

Our ref. : AB2619/LPA130526
Planning Portal ref. : PP-14931346

Development Management
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

13th May 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION - MILLGATE HOUSE, RUSCOMBE LANE, RUSCOMBE, TWYFORD, RG10 9JR

On behalf of our client, Form Workplace Solutions, please find enclosed a full planning application relating to a site, most recently and lawfully in use for purposes falling within Use Class E (i.e. for commercial, business and service purposes), located at Millgate House, Ruscombe Lane, Ruscombe, Twyford, RG10 9JT.

Planning permission is sought for the creation of a dedicated, direct pedestrian route into/out of the site, comprising alterations to part of the existing boundary treatment within the curtilage of the site (to create a new pedestrian gate) and the associated creation of a new pedestrian path leading from the highway known as Millgate Court, which forms the western boundary of the site, to existing pedestrian paths within the site.

This planning application, which is being submitted to the LPA electronically via the Planning Portal website, comprises the following documentation ;

- Completed planning application forms.
- Completed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) form.
- This covering letter/supporting statement prepared by Beamish Planning Consultancy.
- Unnumbered 1:1250 scale plan of application site and surrounding area.
- Drawing no. E7866.200.00.201 – existing and proposed site layout plans, sections and existing and proposed photographs prepared by Form Workplace Solutions.

The statutory planning application fee of £309 and the Planning Portal service charge fee of £91 have both been paid electronically when submitting this planning application via the Planning Portal website.

Description of application site and surroundings

The application site comprises a modern detached two-storey building (with additional floorspace within the roof space) known as Millgate House, fronting Ruscombe Lane to the north and Millgate Court to the west.

The curtilage of the site, between Millgate House and Ruscombe Lane, comprises a large area of hardsurfacing used as a car park, benefitting from vehicular access from/egress to Millgate Court, with a separate area of hardsurfacing located to the rear of the building, also accessed from Millgate Court. The remaining curtilage of the site comprises a mixture of landscaping and pedestrian routes.

At the present time the pedestrian entrance into the building is located within its west facing elevation, accessed by way of an existing path which runs between both areas of hardsurfacing. There is no dedicated pedestrian only access point into the site.

The most recent and lawful use of the entire building and its curtilage is for purposes falling within Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service).

The western curtilage of the site adjoins a highway known as Millgate Court, which is a cul-de-sac and which, in addition to the vehicular entrance located within the south-western part of the site, serves 8 residential properties. The surrounding area is predominantly residential to the north and west, whilst Ruscombe Business Park is located to the rear (south) of the site, and the Royal Oak public house is located on the opposite side of Ruscombe Lane directly opposite the north-eastern corner of the site.

Millgate House is neither statutorily nor locally listed and nor is Millgate House (or its immediate surroundings) within a Conservation Area or the subject of an Article 4 Direction restricting permitted development rights.

The application site is also located within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of flooding from surface water.

Planning history of application site

In March 2004 planning permission (application ref. F/2003/9870) was granted by the LPA for the erection of an office building and the erection of 8 x 2-bedroom apartments, incorporating the demolition of existing storage buildings and the creation of a new vehicular access from Ruscombe Lane.

In December 2004 planning permission (application ref. F/2004/2412) was granted by the LPA for an amended development of 8 apartments and a 2-storey office building, and that permission was subsequently implemented. The building known as Millgate House comprises the office building approved by way of that permission, whilst the apartments approved by way of that permission are those located within Millgate Court immediately to the west of Millgate House.

Condition 4 imposed upon the granting of planning application ref. F/2004/2414 states ;

'Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatment(s) shall first be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.'

The reason for the imposition of that condition, as stated within the decision notice, was ;

'To safeguard the visual amenities of neighbouring properties and the locality.'

In June 2005 retrospective planning permission (application ref. VAR/2005/4633) was granted by the LPA for the variation of condition 20 imposed upon the granting of planning application ref. F/2004/2412, relating to an amendment to the previously approved visibility splays.

Proposals for which planning permission is sought

At the heart of the proposals is the desire to create a dedicated pedestrian route extending from the existing main entrance into the building from Millgate Court, which forms the western boundary of the curtilage of the site. At the present time the path leading from that existing main entrance does not extend directly to the boundary of the site, and instead pedestrians have to walk a considerable distance along existing paths within the curtilage of the site and utilise the vehicular access points serving the site.

Consequently, planning permission is sought for the two elements necessary to create that dedicated, direct pedestrian route between the existing pedestrian path within the curtilage of the site and the western boundary of the site.

