

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	253039
Site Address:	Newlands, Mole Road, Sindlesham, Wokingham, RG2 9JQ
Expiry Date:	5 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	28 October 2025
Proposal: Full application for the use of land for the stationing of a mobile home for use as equestrian staff accommodation. (Retrospective)	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside (CP11)
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – White Risk Zone
Tree Preservation Orders – TPO-1825-2021
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones – 7km Linear Mitigation Zone

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 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability 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 CP17 – Housing Delivery
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 TB05 – Housing Mix TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside

Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS10 – Meeting our housing needs CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging ER3 – Supporting the rural economy H1 – Housing mix, density and standards H5 – Rural workers’ dwellings FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design NE6 – Valued landscapes DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity DH6 – Archaeology DH7 – Equestrian development HC5 – Environmental protection HC6 – Air pollution and air quality HC7 – Light pollution HC8 – Noise pollution HC10 – Odor, fumes and dust
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
081887	Proposed erection of one dwelling with garages and staff accommodation.	Refused 07/08/2008
201458	Full application for the proposed erection of an equestrian facility for training and livery purposes including fifty horseboxes, foaling yard, indoor and outdoor riding arenas, lunge ring and horse walker, reception, office, members clubhouse with bar, parking for 25 cars, three parking areas for HGV horse lorries, and three units of residential accommodation comprising managers three-bedroomed house, staff two-bedroomed flat and staff five-bedroomed flat, with access via Gravel pithill Lane and Ellis Hill.	Refused 07/10/2020
250785	Full application for the change of use of land and 3no. buildings to equestrian, erection of 1no.	Approved 20/10/2025

	stable building and creation of a riding arena with associated engineering works (Retrospective).	
		

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objections
WBC Drainage – No objections
WBC Highways – See main body of report
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections

External

Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Comments from Arborfield Parish Council: - Inappropriate use and siting of the mobile home, by reason of its location outside of development limits. - The development is not in-keeping with the character of the area. - The location of the site is unsustainable. - Visual and landscape harm - Precedent for other mobile home uses on greenfield land (<i>Officer comment: The LPA cannot consider the potential of future development as a material planning consideration.</i>) - No justification under gypsy/traveller guidance (<i>Officer comment: This application is not for a GRT pitch, rather it is for equestrian workers.</i>)
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	Comments from Barkham Parish Council: - The application refers to customer/commercial use which permission has not been given for, it is only for the resident's horses (Officer comment: Consent 250785 permitted the commercial equestrian use of the land, namely for full livery purposes.) - The site is located outside of settlement limits. - Impact on the Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape. - The site is not in a sustainable location. - No evidence to support the rationale of the application in relation to fear of theft of equipment or horses. - Insufficient evidence to support the need for staff accommodation. - Concerns about future expansion of site (Officer comment: The LPA cannot consider the potential of future development as a material planning consideration.) - Precedent for other mobile home uses on greenfield land (Officer comment: The LPA cannot consider the potential of future development as a material planning consideration.)
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Two representations received from a local residents raising the following concerns: - The proposed use is incorrect, it should be a mixed use between equestrian and residential (Officer comment: The application red line for this application is different to that of the previous equestrian consent (250785), with the only shared factor being the access road for the site as a whole. As this application covers the use of a separate area of land, a mixed use is not required.) - Concerns as to whether the mobile home meets the specifications in the Caravan Act (Officer comment: Following Officer visits to the site, the LPA are satisfied that the mobile home falls within the definition of a mobile structure/caravan.) - Proposals have degraded quality of the landscape. - Reliance on previous home that existed until it was burnt down in 1973, this is not a precedent and should be treated as abandonment of the previous residential use. - No evidence to justify threat of theft

	- An essential need for the accommodation has not been provided. - Improvement in locational sustainability would be negligible
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APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of an equestrian livery and riding area surrounded by an extensive array of grazing paddocks, accessed via a long winding vehicle from Sindlesham Road to the north-west. The land is surrounded by undulating fields and hills and also enclosed by dense vegetation, some of which is protected by an area-wide Tree Protection Order (TPO-1825-2021).

Application 250785 approved the equestrian use of an area of land which includes a riding area and 4no. stable buildings. The site has permission for full commercial livery, but condition 2 of the consent restricts the following operations due to its sensitive countryside location:

- DIY Livery
- Half Livery
- Riding School Lessons
- The hosting of competitions or events

To the south of the site are 3no. stable buildings and an informal vehicular parking area. The riding area is located immediately north-west of the 3no. stable buildings to the south. Further west is another stable block that includes 5 stables within. The mobile home associated with this application is sited north-west of this stable block.

