

## DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                   |
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| <b>Application Number:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 253011                                                            |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Billingbear Lodge, Maidenhead Road, Binfield, Wokingham, RG40 5RU |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 4 March 2026                                                      |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 8 January 2026                                                    |
| <b>Proposal:</b> Householder application for the proposed erection of extensions and alterations to the dwelling with single storey rear extension to form annex, alterations to the roof form, and associated changes to fenestration, following the demolition and removal of the existing rear projection and associated structures. |                                                                   |

### **PLANNING POLICY**

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Policy</b>      | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<br>National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>   | CP1 – Sustainable Development<br>CP3 – General Principles for Development<br>CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits<br>CP12 – Green Belt                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b> | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development<br>CC02 – Development Limits<br>CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping<br>CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction<br>TB01 – Development within the Green Belt<br>TB21 – Landscape Character<br>TB23 – Biodiversity and Development<br>TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character |
| <b>Other</b>                | Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<br>CIL Guidance + 123 List                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

| Application No. | Description                                                                                                                | Decision & Date        |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 37581           | Erection of single storey extension to provide ancillary office accommodation together with associated parking facilities. | Approved<br>07/06/1991 |
| 010019          | Proposed variation to condition 03 of consent 01110 to allow use by persons other than National Association of Almshouses. | Approved<br>06/04/2001 |
| 010197          | Proposed variation to condition 06 of consent 37581 to allow offices to be used separately from main office.               | Approved<br>06/04/2001 |

|        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                              |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 031877 | Proposed erection of single storey B1 office building with car park and demolition of existing outbuilding                                                                                                                                   | Withdrawn<br>31/01/2003                      |
| 041660 | Proposed provision of new entrance, gates & crossover to Carters Hill. Closure of existing access & reinstatement of hedge & ditch.                                                                                                          | Withdrawn<br>06/05/2004                      |
| 252486 | Application for the prior approval of the erection of a single storey rear extension, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 7.00m, for which the maximum height would be 3.22m and the height of the eaves 3.00m. | Prior Approval<br>Not Required<br>18/11/2025 |

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection subject to condition.

WBC Built Heritage Officer: No comments received

WBC CIL: CIL liable

WBC Ecology: No objection subject to conditions

### External

Garden Trust: No comments received

## REPRESENTATIONS

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parish/Town Council | St Nicholas Hurst Parish: no adverse comments pertaining to application 253011. However, if WBC is minded approving permission, we request that such approval includes recommendations regarding tree protection, removal and replacements.<br><br>Officer response: See trees & landscape section of report. |
| Ward Member(s)      | No comments received                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Neighbours          | No comments received                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## APPRAISAL

**Site Description:** The application site features a two storey residential property located within a rural part of the borough. There is a single storey outbuilding associated with the dwelling (within its garden) and offices and store located to the east of the site which are accessed via a separate entrance from Maidenhead Road.

**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.

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.

**Countryside:** The site is located outside settlement limits in the countryside and is therefore to be considered under Policy CP11 of the adopted Core Strategy.

Policy CP11 of the Wokingham Borough Adopted Core Strategy states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside development limits will not normally be permitted except where certain criteria are met. In the case of residential extensions any proposals must not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The development will not result in an inappropriate increase in scale form and footprint of the original building due to the size of the original dwelling and the large site. In terms of the visual impact the proposed two storey extension would not result in excessive increase in scale or form and the addition has been sensitively designed to remain subservient to the host dwelling in scale and appearance and does not dominate the original form despite views from the public road. The proposal would not result in any unacceptable harmful impact or does not encroach the surrounding countryside. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with policy CP11 in this respect.

**Green Belt:** Policy CP12 of the Core Policy Strategy states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts with national policies for the protection of Green Belt land covered by Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that, *“The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”*. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves 5 purposes, the one most relevant to this proposal is, *“(c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment”*.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that, *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies: *“(c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above*

*the size of the original building*". This is reflected in Core Strategy policies CP11 and CP12 and MDD Local Plan policy TB01, with policy CP11 stating that residential extensions will normally only be permitted where it does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. Policy TB01 defines a "limited" increase in scale to an existing dwelling as a cumulative increase of generally no more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling.

The NPPF clarifies that the original building is considered as it existed on 1st July 1948 when the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 came into effect, or if constructed after this date, as it was built originally. In this case the original building is considered as it existed on 1st July 1948.

In accordance with local policy, to be considered a "not disproportionate" addition to the original dwelling, the scale of the proposed extension should not result in a cumulative increase of more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling. If the proposed development fails this test, it would not be considered acceptable in principle.

|                                             | Volume              | % Increase in volume |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Original dwelling                           | 634m <sup>3</sup>   | N/A                  |
| PD extension (252486)                       | 1,118m <sup>3</sup> | 76.3%                |
| Proposal (253011) including outbuilding     | 887m <sup>3</sup>   | 39.9%                |
| Proposal (253011) Not including outbuilding | 1,101m <sup>3</sup> | 73.6%                |

The existing volume provided by the Agent includes both the prior approval- which has not been built, therefore does not exist and an outbuilding.

