

Item No.	Application No. and Parish	Statutory Target Date	Proposal, Location, Applicant
(3)	25/01921/HOUSE West Woodhay	4 th November 2025 ¹	Elevation adjustments, minor alterations to Western Lodge and rebuilding of the garage annex, to provide a cohesive architectural design to the whole building, now part of the broader Lake House Estate. Western Lodge West Woodhay RG20 0BH Mr Nicholas Brown
¹ Extension of time agreed with applicant until 23 rd February 2026			

The application can be viewed on the Council's website at the following link:
<https://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=T1BVSLRDLPAA00>

Recommendation Summary: The Development Control Manager be authorised to GRANT conditional permission

Ward Member(s): Councillor Gaines
Councillor Benneyworth
Councillor Vickers

Reason for Committee Determination: Over 10 letters of objection received and call-in if recommended approval

Committee Site Visit: 12th February 2026

Contact Officer Details

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and the relevant material considerations, and to make a decision as to whether to approve or refuse the application.
- 1.2 This application seeks planning permission for elevation adjustments, minor alterations to Western Lodge and rebuilding of the garage annex, to provide a cohesive architectural design to the whole building, now part of the broader Lake House Estate.
- 1.3 The application site is a large, detached dwelling with outbuildings located outside any settlement boundary but within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape a biodiversity opportunity area. The vehicular access to the dwelling is located along Hatch House Lane. It is noted that an agricultural access exists along West Woodhay Road, however this falls outside of the red site line, so does not form part of this application.
- 1.4 Amended plans were received during the course of the application relocating the proposed parking to ensure that it sits wholly within the established residential curtilage (which is demarcated by the red site line).

2. Planning History

- 2.1 The table below outlines the relevant planning history of the application site.

Application	Proposal	Decision / Date
74/00581/ADD	Extension of existing building to provide four bedrooms and two bathrooms	Approved / 01.05.1974
74/00585/ADD	Construction of garage with room above	Approved / 01.05.1974
01/00672/HOUSE	Change of use of part of adjacent field to accommodate 1200 litre above ground liquid gas tank. Alterations and extensions to east, west and south elevations to rationalise internal layout	Approved / 20.09.2001
01/02174/HOUSE	Erection of tennis court fence 34.75 x 17.07 x 2.75 high x 50mm mesh perimeter fence with retractable lights	Approved / 28.11.2001
05/02924/HOUSE	Two storey extension to existing garage to form fuel store and flat over to form bedroom and bathroom	Approved / 07.03.2006
05/02925/HOUSE	Retrospective - road side timber fence	Approved / 24.02.2006
06/01594/HOUSE	Demolition of existing garage/fuel store; erection of new garage with fuel store and flat above (revision to application 05/02924).	Approved / 19.09.2006

	External staircase and first floor door to flat and removal of existing lobby.	
06/01976/HOUSE	Single storey extension to form lobby at north end.	Approved / 09.10.2006
07/00172/HOUSE	Single storey extension to form family room.	Approved / 22.09.2007
08/01022/HOUSE	Single storey car port extension to north of existing house and alteration of door and window positions of adjacent approved lobby extension.	Approved / 31.07.2008
10/02946/HOUSE	Two storey extension to existing dwelling.	Approved / 17.03.2011
22/01580/FULD	Extension of the residential curtilage	Refused / 19.08.2022
23/00251/FUL	Replacement and installation of two gates.	Refused / 28.07.2023 – Appeal Part Allowed Part Dismissed 16.04.2024
23/01029/HOUSE	Extension to the dwelling and the replacement of the garage, including a new glazed link.	Non determination Appeal – Dismissed 16.04.2024

- 2.2 An enforcement investigation is currently ongoing in relation to construction vehicles travelling between Western Lodge and Lake House. This access road falls outside of the red line and does not form part of the description of development. As such, it does not form part of the assessment of the current application. Instead, the matter may need to be reviewed separately by the Enforcement Team to determine whether any breach of planning control has occurred.

