

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
251348	20/08/2025	Earley CP	Maiden Erlegh & Whitegates;

Applicant	Mr Sajad Bashier
Site Address	20 Culver Lane, Earley, Wokingham
Proposal	Householder application for the proposed erection of a detached outbuilding for use as a garage within the rear garden. (Part-Retrospective)
Type	Householder Application
Officer	Tariq Bailey-Biggs
Reason for determination by committee	Listed by Councillor Stephen Newton

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 13 August 2025
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL subject to conditions and informatives

SUMMARY

The application seeks to regularise amendments to a previously approved outbuilding at a one-and-a-half-storey detached dwelling on a corner plot in Earley, following an enforcement investigation. The proposal involves converting the structure from storage to garage use, with modest increases in height, width, and length, along with repositioned doors and new windows.

These alterations are minor and retain clear separation from a concurrent outbuilding application, ensuring both remain subordinate to the main dwelling, which itself has consent for significant enlargement. The garage is located to the rear and does not project beyond the established building line, with soft landscaping proposed to improve screening and visual integration.

No unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity or privacy are anticipated, and the garage meets parking standards. Concerns about potential use as a separate dwelling will be addressed by a condition restricting the use to ancillary only.

The scheme complies with local and national policy and is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
251346	Householder application for the Proposed erection of an outbuilding (part-retrospective).	Awaiting decision.
243174	Householder application for proposed erection of an outbuilding.	Approved, 14/01/2025

243086	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 232494 to change of the internal layout of the outbuilding including addition of a staircase to serve loft storage space, plus insertion of rooflights and changes to fenestration.	Approved 13/12/24
241035	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 240123 dated 27/03/2024. Condition 5, Landscaping.	Approved 13/06/2024
240123	Householder application for proposed raised roof with part single part two storey front extension, single storey side/rear extension, front driveway and boundary alterations along with demolition of chimney.	Approved 27/03/2024
232494	Householder application for the proposed alterations to the front garden to create a driveway and new vehicular access, erection of single storey rear outbuilding following the demolition of the existing detached garage plus the erection of new boundary fencing and associated landscaping (part-retrospective).	Approved 08/12/2023

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION	
CONSTRAINTS	Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location (Earley) Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Landscape Character Assessment Area

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
WBC Highways	No Objections.

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council:

Earley Town Council (ETC) - Objects to the application and recommends refusal for two main reasons:

1. The development is visually dominant in the street scene, failing to maintain environmental quality, contrary to Policy CP1.
2. Its scale, mass, and design are inappropriate and intrusive, harming visual amenity and failing to integrate with the street scene, contrary to Policy CP3.

If the application is approved, ETC requests a condition limiting the outbuilding's use to incidental accommodation only. It should not be let or sold as a separate unit without prior approval to ensure adequate parking, amenity, and protection of neighbouring properties, in line with Policies CP1, CP3, TB07, TB08, and CC07.

Local Members:

Councillor Stephen Newton – Submitted a formal objection to the application, expressing concern that it fails to acknowledge a second outbuilding constructed in the same garden. He noted that this adjacent structure has been submitted under a separate planning application (No. 251346), which he believes is an attempt to obscure the fact that both buildings are part of a single development. He argued that the two applications should be considered together, especially given that a previous proposal (application 250666) was refused. Councillor Newton suggested the separation may be intended to

Neighbours:

ACER (The Whitegates Residents Association) - Submitted a revised objection to Planning Application 251348, stating that the outbuilding has been enlarged in all dimensions compared to the previously approved plan (243175), making it visually intrusive and out of keeping with the surrounding garden and street scene.

Key concerns include:

- The increased length, width, height, and eaves height exceed acceptable limits.
- The garage door now faces the house, opposite the vehicle access, raising doubts about its intended use.
- A wider, repositioned side door suggests the building could function as ancillary accommodation.
- The application should be assessed alongside application 241346, as both outbuildings exceed permissible scale.
- The removal of the last tree has further harmed the garden's contribution to the streetscape.

ACER argues the proposal fails to comply with Policy CP3 (appropriate scale and integration) and Policy TB06 (boundary landscaping) and recommends the application be refused.

32 Easby Way, RG6 3XA - Raised concern that the relocated personnel door and new windows are positioned only 750mm from the boundary with Eastcourt Avenue. They suggested this could allow for the creation of a separately accessed unit of accommodation and noted that the proximity also appears to obstruct both access and natural daylight.