In terms of the applicant's fall-back position, the Prior Approval application (ref. 252486) scheme could be implemented at any time and would result in an equivalent (or greater) level of built form than that now proposed. Whilst it is acknowledged that Prior Approval has been granted for development at the site, the scheme approved under that separate regime is materially and fundamentally different from the proposal currently under consideration. The scale, layout, design and use proposed in this application are substantially different from what could lawfully be implemented under the Prior Approval, resulting in a development of a substantially different character and impact. As such, the fallback position carries very limited weight in the assessment of this application. It cannot reasonably be treated as a realistic or comparable alternative against which the current proposal should be judged, as the two schemes are not closely aligned in either physical form or use.

The policy supporting text 3.5 says to exclude other buildings on the site. However, the Courts found in *Sevenoaks District Council v SSE and Dawe* [1997] that an existing detached domestic outbuilding could be regarded as part of the dwelling and, therefore, that an extension to the outbuilding could be regarded as an extension to the house in some circumstances. This is a matter of fact and degree. In this case, the outbuilding is physically detached, but close to the dwelling thus can be considered part of the dwelling. However, with its inclusion; the percentage increase would be approximately

39.9% which exceeds the 35% volume increase as stated in policy TB01 to be considered a “not disproportionate” addition to the original dwelling.

That said, the 35% threshold is not an absolute cap, and each case must be assessed on its individual merits. The overarching aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by maintaining openness, an objective that cannot be fully assessed through volumetric figures alone.

Notwithstanding this the removal of the outbuilding to facilitate the proposed development will consolidate the built development on the site, which would represent a more coherent and contained layout than the pre-existing situation and increase the openness of the property’s rear garden thus a notable benefit to the Green Belt.

Even though it exceeds the % threshold, this is only by a modest degree and it is still considered, the extensions would not result in disproportionate additions in relation to the original dwelling. The addition has been sensitively designed to remain subservient to the host dwelling in both scale and appearance, ensuring it does not dominate the original form. Given its sympathetic design, the extension would not appear intrusive or visually prominent in countryside views, and would therefore preserve the openness, rural character, and visual amenity of the surrounding Green Belt as well as consolidating the built form on site

In conclusion, the changes would not result in disproportionate additions to the original building or cause a detrimental alteration to the scale of the dwelling or to the scale of development on the site. Consequently, the proposal would not harm the openness of the Green Belt or result in undue encroachment into the countryside and is therefore not considered inappropriate development in Green Belt terms.

**Annex:** The single storey rear extension would be used as an annex and would contain a living room, bedroom and en-suite and would be used by an elderly relative of the applicant.

No information has been provided as to the intended occupier of the annex. The proposed annex could be accessed without disturbing the entering the main house or disturbing the occupants as the annex would have a separate entrance door and could be accessed by the separate office entrance. However, the annex is physically attached and opens onto the main residential garden of the property. There is an internal link from the main dwelling utility/boot room to the annex, and the annex would be reliant on using the main house for cooking/preparing meals, therefore the floor plan for the annex do not contain the facilities required for day-to-day living and thus could not be occupied as a separate dwelling. Thus, the circumstances indicate that the proposal would be used ancillary to Billingbear Lodge. The proposed annex would not result in a material change of use or the formation of an independent residential planning unit. As stated above, the proposed use would be purely ancillary to the main dwelling. A condition will be attached to any permission to prevent segregation of the annex.

**Character of the Area:** The Borough Design Guide states “*side extensions should be set back from the building line by at least 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary*”. The first-floor side extension would be

more than 1m from the plot boundary but not be set back from the building line and the roof line continuing, thus not entirely complying with the BDG. However, in this case given it's setting with no adjoining neighbouring property to the west it avoids any terracing effect with significant separation from the plot boundary (over 10m) whilst remains visually subordinate to the host dwelling through its scale, proportions and roof form. The lack of a set-back therefore does not result in harm to the character of the dwelling or street scene. Therefore, whilst it does not comply with the BDG fully, in this instance it would be deemed acceptable.

Whilst continuing the ridge line of dwellings is discouraged, the extension relates well to the host dwelling and replicates the existing gable arrangement therefore would not adversely impact the character of the area. The proposed side extension would be a complimentary design to the host dwelling and would not be an incongruent or dominant feature to the host dwelling, with the resulting built form would not appear out of place or unduly prominent. Furthermore, as stated in the section 23 of BDG "*the roof form of the extension should take it's form from the main building*". The first-floor side extension would keep and mirror the same pitched roof and gable form of the main building. As a result, the proposal would not adversely impact the character of the area.