Firstly, alterations are required to the existing wrought iron railings to create a pedestrian gate (opening inwards) and incorporating the addition of an intercom device. As detailed within accompanying drawing no. E7866.200.00.201, the height of the existing means of enclosure will not be increased and the existing railings will be modified to create the gate.

Secondly, a stone paved tarmac pathway, approximately 4.19 metres long by 2.28 metres wide, is proposed to be constructed between the western boundary of the site curtilage (where it adjoins Millgate Court) and an existing pedestrian path further within the curtilage of the site.

The proposed pathway would partly be surfaced with tarmac and partly with stone paving on a hardcore sub-base, as detailed within accompanying drawing no. E7866.200.00.201. The existing kerb stones where the proposed pathway adjoins Millgate Court would also be removed, and the path would incorporate a 1:125 angled fall to prevent rainwater pooling.

It is acknowledged that the proposed alterations to the existing boundary treatment could constitute 'permitted development' under Class A of Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). However, we recognise that condition 4 imposed upon the granting of planning application ref. F/2004/2414 (which has been implemented), requires the boundary treatment scheme previously approved to be maintained in perpetuity, and therefore any alterations to the previously approved boundary treatment require approval from the LPA.

It is also acknowledged that the proposed pathway could constitute 'permitted development under Class E of Part 7 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), although it is recognised that tarmac is not porous.

The Development Plan and associated guidance

At local level the adopted development plan currently comprises the Core Strategy (adopted January 2010), the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted February 2014), the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted January 2023) and the Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan ('made'/adopted in February 2024).

The LPA has prepared a new Local Plan (the Local Plan Update 2023-2040) which was submitted (in February 2025) to the Secretary of State for independent Examination in Public, and that Examination is now nearing its conclusion. According some weight must be attached to that emerging Local Plan, but weight should also continue to be attached to the adopted Development Plan documents, as long as they are consistent with both the thrust and content of more up-to-date national planning policies and associated guidance.

At national level, the latest update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in February 2025 and streamlines previous national planning policy into a consolidated set of priorities, to ensure that planning decisions reflect genuine national objectives, with the principle of sustainable development permeating the framework.

The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) was first published by the Government in March 2014 and is regularly updated, and also streamlines previously published national guidance, which had taken the form of planning policy guidance notes and planning policy statements, into a single document.

Planning Assessment

The starting point for determining any planning application is set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that “where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

The proposed alterations to a small area of the existing boundary treatment along the western part of the curtilage of the application site will have no impact upon the visual amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and will not result in any significant change in the appearance of the boundary treatment or the surrounding streetscene, stressing that the existing railings will simply be modified to create a pedestrian gate and the height of the railings/boundary treatment will remain unchanged.

Similarly, the associated creation of a small length of pathway, linking directly with existing pedestrian pathways/routes within the curtilage of the site and providing a dedicated, direct pedestrian route between Millgate Court and the main entrance of the building, will have no adverse impact upon either the application site or the immediate locality.

Nor will the proposed creation of a dedicated pedestrian route into and out of the site have any adverse impact upon the free flow of traffic or highway safety, stressing how Millgate Court is a cul-de-sac which only serves 8 residential properties and the smaller car park within the curtilage of the application site. Indeed, the creation of a dedicated pedestrian route into and out of the site, as opposed to the current arrangement whereby pedestrians entering or leaving the site have to utilise the existing vehicular access points to do so, will reduce the risk to such pedestrians.

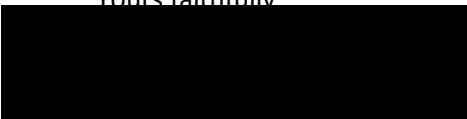
Conclusion

For the reasons set out within this supporting statement the proposals fully accord with both the adopted and emerging Development Plan, including Core Strategy policies CP1 (Sustainable Development), CP3 (General Principles for Development) and CP6 (Managing Travel Demand), Managing Development Policy CC01 (Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development), policy RU9 (Managing Traffic) of the Ruscombe Neighbourhood Plan and emerging London Plan Update policies SS1 (Sustainable Development Principles), C1 (Active and Sustainable Transport and Accessibility) and C2 (Mitigation of Transport Impacts and Highways Safety and Design).

In conclusion therefore planning permission should be granted for the proposals, subject to the imposition of appropriate, necessary and reasonable conditions, the content of which we would welcome dialogue regarding with the Case Officer to whom this application is allocated.

We trust that this planning application will be promptly validated and look forward to receiving formal confirmation of this in due course, and subsequent dialogue with the Case Officer to whom this application is allocated, but in the meantime should any further information or clarification be required please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully


Adam Beamish
BA (Hons), DIP TRP, MRTPI