

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252733
Site Address:	White Cottage, Bearwood Path, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5EY
Expiry Date:	7 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	27 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of an outbuilding to create ancillary annex following demolition of existing detached garage and carport. (part-retrospective)	

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
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 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 SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements SS17 – Transport improvements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
232215	Householder application for the proposed erection of a timber gazebo and an outbuilding	Conditionally Approved –

	to create a garage/gym following demolition of the existing detached garage and car port (part retrospective).	09/01/2024
232214	Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed erection of 2 no. detached outbuildings to form an annexe and a garage/gym following demolition of the existing detached garage and car port.	Withdrawn – 13/11/2023

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways: Request further information before determination
WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection
WBC Built Heritage Officer: No objection subject to condition
WBC CIL: No comments received
WBC Ecology Newts: No objection subject to informative
WBC Ecology: No comments received

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Winnersh Parish Council had no observations to make on the application.
Ward Member(s)	Cllr Prue Bray: Concern regarding the number of third party comments submitted in support of the application from outside of the local area. <i>Officer's Comment: The number of comments received is not a material planning consideration itself. The application will be considered on its merits.</i>
Local Residents/ Other Representations	13 comments received in support of the application.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

White Cottage is a Grade II listed building, the original part dating from the 16th Century. It is surrounded by an attractive and verdant garden area that provides separation from the surrounding late 20th Century residential development. The site is located on a prominent plot facing the T-junction of Bearwood Path, Lockyer Close and Chatsworth Avenue. The site benefits from a detached garage to the rear as well as a recently erected gazebo to the south-west of the main dwelling.

Proposal:

This application proposes the erection of a single storey detached outbuilding to the rear of the main dwelling to form an annexe following the demolition of an existing detached garage and carport. The existing outbuilding has been demolished hence

the part-retrospective nature of the proposal.

The proposed outbuilding would have a total footprint of approximately 90sqm including a side canopy and access ramp with an eaves height of approximately 2.25m and total ridge height of approximately 3.9m. The outbuilding would be of a very similar size and scale to an incidental garage/gym outbuilding that was approved by the Council under consent ref 232215 but has not been constructed.

The proposal would comprise additional habitable accommodation including a bedroom and bathroom facilities alongside living space. No kitchen facilities are proposed. The applicant has advised that the annexe is required to accommodate their elderly parents as the main dwelling is unsuitable for elderly care and wheelchair users.

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 within the Major Development Location of Winnersh, as designated by Core Strategy policy CP9. Alterations and additions to an existing residential dwelling within settlement limits is acceptable in principle, subject to impact on other material considerations including the character of the area, heritage assets and neighbouring amenity.

Design and Character of the Area:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high quality design. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

Section 4.11 of the Borough Design Guide states that garages (or other outbuildings) should not be sited in front gardens or project forward of the building line of a property. Nonetheless, the key considerations for all proposed additions to residential dwellings are they should be well designed, respond positively to the original dwelling, contribute positively to the local character and relate well to neighbouring properties.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design as well as any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents.

In terms of its size and scale, while the proposed outbuilding would be larger than the

existing structure it would be sited in a similar position and remain proportionate in size to the main dwelling in terms of its height and footprint. Indeed, the current proposal would be marginally lower in height compared to the previous consent which remains extant.

In terms of its design, the proposed hipped roof form would complement the form of the main dwelling and further mitigate the visual bulk of the scheme. The proposed use of oak timber cladding would not adversely appear at odds with the site and would be broken up by the black leaded windows, brick plinth and clay roof tiles which would complement the appearance of the main dwelling.

Nature/use of proposed ancillary accommodation

An annexe would typically have to have a degree of reliance on, and a clear functional link with, the host dwelling to be considered as “ancillary” to the residential use of the main dwelling. For example, an annexe may typically only accommodate one or two occupants or not include full kitchen or bathroom facilities to demonstrate that main meals or washing would be taken in the main house. In short, an ancillary annexe would not usually be capable of facilitating self-contained residential accommodation.

This has been acknowledged by similar appeal decisions in the past, including the Inspector determining Planning Appeal Ref. APP/L3815/C/15/3141285 (Annexe 47 Wellington Gardens, West Sussex, PO20 0RF for the erection of an outbuilding, who stated that: *“Irrespective of whether the term “annex” is used to describe the building, the fact remains that if the building were to provide all the normal facilities for self-contained day to day living, it would be a dwelling for the purposes of planning law.”*

Likewise, in *Gravesham Borough Council v Secretary of State for the Environment* (1982) P&CR 142, McCulloch J in the High Court was required to consider the definition of a dwelling house. He held that a distinctive characteristic of a dwelling house was its ability to afford to those who used it the facilities required for day-to-day private domestic existence.

