

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250905
Site Address:	Newlands Farm, Barn 1, Sindlesham Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9JH
Expiry Date:	31 July 2025
Advert Publication Date:	29 April 2025
Site Notice Date:	30 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	30 April 2025
Proposal: Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed erection of a single storey side and rear extension with 1 no. roof lantern.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- The application site is a Grade II Listed Building located within Arborfield.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets (where site is within a Conservation Area)

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
020975	Proposed conversion of redundant barns to 5 residential units plus erection of new garage for farmhouse.	Approved 07/07/2004
022196	Proposed conversion of 5 listed barns to 4 residential units and garages.	Approved 07/07/2004
050340	Proposed rebuilding of barn and use as 1 residential unit, conversion of 4 other barns to 3 residential units (amendment to planning consents F/2002/5813 & LB/2002/7840). Part retrospective.	Approved 01/02/2006
050341	Proposed rebuilding of barn and use as 1 residential unit, conversion of 4 other barns to 3 residential units (amendment to planning consents F/2002/5813 & LB/2002/7840). Part retrospective.	Approved 01/02/2006

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Conservation	Objection and refusal recommended
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WBC Ecology	Request further information prior to determination.
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REPRESENTATIONS

None

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Barn 1 at Newlands Farm is a Grade II Listed Building, it is listed as 'Stable at Newland Farm', and it is a brick and timber stable of the early 18th century which has been converted for domestic use. The stable building forms part of a well preserved, although no longer in agricultural use, 18th century farmstead – Newlands Farm (historically Arborfield Farm). The farmhouse itself is later, 19th century, with the four Georgian structures individually listed on the site. The farm is located just to the north of Arborfield Cross and specifically included within the Conservation Area.

The proposal complies in terms of:

Impact on heritage asset:



Description of Development:

This application seeks permission to erect a single storey rear/side extension to the dwelling to provide a new kitchen/dining area and a utility room.

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets:

Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan outlines that the Council will conserve and seek to enhance the designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by supporting development proposals that will conserve the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets.

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Additionally, paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a proposal would amount to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use.

This application proposes the alteration and extension of the Grade II listed 'Stable at Newland Farm', a brick and timber stable of the early 18th century, which has since been converted for domestic use. The stable building forms part of a well preserved, although no longer in agricultural use, 18th century farmstead – Newlands Farm.

The listed building draws its significance from a number of aspects – the context, association with the farmstead and village, the architectural and historic interest of which, crucially, the historic fabric and planform form part. It is these two latter elements which would be severely impacted by the proposals.

The proposal would result in a substantial loss of the historic fabric, with walling to the north and west removed. Additionally, there would be an impact on the plan form, and as a listed building, the plan form greatly contributes to its special interest – the ability to appreciate the historic structure as a fairly simple agricultural building, set within the farmstead complex would be eroded by the increased footprint of the proposed alterations.

In terms of the proposed design, the Council's Heritage Officer finds that the gable ended element would betray an authenticity of historic appearance. Additionally, the contemporary flat/crown roof would fail to respond and reflect the rural vernacular half-hipped roof form of the host, introducing a convoluted inauthentic appearance. These proposed extensions would seek to increase the sense of a 'domestic characteristic', thus eroding the rural/utilitarian interest of the agricultural barn and to the neighbouring, separately listed, barns on the site.

The Council's Heritage Officer finds that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the identified heritage assets. As per paragraph 215 of the NPPF, the harm is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Given the limited scale of the proposal and as it would only be providing more space for existing rooms and a small utility room, it is not deemed that there are any notable public benefits of the proposal that outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset.

Through the loss of historic fabric and plan form, and inauthentically designed alterations, the proposals would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the setting of other listed buildings. Therefore, the proposed development would conflict with Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy and Policy TB24 of the Managing Development Delivery local plan. This forms the first reason for refusal.

Character of the Area:

The proposed single storey rear/side extension adheres to R16 design principle within the Borough Design Guide (BDG) in relation to separation distances as the proposal is set 1.4 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property. However, the extensions would be visible from the public highway and there would undoubtedly be an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and thus the setting of the Listed Building. The spatial relationship between the stable and the separately listed barn immediately to the east would be affected. Through the form and massing, the proposals would erode this historic relationship, blurring the authentic plan of the farmstead. Whilst there are always unavoidable consequences of a conversion of an agricultural farmstead to residential use, these 'barn conversions' on the whole, have sought to minimise the sense of domesticity, thus retaining the spirit of the farmstead complex. It is this character which would be eroded by the proposals as presented in this application, thus adversely affecting this part of the conservation area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policies CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, and Policy TB24 of the Managing Development Delivery local plan. This also forms part of the first reason for refusal.

Conclusion:

The impact on the historic fabric and plan form of the listed building is a strong enough reason to warrant refusal of the application. Through the loss of historic fabric and plan

form, and inauthentically designed alterations, the proposals would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the setting of other listed buildings.

Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date:	30 July 2025
Earliest date for decision:	30 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	31 July 2025