

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Applicant: Sarah Weatherlake

Site: Land adjacent to Yewcroft / The Bothy, Wargrave, Berkshire

Local Planning Authority: Wokingham Borough Council



Cover image: Site + Wargrave Manor (© Andrew Holt/ Alamy Stock Photo)

1.0 Introduction

1.1

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the construction of a single-storey dwelling on land adjacent to Yewcroft, accessed from The Bothy, Wargrave.

1.2

The application site lies within the Wargrave Conservation Area and is located immediately south of land associated with Wargrave Manor, a Grade II listed building. The proposal therefore has the potential to affect designated heritage assets and their settings.

1.3

The purpose of this statement is to identify and assess the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposal, to describe the contribution made by the application site to that significance, and to evaluate the impact of the proposed development in accordance with the statutory duties set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.4

This document is submitted as a standalone Heritage Statement, separate from the Planning, Design and Access Statement, in direct response to the local planning authority's validation requirements.

2.0 Legislative and Policy Context

2.1

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard be had to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.

2.2

Section 72(1) of the Act requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

2.3

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national policy on the historic environment. Of particular relevance are paragraphs 199–208, which require:

- Identification and assessment of heritage significance
- Consideration of the contribution made by setting
- A balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm

2.4

Local planning policy within the Wokingham Borough Local Plan and Managing Development Delivery DPD reinforces these statutory and national policy requirements.

3.0 Site Description

3.1

The application site comprises an area of former garden land historically associated with residential properties along The Bothy. It is enclosed by a combination of historic brick boundary walls, hedging and mature planting, creating a contained and private space with limited public visibility.

3.2

The Bothy is a narrow, informal lane leading northwards from Wargrave Hill. Its character is defined by enclosure, modest domestic buildings, garden walls and a lack of suburban highway features. This contributes significantly to the character of this part of the conservation area.

3.3

The site slopes gently from east to west and historically functioned as part of a larger garden area, with remnants of garden structures and planting still evident.

4.0 Heritage Assets Affected

4.1 Wargrave Conservation Area

4.1.1

The Wargrave Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the village and extends northwards to include land associated with Wargrave Manor and its parkland.

4.1.2

Its significance derives from:

- The historic settlement pattern
- The relationship between village, river and estate landscape
- Enclosed lanes such as The Bothy
- Traditional boundary treatments, particularly brick and flint walls
- Mature trees and garden landscapes

4.1.3

The Bothy represents a transitional space between the denser village core and the open

parkland of Wargrave Manor. This interface is an important component of the conservation area's significance.

4.2 Wargrave Manor (Grade II)

4.2.1

Wargrave Manor is a Grade II listed building of architectural and historic interest. Its significance lies in its architectural composition, historic function and its relationship with the surrounding designed landscape.

4.2.2

The setting of Wargrave Manor includes open parkland to the south and east, historically separated from the village by boundary walls, tree belts and changes in land use. These elements are integral to understanding the manor's historic relationship with the settlement.

5.0 Contribution of the Application Site to Significance

5.1

The application site does not contain any listed buildings or buildings of architectural or historic interest.

5.2

Its contribution to heritage significance is contextual, rather than intrinsic, and arises from:

- Its role as enclosed garden land at the edge of the village
- The presence of historic boundary walls
- Its relationship to The Bothy as an enclosed lane
- Its position forming part of the visual buffer between the village and the Wargrave Manor parkland

5.3

The site does not make a positive contribution through openness, landmark buildings or designed vistas. Instead, its contribution is defined by containment and enclosure.

6.0 Description of the Proposed Development

6.1

The proposal seeks consent for a single-storey dwelling with a Gross Internal Area of 149m², located entirely within the footprint envelope of a previously approved dwelling.

6.2

The building is deliberately low in height, with ridge heights, eaves heights and finished floor levels matching those previously approved by the local planning authority.

6.3

External materials replicate the approved palette, including red/orange brickwork, dark-stained timber elements, slim-profile glazing and a sedum roof.

6.4

A new vehicular access is proposed from The Bothy, located immediately adjacent to an existing pedestrian gate. This requires the removal of a short section of boundary wall between two existing pillars, with the majority of the historic wall retained.

7.0 Impact on the Wargrave Conservation Area

7.1

The proposed dwelling respects the established scale and character of The Bothy. Being single-storey and set behind existing boundary walls, it does not introduce excessive bulk, height or visual prominence.

7.2

The removal of a limited section of boundary wall is carefully controlled and framed by existing brick pillars. This preserves the rhythm, enclosure and historic character of the lane.

7.3

The dwelling's form, materials and subdued architectural expression align with the informal, garden-led character of this part of the conservation area.

7.4

The proposal does not erode historic plot patterns, does not suburbanise the lane, and does not interrupt important views or vistas.

7.5

The development therefore preserves the character and appearance of the Wargrave Conservation Area, in accordance with Section 72 of the 1990 Act.

8.0 Impact on the Setting of Wargrave Manor

8.1

The setting of Wargrave Manor is primarily experienced through its open parkland and designed landscape, which remains visually and physically separate from the village by boundary walls and tree belts.

8.2

The application site is screened from the parkland by a substantial brick boundary wall and mature trees. These features form part of the historic boundary between estate land and the village.

8.3

The proposed dwelling remains low in height and does not extend closer to the parkland than development previously approved on the site.

8.4

Filtered views from within the parkland already include glimpses of existing settlement-edge buildings beyond the boundary wall. The proposed dwelling does not introduce a new or more intrusive element into these views.

8.5

The proposal therefore causes no harm to the setting of the Grade II listed Wargrave Manor, and preserves the historic relationship between the manor and the village.

9.0 Planning Balance

9.1

The proposal has been assessed in accordance with the statutory duties and national policy requirements relating to heritage assets.

9.2

The assessment demonstrates that the development results in **no harm** to the significance of either the Wargrave Conservation Area or the setting of Wargrave Manor.

9.3

As no harm is identified, there is no requirement to apply the balancing exercise set out in NPPF paragraph 202.

10.0 Conclusion

10.1

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respond to the historic context of The Bothy, the Wargrave Conservation Area and the setting of Wargrave Manor.

10.2

The proposal:

- Preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area
- Retains and respects historic boundary features
- Maintains the visual separation between village and parkland
- Does not harm the significance or setting of Wargrave Manor

10.3

The development is therefore fully compliant with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF and local planning policy, and should be supported in heritage terms.