3. Legal and Procedural Matters

- 3.1 **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA):** Given the nature, scale and location of this development, it is not considered to fall within the description of any development listed in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, EIA screening is not required.
- 3.2 **Publicity:** Publicity has been undertaken in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Site notice were displayed on 14th October 2025 at the application site, with a deadline for representations of 4th November 2025. Notification letters were sent to 17 people.

- 3.3 **Local Financial Considerations:** Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that a local planning authority must have regard to a local finance consideration as far as it is material. Whether or not a 'local finance consideration' is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision based on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority or other government body. No local financial considerations are material to this application.
- 3.4 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy charged on most new development within an authority area. The money is used to pay for new infrastructure, supporting the development of an area by funding the provision, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. CIL will be used to fund roads and other transport facilities, schools and other educational facilities, flood defences, medical facilities, open spaces, and sports and recreational areas. Subject to the application of any applicable exemptions, CIL will be charged on residential (Use Classes C3 and C4) and retail (former Use Classes A1 – A5) development at a rate per square metre (based on Gross Internal Area) on new development of more than 100 square metres of gross internal area (including extensions) or when a new dwelling is created (even if it is less than 100 square metres). CIL liability, and the application of any exemptions, will be formally confirmed by the CIL Charging Authority under separate cover following any grant of planning permission. More information is available at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>
- 3.5 **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED):** In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Council must have due regard to the need to achieve the following objectives:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.6 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—
- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.7 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage, the duty is to have regard to and remove or minimise disadvantage. In considering the merits of this planning application, due regard has been given to these objectives.

- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 All new buildings within the development will be required to comply with Building Regulations which have their own criteria to apply for the design of buildings which also has due regard to the Act. CIL contributions are also taken towards healthcare and education & training facilities as part of the development.
- 3.10 **Human Rights Act:** The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, including Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of property), Article 6 (Right to a fair trial) and Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life and home) of the Act itself. The consideration of the application in accordance with the Council procedures will ensure that views of all those interested are taken into account. All comments from interested parties have been considered and reported in summary in this report, with full text available via the Council's website.
- 3.11 It is acknowledged that there are certain properties where they may be some impact. However, any interference with the right to a private and family life and home arising from the scheme as a result of impact on residential amenity is considered necessary in a democratic society in the interests of the economic well-being of the district and wider area and is proportionate.
- 3.12 Any interference with property rights is in the public interest and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime for controlling the development of land. This recommendation is based on the consideration of the proposal against adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.
- 3.13 **National Landscapes (AONB):** Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 (as amended) provides a general duty for public bodies: "Any relevant authority exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to effect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty)." AONBs have been rebranded to be known as National Landscapes, although their legal AONB status continues.

4. Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultation

- 4.1 The table below summarises the consultation responses received during the consideration of the application. The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report.

West Woodhay Parish Council:	<p>8th Oct: Objection –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the application contains incorrect and misleading information. Although the plans show a new access, driveway, turning circle and parking, the application form answers "NO" to related questions on access and parking changes.
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- A new access onto West Woodhay Road has previously been refused at appeal.
- The proposed driveway, turning circle and new parking areas would extend onto agricultural land.
- The introduction of a new access and associated hard landscaping is said to urbanise a quiet rural lane within the AONB
- No reasoning or evidence is provided to explain why a new access, driveway, turning circle or additional parking are required
- new access could increase traffic movements beyond occasional agricultural use, creating safety risks for road users and contributing to further suburbanisation of the rural lane.
- Parking provision would increase to eight spaces despite fewer bedrooms at Western Lodge, which is seen as excessive.
- No lighting plan has been submitted.
- Concerns about spoil removal and disposal, including questions about whether spoil recently placed in an ancient fishpond was permitted and whether it may be contaminated.

