

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252481
Site Address:	Morrisons, Woosehill Shopping Centre, Woosehill, Wokingham, RG41 3SW
Expiry Date:	30 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	10 November 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a detached pod structure in the existing car park (part 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 CP13 – Town Centres and Shopping CP15 – Employment Development
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB15 – Major Town, and Small Town/District Centre development TB16 – Development for Town Centre Uses TB20 – Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	Not applicable to this application.
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 C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging ER1 – Core Employment Areas

	ER2 – Employment uses outside of Core Employment Areas ER5 – The hierarchy of centres ER6 – Town, district and local centres and shopping parades ER7 – Strengthening the role of centres NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity HC8 – Noise pollution
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (Wider Morrisons site)

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
230712	Full application for the erection of a Car park valeting facility with installation of a canopy and siting of container for office/storage	Approved 26/04/23
200295	Full application for the erection/installation of a Barber pod to the main carpark covering 4 carparking spaces in total. (Retrospective)	Refused 18/03/20 and dismissed at appeal
203139	Full planning application for the installation of a barber's pod within the existing Morrisons car park	Approved 21/01/21
18259	Supermarket	Approved 16/02/1983

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection
WBC Highways – No objection
WBC Ecology Newts – No comments received
WBC Green Infrastructure – No objection

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Wokingham Town Council – No objection but note that pod has already been erected and so the proposal is now retrospective <i>Officer comment: Since this comment was made, the location of the proposed pod has been amended from its</i>
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	<i>erected location. As such, the development is part retrospective as whilst the pod is on site, it is no longer located in the location proposed. If permission is granted, it will be moved across the site.</i> <i>Wokingham Town Council were re-consulted on the revised plans showing the new location of the pod. However, they confirmed on 28/01/26 that they did not wish to comment on the revised proposal and the borough council proceed with making a decision on the application.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a supermarket car park (Morrisons). The site is bounded by Fernlea Drive to the west, Woosehill Spine Road to the north, Morrisons Park and Emm Brook to the east, with Acorn Community Centre to the South. The Morrisons car park is accessed via both Woosehill Spine Road and Fernlea Drive with pedestrian links provided.

As well as the main supermarket, there are also several other businesses operating in the car park; a barbers and a car washing/ valeting servicing.

Proposal:

Part retrospective planning permission is sought for the erection of a WeBuyAnyCar pod within the Morrisons car park. The pod measures 2.8m in height, 4.8m in width and 3.2m in depth. The pod will occupy 2 existing parking spaces and 10 parking spaces within the Morrison's car park are also to be used specifically in association with the pod (for customer use).

In terms of how the business would operate, customers are offered an online quotation for the sale of their vehicle and if accepted it can be taken to a WeBuyAnyCar pod where cars will stay on site for a maximum of 72 hours and then are removed from the site.

The proposal is part retrospective as the pod has been erected, however is now proposed to be moved to a different part of the car park in light of concerns raised by WBC Highways regarding the initially proposed pod location.

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 in the major development location of Wokingham, and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy.

The site is also located within the Woosehill Local Centre, as per policy CP13.

In line with Policy TB16 of the MDD, no sequential or retail impact assessment is required for this scheme given the proposal is located in a local centre, falls below the 500 sqm extension threshold and is not strictly a retail use (due to the proposed functions of the business, the use falls under use class Sui Generis).

In local centres, roles of all existing and new retail centres will be protected and maintained, in addition to local shopping centres and parades that meet the day to day needs of the local community, as per Policy CP13 of the Core Strategy and ER5 of the LPU. Proposals that retain and enhance the provision of day-to-day shopping facilities in Local Centres will also be supported in line with Policy TB17 of the MDD.

In this case, the principle of an additional commercial use will help to align with retail policies; diversifying the area and enhancing day-to-day shopping facilities and so is acceptable in relation to policies CP13 and TB17 of the MDD.

Local Plan Update

The Local Plan Update (LPU), the plan which will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and MDD local plans, is at Regulation 22 stage as it has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. As per paragraph 49 of the NPPF:

Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*

As a whole, the LPU is still given limited weight, despite its advance stage of preparation. This is owing to unresolved objections to a great number of the policies contained within it. However, those policies highlighted in **yellow** in the policy table earlier in this report are those that have received less objection and therefore individually hold moderate weight in the determination of this application. All the others hold limited weight. The policies that hold moderate weight will feed into/ be considered in their relevant sections in this report.

Design/ Character of the Area:

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.

Policy NR2 of the Borough Design Guide states that non-residential development should be designed to contribute towards improving character and quality of the area. Proposals will be required to demonstrate the appropriateness of the approach in each case.

