

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	253069
Site Address:	Broadacre Place, Broadcommon Road, Hurst, Wokingham, RG10 0RE
Expiry Date:	10 February 2026
Site Visit Date:	9th February 2026
Proposal: Full planning application for the proposed partial change of use of an existing building to residential use to create 1no. dwelling house, including alterations to fenestration and the installation of rooflights, alongside the erection of a front porch, following the demolition of an existing mobile home.	

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 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP17 – Housing Delivery
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 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB05 – Housing Mix TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside SS10 – Meeting our housing needs SS16 – Safeguarded routes SS17 – Transport improvements CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE2 – Environmental standards for non-residential development CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development

	CE6 – Reducing energy consumption in existing buildings CE7 – Low carbon and renewable energy generation CE8 – Protecting renewable energy generation C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C3 – Active travel C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging H1 – Housing mix, density and standards H2 – Presumption against residential losses H3 – Affordable housing FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage FD3 – River corridors and watercourses NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity HC5 – Environmental protection HC6 – Air pollution and air quality HC7 – Light pollution HC8 – Noise pollution HC9 – Contaminated land and water HC10 – Odor, fumes and dust
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document A Design for Hurst

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
F/1996/64623	Use of land for keeping of ponies and construction of barn for stables, tack and harness room	Approved January 1997
F/1997/65625	Erection of barn	Refused August 1998
F/1998/68224	Erection of wall and gates (retrospective/with enforcement)	Refused October 1998
C/99/1020616	Appeal against refusal of F/1998/68224	Dismissed August 1999
F/1998/68504	Erection of barn	Refused February 1999

F/2001/4399	Stationing of mobile home	Refused December 2001
F/2002/6112	Erection of barn and formation of manege	Approved July 2002
F/2007/3050	Erection of equipment store, mess room and WC an increase in height of entrance gates	Approved February 2008
F/2008/1419	Erection of equipment store, mess room and WC and relocation of existing hay barn	Approved July 2008
F/2009/1060	Temporary stationing of mobile home for grooms accommodation (seasonal for five years)	Approved July 2009
F/2015/0887	All weather polo pony exercise track (lapsed)	Approved June 2015
F/2015/0917	Temporary stationing of mobile home for grooms accommodation (seasonal for five years)	Approved August 2015
182579	Installation of an all-weather exercise track for use by polo ponies	Approved November 2018
201418	Permanent retention of mobile home to provide groom's accommodation	Approved August 2020
222377	Application to vary condition 2 of planning consent 201418 for the proposed permanent retention of existing mobile home to provide groom's accommodation. Condition 2 refers to the occupation and cessation of mobile home use, and the variation is to change the wording of the condition	Approved September 22. Dismissed at appeal 09/05/2023
232230	Full application for the stationing of a mobile home following the removal of the existing mobile home.	Approved December 2023
251843	Full application for the proposed partial change of use of existing building to residential to create 1no. dwellinghouse, along with changes to fenestration to include installation of rooflights, plus removal of existing mobile home	Approved September 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health- No comments received
 WBC Drainage- No objection
 WBC Highways-No objection subject to condition(s)
 WBC Landscape and Trees- No objection subject to condition(s)
 WBC CIL- Development is CIL liable
 WBC Ecology-No comments received
 WBC Waste Services-No comments recieved
 WBC Cleaner and Greener-No comments received

External

Thames Water Utilities Ltd-No comments recieved

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objections
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Broadacre Place is located on the south-western side of Broadcommon Road, south of the village of Hurst. The site consists of equestrian buildings including, a mobile home, stables, hay barn, storage and a shed. The site also has an exercise track to the east of the buildings and is surrounded by rural fields. Furthermore, the site is located within the designated Countryside.

Planning History: It is noted that Broadacre Place has had several Planning Applications submitted.

The use of the land for the keeping of the ponies and access onto the site was granted under application F/1996/64623 in January 1997. Following this, an application for a mobile home for groom's accommodation was approved by F/2009/1060 in July 2009. The need for on-site accommodation was demonstrated on the basis that the site was used for the stabling of polo ponies. The level of care required for polo ponies falls into the same category as that for racehorses or competition horses, particularly where training and veterinary treatment is concerned. This was supported by a full assessment by the Council's agricultural consultants. It was ultimately considered that despite the fact new residential accommodation within the Countryside is unacceptable in principle, the polo pony use was considered an 'exceptional circumstance'. As a result, application F/2009/1060 was approved subject to a 5-year temporary permission.

