

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261898
Site Address:	Bearwood Park Training Ground, Mole Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, RG41 5DB
Expiry Date:	13 October 2026
Site Visit Date:	None undertaken
Proposal: Prior approval submission for the proposed installation of 265kW of roof mounted PV panels on the Training Ground building.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Section 55	Provides that 'development' includes the carrying out of building operations on land, and 'building operations' includes structural alterations or additions to buildings.
Section 57	Planning permission is needed for all development of land.
Section 187a	Enforcement for breach of conditions

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Article 7	Prior approval applications: time periods for decision
Article 3	In conjunction with Schedule 2, Part 14 Class J grants planning permission for installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises
Article 4	Provides that the planning authority may give direction to restrict the effect of Article 3

Update note: SI 2026/896 came into force on 27 August 2026 but did not amend Class J. The Class J appraisal has been updated to remove former J.1(d) and J.3, previously omitted by SI 2023/1279, and to reflect the current J.4 procedure.

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
261871	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 142536 for amendments to Parking and Access, Air Source Heat Pumps, Refuse and Cycle Storage, Levels and Retaining Wall Works, Elevation Changes, Increase in Building Height, Steps and Ramps, Gravel Strips and Changes to Fenestration.	Refused 2 September 2026
261704	Application for a Non-Material Amendment to planning permission F/2014/2119 dated 20 July	Refused 19 August 2026

	2015 for the redevelopment of Former Bearwood Golf Course to allow the dismantling and rebuilding of existing boundary walls serving Units 6, 7 and 8 and Units 15, 16 and 17 at the former Sawmill Site in the same approved locations using salvaged and matching materials.	
221841	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent F/2014/2119 (142536) to allow an amendment to the alignment of the pedestrian footpath to the west of the facility.	Approved 24 June 2022
220165	Full application for an entrance gate at the access adjoining Mole Lodge for a temporary period of 3 years from the date of determination (of this application). (Retrospective)	Withdrawn
201228	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent F/2014/2119 dated 20/07/2015. Condition 2. Samples and Details of Materials. 30. Boundary Treatments (Fences and Walls). 32. Details of Earthworks. 35. Re-pointing - Sample Area On Site. 41. Recording (Plans/Photos) - Former Store Building to be demolished.	Approved 18 January 2021
192468	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent F/2014/2119 dated 22/07/2015, condition 2-Samples & details. 30- Boundary treatments. 31- Landscape management.34-Schedule of repairs.35-Re-pointing sample area on site.41-Recording (Plans/Photos) Former store to be demolished. 44- Landscape & Ecological management plan. 54-Scheme of Remediation. 55 -Investigation to determine future impact of landfill gas.	Approve 29 November 2019
181838	Application for the submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent (173015) 19/03/2018. 2. Materials Samples 6. Measured Survey 30. Boundary Treatments 31. Landscape Management Plan 32. Earthworks 34. Schedule of Repairs 37. Joinery Details 38. Replacement doors and Windows 41. Recording - Plans/Photos 44. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan 52. External Lighting Scheme 54. Contamination 55. Landfill Gas	Approved 4 March 2019
173015	Application to vary condition 3 (approved plans) of planning permission F/2014/2119) for the redevelopment of former Bearwood Golf Course to provide a new football training ground and academy facility, comprising of 3 full size pitches 5 other pitches for use by various under 18 age	Approved 19 March 2018

	groups and 2 goal keeping practice areas. A single storey extension and conversion of existing golf course clubhouse into security gatehouse and visitor's cafe, new maintenance shed and maintenance store. Single storey changing block and medical suite. Refurbishment of West Lodge for junior academy trialists, refurbishment of apple store, retention and refurbishment of riding stables offices/stores to academy offices, new single storey academy building to provide changing rooms, medical suite, classrooms, player recreation and gymnasium area. Refurbishment of Mole Lodge to provide accommodation for senior academy trialists, new two storey first team building, single storey headquarters building. The refurbishment/building of existing housing and farm/industrial buildings to provide 26 residential units (net increase of 18 residential units) with associated parking, landscaping and access. Demolition of ancillary buildings plus garden wall to be made good and associated works relating to Bearwood Lake dam.	
172673	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 142536(F/2014/2119 -20/7/2015). 5. Drainage Strategy. 12. Communications Plan. 29a. Tree Protection Plan. 31. Landscape Management Plan.	Approved 15 November 2017
172072	Application for the submission of detail to comply with the following condition of planning consent (F/2014/2119) from 20/07/2015. 17. Bicycle Storage / Parking facilities 20. Road Widening 53. Air Quality Assessment	Approved 16 August 2017
173567	Application for the submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent F/2014/2119 20/07/2015. 52. External Lighting Scheme	Approved 21 March 2018
160138	Conditions application for the submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent F/2014/2119 (dated 20/07/2015): Part Discharge: 5. Drainage - Residential 6. Measured Survey/Finished Floor Levels - Residential 33. Mill Building 37. Joinery Details 38. Replacement Windows/Doors. Full Discharge: 18. Cycle Storage - Residential 25. Construction Management Plan 26. Framework Travel Plan 42. Archaeology 43. Reptile Mitigation Strategy 45. Great Crested Newt	Part approved 6 August 2017