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework
National Design Guide
National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

CP1 – Sustainable Development
CP3 – General Principles for Development
CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
CP7 – Biodiversity
CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals

MDD Local Plan (MDD

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

CC06 – Noise

CC07 – Parking

CC09 – Development and Flood Risk

CC10 – Sustainable Drainage

TB21 – Landscape Character

TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING ISSUES

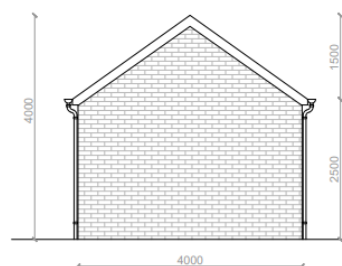
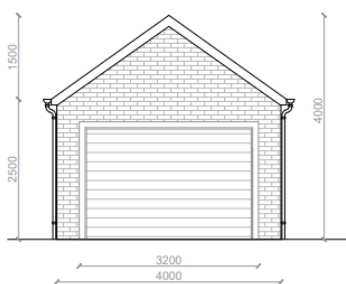
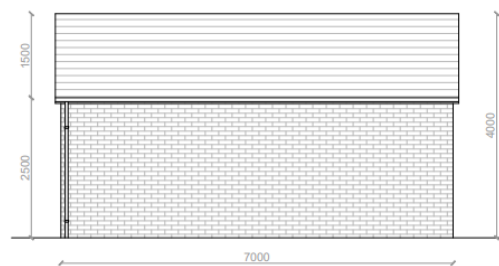
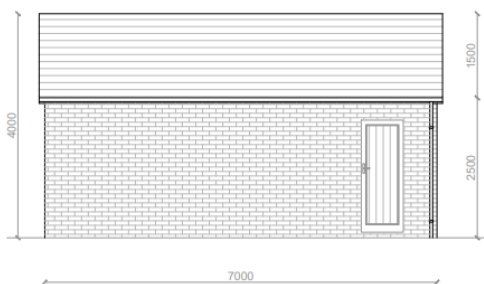
Site Description, planning history and proposed development:

- 1) The application site falls within the Major Development Location of Earley and relates to a one-and-a-half-storey detached dwelling located at a corner plot at the junction of Culver Lane to the north and Eastcourt Avenue to the west.
- 2) This part-retrospective planning application is a resubmission of a similar scheme that was refused in May 2025 under planning reference 250666. It forms part of a wider suite of applications submitted in response to an enforcement investigation (ref: RFS/2025/090145) concerning the construction of outbuildings on the site that were not carried out in accordance with previously approved permissions. These include a single-storey rear outbuilding approved under application ref: 232494 (December 2023) for use as a gym/playroom, study, and bathroom, and a separate storage outbuilding approved under ref: 243174 (December 2024). As these elements have not been built in accordance with the approved plans, they are presently unauthorised in planning terms.
- 3) The most recent application under ref: 250666 which sort planning permission for the proposed erection of 2 no detached outbuildings which was refused for the following reason:

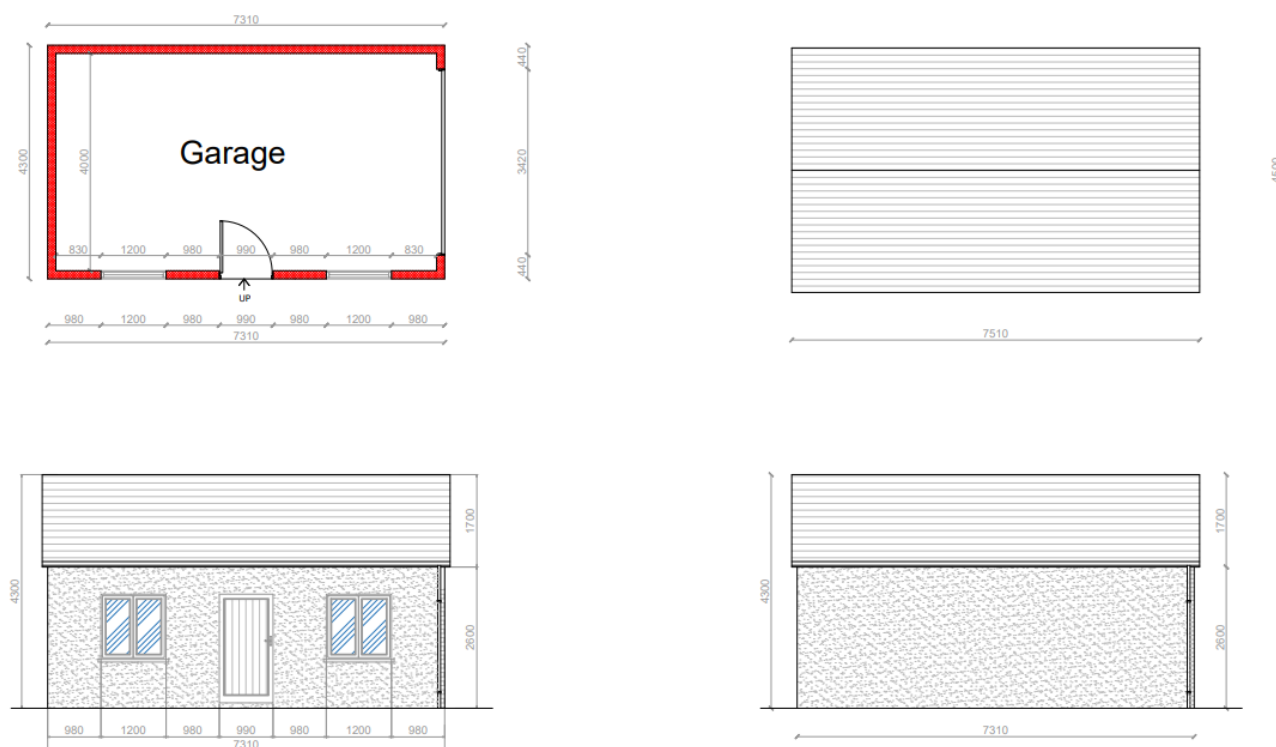
Individually and cumulatively, the proposed outbuildings would by reason of their excessive scale, height, massing and inappropriate siting forward of the established building line along Eastcourt Avenue, result in an overly dominant, incongruous and visually intrusive form of development. From many locations along Eastcourt Avenue, the proposed outbuildings would read as one continuous form of development forward of the established building line that would significantly detract from the visual amenity of the character and appearance, pattern of development and spatial qualities of the immediate vicinity, contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide, and Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

