

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260250
Site Address:	Wokingham Theatre, Twyford Road, Wokingham, RG40 5TU
Expiry Date:	31 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	09.05.2025 – see PA: 242967
Proposal: Application to vary conditions 4, 5, 6 & 7 of planning consent 242967 for the proposed erection of a two storey extension to form a studio block, plus the erection of a link between the main building and the storage barn (which is to be retained on a permanent basis); closure of the old access and creation of public parking spaces, formation of a new access and installation of hardstanding to form on-site parking. Condition 4 refers to drainage details, 5 to protection of trees, 6 to landscaping, 7 to parking. Variation is to satisfy the requirements of conditions no. 4 and 5 and provides a justification surrounding the re-wording of conditions no. 6 and 7.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	Policy CP1 – Sustainable Development Policy CP2 – Inclusive Communities Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development Policy CP6 – Managing Travel Demand Policy CP7 – Biodiversity Policy CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Policy CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals Policy CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	Policy CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy CC02 – Development Limits Policy CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping Policy CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction Policy CC06 – Noise Policy CC07 – Parking Policy CC09 – Development and Flood Risk Policy CC10 – Sustainable Drainage Policy TB04 – Development in vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Burghfield Policy TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards Policy TB21 – Landscape Character Policy TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation

and Waste Plan (JMWP)	
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS5 – Development in the countryside C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C3 – Active travel FD2 – Sustainable drainage NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity 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

App No.	Description	Decision/Date
14961	New theatre building	Approved 4 July 1981
22160	New theatre building	Approved 20 September 1984
26500	Illuminated signage with logo	Approved 3 November 1986
42100	Workshop extension	Approved 15 March 1994
F/1999/69164	Front and two storey side extension	Approved 29 June 1999
F/2007/2722	Pedestrian improvements to Cantley Park	Approved 6 June 2008
F/2008/1693	Rear extension for rehearsal and dressing room	Approved 9 September 2008
F/2009/0172	Amendment to F/2008/1693	Approved 8 June 2009
EXT/2012/1172	Extension of F/2009/0172 for three years	Approved 13 August 2012 (not implemented)
163372	Internal/external alterations for backstage and rehearsal space, studio, public circulation and storage barn	Approved 15 June 2017
213162	Full application for temporary permission for the erection of a storage barn (part retrospective)	Approved, 21 October 2021

242967	Full application for the proposed erection of a two storey extension to form a studio block, plus the erection of a link between the main building and the storage barn (which is to be retained on a permanent basis); closure of the old access and creation of public parking spaces, formation of a new access and installation of hardstanding to form on-site parking.	Approved, 01/05/2025
ENFORCEMENT HISTORY		
RFS No.	Description	Decision/Date
2021/086612	Erection of barn in incorrect location	Closed 24 September 2021 following application

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Property Services – No comments received.
WBC Drainage – No objections.
WBC Highways – Further information requested.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	The Wokingham Town Council P&T Committee – Support application.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description and Proposed Works:

Wokingham Theatre lies at the northern end of Wokingham, to the east of Twyford Road and within Cantley Park. Cantley Hotel adjoins to the east but the rest of the site comprises parkland and playing fields and tennis courts. It falls within designated countryside but North Wokingham SDL adjoins to the north.

This application seeks to vary Conditions 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the existing planning consent. Condition 4 relates to drainage details, Condition 5 to the protection of trees, Condition 6 to landscaping, and Condition 7 to parking. The proposed variation seeks to address the requirements of Conditions 4, 5, and 6, and to provide justification for the rewording of Conditions 6 and 7.

Flooding and Drainage:

Condition 4

Condition 4 of planning consent 242967 requires (in summary) that no development shall take place until full details of the site's drainage system have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

The Council's Drainage Officer has reviewed the submitted Sustainable Drainage Assessment (prepared by GeoSmart Information Ltd, dated 17/10/2025). The report confirms that the proposed two-storey side extension incorporates attenuation to manage surface water runoff from a 1 in 100-year storm event, including a 40% allowance for climate change. Discharge is to be controlled at a rate of 2 litres per second, as shown on the surface water drainage drawing in Appendix B.

Causeway Flow calculations provided in Appendix C demonstrate that there will be no flooding on site for events up to and including the 1 in 100-year storm event, with the 40% climate change allowance applied.

Details of ongoing maintenance are set out in Appendix D, with responsibility assigned to the site owners or a specialist asset management company appointed by them.

On this basis, the Drainage Officer considers that acceptable information has been provided. The requirements of the condition are therefore considered to be met in accordance with the approved details, as varied under this permission.

Landscape and Trees:

Condition 5

Condition 5 of planning consent 242967 requires that (in summary) no development shall commence until a tree protection scheme (in accordance with BS5837:2012) has been approved and implemented. All works must comply with the approved measures, with protected areas maintained throughout construction.

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement (prepared by LandArb Solutions Ltd) and the accompanying Tree Protection Plan and considers them acceptable. No objection is raised to the proposed hard landscaping for the car park, which is shown on Drawing LAS844 (31.10.2025) as local gravel within a plastic grid laid at existing ground level. Based on the submitted details, the impact of the car park development is considered minimal, and the installation of the gravel-filled grid at ground level will have only a very minor effect on T1.

The requirements of the condition are therefore considered to be met in accordance with the approved details, as varied under this permission.

Condition 6

The applicant is seeking to amend Condition 6 to allow landscaping works to be implemented on a phased basis, rather than prior to first use, to ensure the building can remain operational and maintain safe fire escape routes during construction. They propose that full landscaping be completed at a later stage, such as the first planting season following completion of the development.

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the submitted hard and soft landscaping scheme, along with the accompanying specification, and considers the details acceptable. The Trees and Landscape also raises no objection to the construction of the toilet block, to serve as a fire escape, being carried out prior to the completion of the landscaping works.

As such, Condition 6 will be reworded accordingly to reflect the approved details and to allow for the phased implementation of the development

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The applicant is seeking to amend Condition 7 to allow the parking area to be brought into use during the construction phase without requiring full completion to its final specification to ensure the building can remain operational and maintain safe fire escape routes during construction.

The Council's Highways Officer has considered this arrangement and raises no objection in principle but has requested evidence that sufficient parking spaces can be provided from the wider site to meet the additional parking demand induced by either/both phase(s) of the theatre operations.

The supporting block plans show designated parking provision for seven spaces. In any case, the Case Officer considers that the surrounding area provides ample parking to accommodate any overspill. Immediately to the north lies a car park serving over 125 spaces for Canley Park and its associated recreational activities. Other nearby buildings and facilities also have their own parking areas to meet demand. Therefore, even during busy periods, it is likely that sufficient parking will be available in the main parking area. On this basis, no objection is raised to the proposed arrangement, and Condition 7 will be reworded accordingly to reflect the approved details and allow for the phased implementation of the development.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	25 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	26 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	31.03.2026