TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

MR B. RYAN

PLANNING STATEMENT

THE COACH HOUSE
BLAGROVE LANE
WOKINGHAM
RG41 4AX

Erection of detached single storey garage (householder application)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a householder application to construct a single storey detached garage. The application is submitted on behalf of Mr B. Ryan and follows the grant of application ref.240337 which is now completed and ready for occupation ('*full application for the proposed erection of a first floor extension along with 2no. rear facing dormers to facilitate conversion of the existing annex building to an independent dwelling, with associated external alterations including addition of a chimney and flue, a front canopy roof and changes to fenestration, plus provision of replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage'*).

1.2 This statement is divided into the following sections:

- Site and Surroundings
- Site History
- Planning Policy Context
- The Planning Application
- Summary and Conclusions

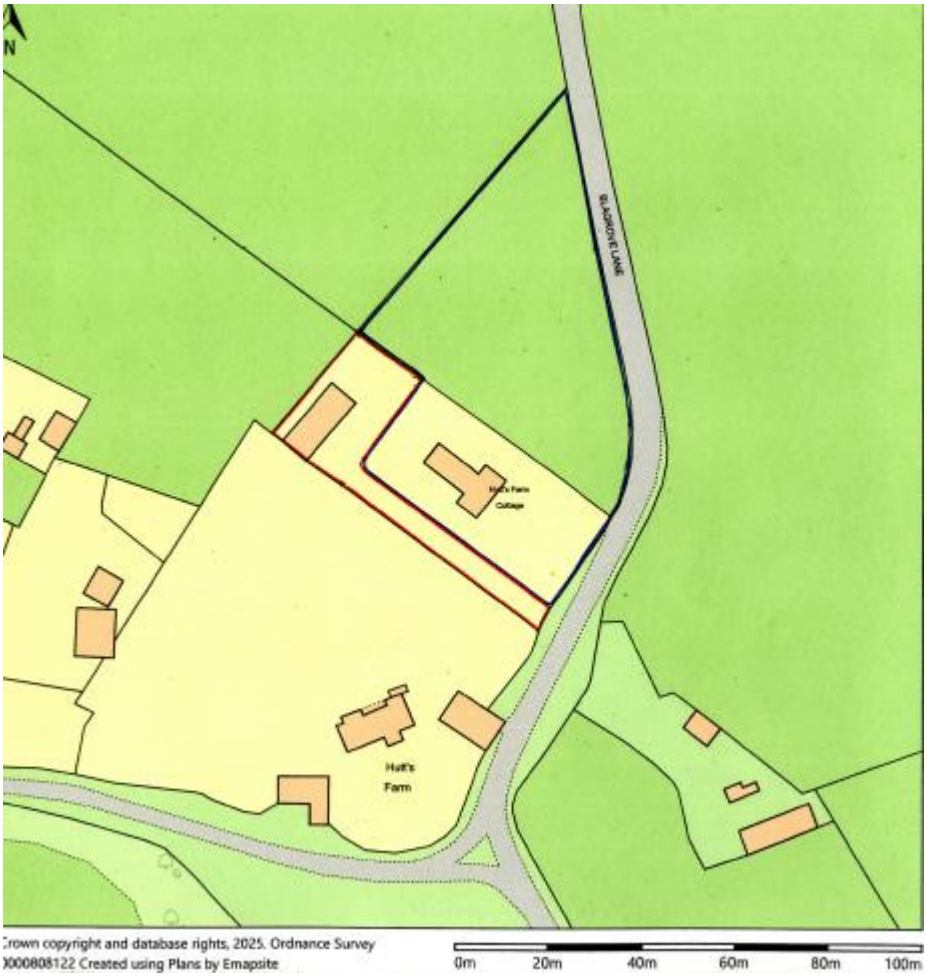
1.3 The application is accompanied by the following consultant reports:

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (ROAVR Group)

