

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260127
Site Address:	Longmoor Cottage, Park Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4PT
Expiry Date:	24 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	20 February 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of an outbuilding, following demolition of the existing outbuilding. (Retrospective)	

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
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 TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other		Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision/Date
R/74/1965	Additions	Approved March 1965
19459	Single storey extension (kitchen, utility room and bedrooms)	Approved June 1983
33680	New double garage	Approved July 1989
34687	Single storey breakfast room extension and front porch extension	Approved November 1989

162295	Raising of roof height with first floor extension, new roof over first floor and attached annexe, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation, single storey side/rear extension, two storey side extension, first floor extension, front entrance and front fence	Approved January 2017
180723	Raising of roof height with first floor extension, single storey front porch, side and rear extensions, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation, replacement of existing chimney and changes to fenestration (retrospective).	Withdrawn October 2018
183261	Single storey side extension to annex and dwelling, flat roof, changes to fenestration and internal alterations (retrospective)	Approved March 2019
201278	Replacement and enlargement of detached garage	Refused August 2020 (appeal dismissed)
203526	Application for a certificate of existing lawful development for land at Longmoor Cottage as garden forming the domestic curtilage of the property	Approved: February 2021

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection subject to a condition
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to a condition
WBC CIL – No comments
WBC Green Infrastructure – No objection

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Finchampstead Parish Council	No objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Context: This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of a detached garage within the grounds of Longmoor Cottage, located on the eastern side of Park Lane, close to its northern end. The garage measures approximately 7.7 m in width and 7.48 m in length, with a pitched roof reaching a maximum ridge height of around 5.7 m. It incorporates a loft room at first-floor level, accessed via an external oak staircase on the western elevation. The building is finished in light-coloured render with a brick plinth and red roof tiles to match the host dwelling. A paved area and a

low-level lighting column serve the garage, and solar panels are installed on the rear roof slope.

The outbuilding is situated within a woodland area subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO-1744-2020), which forms the primary consideration in the assessment of this application.

The retrospective proposal has been submitted following the refusal of application 201278, which was subsequently dismissed at appeal. That earlier scheme also related to a replacement garage, with the Local Planning Authority and the Inspector identifying concerns principally in relation to the impact of the development on the surrounding protected trees. The basis on which this application has been made is that this was carefully considered by the applicant during the development.

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 site is located in the countryside and is therefore to be considered under Policy CP11 of the adopted Core Strategy, which seeks to control development outside defined settlement boundaries. Relevant to this scheme, CP11 not permit development outside of development limits unless it falls within the exemption criteria below:

- It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings.
- It does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The replacement outbuilding, although larger than the original garage, follows a similar footprint and remains clearly subservient to the main dwelling in terms of scale and overall massing. As such, the development is not considered to result in excessive encroachment or an unwarranted spread of built form into the surrounding countryside.

It is also material that concerns regarding the principle of development were not raised during the assessment of application 201278, which was considered under the same framework, and which proposed a larger outbuilding than the structure that currently exists on site.

Accordingly, it is not considered that the development has harmed the rural character or visual amenity of its countryside setting, nor has it undermined the openness of the area. The scheme therefore accords with Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy.

Use of Outbuilding: Notwithstanding the above, it is acknowledged that the outbuilding is still relatively large for a development of this nature. The application indicates that the first-floor space is intended solely as loft accommodation; however, a separate investigation undertaken by the LPA has identified that it is currently being

used as an office. There is no objection in principle to such a use, as an office can be reasonably regarded as incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling. Nevertheless, having regard to the scale of the outbuilding and its physical separation from the host property, it is considered necessary to impose a condition restricting its use to purposes incidental to the dwellinghouse. This will ensure that the outbuilding cannot be used as a separate unit of accommodation or for any non-residential or commercial purposes.

Character of the Area: Park Lane is a well-established rural setting characterised by low-density development, generous plot sizes and a strong relationship with the surrounding countryside. The area is defined by its quiet, informal lane character, mature landscaping, and a mixture of dwellings and outbuildings that sit comfortably within their plots. Development in the vicinity is modest in scale and consistently respects the semi-rural nature of the locality.

The replacement garage has retained the established form and style of the original structure, and therefore has not altered the prevailing pattern of built form. The modest increase in scale does not elevate its prominence within the street scene, which continues to be effectively screened by mature boundary trees.

The retrospective development has therefore not adversely affected the character of Park Lane as assessed above, and its visual impact is considered acceptable. The development accordingly complies with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Furthermore, impact on character was not identified as an issue during the refusal or subsequent appeal dismissal of application 201278, which proposed a more substantial extension to the outbuilding than that which has been constructed.

Neighbouring Amenity: There are no neighbouring amenity concerns arising from the retrospective development, due to the significant separation between the outbuilding and the surrounding neighbouring properties.

Landscape and Trees: As stated above, the outbuildings relationship with the surrounding trees is the principal consideration in the assessment of this application.

The original garage and its foundations were located within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of several protected trees within the woodland. While the original slab and foundations were retained, the previous structure (walls and roof) was demolished in 2020. The as-built garage includes additional slab and foundation works extending north and east, away from the protected woodland.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) prepared by Mark Welby Consulting Arborists (dated 2 October 2025) concludes that:

- No trees were removed to facilitate the development.
- The garage was constructed in a sensitive manner with regard to retained trees.
- The overall arboricultural impact is considered low.
- Remedial measures are proposed to address the retrospective nature of the development.

The proposed mitigation measures include:

- Removal of materials from within RPAs.
- Removal and reduction of hard surfacing within RPAs.
- Removal of the pad base beneath the external staircase and replacement with appropriate wall supports.
- Soil amelioration within impacted areas.

The Tree Officer agrees with the findings of the AIA and considers that, subject to implementation of the specified mitigation and remediation measures (as set out in the AIA and associated Tree Protection Plan), the development would have an acceptable impact on the adjacent protected trees.

Accordingly, a condition is recommended requiring full adherence to the approved Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan, including implementation and retention of tree protection measures for the duration of the works.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raised no objection to the development.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable and the application is recommended for approval.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	9 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	24 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>HMM</i>
Date:	10 March 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Countryside*
- *Tree Preservation Order (TPO-1744-2020)*