- 4) Subsequently, several amendments have been made to the proposals in an effort to overcome the above reason for refusal and ultimately regularise the unauthorised works on site, as identified during the enforcement investigation.
- 5) When compared to the approved scheme under planning reference 243174, the following changes are now proposed:
- The conversion of the outbuilding from a storage space to a garage.
 - The length has been increased from 7 metres to 7.3 metres.
 - The width has been increased from 4 metres to 4.3 metres.
 - The height has been increased from 4 metres to 4.3 metres.
 - A side entrance door has been repositioned, and two side windows have been added.
- 6) A comparison of the elevational drawings and site layout between the originally approved scheme and the current proposal is provided below:

Storage outbuilding as approved under 243174



Proposed Garage:



- 7) It should be noted that this application has been submitted alongside a concurrent, separate application for the part-retrospective erection of a detached rear outbuilding for use as a gym/playroom, bathroom and home office under planning reference 251346. While each application is assessed on its own merits in terms of planning acceptability, it is relevant that the most recently refused application (ref: 250666) included both the main outbuilding and the garage within a single proposal. As such, this report will, where appropriate, consider the relationship between the two structures as part of the overall assessment of the current scheme.

Character of the Area:

- 8) Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that maintain and enhance the high quality of the environment.
- 9) Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy emphasises 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
- 10) Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide advises that a garage should not be sited in front gardens but should be to the side or rear of a dwelling and the garages should not project forward of the building line of a property.
- 11) The application site comprises a one-and-a-half-storey detached dwelling located at a corner plot at the junction of Culver Lane to the north and Eastcourt Avenue to the west. The character of the surrounding area distinctly varied when viewed as a whole,

primarily consisting of two storey dwellings set in discernible groupings which are distinguished by repeated house type.

- 12) The proposal includes several modifications to the previously approved scheme under planning application reference 232494 as described above.
- 13) Taken together, the proposed amendments are considered minor in nature and do not result in a significant change to the overall scale, form, or function of the proposed garage. While it would remain positioned close to the south-western boundary and visible from the public realm along Eastcourt Avenue, the modest increase in dimensions, when compared to the extant permission, would be barely perceptible. The garage would remain located within the rear garden area, in line with the guidance set out in Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide. It would not appear out of keeping within the street scene, particularly given the presence of an existing detached garage to the rear of the application site and a similar garage structure to the rear of No. 16 Eastcourt Avenue, immediately to the south-west of the application site.
- 14) When considering both the proposed garage and the separate main outbuilding under consideration in application 251346, it is acknowledged that their ground-level proximity would be relatively close. However, a substantial gap would be maintained at roof level, ensuring a clear visual break between the two structures. The omission of the side car port from the main outbuilding as previously proposed under planning reference 250666 now helps prevent the appearance of a single, continuous built form and allows each building to remain legible as a distinct, ancillary element within the site. As such, the combined impact on massing and visual character is considered acceptable.
- 15) It is acknowledged that the applicant benefits from extant planning permissions for both outbuildings under 243174 and 232494, which provide a credible fallback position. In comparison, the proposed amendments are modest and would not result in any materially greater impact on the character of the area. The design remains sympathetic, the outbuildings retain clear separation, and both structures continue to read as subordinate to the main dwelling, which is itself increasing in scale. Additionally, soft landscaping will be introduced along the site boundaries to enhance visual amenity and help integrate the development within the street scene. Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable within its context and accords with policies CP3 and CP9 of the Core Strategy, as well as the guidance contained within Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

- 16) With regards to the new ground floor windows, the existing boundary fencing would be high enough to sufficiently mitigate any overlooking concerns

Loss of light and overlooking:

- 17) The proposed garage would remain positioned close to the south-western side boundary, within the rear garden area and well away from neighbouring properties.