19th Nov: Objection

- The revised block plan shows a new driveway not included in the description of development, rendering the application procedurally flawed.
- It considers the driveway unauthorised development, potentially harmful to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape,
- highway safety concerns, and lacking justification, particularly given previous refusals.
- The Parish Meeting requests that the application either be refused or amended to remove the driveway and clarify the scope of development.

9th December: Objection

- Concerns raised regarding red and blue lines on the plans and site ownership of some land contained in the blue line.

Highways:	No Objection
Archaeology:	No Objection
North Wessex Downs:	No Response

Public representations

- 4.2 Representations have been received from 15 contributors, all of which object to the proposal.
- 4.3 The full responses may be viewed with the application documents on the Council's website, using the link at the start of this report. In summary, the following issues/points have been raised:
- Additional access along West Woodhay Road
 - Driveway joining to Lake House
 - Parking outside residential curtilage
 - Pathways across agricultural land
 - Issues with application forms and plans
 - Removal of pond
 - Works commenced
 - No lighting plan
 - Traffic/highway safety
 - Impact on landscape

5. Planning Policy

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following policies of the statutory development plan are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Development Plan Document	Relevant Policies
<u>West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041</u>	<p>Strategic Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SP1 The Spatial Strategy • Policy SP2 North Wessex Downs AONB • Policy SP5 Responding to Climate Change • Policy SP6 Flood Risk • Policy SP7 Design Quality • Policy SP8 Landscape Character • Policy SP11 Biodiversity & Geodiversity • Policy SP19 Transport <p>Development Management Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DM1 Residential Development in the Countryside • Policy DM3 Health & Wellbeing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DM4 Building Sustainable Homes & Businesses • Policy DM5 Environmental Nuisance & Pollution Control • Policy DM6 Water Quality • Policy DM7 Water Resources & Waste Water • Policy DM14 Assets of Archaeological Importance • Policy DM15 Trees, Woodland & Hedgerows • Policy DM28 Residential Extensions • Policy DM29 Residential Annexes • Policy DM30 Residential Amenity • Policy DM41 Digital Infrastructure • Policy DM44 Parking
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5.2 The following material considerations are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide
- Quality Design SPD (2006)
- Planning Obligations SPD (2014)
- Sustainable Drainage Systems SPD (2018)

6. Appraisal

Principle of development

- 6.1 According to Policy DM28, the principle of the extension of existing permanent dwellings will be supported. The policy gives criteria where residential extensions will be permitted; these relates to the impacts of the development and are considered, as appropriate, under the headings below.
- 6.2 As the proposal includes a residential annex, the proposal must also be assessed against Policy DM29. This policy states that proposals for residential annexes will be supported where the following criteria are satisfied:
- i. It is in accordance with policy DM28;
 - ii. It has either a clear physical and/or functional link to the main dwelling;
 - iii. If it is detached, it has a close spatial relationship with the main dwelling with satisfactory shared access, vehicular parking, utilities and garden space; and
 - iv. It is designed so that it can continue to be used as an ancillary and subordinate part to the main dwelling without creating an independent and/or separate planning unit at any time.
- 6.3 Policy DM29 continues that, where proposals are considered acceptable, a condition will be applied to restrict occupation of the annexe to a person dependent upon an occupant of the main dwelling. Permitted development rights may also be removed and/or a legal agreement may be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

- 6.4 The proposal seeks changes to the existing main dwelling as well as replacement outbuilding therefore providing the proposal meets the criteria set out in policies DM28 the principle of the proposal is acceptable.

