

VIA PLANNING PORTAL: PP-15072443

Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Project Number: DAP-R26-24

4 August 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE RETENTION AND COMPLETION OF A RAISED PERMEABLE PARKING AREA CONNECTED TO THE EXISTING DRIVEWAY, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED GROUNDWORKS, RETAINING EDGING, DRAINAGE WORKS AND LANDSCAPING AT THE MOORINGS, LODDON DRIVE, WARGRAVE, READING, RG10 8HL

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Dames A+P on behalf of Mr Alex Moller in support of a retrospective householder planning application for the retention and completion of a raised permeable parking area at The Moorings, Loddon Drive, Wargrave.

The works comprise a domestic parking area connected directly to the existing driveway, together with associated groundworks, retaining edging, drainage works and landscaping. No building has been erected or is proposed.

The application follows discussions with Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC) Planning Compliance Officer in connection with enforcement reference RFS/2026/091449. The application is submitted to regularise the planning position and allow the limited raised element of the parking area to be assessed on its planning merits. Our covering letter dated 4 August 2026 records that the Council considers express permission necessary because parts of the parking area are more than 300 mm above the previous ground level.

To assist officers in their consideration of this application, the site context, nature of the development, relevant planning framework and principal planning considerations are set out below.

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The Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises The Moorings, a detached dwelling set within a substantial residential plot of approximately 4,191 square metres on the eastern side of Loddon Drive.

The dwelling is positioned towards the eastern part of the site, with the existing driveway extending westwards to Loddon Drive. The parking area is located within the front garden, adjacent to and physically connected with that driveway.

The site is spacious and well landscaped, with mature trees, boundary planting and other vegetation providing substantial enclosure. The submitted photographs illustrated on drawing number DAP-R26-24-A-106 show that the parking area is contained within the site and is seen against an established landscaped backdrop.

The Development

Planning permission is sought for the retention and completion of a permeable parking area serving the existing dwelling.

The parking area provides additional domestic hardstanding and is connected to the existing driveway by a short access spur.

The submitted levels plan, drawing number DAP-R26-24-A-103, identifies an Addagrip resin-bound finish and shows how the parking surface responds to the existing levels across the site.

The works include low retaining edging where required to accommodate the difference between the parking surface and the surrounding ground. The submitted site photographs, drawing number DAP-R26-24-A-106, demonstrate that this edging is limited in height and has a simple, recessive appearance.

The parking area has also been designed in response to surface-water and waterlogging issues. The modestly raised finished level provides a more resilient and usable parking surface during periods of shallow surface-water accumulation. The flood-risk benefit does not arise from the raised level alone, but from the permeable resin-bound finish and associated drainage construction, which are intended to allow rainfall to pass through the surface and be managed within the underlying construction rather than generating rapid surface-water runoff.

If the Council is minded to grant permission, the development will be completed with associated drainage and landscaping so that it is integrated appropriately into the surrounding garden.



The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The adopted development plan for WBC includes the following:

- The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, adopted on 29 January 2010;
- The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, adopted on 21 February 2014; and

A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has not been adopted.

We consider the most pertinent policies to be as follows:

- CP1: Sustainable Development
- CP3: General Principles for Development
- CP7: Biodiversity
- CC01: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC03: Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- CC07: Parking
- CC09: Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
- CC10: Sustainable Drainage
- TB21: Landscape Character
- TB23: Biodiversity and Development

In addition to the adopted development plan, the following are considered to be relevant material considerations in the determination of this application:



- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024 and revised in February 2025).
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- The Planning History for the Site, including permission F/2006/8482.
- The realistic permitted-development fallback under Class F of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order;
- The Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD.
- The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and associated companion guidance.

Planning Tests

Having regard to the development plan, the NPPF, the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and the other material considerations identified above, the principal tests to be addressed are considered to be as follows:

1. Whether the principle of retaining a domestic parking area within the established residential curtilage is acceptable;
2. Whether the limited raised and engineered element would preserve the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area;
3. Whether the proposal would avoid unacceptable harm to neighbouring residential amenity;
4. Whether the parking area would provide a safe and appropriate form of domestic parking without prejudicing highway safety;
5. Whether the development would be appropriately flood resistant and resilient for its intended use;
6. Whether the proposal would avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere, including through the displacement of floodwater or an increase in surface-water runoff;
7. Whether the permeable surfacing and drainage arrangements would manage surface water sustainably;



8. Whether the development would avoid unacceptable harm to trees, landscaping, biodiversity and other environmental interests; and
9. Whether the limited additional impact arising from the raised element would be acceptable when considered against the Class F permitted-development fallback.