As such, the proposal would not result in any loss of light or overbearing impact on neighbouring amenity.

Trees and Landscaping:

- 18) Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping and Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character
- 19) R14 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires well-designed hard and soft landscaping that complements housing.
- 20) Although a landscaping scheme was required by condition under the extant approval for the outbuilding (ref: 232494), it was not formally discharged. Instead, it was superseded by a landscaping scheme approved under application 241035, which related to subsequent extensions to the main dwelling approved under ref: 240123.
- 21) The Case Officer considers that there is an opportunity to introduce soft landscaping along the south-western boundary of the application site, such as a hedgerow or a series of small trees. This would enhance the visual amenity of the area and provide additional screening of the proposed garage from the street scene. A suitable landscaping scheme will be secured by condition should the application be approved.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

- 22) The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed the application and considers the proposed garage to be acceptable, as it would complement the existing parking provision. This includes four off-street parking spaces on the front driveway, which is deemed sufficient for a dwelling of this size and compliant with the Council's Parking Standards. Accordingly, no objections are raised on highway grounds.

Amenity Space:

- 23) The remaining rear amenity space would exceed the minimum depth requirement of 11 metres.

Other matters:

- 24) Several objections have been raised on the grounds that the proposed installation of two side windows and a side door to the garage could enable its use as a self-contained unit, separate from the main dwelling.
- 25) However, the inclusion of these features does not, in itself, indicate that the building would be used as a separate dwelling. The garage is of a modest scale, appropriate for a single bay, and maintains a close physical and functional relationship with the main house. It would also be situated within a mutually overlooked garden area, with no separate access or demarcated outdoor space proposed. As such, its use as an independent unit is not considered likely or supported by the submitted plans.

26) Nonetheless, the creation or use of a self-contained unit of accommodation within the rear garden of the application site would not be acceptable in planning terms. Such use would constitute a material change of use requiring separate planning permission.

27) Accordingly, should the application be recommended for approval, a planning condition would be imposed to ensure the outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwellinghouse. This condition would explicitly restrict the building from being used, sold, or sub-let as a separate unit of accommodation. The Council reserves the right to take appropriate enforcement action should the outbuilding be used in breach of this condition, including in circumstances where it functions independently of the main dwelling.

28) This approach ensures that the development remains consistent with the intended ancillary use, avoids the establishment of an unauthorised dwelling, and safeguards the planning integrity of the site and surrounding area.

Conclusion

29) The proposal addresses the previous refusal by maintaining clear separation between outbuildings and respecting the established building line. The amendments preserve the character and visual amenity of the area, ensuring the development remains subordinate to the main dwelling and avoids dominance or visual intrusion. The introduction of soft landscaping along site boundaries will further enhance screening and integration with the streetscene.

30) There are also no anticipated adverse impacts on highway safety or neighbouring amenities.

31) Subject to the conditions and informatives within Appendix 1 below, this application is recommended for approval.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
<i>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 the protected groups 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 upon protected groups as a result of the development.</i>

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / informatives

APPROVAL subject to the following conditions and informatives:

1. Timescale

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Approved details

This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings titled and numbered Location Plan, 16 REVB and 23 REVA received by the local planning authority on 06/06/2025. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. Landscaping

Within three months of the date of this permission, there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted, and any existing trees or shrubs to be retained. Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s).

Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure adequate planting in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 (and TB06 for garden development).

4. External materials

Except where stated otherwise on the approved drawings or application form, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the outbuilding hereby permitted shall be of similar appearance to those used in the existing building, unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

5. Non-let/No sale

The outbuilding hereby approved shall be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwellinghouse, the main dwelling shall remain in use as a single dwellinghouse and the outbuilding shall not be used, sold or sub-let as separate dwellings.

Reason: A separate unit of accommodation of this nature may not be acceptable in this location in the interests of the amenities, character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP4, and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC01, CC07, TB07, TB08.

Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
2. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.
3. The applicant is reminded that should there be any change from the approved drawings during the build of the development this may require a fresh planning application if the changes differ materially from the approved details. Non-material changes may be formalised by way of an application under s.96A Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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