

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260923
Site Address:	Owl End, Willow Lane, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8LG
Expiry Date:	16 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	20 May 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a garage.	

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB02 – Development adjoining the Green Belt
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements SS5 – Development in the countryside SS6 – Development in the Green Belt FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Wargrave Parish Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
072876	Proposed erection of new poolhouse. Demolition of existing garden buildings.	Approve - 11 September 2007

071300	Proposed erection of a single storey timber framed orangery	Application Withdrawn - 18 May 2007
071663	Proposed erection of new pool house, plus demolition of existing garden buildings. (Amendment to consent F/2007/ 1581).	Approve - 13 February 2008
070539	Proposed erection of single storey detached three bay garage.	Refused - 18 June 2007
061059	Proposed two storey side extensions to dwelling.	Refused - 17 March 2006
062590	Proposed two storey side extensions to dwelling and demolition of existing single story extensions plus change flat roofs to pitched roofs	Approve - 25 July 2006
060632	Proposed erection of chimney breast. (Amendment to consent F/2006/7862).	Approve - 16 February 2007
201410	Full application for the proposed change of use of existing ancillary outbuilding to independent dwelling, plus changes to fenestration, with associated landscaping and parking.	Refused - 22 September 2020

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – see Flooding and Drainage section.

External

No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Wargrave Parish Council – No objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to Owl End, a detached two-storey dwelling, with a detached annex and barn located on the northern side of Willow Lane, Wargrave. The property occupies a generous residential plot within a predominantly rural area characterised by large, detached dwellings set within spacious plots interspersed with mature landscaping and open countryside.

The dwelling is set back from Willow Lane behind a generous driveway and turning area providing off-street parking. The surrounding area retains a spacious and verdant character, with mature vegetation and open land making a positive contribution to the rural appearance of the locality.

The site lies within the designated Green Belt and Countryside as identified within the Development Plan.

Proposal Description:

This householder application seeks planning permission for the erection of a detached garage and car port. The proposed building would measure c.6.5m by c.6.5m, resulting in an increase of hardstanding of c.37.3sqm and an external volume of c.105.25m³.

The structure would comprise a detached single-storey garage with an attached open-sided car port beneath a mono-pitched roof, measuring c.2.75m in height at its highest point and c.2.25m at its lowest.

The building would be positioned adjacent to the existing driveway and turning area to the south-west of the dwelling.

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.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals should accord with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The application site is located within the Green Belt and Countryside. Consequently, consideration must be given to the relevant provisions of the NPPF together with Policies CP11 and CP12 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy

Green Belt:

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraph 153 states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to openness, and that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Policy CP12 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (the CS) states that 'Planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt as defined in PPG2'

Policy TB01 states that the alteration and/or extension of a dwelling and the construction, alteration or extension of buildings ancillary to a dwelling in the Green Belt

over and above the size of the original building(s) shall be limited in scale. The supporting text states

With regard to the alteration and/or extension of a dwelling and the construction, alteration or extension of buildings ancillary to a dwelling, proposals will be assessed against the original building(s), as defined in the NPPF. Due to the restrictive policies that apply to the Green Belt and the need to retain the openness of the countryside, only limited extensions to a dwelling will generally be permitted. 'Limited' means a cumulative increase of generally no more than a 35% increase in volume over and above the original dwelling.

The supporting text to this policy states that 'limited' means a cumulative increase of generally no more than a 35% increase in volume over and above the original dwelling. Both of these policies pre-date the current version of the Framework but they are broadly consistent with its chapter 13. Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the current Framework are similar to paragraphs 89 and 90 cited within MDDD Policy TB01.

Paragraph 154 of the Framework states that development within the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development unless any exceptions apply. The exceptions are listed in 154 and 155 of the NPPF. Paragraph 155 of the NPPF is not considered to be engaged in this case, given the nature and scale of the householder development proposed.

Neither the Framework nor the development plan policies make any specific reference to the erection of detached outbuildings as being not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

The proposed detached garage does not fall within any of the exceptions to inappropriate development set out in paragraph 154 of the NPPF.