The site is located within the designated Countryside, plus the Barkham and Bearwood valued landscape area. Bearwood College, a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, is located 150 metres to the east.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the retrospective stationing of a mobile home for residential use. It is important to highlight that the intended occupants of this mobile home will be employees of the site's equestrian use, under permission 250785. The applicant has provided an evidence base to justify its necessity in association with the site's equestrian use, including financial accounts for the past three years.

Principle of Development:

Policy Context:

General:

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.

Local Plan Update:

The Council is currently progressing their Local Plan Update (LPU). The Proposed Submission Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Planning Inspector on Friday 28 February 2025. Two independent Inspectors were appointed, with Part 1 examination hearings held in November 2025. The Inspectors have now written to confirm the examination can progress to Part 2 hearings.

As a result of the above, the weight applied to the LPU policies is currently limited. The most relevant policies are listed below.

Policy SS5 of the LPU relates to development in the Countryside. Paragraph 2 states that Development proposals in the countryside will in general only be supported for the types of development set out below:

- The construction of new dwellings which accord with Policy H4: Exceptions sites, Policy H5: Rural workers' dwellings and Policy H10: Traveller sites;
- Development proposals for which land is allocated;
- Development which supports the rural economy and equestrian uses in accordance with Policy ER3: Supporting the rural economy and Policy DH7: Equestrian development;
- Low carbon and renewable energy generation schemes in accordance with Policy CE7: Low carbon and renewable energy generation;
- The re-use or conversion of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction which would not require extensive reconstruction;
- The replacement, extension or alteration (including sub-division) of existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction, and which do not lead to disproportionate increases in scale, form or footprint beyond the original building;
- Redevelopment or infilling of previously developed land that does not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or the rural setting of the village;
- Agricultural and forestry development that is demonstrated to be reasonable and proportionate to the need;
- Outdoor sports, recreation, leisure and nature conservation development that is demonstrated to be necessary, reasonable and proportionate for the use;
- The provision of essential community facilities which cannot be located within settlement boundaries and are demonstrated to be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the use;
- The provision of essential utilities and infrastructure (including development for strategic transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a countryside location), and cemeteries and burial grounds; or
- Minerals and waste development in accordance with relevant policies in the minerals and waste local plan.

Policy H6 relates to rural workers' dwellings. Development proposals in the countryside for a rural worker dwelling which serves an existing agricultural, forestry or similar land based rural business requiring a countryside location, will be supported where all the following criteria are met:

- There is an essential need for one or more permanent full-time worker(s) to be accommodated at all times on the site of a rural enterprise in order for the enterprise to operate;
- The rural enterprise has been established for at least 3 years and has been demonstrated to be economically sustainable and financially viable for the foreseeable future;
- The functional need for the rural worker dwelling cannot be accommodated in suitable existing accommodation available in an existing defined settlement within a reasonable distance of the rural enterprise in the first instance, or within another existing building on the site which is suitable for conversion or extension;
- The size and scale of the dwelling is commensurate with the functional requirement of the intended occupant and their connection with the rural enterprise;
- The dwelling is sited close to existing buildings as far as is practicable and is appropriately designed and landscaped to avoid unacceptable impact on the countryside character; and
- No dwelling serving or associated with the rural business has been either sold or converted from a residential use or otherwise separated from the holding within the last 10 years. The act of severance may override the evidence of need.

Where rural worker accommodation is essential to support a new rural enterprise, it should be provided temporarily by a caravan, mobile home, or other temporary accommodation for the first three years. It will be required to satisfy the functional tests set out at 1a), c), d), and e) and additionally demonstrate that the following financial tests are satisfied:

- There is clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned; and
- There is clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis.

Permission for all rural workers dwellings, including temporary accommodation, will be subject to a condition which restricts occupation of the dwelling to a person directly employed on a permanent full-time basis in rural enterprise.

Core Strategy 2010:

The site lies within the Countryside as designated in the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Core Strategy policy CP11 states, in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except in certain circumstances. This criteria is as follows:

- 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.

