

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	243135
Site Address:	Bismillah House, Brookers Hill, Shinfield, Wokingham, RG2 9BX
Expiry Date:	02 May 2025 (EoT)
Site Visit Date:	20 February 2025
Proposal: Householder application for proposed erection of an outbuilding to facilitate workshop for parking for a motorhome and games room plus veranda.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside
Tree Preservation Orders

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
211960	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a detached outbuilding to form a pool house, a 1m high front boundary fence, new means of access including an entrance gate and driveway hardstanding.	Approve 30 th July 2021
220922	Householder application for single storey rear extension, two storey side extension, porch extension, incorporation of new balcony to the rear and a new veranda to the side of the property, and changes to fenestration (Retrospective).	Approve 13 th May 2022

222692	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 220922 to allow changes to floor plans and associated changes to fenestration.	Approve 26 th October 2022
222154	Householder application for the proposed installation of semi permeable hardstanding (retrospective).	Approve 31 st October 2022

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No Objection Subject to Condition
WBC Highways – No Objection
WBC Landscape and Trees – Objection

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Objection raised: The outbuilding appears to be oversized for the intended use of motorhome parking and a leisure room for a dwelling house. If this application is approved, SPC would request that a condition is attached to restrict future business use of the building. <i>Officer comments:</i> The main dwelling house has 6 bedrooms and is located within a large residential plot. The internal dimensions of the games room/workshop/motorhome parking area would each be approximately 8.4 m². The outbuilding would be located at the rear of site and would not be visible from the road. Overall, if the proposal is conditioned to remain incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling, it would not adversely impact the character of the area, the host property or the countryside, as assessed below.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Bismillah House (formally known as Foxglade), is a spacious plot located at the far end of Brookers Hill in Shinfield, and adjacent to the M4 motorway. It comprises a 6 bedroomed detached house and no. 3 outbuildings. To the west of the main dwelling house, a hardstanding covers an area approximately 1662 sqm. The site is partially screened from the road, by a tall fence and vegetation. The site has no. 2 vehicular

entrances at the front and faces onto open countryside. The street scene is green vegetation and trees with detached properties along one side of the lane that are screened from the road. While located within the countryside, the application site, and especially the location of the proposed outbuilding, are within close proximity to the M4 and suffer from road noise which also impacts on the quality of the character of these areas.

Existing trees previously removed adjacent to the M4 boundary are the subject of a separate enforcement investigation for the site, as is the failure to adhere to conditions on previous permissions requiring additional planting along the frontage of the site. Areas of hardstanding have been laid across a large area of the application site (some of which has approval under 222154 and would facilitate access to the proposed outbuilding) and, again, separate enforcement investigations are undergoing in that respect.

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 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.

Proposal:

The erection of an outbuilding plus veranda to facilitate parking for a motorhome, a workshop and games room. The outbuilding would be located 1.7m away from the northern boundary of the residential curtilage that is adjacent to the M4 motorway. It would be 19.8m in length and 11m in width; it will have a double pitch roof with no. 8 rooflights and be a maximum of 5m in height. The veranda will have a flat roof on the side elevation measuring 3m in height, 9m in width and 2m in depth. The front elevation will have an up and over shutter door measuring 3m in height and 4m in width. The application does not include loss of soft landscaping.

Character of the Area:

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials, and character, 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. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The proposed outbuilding would be located within a spacious plot; it would be approximately 24m further back from the rear wall of the main dwelling house, and

approximately 6m from the nearest existing outbuilding. Hence, while the proposal is significant in size, it would still appear as an ancillary and subservient outbuilding to the main dwellinghouse.

The proposed outbuilding would be located approximately 1.7m from the northern boundary of the residential curtilage and the backdrop of the M4 embankment. However, the ground level of the site is approximately 2m to 3m lower than the motorway, and when taking the acoustic barrier into account, only the roof of the outbuilding would be visible from the M4. Moreover, the increase in scale, form and footprint would not be excessive when compared to that of the main dwelling house and the separation distance between them. A condition is recommended to secure replacement soft landscaping commensurate to helping soften the impact of the proposed outbuilding. Subject to compliance with said condition, the development will not have a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area.