2 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

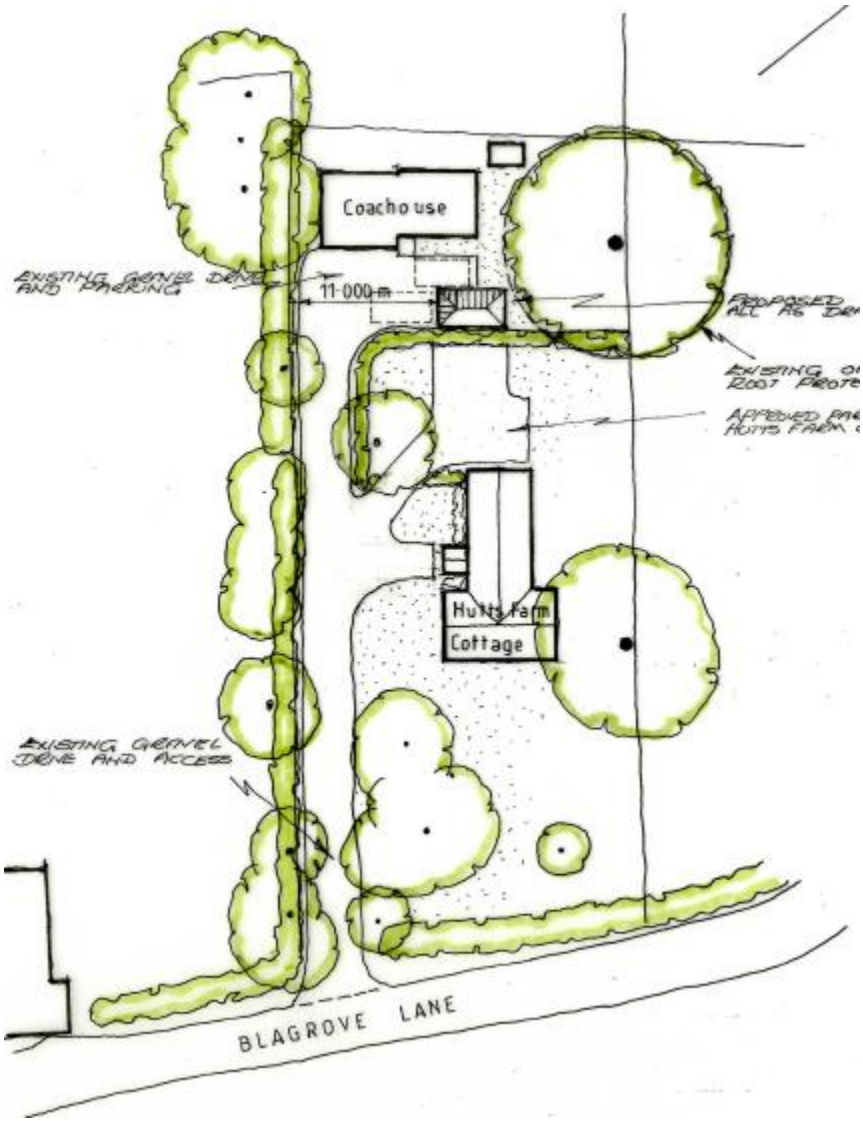
2.1 The application site lies on the western side of Blagrove Lane within land defined as being 'Countryside' in the Proposals Map. The Coach House is a detached two storey dwelling which was granted permission for extensions and independent use in 2024 (240337). The dwelling is now completed, and the owner now wishes to construct a small, detached garage to the front of the property on an existing area of hardsurfacing.

Site location plan



2.2 The former host property (Hutts Farm Cottage) which lies to the south-east is a similar size two storey property albeit set within a larger retained garden area. Both properties are accessed via the same shared driveway from Blagrove Lane. The Coach House is set back a substantial distance from the highway (in excess of 55m) and is screened by existing planting and hedging along the road frontage and within the front garden area of Hutts farm Cottage. The surrounding area is generally characterised by large, detached properties and paddocks.

Proposed site layout



3 SITE HISTORY

3.1 Relevant planning history is set out below:

240337 - Full application for the proposed erection of a first floor extension along with 2no. rear facing dormers to facilitate conversion of the existing annex building to an independent dwelling, with associated external alterations including addition of a chimney and flue, a front canopy roof and changes to fenestration, plus provision of replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage. Approved 28/03/2024.

231631 – Erection of a first floor extension to facilitate conversion of the existing annex building to an independent dwelling, with associated external alterations including addition of a chimney and flue, front canopy roof and changes to fenestration, plus provision of replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage. Approved 07/12/2023.

221676 - Conversion of existing annex building to an independent dwelling with associated external alterations and replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage. Refused 26/07/22. Appeal allowed 04/01/23.

212832 - Conversion of existing annex building to an independent dwelling with associated external alterations and replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage. Refused 19/08/21. Appeal dismissed 24/02/22.

200930 – Conversion of existing annex building to an independent dwelling with associated external alterations and replacement parking for Hutts Farm Cottage. Refused 29/06/2020. Appeal dismissed 24/12/2020.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

i) National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

4.1 DM3: Determining development proposals - States that LPA's should work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision. LPA's should take a 'proportionate' approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact.

4.2 S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development - Confirms that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Outside settlements, this means applying Policy S5.

4.3 S5: Principle of development outside settlements – States that only certain forms of development should be approved outside of settlements. These should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the Framework. Paragraph 1,(c) is part of the list that assumes positive consideration and states as follows:

> *'The reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building'*

4.4 DP3: Key principles for well-designed places – States that development proposals should respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings.

ii) The Development Plan

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010)

4.5 Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) requires, amongst other matters, that new development is of an appropriate scale, mass, activity, built form, height, materials, character and design quality. Proposals should not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring land uses.

4.6 Policy CP11 is concerned with proposals for development on sites located outside of the Development Limit (including Countryside). The policy sets a series of criteria which new developments are required to meet including the following:

- It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;
- It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvements;
- In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

iii) Wokingham Borough Design Guide

4.7 The following guidance is considered to be of relevance:

4.8 R1 – Requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

4.9 RD1 – New development and associated landscape should retain, incorporate and enhance features that contribute towards the landscape character and biodiversity of the area.

