

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250360
Site Address:	Pinewood Leisure Centre, The Lodge, Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG40 3AQ
Expiry Date:	2 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	26 March 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed permanent siting of 2 no. wooden clad shipping containers on existing hardstanding for ancillary storage by tenants at the Pinewood site. (retrospective)	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Countryside
Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zones
Public Open Space
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Water Utility Consultation Zones
Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Heathrow Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Minerals Site Consultation Area
Replacement Mineral Local Plan
Landscape Character Assessment Area
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones (5km)

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 - Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking

	CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
210961	Full application for the proposed siting of 2 no. wooden clad shipping containers for a temporary period of 3 years on existing hardstanding for ancillary storage by tenants at the Pinewood site.	Approved: June 2021

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to a condition

External

Bracknell Forest Council – No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Context: Pinewood Leisure Centre is located on the border between Wokingham and Bracknell and consists of several single storey buildings hosting different leisure/community facilities and a bar/café. The buildings currently on site are a variety of wooden, brick and steel-clad exteriors.

The location for the storage units is an existing concrete base measuring 8m in width by 24m in length, located adjacent to the Pinewood gymnastics club and to the rear of the Pinewood Judo Club.

The development is retrospective, having previously been granted permission on a temporary basis in June 2021. This application seeks to regularise the permanent siting of the existing structures.

Principle of Development: The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located in the countryside and therefore must be assessed against policy CP11. This policy states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

- 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and
- 2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and
- 3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or
- 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building;
- 5) In the case of replacement dwellings the proposal must:
 - i) Bring about environmental improvements; or
 - ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
- 6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building;
- 7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

The existing structures would continue to support the Parish Council and other occupiers of the existing buildings at the Pinewood site, by virtue of providing much needed storage space. Accordingly, nothing contained within the current application is deemed to affect the conclusion of the previously approved application, which is that the principle of development is considered acceptable as it would improve the operations of the existing community / leisure facilities at the site.

Character of the Area: From a visual perspective, it is thought that the storage units have been designed in a way which allows for an adequate integration into the wooded character of their surroundings. This refers to both the modest scale of the structures, as well as the use of appropriate external finishes.

In taking a wider view of the site, the storage containers would be contained to the coalesce of existing buildings and would not unacceptably encroach into the woodland setting to the rear.

In summary, the scale and footprint of the proposed containers are considered to be appropriate in the context of the site and the surrounding countryside, in accordance with Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy.

Other Matters: It is noted that permission for the containers was previously only granted by the LPA for a period of three years. Notwithstanding, there is no overriding reason to suggest that the siting of the containers would only be acceptable on a temporary basis. Accordingly, having reevaluated the impact of the development, it is considered that there is no requirement to impose a condition restricting the time in which the containers remain in situ.

Neighbouring Amenity: The retrospective development has no implications on the surrounding commercial/leisure uses.

Landscape and Trees: It can be seen from the submission that the containers are sited on hard standing and are in close proximity to trees. It seems that containers/hardstanding and trees have co-existed for some time, but it is known that 'construction stress' and subsequent decline of trees can take many years to show. Accordingly, a condition has been suggested by the Landscape & Trees Officer to ensure the retention of the surrounding woodland.

Conclusion: For all the above, the development is acceptable, and the application is recommended for approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

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:	Approve
Date:	8 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	31 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>HMM</i>
Date:	8 April 2025