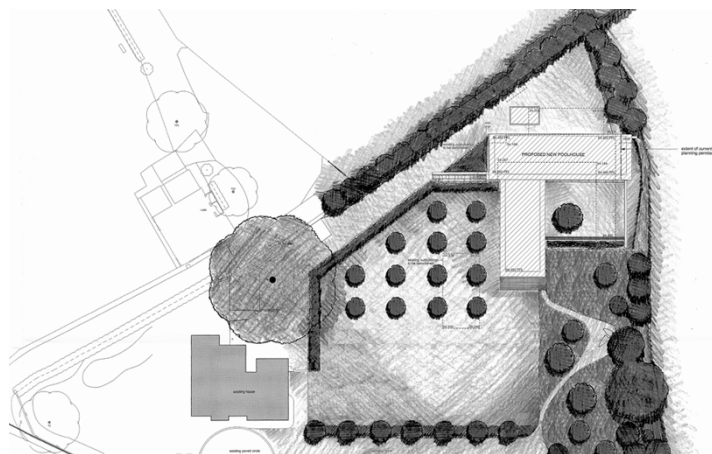
In particular, it is not for agriculture/forestry; is not a facility for outdoor sport/recreation; it is not an extension or alteration to a building; it is not a replacement building; infilling in villages; it does not provide affordable housing; does not constitute limited infilling, as it would not fill a gap in an otherwise built frontage, nor does it comprise the redevelopment of previously developed land and does not meet the exceptions in 154(h).

It is acknowledged that the High Court in *Warwickshire County Council v Secretary of State* found that the exception for extensions in paragraph 149(c) of the NPPF (now paragraph 154(c)) is not confined to structures that are physically attached to the original building and that, in some circumstances, a detached structure may constitute an extension of another building. However, the judgment does not establish that every detached domestic outbuilding or garage should automatically be regarded as an extension for the purposes of Green Belt policy. Whether a detached building falls within the scope of paragraph 154(c) remains a matter of planning judgement having regard to the particular facts of the case.

In this instance, the proposal comprises a self-contained detached double garage with its own footprint, scale and visual presence. Whilst it would serve the dwellinghouse, it would not physically enlarge or alter the dwelling itself and is more appropriately

characterised as a new freestanding outbuilding within the curtilage rather than an extension to the dwellinghouse. As such, it is not considered to fall within the exception set out in paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.

In any event, even if the proposed garage were to be regarded as an extension for the purposes of paragraph 154(c), it would still need to satisfy the requirements of that exception. Paragraph 154(c) applies only where extensions do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In this regard, significant weight is attached to the planning history of the site, including the substantial additions previously approved under applications F/2007/1581 and F/2007/3082, which resulted in the dwelling more than doubling in size and led to the removal of permitted development rights (Class A – E). When assessed cumulatively against the original dwelling, the proposed garage would represent a further increase in built form which, in the Council's view, would amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. Even if paragraph 154(c) is engaged following *Warwick*, the cumulative additions to the original dwelling (including F/2007/3082) are disproportionate and therefore fail the exception in any event. The site location plan for F/2007/3082 is below for context; it shows the dwelling and the substantial approved outbuilding:



Precise volumetric comparisons are difficult because the volume of the original dwelling is not available. However, the planning history demonstrates that the dwelling has already undergone substantial enlargement, with the officer report for application F/2006/6740 noting that the property had already more than doubled in size compared to the original 1948 dwelling. Furthermore, application F/2007/3082 approved a substantial detached building with an approximate volume of 675m³. The current proposal would introduce a further 105.25m³ of built form. The proposed garage would add a further 105.25m³ of built form, equivalent to approximately 15.6% of the volume of the substantial outbuilding approved under F/2007/3082.

Whilst that increase may be relatively modest in isolation, when viewed cumulatively with the substantial historic additions to the site, it contributes to a pattern of development that materially exceeds the limited enlargement envisaged by Policy TB01 and reinforces the conclusion that the proposal would amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.

Whilst the proposed garage would be incidental to the enjoyment of the existing dwellinghouse, that fact does not, in itself, mean that the development benefits from an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal therefore constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful and attracts substantial weight against the proposal.