These matters form the framework for the assessment of the proposal. The following section considers each matter in turn, having regard to the nature and scale of the development, its relationship with the existing dwelling and driveway, the submitted plans and FRA, the applicable development plan policies, and the Class F permitted-development fallback.

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal relates to the retention and completion of a domestic parking area within the established residential curtilage of The Moorings. It does not introduce a new dwelling, create a separate planning unit or establish a materially different use of the land.

The parking area is ancillary to the existing residential use and is physically and functionally connected to the established driveway. Policy CP3 supports development that is inter alia, appropriate to its site and surroundings, while Policy CC07 seeks to ensure that an appropriate level of off-street parking is retained. Policy CC07 specifically requires proposals to demonstrate appropriate parking provision and the retention of a suitable overall level of off-street parking.

The remaining Class F permitted development rights also provide a material fallback position. Accordingly, the principal planning issue is not considered to be the acceptability of domestic hardstanding in principle, but the additional effect arising from the limited raised and engineered element.

The proposal is considered consistent with Policies CP1, CP3, CC01 and CC07.

Character and Appearance

Policy CP3 requires development to be appropriate in scale, form, layout and appearance and to avoid harm to landscape character. Policy CC03 requires existing trees, hedges and landscape features to be protected and retained and seeks high-quality landscaping as an integral part of development. Policy TB21 requires proposals to retain or enhance the character, condition and features of the landscape.



The parking area occupies a limited part of a substantial residential plot and is positioned well within the established garden. Its low-level, horizontal form means that it does not have the mass, enclosure, or visual characteristics of a building.

The submitted sections and elevations demonstrate that the parking area remains subordinate to the dwelling, the surrounding garden and the established boundary vegetation. The majority of the parking area is raised by less than 300 mm above the previous ground level, with only limited parts extending to approximately 380 mm. The FRA records a finished platform level of 33.71m AOD and adjoining ground levels of approximately 33.33–33.51m AOD.

The permeable resin-bound finish, restrained retaining treatment and proposed landscaping will give the development an appropriate domestic appearance. Existing trees, planting and boundary treatment provide substantial visual enclosure, and the parking area would not appear prominent or incongruous from Loddon Drive or the surrounding area.

The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the spacious, landscaped and residential character of the site and accords with Policies CP1, CP3, CC03 and TB21.

Residential Amenity

Policy CP3 requires development to avoid unacceptable effects upon adjoining land and the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The parking area is set within the applicant's residential curtilage and is separated from neighbouring dwellings by the generous dimensions of the site, existing boundary treatment and established landscaping.

The development does not include any built enclosure, elevated seating area or recreational platform. Its use is limited to the parking and manoeuvring of domestic vehicles associated with the existing dwelling.

The proposal would not result in material overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact, noise, disturbance or any other unacceptable effect upon neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy CP3.



Parking and Highway Safety

Policy CC07 requires proposals to meet appropriate parking standards and retain a suitable overall level of off-street parking. Policy CP3 also requires development to avoid unacceptable effects upon highway safety and the functioning of the surrounding area.

The parking area is accessed from the existing driveway and established vehicular access onto Loddon Drive. No new or altered highway access is proposed.

The development provides additional off-street parking and manoeuvring space within the site. It would not increase on-street parking pressure, interfere with the operation of the highway or result in any material effect upon highway safety.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies CP3 and CC07.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy CP1 requires development to provide adequate drainage and avoid increasing, and where possible reduce, flood risk. Policy CC09 requires flood risk from all sources, including historic flooding, to be taken into account and requires development not to worsen flood risk on the application site or elsewhere. Policy CC10 requires surface water to be managed sustainably and SuDS to be incorporated where practicable.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3, and the submitted FRA identifies the wider site as being within the functional floodplain. The application is therefore accompanied by a detailed assessment of fluvial, surface-water and other sources of flood risk.

The FRA classifies the proposal as minor householder development and confirms that the parking platform constitutes a water-compatible use. It also concludes that the sequential and exception tests are not required for this form of minor development.

The parking area has been designed in response to surface-water and waterlogging issues experienced within the site. Its modestly raised finished level provides a more resilient and usable parking surface during periods of shallow surface-water accumulation.

The surface is to be finished in permeable resin-bound material, allowing rainfall to pass through the surface and drain into the surrounding ground rather than generating rapid uncontrolled runoff. The FRA concludes that the development would have a negligible effect upon surface-water runoff and the displacement of floodwater.



Although the platform would be inundated during more significant fluvial events, it contains no habitable accommodation or vulnerable infrastructure and is inherently flood resilient. The FRA concludes that it could withstand inundation without material damage or loss of function.