4.10 RD5 – New development in rural areas should respond to the typical forms of buildings in the village or locality.

4.11 RD6 - The elevations of new buildings must be well composed, well-proportioned and well detailed.

4.12 RD7 – New buildings should respond to the materials, details and colours that may be distinctive to a locality

4.13 Page 57 states that garages should not be sited in front gardens and should not project forward of the building line of a property.

4.14 R23 – States that alterations and extensions to buildings should be well designed; respond positively to the original building; contribute positively to the local character and relate well to neighbouring properties.

5 THE PLANNING APPLICATION

5.1 The application proposal is for the erection of detached single garage. As stated above, the site is within the countryside where CS Policy CP11 aims to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment. The main issue is therefore considered to be the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.

5.2 The main considerations are as follows:

i) Character and appearance, including the effect on the surrounding countryside;

ii) Access and Parking;

iii) Landscape and Trees.

i) Character and appearance, including the effect on the surrounding countryside

5.3 The detached outbuilding would be sited on land forward of the front elevation. The footprint of the proposed building would measure 6.45m x 3.45m. It would have a low eaves height of 2.2m and a ridge height of 4m broadly keeping within what would normally be considered as being permitted development had the structure been located behind the front elevation. The scale, form and height of the proposed garage would therefore be subservient to the main two storey dwelling which has recently been completed under ref.240337.

5.4 The proposed building would have a traditional appearance with a pitched roof. It has a sympathetic approach to its locality and employs materials appropriate to the environment, landscape and countryside setting of the site (i.e. timber, brick and clay tiles). The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of CS Policies CP1 and CP3 as well as the general design guidance contained within the BDG and the NPPF (2026).

5.5 The proposed outbuilding would be well screened by existing trees and Hutts Farm Cottage from Blagrove Lane. Whilst the building would be located forward of the main front elevation (although it is slightly off set to the side), a distance of approximately 50 metres would be retained between the garage and the Blagrove Lane highway. Any view of the new building would be in the context of the existing dwelling and the proposal would not appear incongruous or out of character with its surroundings. It is acknowledged that text within the BDG states that garages should not be sited in front gardens but should be to the side or rear of a dwelling and that they should not project forward of the building line of a property. In this case, the property is in a rural location and does not fall within an established street scene as such. Therefore, the rigid application of the design guidance would not be appropriate in such circumstances.

5.6 It is worth pointing out that the BDG is treated by the Council as guidance as there are numerous other examples within settlement and countryside locations where detached garages and ancillary buildings have been granted planning permission. In addition, given the constraints of the plot, it is not possible to access or position a garage to the rear or side of the dwelling (i.e. protected trees). The existing property does not benefit from any garaging, and the proposal will be able to accommodate a family sized car without impacting on the overall level of parking.

5.7 The proposed building is also conveniently located in relation to the main dwelling, and it would not result in any encroachment or expansion away from the original buildings as required by Core Strategy Policy CP11. The objective of Policy CP11 to *'protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment'* would not therefore be compromised.

5.8 In terms of NPPF (2026) policy S5, the close physical relationship of the garage to the property clearly indicates that it should be considered to be a 'normal domestic adjunct' and therefore assessed as an extension to the property (i.e. it is only 3.5m from the front elevation). As such it benefits from paragraph 1(c) which assumes positive consideration unless the benefits of doing so are substantially outweighed

by any adverse effects. On this occasion, the proposal is not considered to be harmful and there is therefore no conflict with S5.

ii) Access and Parking

5.9 The original planning permission for the separate use of the building as a 3-bed dwelling included provision for 3 parking spaces. This proposal maintains the same level of onsite parking and ensures that the Council's minimum internal dimensions are met.

iii) Landscape and Trees

5.10 The proposed garage footprint will be constructed outside of the RPAs of all surveyed trees (see AIA). Some limited access within the RPA of T1 will be required for construction works. No pruning work would be required to any tree canopies. One tree is recommended for removal as it falls within Category U and is in a poor condition.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The application should be supported for the following reasons:

i) The proposal is for a detached outbuilding providing for covered garaging. This is much needed space and would enable the occupants to store a car and any maintenance equipment. The existing dwelling does not currently benefit from any garaging or secure storage.

ii) The proposed building is sensitively sited in a well screened location to the front of the main dwelling. It would remain well set back from Blagrove Lane and would not be visually prominent or harmful to the character and appearance of the area given the separation distance to the road frontage and its secluded location. The proposed building is conveniently located in close proximity to the main dwelling and would not result in any encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings as required by Core Strategy Policy CP11. Its close proximity clearly indicates that for the purposes of policy S5 of the NPPF (2026) it should be treated as a ‘normal domestic adjunct’.

iii) The proposed building is well designed and is in keeping with and subservient to the main dwelling on the site. Materials appropriate to the environment and landscape setting of the site are proposed. The proposal therefore complies with the design requirements of CS Policies CP1 and CP3 as well as the general design guidance contained within the BDG and the NPPF (2026).

iv) The proposal retains 3no.parking spaces with the proposed garage meeting the Council’s minimum internal size requirements.

v) The accompanying consultant plans and reports confirm that trees can be protected. This proposal does not increase built footprint so there are no implications arising from the proposal in this regard.