Character and appearance

- 6.5 According to Policy SP7, new development will be required to strengthen a sense of place through high quality locally distinctive design and place shaping. This will enable healthy place making, creating places that are better for people, taking opportunities available for conserving and enhancing the character, appearance and quality of an area and the way it functions. Development proposals will be expected to show how they have responded positively to both national and local design guidance. At a national level this includes the characteristics of a well-designed place as set out in the National Design Guide (2021), or as superseded, and at a local level, this includes neighbourhood plans, design guides or codes and relevant community planning documents that identify the local character and distinctiveness of an area which is valued by local communities.
- 6.6 Specifically in relation to residential extensions, Policy DM28 includes the following criteria relevant to this consideration:
- The scale of the enlargement or outbuilding is clearly subservient to the original dwelling (criterion a);
 - It is of a high quality design, in accordance with policy SP7, which conserves and enhances the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding area in accordance with policy SP8 (criterion b);
 - It does not harm the setting of the existing dwelling and the space occupied within the plot boundary (criterion c);
 - It does not harm the historic and/or architectural interest of the existing dwelling (criterion d);
 - The use of materials is appropriate within the local architectural context (criterion e);
 - The windows are appropriate in terms of number, architectural style and type, position, size and proportion, extent of opening and need for obscure glazing (criterion g);
 - Following construction of the extension, sufficient space is available for on-site vehicular parking in accordance with policy DM44 in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the area (criterion h);
 - It enables for the retention and provision of high quality useable private amenity space in accordance with policy DM30 (criterion i).
- 6.7 The proposal is considered to meet the above criteria. It seeks minor changes to the main dwelling, including alterations to windows and doors, the removal of two chimneys, the addition of a new chimney, alterations to the roofline, a new parapet flat roof with a metal balustrade, and a minor first-floor extension to the east elevation to align the existing wall.
- 6.8 The proposal aims to improve the overall appearance of the dwelling by rationalising previous extensions to achieve a more uniform form. While the historic farmhouse character has been eroded over many years through earlier additions, the proposal does not increase the overall footprint, and the materials proposed match the existing dwelling. The design and materials are considered appropriate and will not have a significant negative impact on the character and appearance of the rural area.
- 6.9 The proposal also includes replacing the existing outbuilding, currently used as a garage/annexe. The existing footprint is approximately 46.9 sqm, with garage doors on the south elevation. The replacement outbuilding would be on the same siting with a

slightly larger footprint of approximately 60 sqm and garage doors relocated to the western elevation.

- 6.10 The existing outbuilding contains an internal staircase leading to first-floor accommodation within the roof space, served by dormer windows to the east and west elevations. The replacement outbuilding provides an enclosed external staircase leading to first-floor roof-space accommodation, also with east and west dormers, and includes a small balcony to the south elevation.
- 6.11 The proposed design, height, form and materials are similar to the existing structure. Although the footprint is larger, the scale remains subservient to the main dwelling, and given the size of the plot, the outbuilding continues to appear subordinate. As the outbuilding sits close to the dwelling, it is read in conjunction with it. A condition is recommended to ensure the outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwelling.
- 6.12 It is noted that an appeal was dismissed for a replacement outbuilding under application 23/01029/HOUSE. The Inspector concluded that, although the proposed garage would have resulted in a reduced footprint, its overall bulk would have appeared substantially greater due to the increased eaves height, the scale of the dormer features extending from the ground-floor elevations, and the gabled roof forms. While its maximum height and scale would have remained below that of the main dwelling, the Inspector found that this did not achieve a subordinate relationship. Furthermore, the proposed link to the main house would have removed the visual separation between the buildings, thereby increasing the perceived massing and integrating the garage more prominently with the host dwelling.
- 6.13 In contrast, the currently proposed replacement outbuilding is of a similar scale and design to the existing structure and is considered to present a more clearly subservient form in accordance with relevant policies
- 6.14 Overall the proposal is considered to be acceptable, and it is therefore considered that the scheme complies with the NPPF, and Policies SP7, SP8 and DM28 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 with regards to the design, character and appearance of the proposal.