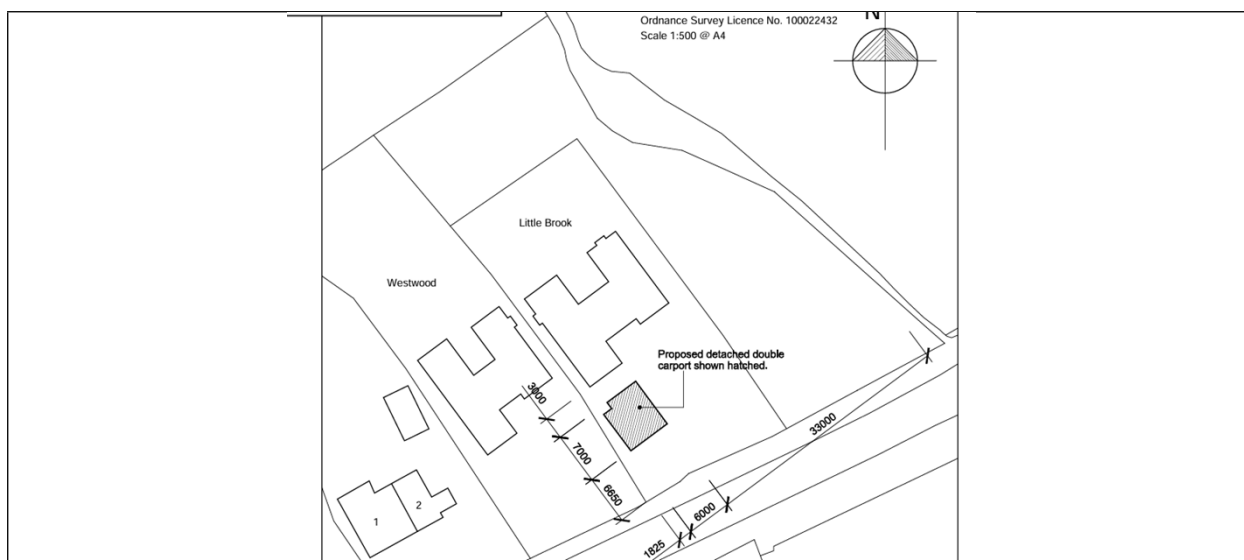
The proposal's effect on openness alone is, however, limited by its modest scale, single-storey form and location within an established residential curtilage. Notwithstanding this, it would nevertheless introduce additional built form into the Green Belt and result in some loss of openness.

Whilst each case must be assessed on its own merits, in appeal APP/R0335/D/20/3253942 for a detached carport in the neighbouring authority of Bracknell, the Inspector concluded that it did not meet any exceptions in the paragraph 154. They stated: *"The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and further harm to the Green Belt would be caused as a result of loss of openness.*

These matters carry substantial weight".

The applicant argues within their planning statement that the proposal constitutes limited infilling in a village and falls within exception 154(c). The site is approximately 1km from Wargrave settlement boundary in a Countryside location with sporadic riverside development. Further to this the appeal Inspector (above) states *"The Framework does not define 'limited infilling'. However, I consider limited infilling to mean to fill or close a gap between existing buildings or to fill a gap in the continuity of development"*. The proposed building would be sited to the front of the dwelling not between or adjacent to existing development on either side. It does not fill a gap in the continuity of development consequently it would not constitute limited infilling. Additionally, the site is not within a village.

The case is for a similar building with a similar relationship to the front of a dwellinghouse in the Green Belt and nevertheless demonstrates that detached domestic outbuildings do not automatically benefit from an exception under paragraph 154 of the NPPF and must be assessed on their individual merits. The block plan of APP/R0335/D/20/3253942 is below for context – it shows a similar relationship to the proposal under this application.



The above appeal decision is not determinative, and each case must be assessed on its own individual merits. However, it provides a relevant example of a detached domestic carport/garage-type structure in the Green Belt being treated as inappropriate development where no relevant exception was found to apply.

Principle conclusions:

Overall, the proposed detached garage is not considered to fall within any of the exceptions to inappropriate development set out in paragraphs 154 or 155 of the NPPF and therefore constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Substantial weight is attached to this harm.

Furthermore, even if the proposal were accepted as an extension for the purposes of paragraph 154(c) it would have a limited effect on openness alone. However, due to the site's planning history and the substantial additions already undertaken the cumulative impact would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building (over and above the 35% guidance set out in the supporting text to TB01). The proposal is therefore contrary to the aims of Green Belt policy contained within the NPPF, Policy CP12 and TB01.

Countryside:

The site lies within the Countryside as designated in the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Core Strategy Policy CP11 states that, in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside development limits will not normally be permitted except in certain circumstances. The relevant criteria is as follows:

- 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

Given the modest scale of the detached garage and car port, together with its close relationship to the host dwelling and location within the established residential curtilage,

the proposal would not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the existing dwelling.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy.

Character of the Area:

Paragraph 187(b) of the NPPF requires that planning applications enhance the natural and local environment by 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.'

Policy CP11 supports development in the countryside only where it maintains the high quality of the rural environment. Policy CP1(1) similarly only supports development that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment, with policy CP3 supporting development of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height and character to the area CP3(a) and which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place contributes to the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings CP3(f).

The Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document provides further guidance for developers with general guidance that development should respond positively to its site and local context (G1) and respond positively to the local character of the area (G2).

