

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250583
Site Address:	Warren Farm, Forest Road, Binfield, Wokingham, RG40 5QY
Expiry Date:	12 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	19 March 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of the land to facilitate stationing of a mobile structure for use as a café (retrospective).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
JCEB Areas of Search for Sand and Gravel
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas
Local Plan Update Submitted Sites

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 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements 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 CP13 – Town Centres and Shopping CP15 – Employment Development
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 TB11 – Core Employment Areas TB12 – Employment Skills Plan TB16 – Development for Town Centre Uses TB17 – Local Centres and Neighbourhood and Village Shops TB18 – Garden Centres and other small rural units outside Development Limits

	TB20 – Service Arrangements and Deliveries for Employment and Retail Use TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM5 - Protection of the Countryside DM8 - Restoration of Minerals and Waste Developments DM9 - Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity DM12 - Sustainable Transport Movements DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
1003/57	2 storey extension to dwelling	Approved 1957
F/2003/9574	Proposed new access to farmland from Forest Road	Refused 02/09/2003
AG/2003/0818	Application for prior agricultural determination on the proposed formation of a replacement farm access.	Refused 14/01/2004
F/2004/1230	Proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to B1, B2, B8 and builders merchants and yard, hardstanding, landscaping bund and access from Forest Road.	Non determination Appeal dismissed 11/06/2007
060881	Proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to B1, B2 and B8 and change of use of building to builders merchant and yard.	Refused 04/05/2006
F/2008/0775	Retention of existing access & drive to serve the farm and proposed grain store. Retrospective.	Refused 08/07/2008
F/2008/2779	Application for noise attenuation bund. Retrospective.	Refused 16/02/2009
F/2008/2778	Proposed change of use of agricultural land to highways verge at junction of Forest Road and Twyford Road at Bill Hill plus repositioning and replacement of hedgerow.	Approved 20/04/2009

F/2009/0803	Erection of new sewage treatment plant to replace existing cesspit drainage system. (retrospective).	Approved 21/07/2009
C/2009/1667	Application for submission of details to comply with condition 2 and 3 of planning consent F/2009/0803. 2 .Landscaping scheme. 3. Fencing.	N/A
F/2010/0304	Proposed re-alignment of existing access together with ancillary landscaping and fencing works	Approved 17/06/2010
F/2010/0539	Proposed retention of barn for agricultural use.	Refused 28/05/2010
100952	Change of use of former agricultural buildings to B2 general industrial/B8 storage and distribution use with associated parking, storage and landscaping (retrospective).	Refused 28/05/2010 Appeal - Allowed
111617	Application for retention of barn used for agricultural storage in association with Warren Farm. Retrospective.	Approved 21/05/2012
112011	Application for submission of details to comply with conditions 2,3,6,8,9,11,12 and 13 of appeal planning consent F/2010/0702. 2. Boundary treatments. 3. External lighting. 6. Height of storage within defined areas. 9. Landscape management plan. 11. Combined site travel plan. 12. Scheme for 10% energy from renewable sources. 13. Sustainable drainage.	Approved 25/06/2012
CLE/2012/1339	Application for a certificate of lawful existing use for the extension to be used as a separate dwelling house.	Approved 17/01/2013
F/2014/0351	Erection of 2no replacement dwellings, following demolition and removal of existing dwellings.	Refused 27/05/2014 Appeal - Allowed
F/2014/2845	Proposed erection of a single storey extension.	Approved 26/01/2015
141141	Application for retention of hay barn	Approved 07/04/2015
F/2015/0822	Proposed erection of extensions to building B and retention of open storage areas. (part retrospective). Implementation of Landscaping scheme.	Approved 25/06/2015
161587	Full application for the retention of construction training facilities and associated buildings.	Refused 23/09/2016

		Appeal – APP/X0360/W/1 6/3159454 – Allowed
161588	Full application for the retention of building and the continued use of motor vehicle repairs. Please note that this appeal is linked with APP/X0360/W/16/3159454, LPA REFERENCE 161587.	Refused 23/09/2016 Appeal – APP/X0360/W/1 6/3159454 – Allowed
171774	Application to vary condition 5 of planning consent F/2011/2413 for the retention of barn used for agricultural storage in association with Warren Farm. Retrospective. Condition 5 to allow alternative Class B use.	Decline to Determine 06/07/2017
181587	Application to vary condition 2 following the grant of planning consent F/2014/0351 for the proposed erection of 2no replacement dwellings, following demolition and removal of existing dwellings. Condition 2 relates to the approved plans with the amendments involving a repositioning of the dwelling on plot 1 and repositioning of the dwelling and parking area on plot 2.	Approved 03/08/2018
181910	Full planning application for the change of use of buildings for B1(c) light industrial.	Refused 05/09/2018
182957	Full application for the proposed change of use of land and buildings to (B8) storage and distribution.	Approved 15/04/2019
183150	Application for agricultural prior determination for change of use of agricultural buildings to 3no residential dwellings.	Approved 31/07/2019
190018	Application for submission of details to comply with following condition of planning consent 181587 (Dated 03/08/2018) 3. Materials (Plots 1&2 Warren Farm)	Approved 18/01/2019
190445	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 181587 (Dated 07/058/2018) 8. Programme of archaeological works	Approved 05/03/2019
190508	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 181587 (Dated 07/08/2018) 4. Landscaping 6. Boundary Treatments	Approved 18/03/2019

