

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250832
Site Address:	Pavilion House, Mole Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, RG41 5DU
Expiry Date:	22 August 2025
Site Visit Date:	5 August 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of the existing pavilion and sports changing facilities to provide an assembly hall and office facilities, with the erection of a single storey infill extension, changes to fenestration and addition of 2 no. canopy roofs.	

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP15 – Employment Development
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements SS8 – Meeting our employment needs C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging ER2 – Employment uses outside of Core Employment Areas FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity DH5 – The historic environment

	HC2 – Community infrastructure HC3 – Local Green Space HC4 – Open spaces, sports, recreation and play facilities
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document The Playing Fields Policy (Sports England)

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
202622	Full application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension to form storage area and replacement of existing external cladding.	Approved 10 November 2020
981326	Proposed Temporary Building (Retrospective) For B1 (Office) Use And D2 (Assembly And Leisure) Use	Approved 1 December 1998
12010	Community Hall	Approved 22 November 1979

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Environmental Health – no comments receive WBC Drainage – no objection WBC Highways – no objection WBC Green Infrastructure – no comments received WBC Landscape and Trees – no objection WBC Built Heritage Officer – no objection WBC Ecology Newts – no objection WBC Sports Development (Places and Neighbourhoods) – no comments received
External
Sport England – no objection Thames Water Utilities Ltd – no comments received

REPRESENTATIONS	
Arborfield and Newland Parish Council	“Arborfield & Newland Parish Council supports this application to alter the existing facilities to allow Winnersh Parish Council to better serve its local community.”
Councillor Prue Bray	“This is an application by Winnersh Parish Council. I am a member of the parish council and therefore have an interest in the application. So I will not be commenting on it.”
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

1. The application site comprises the Allnatt Pavilion building which is a single storey, red brick building with a flat roof. It is adjoined by Bearwood Recreation Ground to the north-east, community centre building to the west, car park to the north-west. The

caretakers' dwelling and parking adjoins the Allnatt Pavilion to the south. The site lies within Sindlesham Conservation Area.

Principle of Development:

2. 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.

Countryside

3. The site is located outside settlement limits and within designated countryside. Core Strategy Policy CP11 states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside development limits will not normally be permitted except where *inter alia* "(2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings" and "(6) essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through re-use/replacement of an existing building".
4. The LPU Policy SS5 states that development in the countryside will generally only be supported for specific types of development, including (f) extension of existing buildings which does not lead to disproportionate increases in scale, form or footprint beyond the original building.
5. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
6. The proposal seeks permission for a ground floor extension to the building. The proposed new floorspace would measure approximately 11m² and would lead to enlargement of the existing community hall and hall store. As the proposal does not seek to create new community facility (assembly hall), it is not considered that exception (6) to CS Policy CP11 applies.
7. In relation to exception (2), whilst there are no available historical records which show the footprint of the "original building", the proposed new floor space would represent only 7% increase of the existing floorspace (152m²). Moreover, the additional floorspace would be limited to an area of existing hardstanding with flat roof above, and which is enclosed from three sides by elevations of the existing building. This is shown in Figure 1 below, with the approximate extent of additional space shown in yellow:



Figure 1: Approximate extent of the additional floorspace

8. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings and would not conflict with CS Policy CP11. Moreover, it would not be contrary to the purposes of CS Policy CP11, which are to protect separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment.
9. The proposal involves the change of use of a community building. The key consideration is whether the loss of one type of community facility (sports changing rooms) is acceptable and whether the proposed new uses (offices and assembly hall) are appropriate in this location.

Loss of Sports Facilities

10. Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that do not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available. The MDD LP Policy TB08 sets out that proposals for development that could lead to the loss of sport or recreational facilities would need to be consistent with paragraph 74 of the NPPF. This paragraph has been updated since the MDD LP was adopted.
11. The relevant paragraph of NPPF (2024) is paragraph 88, which states that planning decisions should enable the retention of accessible community facilities, including sports venues. Paragraph 98 requires that planning decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities.
12. The Emerging LPU Policy HC4 states that existing sports facilities will be protected and that development in existing sports facilities will only be permitted where one or more of conditions are met, including *“an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the facilities are surplus to requirements and alternative facilities are available within a reasonable distance”*.
13. The Planning and Heritage Statement, which accompanies the application, confirms that the sports changing facilities used to serve Winnersh Rangers sports club. It also sets out that these facilities (toilets and changing rooms) are no longer in use. The applicant confirmed that storage facilities have been recently relocated to

another building, which received planning permission on 10th November 2020 (application reference 202622).