The application site relates to a tarmacked car park serving Morrisons, a large supermarket. As such, the introduction of a modest scale structure in the expansive car park would not be considered of an unsuitable siting or design. Furthermore, the car park also already comprises of a similar style 'pod' structure being used as a barbers. As such, the introduction of alternative retail uses within the grounds of the main supermarket is already established. The pod would be constructed from composite cladding which is considered acceptable given the nature of the proposal.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states that development should not be of detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users. This is echoed by DH2 of the LPU.

The site is in a commercial use and the proposed pod would be contained within the car park. The closest neighbouring dwelling is located over 100m away and would not be affected by the proposal in terms of overlooking, loss of light or being visually overbearing.

Environmental Protection Matters

Policy CC06 of the MDD states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors including residential development.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer does not raise any concerns with the proposal in respect of noise given the proposal takes place well within the grounds of the existing car park with residential properties being ample distance away. However, a condition will be applied ensuring the WeBuyAnyCar business can only open when the main supermarket is and in line with their opening hours. Hours of use will be restricted to 07:00 – 22:00 (Monday – Saturday) and 10:00 – 16:00 (Sunday) to protect the quality of the general environment from adverse noise pollution at unsociable hours.

Whilst the above is considered satisfactory, should any excessive noise issues arise these can also be dealt with separately by the Council's Environmental Protection team under relevant legislation.

Environmental Health Officers have also not raised any concerns regarding odour, air quality, or other environmental risks.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CC07 of the MDD seeks to ensure that parking standards are appropriate for a proposed development. The parking space requirements are set out in Appendix 2 of the MDD. Policy C5 of the LPU states that development proposals should provide and

retain vehicle parking (including motorcycles) and cycle parking that caters for the needs of all users

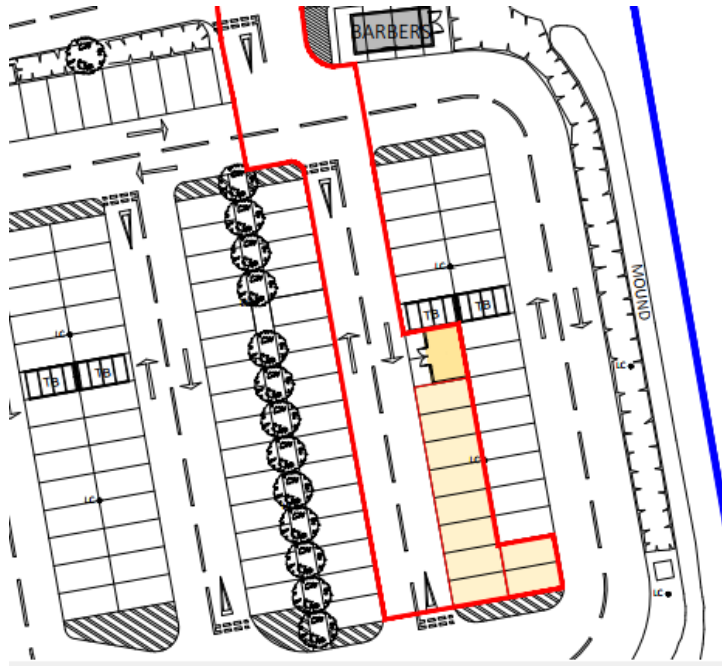
WBC Highways highlighted that WBC standards state the requirement of developments of A1 use class provide 1 parking space 20sqm. The applicant was asked demonstrate that the proposed levels of parking are in line with the WBC parking standards. The applicant considered the requirement that developments within the A1 use class must provide one parking space per 20 sqm. Based on the existing store size of 3,368 sqm, this equals a requirement for 169 spaces. The car park provides a total of 227 spaces (241 existing), which exceeds the minimum requirement and is therefore fully compliant with WBC parking standards. No further comments from WBC Highways were raised on this matter and therefore officers are working on the basis that the car park will still have sufficient parking spaces despite the development.

Concern was raised by WBC Highways regarding the previous location of the proposed pod given it would obstruct the intervisibility between the road and adjacent parking spaces of the pod. As such, the location of the pod was repositioned further north, adjacent to existing trolley bays. The re-positioned location is deemed acceptable in terms of visibility splays from a Highway perspective.

Original location of the pod:



Revised location of the pod:



WBC Highways, did however, note that the parking space(s) right next to the pod unit is not suitable for parking. The applicant may want to use bollards or cross hatching to prevent parking from this space. However, the space directly adjacent to the pod is to be used as temporary parking associated with the pod, rather than for general customers of Morrisons, and as such the risk of adverse highway safety from parking in this space is reduced. WBC Highways did not advise that the absence of hatching or bollards would warrant refusal of the scheme. The proposal is therefore deemed acceptable from a Highway perspective.

Ecology:

Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy states that development should not harm species or habitats of principle importance in England. Bats and Great Crested Newts are two species that are protected under the planning process. Policy TB8 of the MDD ensures that the Thames Basin Heaths SPA are protected from development.