National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF sets out that new isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances, and provides a non-inclusive bulleted list of the factors that may constitute such special circumstances, including at bullet point 1 where there is a need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside. Neither 'essential' nor 'rural' are defined by the NPPF.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should enable:

- the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;
- the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Paragraph 89 states that planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

Assessment:

Essential Need:

Alongside the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) also includes guidance for isolated homes in the Countryside. Paragraph 10 of the NPPG 'Housing Needs of Different Groups' covers the relevant considerations for the assessment of essential rural workers accommodation, namely:

- evidence of the necessity for a rural worker to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective operation of an agricultural, forestry or similar land-based rural enterprise (for instance, where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attention 24-hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health or from crime, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products);
- the degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future;
- whether the provision of an additional dwelling on site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process;
- whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, providing such improvements are appropriate taking into account their scale, appearance and the local context; and
- in the case of new enterprises, whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period.

With regards to the necessity for a worker to live at the site, the main operation associated with the business (Sillett Equestrian) is the training of competition horses for showjumping competitions. At night, all of the competition horses are placed within the stable blocks on site, which include a total of 11 stables.

Further afield, the applicant also owns all of the paddocks that surround the application site, which are specifically used for grazing purposes only. In total, the site hosts between 30-40 horses at a time, with the majority of those grazing in the paddocks surrounding the site.

The applicant has provided evidence to justify the necessity for a rural worker to live at the site. Staff arrive at 7:00-7:30am, feed and muck out the horses. Dependent on competition schedules, the horses are exercised around 5-6 times per week. This includes schooling and training in the arena, hacking in The Coombes and competitions.

Given the applicants have a mixture of older and experienced horses along with younger ones starting their education, the horses use the arena training for this purpose. Their weekly training includes use of the show jumps for specific exercises to teach and improve suppleness and athleticism. The applicants have two riders along with themselves that exercise and train the horses, with the applicants personally overseeing the daily routine and management of each horse. The horses are groomed on a daily basis, prepared for exercise and washed off after. The horses see a physio for performance and comfort every 6 weeks and the farrier comes every 5 weeks to fit them with new shoes.

From the LPA's perspective, the nature of the tasks raised in the two paragraphs above are predominantly daytime or ad hoc tasks and does not provide clear justification for overnight accommodation/staff presence.

Horses are checked twice daily, with some of them requiring feed and supplements on a daily basis, if for any reason one of the horses need to come in following an injury, they are brought into a stable for treatment or to see a vet where necessary. During the winter months when the ground is wet, their feet can get softer and they can develop abscesses in the hoof. The horse then needs to be brought into a dry stable with a poultice applied to the hoof to draw out the abscess and relieve the pain, this process can take a week for full recovery. Health checks are twice daily, and do not necessarily provide justification for overnight accommodation. Similarly, the weather dependent and winter events/tasks are seasonal and do not provide clear justification for an all-year round on-site presence.

The horses require 6 monthly vaccinations, annual dentistry and other routine visits, all of which require a staff member to be present and assist. It is not uncommon for a horse to have a serious condition which requires emergency medical treatment and whilst the horse is treated as much as possible on site, the horse may need to be transferred to a clinic for surgery of specific treatment if this cannot be managed on site. Surgery for complications such as colic is serious and very stressful and risky for the horses and there are many other treatments carried out by the applicant prior to this, some of which require hourly procedures which can go throughout the night. Again although medical conditions can be serious, this is likely to be an ad hoc, occurrence.

Foaling also occurs on an irregular basis, with 1-2 horses foaling annually on average. Foaling is stressful and this process takes around 30-45 minutes, should there be complications, this can be fatal for both the mare and the foal. The mare will often require some assistance and once the foal is born. Should a mare reject a foal, colostrum must be sourced immediately, usually from another mare somewhere which requires driving somewhere in the middle of the night as most mares foal late in the evening or early morning when its quit and consider it safe. If the mare dies whilst foaling, the foal requires immediate attention and the applicants will attempt to locate a foster mare and this is of course very traumatising. The foal will require 24 hour care until the foster mum is found, and sadly there is no guarantee that the foster mum will accept the foal. This is again an ad hoc even 1-2 times per year.

The planning statement outlines that in the last 6 months, the applicants had a pony with colic that required surgery, when he was allowed to have food reintroduced he could only eat small amounts every two hours, which meant that the applicants were up every two hours feeding him for a month. This further required ongoing diet management and routine for three months post-surgery.

The health related matters raised in the three paragraphs above are acknowledged, with the LPA understanding that an on-site presence would clearly aid the referenced events running smoothly. However, these events are occasional; the applicant's agent has clarified that only 1-2 horses on average being bred annually. Further to this, the applicant states that they also have a camera which alerts them to incidents. Based on this, it is not considered that a permanent dwelling is yet proportionate to the scale of functional need at the site; emergencies such as those referenced above could realistically be handled by on-call visits or temporary staff accommodation (uses of land for 28 calendar days a year).