There are several key physical and use characteristics of proposed additional accommodation which assist in identifying whether it would be ancillary to the main dwellinghouse, or be tantamount to a new, self-contained dwellinghouse:

- Physical characteristics: size/scale, siting/location & internal facilities

As discussed above, in relation to the size of the plot and the host dwelling the proposal would be proportionate in terms of its size and scale. The proposal would be sited within the residential curtilage of the property circa. 9m to the rear of the main dwelling. Access to the annexe would be via the existing access for White Cottage off Bearwood Path with parking and amenity space shared between the intended occupants and the existing occupiers of the site. No additional access, or subdivision of the plot, is proposed. As such, the proposal would not appear physically detached or separate from the main dwellinghouse and there would be a clear link to the use of the main dwelling in this respect.

In respect of internal facilities, 1no. double bedroom and en-suite bathroom is proposed within the northern end of the building. No kitchen facilities are shown on the submitted proposed floor plan, with the remainder of the internal space shown as a 'Summer Room'. The proposal does not contain facilities to prepare main meals. As such, it has been demonstrated that the proposal would not be capable of facilitating self-contained residential accommodation.

- Use characteristics: the identity and relationship of the intended user(s) to the occupants of the main dwelling & nature of occupation

The intention behind the additional accommodation on the site is to provide care and support for the applicant's elderly parents is understood. While full details on the needs of the intended occupants have not been provided, the submitted Planning Statement states that the main dwelling would not be suitable accommodation in the long-term and it is accepted that all intended occupants would be related with each other.

Summary:

Overall, it is accepted that the proposed development would be an ancillary use to the host dwelling. The proposed annexe use would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area due to its reliance on and functional link with the host dwelling. However, alterations following the development to facilitate the creation of a separate residential unit would be a disruptive change of use which would not correspond with the character of the area. For the avoidance of doubt, a condition restricting the use of the annex to ancillary accommodation only.

The proposal would have an acceptable impact on visual amenity and the character of the area in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3, the NPPF and the Borough Design Guide SPD.

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets:

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development must ensure the preservation of any nearby listed building, including its setting. Section 16 of the NPPF requires consideration of the harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.

Policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan outlines that the Council will conserve and seek to enhance the designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by supporting development proposals that will conserve the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states that LPAs should avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The Council's Built Heritage Officer has reviewed the proposal and raised no objection on the basis that the annexe would be very similar to the size and height of the outbuilding approved under consent ref 232215. As such, no adverse harm to the setting of the listed building has been identified and the proposal complies with policy TB24 of the MDD Local Plan and the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Due to the proposed siting of the proposal away from the site's boundaries adjacent to neighbouring properties there are no concerns in relation to potential impact on amenity in terms of loss of light, overlooking or overbearing.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan set out the parking standards for development, noting that these should be regarded as a starting point with each site assessed on its own merits.

The site's existing parking provision to the rear of the main dwelling would not be affected by the proposal. The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed the proposal and has raised no objection to the existing access and driveway being retained and is satisfied that the parking area to the rear provides ample space for more than three vehicles which meets the Council's parking standards.

The submitted proposed block plan indicates the provision of a disabled parking space adjacent to the northern end of the annexe. The Officer has raised concern with the proximity of the space to the access ramp and advises that the ramp is relocated to provide sufficient clearance. While this is duly noted, as the parking area is pre-existing and set well back from the public highway, and the Officer concludes there is ample space within the existing drive to park at least three vehicles, it is considered onerous to request alterations to the design of the proposal. Given the scale of the proposal, there is also no policy requirement to provide cycle parking provision.

Biodiversity, Trees and Landscape:

There is a protected Weeping Willow Tree located to the south of the site's vehicular access (TPO No. 1954/2024) which would not be affected by the proposed development. The Council's Landscape Architect has reviewed the proposal and has raised no objection from a trees and landscape perspective. The Council's Ecology Newts Consultant has reviewed the proposal and is satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on Great Crested Newts during and following the development.

Subject to conditions, the application is acceptable and is therefore 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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The proposed annex is intended to provide accommodation for the applicant's elderly/disabled relative who requires proximity to the main dwelling to ensure appropriate care and support. Although no detailed evidence has been provided nor has the disabled persons exemption been applied for, the plans include a disabled parking space, level ramped access and wheelchair storage.

In accordance with the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), the potential impacts of the development on the health, well-being, and independence of the intended occupier have been considered. The provision of on-site accommodation would reduce the need for frequent travel and reliance on external carers, promoting independence while safeguarding the individual's welfare. The Council has had due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations, and considers that allowing the annex would support these objectives without causing harm to wider planning interests.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	6 January 2026
Earliest date for decision:	11 December 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	7 January 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Major Development Location – Winnersh*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Area – Loddon River Valley with Open Water*
- *Tree Preservation Order No. 1954/2024 (Single – Weeping Willow)*
- *Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Area*
- *Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone (Red)*