen, bathrooms, services and internal decoration
- Cleaning of internal timbers
- Alternation of the plan form

Entrance gates were initially included in the original scheme but now has been omitted this from this application.

Windows

It is proposed to repair and refurbish the historic timber windows which are in varying condition. The repair of the historic windows is welcomed with no concerns raised over additional secondary glazing to be affixed. The building has unfortunately had a number of inappropriate replacement windows fitted (including uPVC) without consent, of which it is proposed to further replace with more appropriately detailed units – this is again welcomed and would seek enhance the asset. The details of the new windows shall be conditioned, and to be of similar design to the historic windows, traditionally hung and timber construction, through glazing bars etc.

Replacement staircase

The extant staircase is positioned to the side of the central stack, with the positioning likely contemporaneous with the stack insertion. The actual fabric is, however, understood to be fairly modern, and given the proposed replacement in oak is appropriate in design terms, no objection is raised to this proposed alteration. As details have been provided of the proposed staircase, there would no requirement for additional drawings under condition.

New kitchen, bathrooms, internal decoration and new services, along with repairs to plaster etc

As part of the building's refurbishment it is proposed to install new kitchen, bathroom and associated fitting and services along with internal redecoration. Provided existing service runs are utilised and impact to the fabric is kept to a minimum (through fittings etc.) then no concerns are raised to these proposed works. In terms of cabinets etc. no issues are raised to decorative fittings. Where plasterwork requires repair, this should be done appropriately as detailed in the submitted method statement – given the acceptability of this methodology no additional details are required in this regard.

Cleaning of internal timbers

Many of the internal timbers have been inappropriately stained and painted in dark brown/black colours and it is proposed to remove this finish and return to the natural timber appearance. Whilst this is acceptable in principle and general terms encouraged, great care must be taken when enacting the works. It is noted in the methodology that the works would be undertaken by a special contractor and that a test patch would be undertaken – this is critically important to establish the right method and medium to remove the top finish(es). Results are dependent on the timber condition and type of paint/stain that has been used. Low pressure aggregate/sodium can work, but also can achieve mixed, even damaging results. More success has been seen with dry ice cleaning (which also creates less mess) – this should be considered. Provided the applicant is confident no damage to the historic timbers would occur, no objection is raised to this proposal.

Alternation of the plan form- first floor

It is proposed to remove part of the internal walling as to create an en-suite for the master bedroom suite. This walling is solid, presumed to be masonry and with the 18th century altered part of the building. The room of which is forms part of the division is long and thin, with the other side – a bedroom – more of traditional proportions. This 'long and thin' room is peculiar and was perhaps created to be a lavatory, it would seem to serve little other purpose, thus the walling may not be terribly historic, as the plan form of this area is not what would be expected for an 18th century plan. Whilst this is uncertain, the proposed fabric to be lost in restricted

to internal masonry, and whilst the loss of any historic fabric is regrettable, on balance the alteration here is considered acceptable. No concerns are raised to the other new subdivision/removal of modern partitions on the first floor.

Alternation of the plan form- ground floor

The officer raised concerns with the loss of the ground floor walling containing timber framing. Revised plans have been submitted showing the retention of the timbered former external wall with no objection to the new subdivision to create the utility/boot room with an access doorway.

Impact on Heritage Asset:

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development must ensure the preservation of any nearby listed building, including its setting, Paragraphs 194-198 of the NPPF requires consideration of the harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset and Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan requires the conservation and enhancement of Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas, including their views and setting.

Overall, the proposed changes would not result in significant harm to the listed building. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with TB24 of the Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan or the NPPF.

Conclusion

Following the submission of amended drawings P10 LBC Rev C (proposed ground floor plan) and E02 LBC Rev B (existing site plan), of which have taken into consideration previous Built Heritage commentary, namely the retention of the timbered former external wall and omission of the entrance gates, no further concerns are raised to the application subject to conditions.

Impact on heritage asset:	x
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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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	18 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	17 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>HMM</i>
Date:	18 March 2026