In the event that international competitions are being attended by the applicants and the horses, a house sitter would be employed to occupy the home whilst they are away. This would be another member of staff working at the site for equestrian purposes, and such a restriction would be imposed via condition. This further indicates that the owners are not required on site at all times.

Attention now turns to whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, or whether alternative accommodation in the locale could also be viable. No existing built development on site is considered appropriate to either convert or extend for accommodation.

In terms of nearby accommodation provision, the planning statement has completed a 1 mile radius search, with the results concluding that the price of accommodation in the area is more significant than that of a mobile home and is therefore not comparable. Cost is not relevant to functional need and furthermore, the site is not isolated in the general sense, making commuting to the site possible.

In terms of viability, the applicant has provided a relatively brief business plan, but this does concisely cover their commitment to the site, the expansion of the enterprise and also highlights the equestrian expertise of the applicants, accompanied by a brief summary of their competition history. From a financial perspective, the accounts provided by the applicant show consistent profits over the last three years, with there being little concern that the stationing of the mobile home would harm the viability of the business long term. The LPA however do note that the applicant has only had permission on the site for equestrian purposes since 20th October 2025, so it is unclear whether all of these profits directly relate to the business use of the site itself.

In terms of the necessity of the accommodation for the viability of the business, the applicant has outlined in the statement that the competition level of the horses they look after are of significant value to both the viability of the business and the clients they look after the horses on behalf of. Their long term care and protection, assisted by on-site accommodation, would ultimately benefit the viability of the business as a whole.

The LPA acknowledge the extensive set of needs/tasks associated with the caring of competition of horses on site. It is acknowledged that 24/7 on-site accommodation would assist with these matters moving forward but ultimately, the LPA do not consider the request for its retention in perpetuity is sufficiently justified at this time.

It is important to note that not all equestrian enterprises, including those involving competition horses, operate with on-site residential accommodation. In many cases, appropriate management arrangements, staffing patterns, alarm systems, and regular monitoring are relied upon to meet welfare and operational needs without the provision of a dwelling. Accordingly, where a permanent residential presence is proposed, particularly in a countryside location, a clear and robust functional and financial justification is required. This must demonstrate that there is an essential need for a worker to be present on the site at all times, that such need cannot reasonably be met through alternative arrangements, and that the scale of the enterprise justifies a dwelling in planning terms. On the evidence currently before the LPA, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the circumstances of this case are so exceptional as to warrant the retention of permanent residential accommodation in perpetuity.

However, it is standard for LPAs to approve an initial temporary period for rural workers accommodation, to ensure that the need for the dwelling is genuinely required and to monitor its wider impacts on the countryside. This approach provides LPAs with a controlled way to support rural enterprises while safeguarding the countryside from unnecessary or long-term development.

Furthermore, the temporary permissions recognise that the financial viability and operations of rural enterprises can change over time, so a temporary period enables the LPA to review the continued need for accommodation in the future alongside its associated impacts.

Overall, the LPA considers that the applicant has provided sufficient evidence to justify staff accommodation on site but for the reasons raised above, a temporary permission is considered the most proportionate form of consent in the current context of the business and operations it relates to.

Principal of the location:

With regards to criterion 1 of CP11, the accommodation would contribute to an existing rural enterprise, that being the site's existing equestrian use. As per the Essential Need section above, sufficient justification has been provided to demonstrate the necessity of the accommodation in association with the use. As such, compliance with criterion 1 is achieved.

With regards to criterion 2 of CP11, the mobile home is a temporary structure which would ultimately require removal should the equestrian use of the site cease, avoiding any permanent harm to the Countryside. Combined with its modest footprint and proximity to existing built development on site, it is not considered that the development would result in the excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings. As such, compliance with criterion 2 is achieved.

The wording of Policy CP11 requires compliance with criteria 1, 2 and 3. Compliance with criteria 1 and 2 are noted and criterion 3 does not apply to the proposal. The proposed development is therefore acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area/Landscape Character:

Policy Context:

Paragraph 187(b) of the NPPF requires that planning applications enhance the natural and local environment by 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.'

Policy CP11 supports development in the countryside only where it maintains the high quality of the rural environment. Policy CP1(1) similarly only supports development that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment, with policy CP3 supporting development of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height and character to the area CP3(a) and which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place contributes to the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings CP3(f).

Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues. Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

The Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document provides further guidance for developers with general guidance that development should respond positively to its site and local context (G1) and respond positively to the local character of the area (G2).