Assessment:

The proposed garage and car port would be sited adjacent to the existing dwelling and within the established residential curtilage. Whilst introducing additional built form, the development would remain subordinate to the host dwelling by virtue of its single-storey scale, comprising a flat-roofed garage with an attached mono-pitched car port, with a maximum height of c.2.75m.

The proposal would be largely screened from Willow Lane by the existing brick boundary wall and mature planting along the site frontage. Consequently, views of the building from the public realm would be limited and it would not appear as a visually prominent feature within the street scene or wider rural landscape.

Furthermore, the building would maintain a close spatial relationship with the host dwelling and existing driveway, ensuring it reads as part of the established domestic development rather than as an encroachment into the surrounding countryside.

Overall, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the application site and surrounding rural area, complying with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking/Loss of Light/Overbearing:

The proposed garage and car port would be single storey in form, with a maximum height of c.2.75m.

There are no neighbouring residential properties immediately adjacent to the application site. The nearest dwelling is located on the opposite side of Willow Lane, c.12.75m from the proposed structure.

Given this separation distance, together with the existing brick boundary wall and mature vegetation along the site frontage, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impacts.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal relates solely to the provision of a detached garage and car port ancillary to the existing dwelling. The existing vehicular access and turning arrangements would remain unchanged.

The proposal would provide additional covered parking and is not considered likely to result in any adverse impacts upon highway safety or parking provision.

Amenity Space:

The application site relates to an extensive plot, to which the proposed garage and car port would occupy only a small proportion.

Sufficient private outdoor amenity space would remain available to serve the dwelling following construction of the development.

Flooding and Drainage:

The application site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 due to its proximity to the River Thames. The proposed development is wholly within Flood Zone 2.

As per the National Planning Policy Guidance 'Flood Risk and Coastal Change', the proposed development is classified as 'minor development'. The NPPG states that even minor developments can affect flood risk within or beyond the property, particularly in areas susceptible to flooding. Applications for minor development involving extensions or additions should still meet the requirements to provide a site-specific flood risk assessment. A pragmatic approach should be taken to the scope and level of detail of the assessment – a shorter, simpler assessment is likely to be sufficient in most such cases. As a minimum, the assessment needs to show that the development will be safe for its users for the intended lifetime of the development, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and be sufficiently flood resistant and resilient to the level and nature of the flood risk.

The site is also located within an area susceptible to groundwater flooding. However, the proposal relates to a detached garage and would not introduce a vulnerable use or habitable accommodation. The LLFA has raised no objection to the proposal. Had planning permission otherwise been granted, a drainage condition could reasonably

have secured appropriate measures to manage runoff from the proposed structure. The development is therefore considered acceptable in respect of groundwater flooding

The proposal would result in an increase in impermeable surface area of c.37.3sqm, as confirmed by the applicant. The car port/garage would undoubtedly generate an increase in surface water run off due to the loss of permeable areas of grassland, and there is a need to compensate this loss via alternative floodwater storage elsewhere on site.

The LLFA was consulted and upon review of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, they have raised no objection to the proposal and due to the minor scale of the development, they have requested a condition requiring the submission of details of a surface water drainage scheme. The condition will secure appropriate measures to capture and attenuate runoff from the proposed structure; this will ensure that the increase in surface water runoff is appropriately managed, that flood risk is not increased on site or elsewhere and to confirm the development would be sufficiently flood resistant and resilient to the level and nature of the flood risk.

Landscape and Trees:

Whilst there are no protected trees within the application site, the site lies within the Green Belt and Countryside where the retention of landscape character is an important consideration.

The proposed garage and car port would be positioned adjacent to the existing driveway within the established residential curtilage and is not considered likely to result in unacceptable harm to the wider landscape character.

Conclusion:

The proposal is considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and does not fall within any of the exceptions set out in the NPPF. Substantial weight is attached to this harm. Furthermore, even if the proposal were accepted as an extension for the purposes of paragraph 154(c), it would represent a disproportionate addition when considered cumulatively with the substantial historic enlargements of the dwelling. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Green Belt objectives of the NPPF, Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policy TB01 of the Managing Development Delivery DPD. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

Whilst the proposal is of modest scale and has been found acceptable in respect of character and appearance, neighbouring amenity, highway safety, drainage and landscape considerations, these considerations do not clearly outweigh the substantial weight that must be given to the identified Green Belt harm. Whilst there are material considerations weighing in favour of the proposal, these considerations do not, either individually or cumulatively, clearly outweigh the definitional harm to the Green Belt, the limited harm to openness and the identified conflict with the development plan.

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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. 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 Applicable
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date:	24 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	30 May 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	15/07/26