14. Sports England have been consulted on the proposal and confirmed, in liaison with Winnersh Rangers, the Berkshire and Buckinghamshire County Football Association ("BBFA") and the Football Association, that the changing facilities within the application site are no longer used by the club. Whilst no alternative changing provisions are currently available, Sports England also confirmed that the current changing facilities do not comply with adult changing facilities for adult football and raised no objection to the proposed change of use. Whilst they initially wished for the access to toilet facilities within the building be retained for the club use, the BBFA confirmed that toilet and storage facilities for the football club are present within another building on the wider site. As such, Sports England do not object to the proposal and consider that it would meet their planning policy exception 3. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not conflict with the CS, MDD LP or NPPF and is therefore acceptable in principle.

Proposed Use

15. The proposal seeks planning permission for a change of use to assembly hall and office. Given that the existing building is already in use as a community facility (assembly hall and sports facilities), and this use is proposed to be retained as part of mixed use assembly hall/office, no concerns arise on in relation to the assembly hall element of the proposed use.
16. The proposed office space would be provided within an area indicated as garage/storage and changing rooms. The existing externally-accessed disabled toilet would be retained. The proposal would introduce internal alterations to create another (internally accessed) disabled toilet within the eastern wing of the building, which would also comprise another 2 no. of toilets. The western wing would comprise an enlarged hall (which would be accessible from the internal lobby as well as provide a second direct external access point), storage rooms and an enlarged kitchen.
17. CS Policy CP11 offers support for proposals within countryside that "*contribute to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises*". As already set out above, the proposed extension would result in enlargement of space for community and the community use of the building would be retained, in addition to introducing an office use element. However, the proposed office use element does not fall within the definition of rural enterprises and as such, is not supported by CS Policy CP11.
18. Paragraph 3.50, which provides commentary to the MDD LP Policy TB11 *Core Employment Areas*, confirms that proposals outside Core Employment Areas and within development limits would be assessed against CS Policy CP15. The proposal is not within development limits as it lies within the Countryside.
19. The LPU Policy ER2 supports small-scale employment development proposals (less than 1,000m² gross internal area) within defined settlements but outside Core Employment Areas.
20. Paragraph 91 of the NPPF requires that local authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. It goes on to state that

main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available, should out of centre sites be considered. The NPPF defines as office use as one of the main town centre uses.

21. Notwithstanding, the proposal for office use would deliver office and meeting space for Winnersh Parish Council, who own the building and, as set out in the Planning and Heritage Statement, currently have office and meeting rooms not fit for use by disabled users. The proposed use within the Winnersh Community Centre is considered to be compatible with the existing use as a community space and would represent an efficient use of space, in particular in light of the limited use of part of the building as outlined above. Moreover, paragraph 93 of the NPPF states that the sequential approach referred to in paragraph 91 should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices. Therefore, the NPPF supports the principle of creating employment opportunities in rural areas that are not solely reliant on agriculture or tourism. Given the compatibility of the proposed use by the Winnersh Parish Council as offices with the community use and the support offered by the NPPF, it is considered in this instance that the proposed use is acceptable in principle.

Emerging Local Plan Update

22. The Local Plan Update (LPU), the plan which will supersede the Core Strategy and MDD Local Plan, was published in October 2024 (Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Plan). The LPU sets out the development strategy and proposed site allocations to meet housing needs to 2040. The LPU was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2025 and examination sessions are yet to take place.