Although the proposed single-storey rear extension would project approximately 9.80m, which significantly exceeds the Building Design Guide (BDG) recommended maximum depth of 4m from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary.

Given the sites setting and over 20 from the west boundary, over 10m from the south boundary and over 3m from the flank wall of the offices allowing for adequate breathing space. Also, the plot benefits from a generous rear garden with substantial depth. This ensures that, even with a 9.80m projection, a large proportion of private amenity space remains unbuilt upon, maintaining a spacious residential character and avoiding any sense of overdevelopment.

The proposal would broadly replicate the footprint, size and scale of the former outbuilding that previously occupied the rear of the property. As such, the extension would not introduce a new or intensified built form beyond what has historically existed on the site. Its re-establishment in a more coherent and integrated manner is therefore considered proportionate and contextually appropriate.

While the extension would be visible from the public realm, the design, height and positioning ensure it would read as a secondary element to the main dwelling. The roof incorporates a gable end to match the general roof form of the main house with the eaves of the extension lower than that of the main dwelling. It would sit comfortably within the existing built context and would not appear overly prominent or incongruous. The resulting visual impact is therefore limited and would not harm the character or appearance of the street scene.

The proposed materials are to match the existing, thus in keeping with the existing characteristics of the dwelling and such would not harm the street scene.

### **Neighbouring Amenity:**

*Overlooking:* The addition of windows to the front elevation would have the similar outlook to the existing and would overlook onto the front garden of Woodview over 15m away. Thus, given the existing arrangement, the proposed would not result in harmful overlooking.

The additions on the side elevation (northeast facing) would overlook onto The Straight Mile and hedging, thus no overlooking concerns.

The first-floor bathroom window in the southwest facing side elevation would be obscured glazed, thus no overlooking concern. The proposed ground floor openings would be similar to the existing and given the arrangement is not being significantly altered, therefore no overlooking concerns.

The rear elevation outlook would overlook onto Maidenhead Road and vegetation. The openings would be similar to the existing, thus no concern.

All windows marked obscure glazing on plan P25/18/2/200 will be conditioned obscured glazed.

*Loss of Light/Overbearing:* Given the first floor side extension is on the west side of the site, matching the first floor building line and significantly away from Westwood and the offices, it would not be considered to be overbearing or result in harmful loss of light.

The ground floor extension would be similar in footprint and form to the outbuilding demolished so the arrangement would not be too dissimilar and given its only single storey it would not be considered to be overbearing or result in harmful loss of light.

**Amenity Space:** The proposal reduces the amount of amenity space available to the property but it would still be roughly rectangular in shape, receive sunlight for part of the day and be able to accommodate typical garden activities as set out in the Borough Design Guide. Therefore, the reduction in amenity space is not considered to have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

**Highway Access and Parking Provision:** The dwelling currently has 3 bedrooms, with the proposal to increase the number of bedrooms to a total of 4. WBC's adopted parking standards after development state 3 or more spaces for a 4 or more bedroom dwelling. The proposed site layout states 3 parking spaces will be provided, thus complying with standards.

**Landscape and Trees:** The site is located adjacent to the junction with the Straight Mile and Maidenhead Road. The site is characterised by its landscape setting on but within a Local Historic Garden known as Billingbear. A highway verge to the southern site boundary contributes to its verdant setting.

The site is in the countryside and the Green Belt, and is within Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Area known as I1 'Ashridge Farmed Clay Lowland' a moderate quality landscape where the Landscape Strategy is to conserve and enhance the existing rural character. Key aspects to be conserved and actively managed are the characteristic wooded ridges and woodland, including ancient woodland. In particular there are opportunities to restore coppice management, and reinstate and repair key

hedgerows and hedgerow standards. In terms of development the aim is to conserve the sparse settlement pattern through controlling development.

It is noted that (a proportion of) the application site falls within Billingbear Valued Landscape. The NPPF indicates that these landscapes will need to be protected and enhanced.

A revised and updated Tree Protection Plan has been submitted that includes protection to tree T5 and the location of the ground mats.

The AMS can be updated with the revised protection information and with the Tree Protection Plan submit as Condition CL7.

A Landscape Proposals drawing showing 3 replacement trees required as Condition CL4.

**Ecology:** Provided that a copy of the Protected Species Mitigation Licence and mitigation strategy approved by Natural England are submitted prior to commencement in accordance with BS42020 section 9.3 there are no objections to the development as proposed.

**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:                       | 4 March 2026    |
| Earliest date for decision: | 11 January 2026 |

|                                                               |                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Recommendation<br/>agreed by:<br/>(Authorised Officer)</b> |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                                                  | <b>4 March 2026</b>                                                               |

**PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**  
*Insert where relevant*