The application site is located within a bat roosting area and Great Crested Newt consultation zone. However, as the proposal would not disturb any existing building, trees and would be situated in an established car park, there would not be considered any detrimental impact to ecology or biodiversity. In the absence of contrary information from the Council's Ecologist, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to CP7.

The site is also located within the 7km mitigation zone for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). However, the development does not involve the creation of residential dwellings and therefore does not trigger a SANG contribution.

Procedural matters:

During the course of this application, the applicant amended the red line site boundary to accommodate the revised location of the proposed pod.

Article 7(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (DMPO) requires that an application must include: *“a plan which identifies the land to which the application relates.”* Once validated, that land is fixed unless the LPA agrees otherwise. There is no provision in the DMPO that gives an applicant a right to amend the application site boundary after validation; this is discretionary.

In terms of case law, *Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v SSE [1982]* discusses tests that can be applied to help establish whether a change to the red line boundary would be acceptable:

- Substantial Difference
- Procedural Fairness
- Minor vs Material

In terms of whether or not it is a substantial difference, the amended red line application boundary was increased in size by the space of 1 parking space which is fairly minor in scale and in proportion to the overall site area. The additional space included within the red line boundary is that indicated by the green cross below.



In this specific case, the additional space proposed in the red line is in the same landownership, is part of the same wider blue line site, and in real terms a small area of land. The change did not result in the amendment of the certificate that was signed for the initial application – certificate A is still correct.

In light of the above, the change is considered minor rather than material.

In terms of procedural fairness, for completeness, a new public consultation with the amended red line boundary was undertaken with the public, parish council and ward councillors, giving all opportunity to make any comments on the amended red line.

As such, the amended red line boundary was acceptable to receive during the course of this application.

Conclusion:

The proposal does not result in substantial harm when assessed against material considerations. The application is therefore 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.

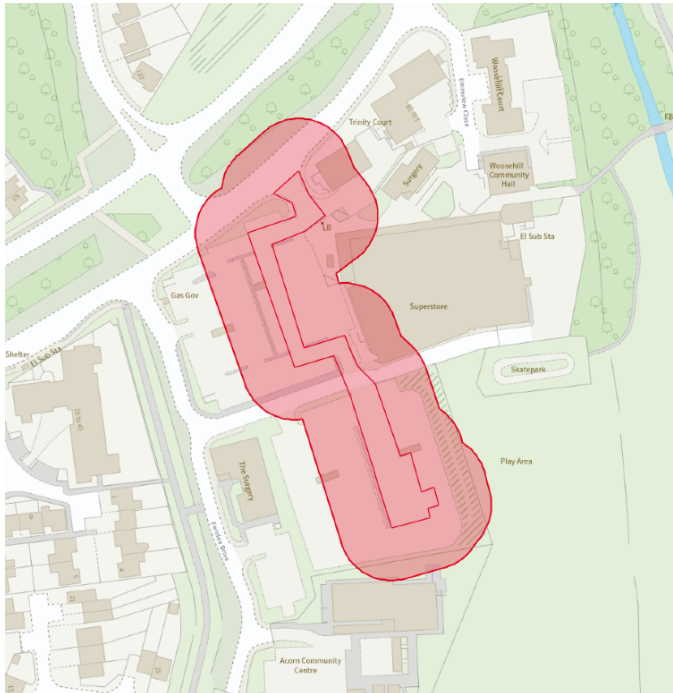
The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy 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 subject to the following conditions: 1. Time Limit 2. Approved Plans 3. Hours of operation
Date:	28 January 2026
Earliest date for decision:	26 January 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	28/01/26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS



#	NAME
1	Within Major Development Locations
2	Within Major Development Locations
3	Within All Development Locations

Retail Centres | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
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1	Local Centre	Woosehill
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Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Major Development Locations	Wokingham

Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone	7km Linear Mitigation Zone

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site	AWE: 12km Zone	This is the 12km Zone. A circular zone of 12km radius around all nuclear sites, for certain types of significant development due to the potential for such developments to pose an external hazard to sites.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Gatwick Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	Description
1	Please consult London Gatwick on the following: All buildings, structures & works exceeding 150 m AGL.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 2

#	Height Band	Wind Turbine	Aviation
1	All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet)	YES	YES
2	All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet)	YES	YES

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 4

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	VO849	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

2	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	VP849	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
3	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	VP852	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
4	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	VQ852	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Amber	For Householder applications check HH Layer. Consult NatureSpace for all other types of development

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000530000&es=11404&location=475984,168857%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Water Utility Consultation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT_WHEN
1	Water Utility Consultation Zone	South East Water Supply Area	New dwellings

Grounds Maintenance Boundaries | Total count: 1

#	PPG17 TYPOLOGY	OWNER
1	Parks and Gardens	Wokingham Borough Council

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Wokingham-Winnersh Settled and Farmed Clay

Wards | Total count: 2

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
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1	Emmbrook Ward	0 m
2	Evendons Ward	14.79 m

Parishes | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Wokingham CP	0 m