	Mitigation Strategy 48. Environmental Health Management Plan 56. Asbestos Management Plan.	
162531	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent F/2014/2119 dated 20/7/15- Full discharge - 27. Hard and soft landscaping; 40. Re-use of clay tiles/ slates 49. Dust mitigation measures; 55. Landfill gas monitoring Partial discharge- 30. Boundary treatments; 31. Landscape management plan; 32. Earthworks 34. Schedule of repairs; 35. Re-pointing; 44. Landscape and ecology management plan; 54. Contamination	Approved 17 July 2017
160814	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent F/2014/2119 (dated 20/07/2015): 29a) Tree protection plan.	Approved 06 December 2016
142536	Full application for the redevelopment of Former Bearwood Golf Course to provide a new football training ground and academy facility, comprising of 3 full size team pitches, 5 other pitches for use by various under 18 age groups and 2 goal keeping practice areas. A single storey extension and conversion of existing golf course clubhouse into security gatehouse and visitor's cafe, new maintenance shed and maintenance store. Single storey changing block and medical suite. Refurbishment of West Lodge for Uni or academy trialists, refurbishment of apple store, retention and refurbishment of riding stables offices/stores to academy offices, new single storey academy building to provide changing rooms, medical suite, classrooms, player recreation and gymnasium area. Refurbishment of Mole Lodge to provide accommodation for senior academy trialists, new two storey first team building, single storey headquarters building. The refurbishment/rebuilding of existing housing and farm/industrial buildings to provide 26 residential units (net increase of 18 residential units) with associated parking, landscaping and access. Demolition of ancillary buildings plus garden wall to be made good and associated works relating to Bearwood Lake dam.	Approved 20 July 2015

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

None

External
None

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

PART J.1 AND J.2 APPRAISAL				
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)			Yes	No
1	s.55	Does it constitute development?	✓	
2	s.191	Would it be contrary to an enforcement notice?		✓
3	s.187a Art.3 (4)	Would it be contrary to any condition imposed by any planning permission granted or deemed to be granted?		✓
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)			Yes	No
4	Art.3 (5)	Are the building operations involved in the construction of the original building lawful?	✓	
5	Art.4	Is there an 'Article 4 Direction' in effect for the site?		✓
6	Sch.2 Pt. 14 Class J	Does it consist of the <u>installation</u> , alteration or replacement of— (a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building; (b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or (c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building other than a dwellinghouse or block of flats	✓	
7	J.1(a)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a pitched roof and would protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope? <u>As stated application form</u>		✓
8	J.1(b)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a flat roof, where the highest part of the solar PV equipment would be higher than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney)?# <u>As stated on application form</u>		✓
9	J.1(c)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof? See plans		✓
10	J.1(e)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument?		✓
11	J.1(f)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a listed building or on a building within the curtilage of a listed building?		✓

PART J.1 AND J.2 APPRAISAL

		<u>The building on which the solar panels are proposed is not considered to be a listed structure in its own right.</u> <u>The site is located adjacent to the listed building West Lodge but outside its curtilage.</u> <u>The building on which the solar panels are proposed lies within the curtilage of the Grade II* Bearwood House. However, the building is of relatively recent construction and post-dates the listing of Bearwood House It is therefore not considered to be a curtilage-listed structure for the purposes of Section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as it postdates 1 July 1948.</u> <u>Nevertheless, the site lies within the setting of the Grade II* Bearwood House, the Grade II Bearwood Chapel and the Registered Park and Garden.</u>		
12	J.2(a)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a wall and protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the wall when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the wall? <u>Not located on a wall</u>		N/A
13	J.2(b)	Would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a wall and be within 1 metre of a junction of that wall with another wall or with the roof of the building? <u>Not located on a wall</u>		N/A
14	J.2(c)	In the case of a building on article 2(3) land, would the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment be installed on a wall which fronts a highway?		✓

PART J.4 APPRAISAL

Development under Class J is permitted subject to the following conditions:

J.4(1)(a) Siting, external appearance and amenity

The solar PV equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area.