Character of the Area:

23. The CS Policy CP3 *General Principles for Development* states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This requirement is amplified by MDD LP Policy CC03 which requires that proposals protect or enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks and promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors, as well as the integration with adjoining countryside. The LPU Policy DH1 requires all development to create a strong sense of place and reinforce local distinctiveness.
24. The proposed extension would be single storey with a flat roof and would measure approximately 11m² in floor area, which is considered to be in keeping with the character of the building as a community centre. The proposed alterations to fenestration are also considered in keeping with the appearance of the building.
25. The proposed materials would include facing brick and render to match existing; the proposed windows would be white UPVC to match existing. As the materials would match existing, no concerns are raised in this regard.

Neighbouring Amenity:

26. CS Policy CP3 requires that proposals do not cause harm to the amenity of adjoining land uses and the surrounding area. LPU Policy DH2 requires development to have "no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of existing or future occupiers". The proposal would result in a retention of the community use and in addition of office use. There are no restrictions in the operating hours currently.
27. The nearest residential property is a two storey dwelling adjoining the building subject to the application, and which sits within the Bearwood Recreational Ground. The Planning and Heritage Statement advises that this dwelling is used as caretaker's dwelling. It is located to the rear of the community hall and the proposed office space would be located further to the north-west.
28. The proposed changes in fenestration would incorporate high-level windows, which would overlook the parking area associated with the dwelling. Given that these windows would be located 1.8m above ground, it is not considered these would result in unacceptable levels of overlooking.
29. The proposed extension would be located along the building frontage and, due to the scale and distance from the residential unit, would not result in overbearing impacts or loss of light.
30. There are currently no restrictions on opening hours of the community hall and, due to the location of the site and the nature of the surrounding area, including the use of the dwelling by caretaker, it is not considered necessary to impose conditions restricting opening hours.

Heritage

31. Under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990, in determining an application which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority "*shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*". The duty in Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 must also be considered as a material consideration in the planning balance.
32. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that "when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset (which includes both listed buildings and conservations areas), great weight should be given to the asset's conservation...irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."
33. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."
34. Paragraph 219 of the NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities "should Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance".
35. Consistent with this, Policy CP3 *General Principles for Development* of the Core Strategy and Policy TB24 *Designated Heritage Assets* of the MDD LP establish that

development should not have a detrimental impact on important heritage features or their setting and should conserve and, where possible, enhance their important character and special architectural or historic interest. The LPU Policy DH5 requires proposals to conserve and, wherever possible, seek to enhance, the historic interest of all heritage assets, including the contribution made by their setting.

36. The application site lies approximately 30m to the north of Reddam House School, which is a Grade II Listed Building, and lies within Sindlesham Conservation Area. The WBC Heritage Officer has reviewed the submission and raised no concerns on the grounds of impacts on designated heritage assets or the Conservation Area. As such, the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts in this regard.

Highways

37. Core Strategy Policy CP6 *Managing Travel Demand* and MDD LP Policy CC07 *Parking* require appropriate vehicle parking, in line with the council's standards (MDD LP Appendix 2). The LPU Policy C2 requires proposals to ensure safe and suitable access for all users. The LPU Policy C5 requires development to provide vehicle and cycle parking that is appropriate to the location and scale of development.
38. The WBC Highways Officer has reviewed the proposal and advised that both the existing and proposed uses fall within Class D2 use as per WBC Parking Standards. The proposal would generate a net increase of parking demand of less than one space. Given the low likelihood of a change in occupancy of the building, the Highways Officer raised no concerns on in terms of vehicle or cycle parking provision (which would utilise the existing parking arrangements). Moreover, they confirmed that the proposal would be unlikely to result in any significant traffic impacts. As such, no concerns arise on highway grounds.

Flooding and Drainage

Flood Risk

39. Core Strategy Policy CP1 *Sustainable Development* and MDD LP Policy CC09 *Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)* establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk. The LPU Policy FD1 requires developments to consider flood risk from all sources.
40. The application site lies within Flood Zone 1, i.e. outside areas at risk of flooding. Footnote 63 to paragraph 181 of the NPPF requires that a site-specific flood risk assessment is provided for all development, including in Flood Zone 1, where the site is greater than 1 hectare. The application site measures approximately 0.1 hectare, therefore, a flood risk assessment is not required.

