

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	242712
Address:	Little Gables, Sindlesham Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9QE		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a new front porch, single storey front/side extension and two first floor rear extensions with changes to existing fenestrations.		
Heritage Asset:	Little Gables and Lychgate Cottage – NDHA Arborfield Cross Conservation Area Listed building along with conservation areas are classed as designated heritage assets under the NPPF (2024) and in the Council's Local Plan policies.		
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

Further information required – holding objection

Comments On Proposal

The application proposes the demolition of elements of Little Gables – an attractive 19th century cottage, along with the attached neighbour of Lychgate Cottage - with the subsequent construction of new single and two-storey additions. Little Gables is located within the heart of the Arborfield Cross Conservation Area, sited just to the north-west of the village green and former duck pond. The cottages feature notably in the Conservation Area Appraisal and by virtue of their age, architectural and historic interest, as well as the positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Arborfield Cross Conservation Area, Little Gables/Lychgate Cottage are identified as a non-designated heritage assets (NDHA).

The application does not appear to have been accompanied by a heritage statement as to identify, assess and explain the proposals' impacts upon the affected heritage assets. As the proposals relate to both the Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset), the building itself as a NDHA, as well as to the setting of other assets, the application is mandatorily required to submit a heritage statement as per the requirement of para. 207 of the NPPF (Dec 2024).

Notwithstanding the lack of mandatorily required assessment, the proposed alteration of the cottage raises a number of concerns. Whilst there may not be an objection in principle to the single storey addition to the side (given Lychgate

Cottage's arrangement), the flat roofed and parapet design does not best sympathise with the host's form and architectural language. Whilst as a general rule Crown roofs are best avoided in the historic environment, in this instance, the replication of Lychgate Cottage's single storey addition, with the small tiled roof pitch – Crown roof arrangement – will be best here given the close relationship with the neighbour and prominence when approaching the cottage. The fenestration here too requires alteration, the bi-folding doors present a large blank aperture, devoid of interest. Greater detail should be included on this elevation – perhaps an appropriately proportioned window opposite the (proposed) kitchen island with a decreased opening and even off-centre, again to add interest.

Whilst the proposed traditional form of the two-storey element, as to replicate and match the host is welcomed, there are concerns as to the over-development of this modest 19th century farmworkers cottage. Whilst these buildings are altered, care must be taken as to not erode the simple plan and appearance of the cottages, of which they draw part of their significance.

Symmetry and the relationship to the attached Lychgate Cottage is important here. Whilst the buildings are altered, consideration should be given to retaining – or reinstating/creating – symmetrical interest. Whilst vegetation at present no longer allows for a strong visual relationship with the village, this may be subject to change in the future, and thus thought must be given as to any future relationship and visibility within the context.

Until such as time as an appropriately authored and thorough heritage assessment has been submitted and the above concerns addressed, the application cannot be supported from a heritage perspective and thus a holding objection is raised.

Conditions			
N/A			
Date:	09/01/2025	Signed:	Roderick McDonald Built Heritage Officer