This temporary permission was then extended for five years to 20 August 2020 under application F/2015/0917. In 2020, an application for the permanent retention of the mobile home was approved (201418) but due to the exceptional circumstances surrounding the need for the home in association with the polo pony use, a condition was imposed requiring the home's removal if the number of polo ponies on site was reduced to less than five. The condition read as follows:

"The mobile home hereby approved shall only be occupied by a groom working on the site under the employment of Lisa Spiers. When the land ceases to be used for the keeping of not less than five polo ponies owned by Lisa Spiers or is used for the keeping of anything other than polo ponies, the use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes shall cease, the mobile home (and any footings) shall be removed and the land, including the parking area, shall be restored to its original condition before the original development took place"

The reason behind the condition was:

“The site is within an area where a dwelling would not normally be permitted and permission is only granted because the dwelling is intended to serve the specific needs of the site, being the need to care for polo ponies. The land also comprises an adequate acreage for polo pony stabling but it would be inadequate for other forms of equestrian use, resulting in an unsustainable use at the existing level of intensity. Relevant Policies: NPPF (Paragraph 79) and Core Strategy: CP3 and CP11”

In 2022 the applicant submitted a variation application (222377) regarding this condition. Initially, they wanted to remove the condition in its entirety but if not possible, they requested that the personal reference to Lisa Spiers was removed. This application was approved 21st September 2022 and the condition was varied, instead of removed altogether, to read as follows:

“The mobile home hereby approved shall only be occupied by a person(s) solely or mainly employed for the care of polo ponies on the land, and any dependants of that person(s). When the land ceases to be used for the keeping of not less than five polo ponies or is used for the keeping of anything other than polo ponies, the use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for residential purposes shall cease, the mobile home (and any footings) shall be removed and the land, including the parking area, shall be restored to its original condition before the original development took place within three months of the use ceasing.”

The reason for the condition remained the same as the reason imposed under application 201418. The applicant appealed this decision on the grounds that the varied condition failed to comply with the 6 tests of planning conditions within the NPPF. This appeal was dismissed in September 2023 by the Planning Inspectorate and the following conclusions were made by the Inspector:

“Accordingly, the condition is necessary, relevant to the development permitted, precise, enforceable and reasonable to ensure the siting of the mobile home for residential purposes is justified. Despite the technical breach with CP11 of the Core Strategy, the mobile home with the condition is compliant with aims and objectives of the Policies CP9 and CP11 of the Core Strategy and paragraph 80 of the Framework.”

Following the dismissal above, application 232230 was consented in December 2023 to relocate the existing mobile home on site to a different orientation. The conditions referenced above were re-applied to this permission.

Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed partial change of use of an existing building to residential use to create 1no. dwelling house, including alterations to fenestration and the installation of rooflights, alongside the erection of a front porch, following the demolition of an existing mobile home.

It is worth noting that the previous application 251843 (approved in September 2025) was for the part conversion of the existing barn store (consented under application F/2008/1419) to a two-storey, two-bedroom dwellinghouse. This conversion would replace the existing mobile home (log cabin) on site, resulting in its removal from site. The previous permission establishes the principle of development and this application

seeks some material changes to the building, which includes fenestration alterations and a new porch.

The planning statement submitted by the applicant states the existing and proposed uses of Broadacre Place. The applicant who purchased Broadacre Place in 2004, uses the site to keep polo ponies. Over time, the level of polo the applicant plays have progressed to a semi-professional level, hence the permission for the log cabin to remain permanently on site.

The planning statement outlines that when the store was originally approved in 2008, it was commonplace for the polo player to use their own equipment to maintain the holding. However, due to rising costs and security concerns, the situation has changed, and it is now increasingly more common on cost effectiveness grounds to outsource this to external contractors. As a result, there is now unused space within the existing store.

Furthermore, the existing planning permission was granted for the re-siting of the log cabin, however, the applicant no longer feels this structure is necessary, when accommodation can be provided in the surplus space in the existing equipment building, and reduce overall maintenance costs of the site.

As part of the proposal the existing log cabin would be removed once the new accommodation is complete and occupied.

Principle of Development:

The principle of development was established by the previous application and there are no material changes that would warrant a different conclusion being reached.

The need for the mobile home, that being for the stabling of polo ponies, has been established since 2009. Application 201418 for the permanent retention of a mobile home was subject to an equestrian appraisal in 2020, and it was concluded by the Council that the continued need for a groom was adequately justified.

The context, use and owner of the site has not changed since this determination, and the Case Officer counted a total of at least five ponies within the stables at the site upon visiting in September 2023 (when determining application 232230) and more recently in August 2025 for this application. The amount of accommodation proposed within the converted barn store would have the same number of bedrooms and whilst there would be an overall increase in habitable floorspace, it is not considered disproportionate to the use of the site.