Drainage

41. MDD LP Policy CC10 *Sustainable Drainage* requires surface water to be managed in a sustainable manner, maintaining greenfield run-off rates and volumes, taking into account climate change. The LPU Policy FD2 requires that all development proposals ensure surface water is managed sustainably.
42. Paragraph 182 of the NPPF requires that proposals "should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, and which are

proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. These should provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible, through facilitating improvements in water quality and biodiversity, as well as benefits for amenity.”

43. The proposal would result in an increase in the footprint of the building; the surface water run off would be managed via soakaway while foul water from the development would discharge into an existing foul sewer network. Given that the proposed infill extension would be within an area of existing hardstanding, the proposal would not result in an increase in impermeable area. As such, no concerns arise in respect of surface water run off.

Ecology:

44. Core Strategy Policies CP3 *General Principles for Development* and CP7 *Biodiversity* establish that proposals should not have a detrimental impact on ecological features. Species and habitats of conservation value should be protected and the ability of a site to support fauna and flora, including protected species, should be maintained and enhanced. In addition, MDD LP Policy TB23 *Biodiversity and Development* requires proposals to enhance and incorporate new biodiversity features, provide appropriate buffer zones between development and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation and ensure ecological permeability.

Great Crested Newts

45. The application site lies within a red impacts zone for Great Crested Newts (“GCN”). This means that there is generally high likelihood of GCN being present within the site. The proposal has been reviewed by the Council’s ecologist, who raised no concerns in relation to potential impacts on GCN.

Bats

46. The application site lies within an area potentially suitable for bat roosts. The community hall has a flat roof with limited opportunities for bat roosts and as such, no concerns are raised in terms of impacts on bats. Notwithstanding, a bat informative is added.

Biodiversity Net Gain (“BNG”):

47. Section 70A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (“TCPA”) sets out that where planning permission is granted, it is subject to a pre-commencement condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met.
48. The application site would not impact on-site area habitats of 25m² or more or on-site linear habitats of 5m or more. As such, the scheme is exempt and not required to deliver BNG.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

49. 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.

Conclusion

50. The proposed use will ensure that the important community function of the facility remains available whilst providing office space (suitable for wheelchair users) in place of the unused storage/changing area. The proposed office use is compatible with the community use of the hall, and does not give rise to any concerns regarding highway impact or neighbour amenity. As such the proposal is considered acceptable and is recommended for approval.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
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<i>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 the protected groups 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 upon protected groups as a result of the development.</i>

BJC

22.08.25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 1

#	NAME
1	Outside Development Locations

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Countryside	Countryside

Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone	7km Linear Mitigation Zone

Mineral Safeguarding Areas | Total count: 1

#	Type	SubType
1	Sharp Sand and Gravel	River Terrace deposits

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site	AWE: 12km Zone	This is the 12km Zone. A circular zone of 12km radius around all nuclear sites, for certain types of significant development due to the potential for such developments to pose an external hazard to sites.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	Height Band	Wind Turbine	Aviation
1	All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet)	YES	YES

Risk of Flooding from Surface Water | Total count: 2

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
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1	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
2	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 1000 year risk extent

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 5

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	RF813	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
2	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	RF814	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
3	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	RF815	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
4	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	RG813	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
5	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	RG814	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	For Householder applications check HH Layer. Consult NatureSpace for all other types of development

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones - Minor | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	Consult NatureSpace for any minor development that intersects a red or amber zone in this layer

Local Wildlife Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Local Wildlife Site	Bearwood Estate - Woods and Lakes

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000530000&res=11404&location=475984,168857%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Grounds Maintenance Boundaries | Total count: 1

#	PPG17 TYPOLOGY	OWNER
1	Amenity Greenspace	Winnersh Parish Council

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Wokingham-Winnersh Settled and Farmed Clay

Conservation Areas | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Conservation Area	Sindlesham

Wards | Total count: 2

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Winnersh Ward	0 m
2	Barkham & Arborfield Ward	2.72 m

Parishes | Total count: 2

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Winnersh CP	0 m
2	Arborfield and Newland CP	2.72 m