The National Design Guide section B1, paragraph 67 also states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Site Context:

The application site is within the Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape, which is wholly within the landscape character area (LCA) L1 known as 'Bearwood Wooded Sand and Gravel Hills'. The valued landscape takes and its demonstrable physical attributes which would take this site beyond "*mere countryside*" and should be considered as more important than Countryside falling outside of this Valued Landscape designation as stated in the Valued Landscapes Topic Paper (2020).

The valuable landscape characteristics of the LCA include;

- Elevated wooded hills
- Varied topography which forms an intricate range of landscape spaces and backdrops
- Large expanses of mature mixed woodland
- The distinctive mosaic of interconnecting mixed woodland interspersed with small scale pastoral fields
- Peaceful secluded character
- Contrast of enclosed views within woodland and long views
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The landscape condition is considered to be good. The main landscape strategy for the LCA is to conserve and enhance the existing wooded and parkland character of the landscape and its biodiversity. In terms of development, the aim is to conserve the unsettled character of the area.

Assessment:

The mobile home is a modest, temporary structure that maintains the single storey character of other built development on site. It is well enclosed by dense vegetation, with there being no public viewpoints available of its form. It is also sited within close proximity to other built development on site.

Whilst it cannot be reasonably argued that the home conserves the unsettled character of the area or retains or enhances the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape, the home would cause no permanent material harm to the landscape

due to its temporary moveable nature. Its presence on site would only be tied to the equestrian use of the wider land, with its removal required in the event the equestrian use ceases. WBC Landscape and Trees have also raised no objections on the impacts to the LCA or Valued Landscape, primarily due to the mobile nature of the development.

From a wider character and visual perspective, the mobile home would have little to no noticeable impact on the locale, primarily assisted by its densely vegetated enclosure and distance from the public highway.

Overall, the impact on the character of the area and wider landscape character is acceptable, subject to appropriate removal and remediation conditions.

Landscape and Trees:

Arboricultural Matters:

As outlined above, a large amount of the site is covered by an area-wide Tree Protection Order (TPO-1825-2021). Due to the mobile nature of the home, the lack of foundations and its distance away from nearby trees on site, there are no objections on arboricultural grounds.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The nearest residential property is Newlands Lodge, located approximately 135 metres north-west of the mobile home. As such, there are no anticipated neighbouring amenity impacts.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

General Highway Safety:

WBC Highways do not consider that the traffic generated from the mobile home proposed would have any significant impacts on the wider highway network.

Locational Sustainability:

There are limited local facilities within acceptable walking distance from the site, nor is there any bus service within acceptable walking distance. This therefore means that private cars would be the main mode for this development and as such, the site is located within an unsustainable location.

The planning statement outlines that the stationing of this mobile home on site would ultimately reduce the number of vehicle movements to and from the application site. Whilst acknowledged, the reduction would be generally limited to the occupants of the home and would not affect other staff and client journeys to the site.

Notwithstanding this, WBC Highways accept that the LPA consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify a rural worker dwelling on the site. Subject to the home being tied to the existing equestrian use, they raise no objections in this regard.

Parking:

The proposed driveway space has more than enough space for three vehicles to park. WBC Highways consider this acceptable.

Refuse Collection Strategy:

The applicant has confirmed that already have a fortnightly collection of waste from the business with Biffa, with bins collected from the site's entrance gate to the north-west. Whilst the distance between the home and the site's frontage exceeds recommended walking distances for refuse collection, this issue in isolation is not considered sufficient to refuse the application and as such, WBC Highways raise no objections to this approach.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of surface water flooding. As the mobile home is a temporary structure with voids underneath it, WBC Drainage raise no objections to the proposals.

Ecology:

Biodiversity Net Gain:

As the proposed development is retrospective in nature, it is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains.

Protected Species:

The site is located within a Bat Roost Area Habitat but due to the nature of the works, there are no anticipated impact on this protected species. A condition however will be imposed limiting any external lighting unless prior written approval is given by the Local Planning Authority.

In terms of Great Crested Newts (GCNs), the site is located within a White Risk Zone, which indicates that GCNs are highly unlikely to be located within the area. As such, the proposals represent no risk to this protected species.

Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area:

The application site is located within the 7km Linear Mitigation Zone for the SPA. As the development does not involve the creation of 50 or more dwellinghouses, the development is not liable for mitigation contributions.

Conclusion:

Overall, the proposed development complies with the development plan. Subject to appropriate conditions, this 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 reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. 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:	Approval
Date:	2 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	14 January 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	3 March 2026