It is therefore considered that the essential need for the mobile home remains justified and therefore complies with section 1 of CP11, that being the requirement for proposals to contribute to rural/countryside-based enterprise. Compliance is also achieved with paragraph 84 of the NPPF as there is a justified need for a rural worker's dwelling in this isolated location.

Regarding section 2 of CP11, the proposals re-use of an existing building and the removal of the existing log cabin would result in a net decrease of development

footprint on site. Therefore, the development would clearly not result in the excessive the Case Officer counted a total of at least five ponies within the stables at the site upon visiting in September 2023 (when determining application 232230) and more recently in August 2025 for this application. The amount of accommodation proposed within the converted barn store would have the same number of bedrooms and whilst there would be an overall increase in habitable floorspace, it is not considered disproportionate to the use of the site.

It is therefore considered that the essential need for the mobile home remains justified, that being the requirement for proposals to contribute to rural/countryside-based enterprise. Compliance is also achieved with paragraph 84 of the NPPF as there is a justified need for a rural worker's dwelling in this isolated location.

Regarding section 2 of CP11, the proposals re-use of an existing building and the removal of the existing log cabin would result in a net decrease of development footprint on site. Therefore, the development would clearly not result in the excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings, compliant with this criterion.

With regards to criterion 3 of CP11, the development involves the re-use of an appropriate building that would result in an overall betterment to the openness of the Countryside (due to the removal of the log cabin). Compliance with this criterion 3 is therefore achieved.

Overall, the development is considered acceptable in principle as per CP11 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Character of the Area:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that developments are of appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to other adjoining land users. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

Broadacre Farm is located in the village of Hurst, North of Wokingham. The site is used for the polo ponies and the storage of equipment. The proposed development consists of the erection of a front porch, (following the approved application 251843 for 1No new dwelling following part conversion of the existing barn) following the demolition of the existing mobile home.

The proposed erection of the front porch appears as a subservient and sympathetic addition to the existing dwelling proposed under application 251843. The proposed porch projects approximately 2.2m from the approved dwelling, however not encroaching the existing boundary or impacting access provision.

Overall, the alterations to the barn building, namely the inclusion of fenestration, would have a negligible visual impact on the character of the site and the surrounding Countryside. Furthermore, the removal of the log cabin would represent a visual and spatial improvement to the site, maintaining the site's rural and isolated surroundings.

Landscape and Trees: The Council's Tree and Landscape Officer have reviewed this application. As Broadacre Place is located within the countryside policy CP11 applies along with the site being situated within the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment – Area 14 'Hurst Clay Lowland' a high-quality landscape of moderate sensitivity and a limited capacity for change.

The Tree and Landscape Officer has recommended subject to approval that in order to comply with Policy TB21 of the Local Plan, and to retain and enhance the character of Broad common Road and the site boundary –the boundaries to be planted with native hedgerow planting with native hedgerow trees at 15m centres around the south-western and south- eastern boundaries with the wider landscape. Included in the plan will be proposed hard and soft landscaping around the site. This will be dealt with a necessary condition.

Neighbouring Amenity: There are no immediate neighbours adjacent to the site. Therefore, no concern for overlooking, loss of light or overbearing.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed the above application. As the existing access from Broadcommon Road will be retained, this is considered acceptable.

WBC Car Parking standards require each parking space to have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. Given the development in a village location, it will require two parking spaces within the red line, however, this is deemed as acceptable as the proposed driveway can accommodate three or more parking spaces and of suitable dimensions.

EV Charging Points: New dwellings are expected to provide a minimum of one EV Charging Point under the latest Building Regulations (Approved Document S). The position of EVCP is indicated in Drawing No. 25072 PL100A, which is acceptable. This may be subject to further authorisation via Building Control.

Cycle Provisions: According to the WBC Parking Standards, 2 cycle parking allocation will be required per dwelling with 4 habitable rooms. The applicant shall indicate direct access to the rear garden, cycle store or garage of suitable sizes for cycle storage on a plan or when discharging conditions.

Refuse Collection Strategy: According to Manual for Streets, the maximum carrying distances for households (30m) and refuse collection operators (25m) from the collection point. While kerbside collection will likely be suitable, as the proposed dwelling will be sited over 30m from the public highway, the applicant shall indicate the position of the bin collection point on a plan or when discharging conditions.

Flooding and Drainage: The site is within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of surface water flooding. WBC Drainage have no objections to the proposal.

Ecology: The site is situated within a Bat Roost area. The development involves the demolition of the existing mobile home. However, no comments have been received by our WBC Ecology Officer, and it was confirmed in the previous application (241843) that no bat survey was required.

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	5 February 2026
Earliest date for decision:	9 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	10.02.2026