The proposal comprises the installation of 563 photovoltaic modules on the flat roof of an existing modern building using a ballast-mounted system with a maximum inclination of 10 degrees. The panels are arranged in regular rows and are set back from the roof edges, ensuring that they remain largely contained within the roof envelope. The host building lies within the curtilage of the Grade II Bearwood House but is of modern construction and is not considered to be a curtilage-listed structure.*

Given the flat roof form of the building and the low-profile nature of the proposed mounting system, views of the solar PV equipment from surrounding public vantage points are expected to be limited. The equipment would not project significantly above

the roofline (10 degrees) and would be read as a recessive addition to an existing modern building. Whilst the panels would alter the appearance of the roof when viewed from elevated positions or close proximity, the development has been sited and arranged to minimise its visual impact as far as practicable.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would result in only a limited change to the external appearance of the building and would not cause material harm to the character or appearance of the area.

The host building lies within the curtilage of the Grade II Bearwood House but, as it was constructed after 1 July 1948, it is not considered to be a curtilage-listed structure. Whilst the site is located within the Registered Park and Garden associated with Bearwood House, the low-profile design, siting and limited visibility of the panels ensure that they would appear as a recessive addition to the existing building and would not materially detract from the character, appearance or visual amenity of the wider estate.*

The equipment has therefore been sited, so far as practicable, to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area, in accordance with Class J.4(1)(a) of the GPDO.

J.4(1)(b) Removal

The solar PV equipment must be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.

This statutory condition applies.

J.4(2) Subject matter of prior approval

Class J(c) development is subject to prior approval as to the design or external appearance of the development, in particular the impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land.

The proposed solar photovoltaic panels would be installed on the roof of an existing building within the Reading Football Club Training Ground at Bearwood Park. The site is located within a large private estate and is surrounded predominantly by sports facilities, open land, woodland and the lake. There are no neighbouring residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the application site. The nearest dwelling is Mole Park Cottage, located a considerable distance to the south-west of the proposed installation.

Given the separation distances involved, the orientation of the panels and the absence of nearby sensitive receptors, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to unacceptable glare affecting the occupiers of neighbouring land. Furthermore, solar panels are designed to absorb rather than reflect sunlight and are typically manufactured with anti-reflective coatings. The design and external appearance of the development are therefore considered acceptable and the proposal complies with the requirements of Class J(c) of the GPDO.

J.4(3) Application requirements

The application must be accompanied by a written description of the proposed development; a plan indicating the site and showing the proposed development; the developer's contact address; the developer's email address where the developer is content to receive communications electronically; and any fee required to be paid.

These have been provided

J.4(4) and (5) Compliance and sufficiency of information

The local planning authority may refuse the application where the proposed development does not comply with Class J, or where insufficient information has been provided to establish compliance with the applicable conditions, limitations or restrictions.

Sufficient information has been provided.

J.4(6) Publicity

The local planning authority must give notice of the proposed development either by site display for not less than 21 days or by serving notice on any adjoining owner or occupier.

Consultation was undertaken.

J.4(7) Further information

The local planning authority may require such information as it may reasonably require to determine the application.

No further information was required.

J.4(8) Determination

The local planning authority must take into account representations made as a result of the publicity under J.4(6) and have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, so far as relevant to the subject matter of prior approval, as if the application were a planning application.

No representations were made, except the Parish Council (see above)

J.4(9) Commencement and the 56-day period

Development must not begin before written confirmation that prior approval is not required, written prior approval, or the expiry of 56 days from receipt of the application without notification as to whether prior approval is given or refused.

13 October 2026

J.4(10) Approved or submitted details

The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details where prior approval is required, or the submitted details where prior approval is not required or J.4(9)(c) applies, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

This statutory condition applies.

J.4(11) Conditions

Prior approval may be granted unconditionally or subject to conditions reasonably related to the subject matter of the prior approval.

No other conditions are required.

J.4(12) Public holidays

When computing the site-display period under J.4(6)(a), any day which is a public holiday must be disregarded.

There were no public holidays during this determination period.

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:	Prior approval not required
Date:	10 September 2026
Earliest date for decision:	13 September 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	25.09.26

This decision is issued in respect of the submitted application form and application plans and documents titled:

- 260274-01-Site Layout For Planning Submission P1
- Locality Plan 260190-02 P1.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the above unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, as per J.4 sub-paragraph (10).

The solar photovoltaic should be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed, as per J.4 sub-paragraph (1).