

Boddingtons Planning

**Statement in support of an application
for
the erection of a marquee during winter months –
1st October to 31st March annually for the storage and repair of
boats**

at

**Val Wyatt Marine
Willow Lane
Wargrave
RG10 8LH**

October 2025

Background

The marina has operated on site since the 1930s. The main purpose of the business is the sale, mooring, maintenance and storage of boats.

Each winter it is necessary to lift boats from the water to store on the land. There are approximately 200 boats on site for hard standing storage during October to March/April each year. The timing of boats being returned to customers depends on weather and river conditions in the months leading up to the start of Spring. Some years relaunch is completed in May.

The advantage of being able to store undercover is that various works of repair and maintenance can be carried out by staff on site throughout the winter on behalf of the owners without having to wait for dry weather conditions. It makes the winter operations more efficient and ensures that most works are complete by the spring, and more boats can be returned to the water earlier rather than having to wait for better weather to complete the backlog. Such works as painting, teak cleaning and polishing as well as overhauls and more serious repairs are carried out and are weather dependant. Boat cleaning also requires cover.

The marquee was purchased in 2018 and is now completing its third year. The fact that it has been in location for this time is testament to its screened location

and lack of impact on neighbours. The query was raised following another application recently.

At the end of the winter period the marquee is dismantled and stored on site over the summer period. The only view into the site is from the river and when activity is at its greatest the marquee is not erected.

The marquee allows approximately 20 boats in addition to the extant capacity of around 30 boats to be stored and worked on undercover, with around 150 outside on the hardstandings. The location of the marquee allows some rotation of boats which is difficult with the other accommodation, again speeding winter works

Boats not under cover will be covered individually by plastic tarpaulins or heavy winter covers. (see photo). Such covers are not required for boats undercover in buildings or the marquee.

The applicant has found the arrangement approved to be very successful and flexible for the winter operations of the marina

Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a marquee for the storage and maintenance of boats ancillary to the marina business for 6 months within a year (1st October to 31st March). This effectively the renewal of the previous permission that has inured for the past 5 years on site without any issue. However, the applicant wishes to extend the length of the marquee from 36 to 54m as shown on the submitted plans. A new permission is therefore required.

However, as the temporary period to allow the council to consider the impact of the marquee in principle has been ongoing for 5 years they may consider that it is not necessary to impose a further 5-year temporary permission. That is a matter for the LPA to decide given that the proposal is different from that previously approved.

Under section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the local planning authority may grant planning permission for a specified temporary period only.

Circumstances where a temporary permission may be appropriate include where a trial run is needed in order to assess the effect of the development on the area or where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of that period.

It will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission (except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale, such as temporary classrooms and other school facilities). Further permissions can normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so. There is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission will then be granted permanently.

A condition requiring the demolition after a stated period of a building that is clearly intended to be permanent is unlikely to pass the test of reasonableness. Conditions requiring demolition of buildings which are imposed on planning permissions for change of use are unlikely to relate fairly and reasonably to the development permitted.

Planning History

Planning permission was granted for a temporary period of 5 years for the location of a marquee within the marina site for 6 months of the year (1st October to 31 March each year. (ref 210538) Approved April 2021

Planning Policy

The Site lies within the Green Belt. The policies are contained within the NPPF 2019 and the Wokingham Core Strategy 2010. The new Local Plan is due to be approved soon. The policies in the NPPF generally reflect those in the Local development plan so lengthy recitation of all policies is not required.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt are contained within paragraphs 143 -147 of the NPPF.

Para 143 indicates that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Para 144 indicates that substantial weight should be given the harm to the Green Belt and that 'Very Special Circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm by reason of inappropriateness is outweighed by other considerations.

Para 145 indicates that not all development is inappropriate and lists the types of development considered appropriate in the Green Belt. Included in this list is b) the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation As long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

The meaning of the words contained within the paragraphs are open to interpretation and there is already significant case law on these matters. Notwithstanding this it is clear that the marina business would be considered as outdoor recreation as it is there to accommodate the use of the river for recreational purposes and facilities ensuring 'seaworthiness' and storage is part and parcel of that activity. The business is long established on this site and there is no question why they are located where they are.

Following this an assessment of the impact of the proposals on the openness of the Green Belt has to be adjudged. Clearly it is possible to say that any building affects the openness in which case there is little point in having categories of appropriate development as all development will have to be refused for those reasons. Our interpretation is that once the facilities are accepted as appropriate it is whether the proposals are reasonable given the purpose that they are seeking to achieve.

If the use is considered not to fall within the category of outdoor recreation, then the proposals will be considered inappropriate and would have to supply 'very special circumstances' to warrant overriding the baseline Green Belt policies.

It is our opinion that the proposed marquee would be considered appropriate development serving outdoor recreation and the proposals would be considered acceptable in scale i.e. not having an adverse impact on the openness Green Belt for the following reasons. In the event that the Officers take a different view we consider that the consideration will amount to the Very Special circumstances required to warrant approval.

1. Temporary nature. The 'building' is not permanent. It is a tent and is removed for 6 months of the year. The building is only in situ for the shortest period of time necessary to fulfil its function and not all year round. The times when there is most activity on the river, the only place where the marquee could make an impact, it is stored away.
2. Function of the land. The function of the land will not change and will remain the storage of boats. The ability to work on the boats over the winter periods adds to the effectiveness and validity of the proposals. The appearance of the site will still predominantly be the sight of boats out of the water on the bank. The boats are considerably more visible and impactful than the marquee. Boats can be stored within the marquee without the coverings seen outside which is especially beneficial for the wooden boats (see photo)
3. Health and safety. The storage of the boats undercover allows safe access to those boats to carry out works over the winter period and allows the workmen to operate in the dry and allows the carrying out of such processes as painting, teak cleaning and polishing which are weather dependant. It improves the services to their clientele and ensures that all; boats that go to the water are in fully serviceable condition.
4. Visibility. The low nature of the marquee makes it invisible from the road and means that it is contained within its own site. In winter times the land alongside the river is not so attractive as all boats are off the river and they themselves have their own impact and presence which is then not apparent in the summer months when boats are on the river.
5. Commercial. As a result of having the marquee the applicant has employed an additional local person on site already and is advertising for a second specifically as a result of this marquee as the ability to carry out works to boats has increased and more can be done during winter.

Conclusion

We consider that the erection of the tent falls within the 'appropriate' exceptions detailed in the NPPF and Development Plan. As such this is appropriate development. The facilities are carefully considered given the circumstances of its location in the Green Belt. The marquee is a temporary structure that will be removed over the summer months when activity locally is highest and fulfils a essential function for the marina in being able to store boats more effectively and to be able to maintain the boats on behalf of their clients during the off season when work can be done without interference with the enjoyment of the river as part of their outdoor recreation. Work is more efficient as these boats need not be covered by tarpaulins to be stripped off each work is required, and work can be programmed whatever the weather.

The land whereon the marquee is located would be covered in stored boats for the winter period when all boats are out of the water. The nature of the use will not change

from that carried on for many years on this site and indeed many other similar sites and is a neater solution than many multi coloured tarpaulins across the area.

CIL is not payable on this development