Location within Countryside

CP11 - Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside) states:

In order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

1. It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and
2. It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and
3. It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or
4. In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
5. In the case of replacement dwellings, the proposal must: i) Bring about environmental improvements; or ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
6. Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building.
7. Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

The site is in Countryside where Core Strategy Policy CP11 applies and criteria 2 is relevant in this case. The development would result in considerable expansion away from existing buildings rather than expansion or encroachment of the buildings themselves. The expansion of development would however be moderated by the proximity of the site close to the M4 and the presence of intervening acoustic fence. The quality of the character of the rear of the application site being particularly impacted by the noise of the M4 and existing hardstanding, some of which has already been approved. In addition, only the roof of the outbuilding would be visible from the M4 embankment where the ground level of the site is approximately 2m to 3m lower than the motorway. The outbuilding would be located at the rear of this very large plot that is partially screened, from public views to the south along Brookers Hill, by the existing dwelling and other outbuildings on site. Hence, public views along

Brookers Hill would not be adversely affected. Furthermore, the recommended landscaping condition would help to secure some replacement soft landscaping to mitigate any limited harm caused by the bulk and mass of the proposed outbuilding.

Overall, the proposal is not contrary to policies CP1 and CP3. There is a degree of non-compliance with CP11 that would cause limited harm in this instance but this could be suitably mitigated by the recommended landscaping condition.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

Overlooking: The proposal would be single storey and would not overlook the immediate neighbour at Willow Tree House.

Loss of Light: The proposal is located approximately 85m from the immediate neighbour and would not impact daylight at Willow Tree House.

Overbearing: The proposal would not be located near to neighbouring properties and would not be visible from the street.

Overall, there are no concerns related to neighbouring amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Highways Officer has commented as follows: *“No objection to the garage/workshop and games room subject to the building remaining ancillary to the main dwelling. The existing access, driveway and parking is considered acceptable on this basis. A condition is recommended to ensure that the proposed outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwellinghouse and is not sold, let etc.”*

Flooding and Drainage:

The Flooding and Drainage Officer has commented as follows: *“The development is in Flood zone 1 and low risk from surface water flooding according to the EA mapping. There will be increase in impermeable area and we would have no objection to the principle of the development but as drainage details have not been provided and the existing drainage details has not been mentioned, we would recommend the condition below.”*

Suggested Condition

No construction shall take place until Surface water drainage strategy which includes details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LLFA. The details shall include how the site currently drains and will be drained after proposed development with consideration to SuDS. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Landscape and Trees:

The Tree Officer has commented as follows: *“Overall, the application appears not to*

comply with the Tree and Landscape policies and guidance.

The site is in Countryside, as such I suggest the location of the property away from other built forms would be contrary to policy CP11. Given the height, location and boundary hedge consent for removal the building would be obvious and incongruous compared to the mainly verdant views as seen from the arterial M4.

The site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 1682/2019, A1, being an area order on all trees alive in May 2019. Tree works application 223088 states: - 'Following the felling of the trees as authorised by this consent, 11 no. tree(s) and broadleaf hedging is to be planted along the front border of the property (Foxglade – Bismillah House), as per the specifications in the arboricultural report reference: SCD 05882/2022. The species are to include:

- Holm Oak (Quercus ilex) x 6*
- Silver Birch (Beula pendula) x 2*
- Norway Maple (Acer platanoides) x 1*
- Field Maple (Acer campestre) x 1*
- Oak (Quercus robur) x 1*
- Broadleaf hedging – mixed native species x 80'*

Aerial images taken after the TPO came into place show trees/mature planting in the indicated location of the proposed workshop and games room. Plus, there will need to be a driveway suitable to carry the weight of horseboxes/mobile homes and potential changes to the highway/driveway access to accommodate their length and width. All of this could harm the roots and canopy of protected trees."

Officer comments: Landscaping details are not shown on the site plan. The tree clearance near the northern boundary adjacent to the M4 is not part of the Condition in the tree works application ref 223088. The hardstanding that is necessary for the outbuilding has already been approved ref. 222154 and has since been extended. The Highways Officer has commented that the access, driveway and parking are acceptable.

The proposed rear outbuilding would not damage the root protection area or canopy of the replacement trees to be planted along the front boundary to comply with tree works application 223088. Furthermore, the entrance and driveway for the outbuilding are already in place. The recently removed trees adjacent to the M4 boundary are the subject of a separate enforcement investigation for the site and are not relevant to this planning application. Therefore, a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and an Arboricultural Method Statement are not considered necessary to determine this application. However, as mentioned above, a landscaping condition is recommended to secure replacement planting adjacent to the M4 that is commensurate to the impact of this proposal and would help soften and mitigate the visual impact of the development to a suitable degree.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	10 March 2025
Earliest date for decision:	29 January 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	30/04/25