191156	Application to vary condition 9 of planning consent 182957 for the proposed change of use of land and buildings to (B8) storage and distribution. Condition 9 relates to the restriction of open storage and operation,	Refused 24/06/2019
191291	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent (182957) dated 15/4/2019. Conditions: 6 - Combined travel plan 7 - Details of parking spaces	Approved 09/12/2019
210438	Full planning application for the proposed change of use of existing portacabin from storage to a cafe (E Class use), with external seating area and associating fencing.	Refused 20/04/2021
210581	Application to remove condition 3 of planning consent 191156 (APP/X0360/W/19/3234330) for the Application to vary condition 9 of planning consent 182957 for the proposed change of use of land and buildings to (B8) storage and distribution. Condition 9 relates to the restriction of open storage and operation. Condition 3 refers to the development carried out/ occupied by Anderson Roofing Supplies LTD.	Approved 09/04/2021

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located on land on the northern side of Forest Road, where the site is accessed, and forms an area of land directly south of Unit 2, Warren Farm. The site is located within an area of countryside, and it is bounded by the M4 motorway to the north. The site was originally in agricultural use and the buildings along with a farmhouse were similarly in agricultural use. Over recent years there have been various permissions granted for B2 and B8 uses and dwellings on parts of the overall site, and

the former farm complex is being used for commercial purposes covering an extensive area being intensively occupied.

The application site is located centrally within the middle of the Warren Farm commercial area which is of an industrial/warehouse character. The wider site features substantial buildings fitting the industrial/warehouse character, and there are also associated extensive external storage areas.

Application 182957 was approved on 19/04/2019 for the change of use of land and buildings to (B8) storage and distribution. The current application site lies within the red line of application 182957 and is located directly to the south of the large building (Unit 2) that now falls within use class B following the approved change of use. Satellite images show that the application site (for this live application) has been empty and never used for the storage of materials since application 182957 was approved. Additionally, the satellite images do not show cars parked here, and therefore it is clear that this area is not a designated parking area.

Description of Development:

This application seeks permission for the proposed use of the land for the stationing of a temporary structure to provide a café facility. The café will provide a new business use at Warren Farm.

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 outside of settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where it does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that maintain the high quality of the environment and demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. 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.

Ancillary Development:

Primary uses of land can embrace one or more ancillary activity. The essential feature of such ancillary uses is that there should be a functional relationship between the ancillary use and the primary use. Any assessment and test for whether a use is ancillary to another requires each case to be determined on its individual merits. It must be considered whether the ancillary use could practically and viably operate on its own should the primary use of the premises cease.

It is clear from the survey results in the planning statement that the customer base of the café is sourced almost entirely (96%) from the adjoining commercial uses. Additionally, the hours of operation for the café (06:00 to 14:30) are specific to meet the needs of the businesses situated at Warren Farm. There is a clear reliance from the café on the businesses at Warren Farm, and it is indicative that the facility is in essence solely for the businesses and this is demonstrated by the figures obtained from the survey. As stated, the hours of operation, being 06:00 to 14:30 Monday – Saturday and closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays, solely reflect that the café is to meet the needs of the businesses at Warren Farm.

Whilst in the vast majority, as demonstrated by the submitted user survey within the planning statement, the use is primarily ancillary to the wider site, as 4% of the users are external, planning permission was required in this instance for the new business use. Additionally, it is noted that whilst the use appears ancillary to the wider site as a whole, the proposed café is not ancillary to a singular business on site.

Character of the Area and Countryside:

Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where it does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion away from the original buildings. And Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy requires that development is appropriate in terms of its scale, layout, built form, height and materials, to the area in which it is located.

Whilst the application site is located within the countryside, the site is located within the middle of this area that has an industrial/warehouse character. As this application is retrospective, the proposed temporary structure was seen in situ during a site visit carried out on 19/03/2025. From the site visit, it was clear that the temporary structure appears appropriate in its location, and its appearance poses no harm to the character of the area. The proposal therefore complies with policies CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposed stationing of a temporary structure to provide a café facility will not negatively impact upon neighbouring amenities. The temporary structure will not have an overbearing impact or cause a loss of light. Additionally, there are no overlooking concerns.

Sustainability and Parking Provision:

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car. A survey has been undertaken as part of this application whereby the total number of customers at the café was recorded, and it was noted whether these were internal users (i.e. those working at the units on site) or 'other' (with these being users who have called at the site for business purposes). On average, 96% of the users of the café facility come from the businesses on Warren Farm. Additionally, the submitted planning statement highlights that the nearest retail outlets from which food items may be purchased are over 3km away. The café therefore complies with Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy as it reduces the need to travel.

There is extensive existing parking available for users of the site. Additionally, 96% of the users of the café are internal users, and therefore the current parking situation is acceptable.

Conclusion:

For the reasons stated above, the proposal is acceptable in local plan policy terms and therefore is recommended for approval.

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.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	14 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	8 April 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	14/05/25