The development would therefore remain appropriate for its intended use, manage surface water through permeable construction and avoid materially increasing flood risk elsewhere. It is therefore considered to accord with Policies CP1, CP3, CC09 and CC10.

Ecology, Trees and Landscaping

Policy CP7 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity. Policy CC03 requires the retention of trees, hedges and landscape features and the incorporation of appropriate landscaping. Policy TB23 requires development to provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and confirms that ecological survey work should be proportionate to the nature and location of the proposal and its likely effects.

The works do not involve the demolition or alteration of a building or roof, or the removal of any mature tree, hedgerow, pond or watercourse.

The principal mature trees, boundary vegetation and landscape features surrounding the parking area are retained. The development will be completed with landscaping so that the hard surface and retaining treatment are integrated appropriately into the garden.

The applicant is not aware of any evidence that the affected area supported protected species or habitat of material biodiversity value. As explained in the covering letter, the application is retrospective, and the affected footprint has already been altered, meaning that a survey undertaken now could not reliably establish the precise ecological condition of the land before the works commenced.

The development would retain the site's principal landscape features and would not result in identifiable harm to biodiversity; it is therefore considered to accord with Policies CP7, CC03, TB21 and TB23.

Permitted Development Fallback

Condition 4 attached to planning permission F/2006/8482 removed permitted development rights under Classes A, B, C, D and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order. It did not remove the rights available under Class F, which relate to the provision or replacement of a hard surface within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.



The applicant does not contend that the raised and engineered element of the parking area necessarily falls within Class F. Nevertheless, the remaining Class F rights represent a material fallback position. In the absence of the raised element, a domestic hard surface could be provided in this part of the curtilage without express planning permission, subject to compliance with the limitations and conditions of Class F.

For completeness, a separate application for a Certificate of Lawfulness (CofL) is being submitted in respect of the relaying and replacement of the hard surface within the residential curtilage under Class F of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the GPDO. This application concerns the lawfulness of the hard-surfacing works only and is distinct from the present application, which seeks planning permission for the limited additional height and associated engineered element, including the retaining edging and groundworks.

The Class F position is therefore relied upon as a material fallback, demonstrating that the principle of domestic hardstanding in this location is acceptable.

Conclusion

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the retention and completion of a permeable domestic parking area within the established residential curtilage of The Moorings.

The parking area is ancillary to the existing dwelling, is physically and functionally connected to the established driveway and does not introduce a new building, separate planning unit or materially different use of the land. Its low-level, horizontal form, permeable finish, limited retaining treatment and landscaped setting ensure that it remains subordinate to the dwelling and does not cause material harm to the character or appearance of the site or surrounding area.

The proposal would not result in unacceptable effects upon neighbouring residential amenity or highway safety. The submitted FRA confirms that the development represents minor, water-compatible and inherently flood-resilient development, and that it would have a negligible effect upon surface-water runoff and the displacement of floodwater. The permeable surfacing and associated drainage arrangements would allow rainfall to drain into the surrounding ground rather than generating rapid uncontrolled runoff.

The principal trees, boundary vegetation and landscape features are retained, and the development will be completed with appropriate landscaping. No identifiable harm to biodiversity has been demonstrated.

The remaining Class F permitted development rights provide a material fallback position and demonstrate that the principle of domestic hardstanding in this part of the curtilage is acceptable. The present application is concerned only with the additional effect arising from the limited raised



and engineered element, including the retaining edging and associated groundworks. That additional effect is modest and does not result in material planning harm.

The applicant acknowledges and regrets that the works were commenced before the necessary planning position had been resolved.

The applicant understood the works to fall within the permitted development rights available under Class F and therefore commenced them on that basis. This application has now been submitted, together with measured drawings, site photographs and technical flood-risk evidence, to regularise the position and enable the Council to assess the development fully and transparently.

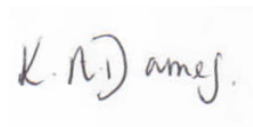
For the reasons set out in this statement, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the development plan when read as a whole, including Policies CP1, CP3, CP7, CC01, CC03, CC07, CC09, CC10, TB21 and TB23. It is also consistent with the relevant objectives of the NPPF and the other material considerations identified.

No other adverse impacts are considered to be significant and demonstrable enough to outweigh the benefits or otherwise justify withholding planning permission.

We therefore respectfully request that planning permission is granted.

Should the Council have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at kerry@dames-ap.com or by telephone on 07921 211386.

Yours faithfully,



KERRY DAMES

DIRECTOR

For and on behalf of Dames A+P