Residential Amenity (Neighbours)

- 6.15 According to Policy DM30, all development will be required to provide and/or maintain a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of land and buildings.
- 6.16 When considering the impact on the living conditions of existing and proposed residential dwellings, development proposals will be supported where there is no unacceptable harm in terms of the following criteria:
- a. Any significant loss of daylight and/or sunlight to land and buildings;
 - b. Any significant overlooking of land and buildings that results in a harmful loss of privacy;
 - c. Development resulting in an undue sense of enclosure, overbearing impact, or a harmful loss of outlook; and
 - d. Noise, dust, fumes and odours.
- 6.17 Criterion f of Policy DM28 also requires that the proposal is not overbearing or of a form which would be detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents by virtue of loss of outlook, daylight, sunlight and / or privacy in accordance with policy DM30.

- 6.18 The proposal has been assessed against the above metrics. It is considered that, given the separation between dwellings, there are limited negative impacts relating to loss of sunlight, overlooking or noise and disturbance.
- 6.19 Comments have been received regarding external lighting. Given the rural nature of the site and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape dark skies policy, a condition has been recommended to control the installation of any external lighting.
- 6.20 Following the imposition of this condition, it is considered that the proposal accords with Policies DM28 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 with regards to amenity.

Residential Amenity (Site Occupants)

- 6.21 According to Policy DM30, all new residential development will be expected to include the provision of the following:
- i. Functional amenity space of a quality and size to meet the needs of the occupants;
 - ii. Internal accommodation of an adequate size and layout relative to the intensity of occupation envisaged;
 - iii. Natural light in all habitable rooms of the proposed development;
 - iv. A garden size which is at least a minimum of 10.5 metres in depth, where possible; and
 - v. A minimum distance of 21 metres between directly facing windows, serving habitable rooms.
- 6.22 Given the nature of the proposal and the existing design, these elements are not considered to apply.

Highways Matters

- 6.23 According to Policy SP19, development that generates a transport impact will be required to (amongst others) mitigate any adverse impact on local transport networks. Criterion h of Policy DM28 requires that following construction of the extension, sufficient space is available for on-site vehicular parking in accordance with policy DM44 in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.24 According to the NPPF, in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that (amongst others) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, the design of parking areas and other transport elements reflects national guidance. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 6.25 The highways officer was consulted on the application and had no objections to the proposal.
- 6.26 Comments have been received regarding the access onto West Woodhay Road and the use of this access for vehicles travelling to and from Lake House. As this access does not form part of the description of development and lies outside the red line boundary, it is not a material consideration in the assessment of this application.
- 6.27 Concerns have also been raised about the number and location of parking spaces. The proposal provides five parking spaces, which is considered acceptable given the size of the dwelling and the outbuilding. In accordance with parking policy, garage

spaces are not counted towards parking provision. The parking layout was amended during the application to ensure that all spaces are located within the residential curtilage, as shown on the updated site plan.

- 6.28 Comments regarding construction traffic have also been noted; however, the level of construction activity associated with this proposal is expected to be short-term and is considered typical for development of this nature. A construction method statement is not deemed necessary in this instance, although a condition restricting construction working hours has been recommended.

Ecology

- 6.29 From an environmental standpoint, Policy DM28 outlines that an extension will be permitted where the proposal complies with the following criteria:
- It would not result in adverse impacts on trees (including their roots and canopy spread) on and off site, in accordance with policy DM15. Trees should be retained where possible; and
 - The proposal conserves and enhances biodiversity, in accordance with policy SP11.
- 6.30 Given the nature of the proposal, it is considered that there is little impact in terms of ecology, and the proposal accords with policy DM28 in this respect.
- 6.31 Householder development is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain; however some ecological enhancements have been included such as bat, bird and insect boxes as well as planting.

Sustainability

- 6.32 According to Policy SP5, the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation will be required to be embedded into new development. Proposals should be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement which demonstrates how the principles in Policy SP5 have been embedded into the development, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed.
- 6.33 A sustainability statement has been submitted which sets out the proposed measures including improvements to fabric efficiency, smart meters, energy efficient lighting, water efficient appliances, external enhancements include new tree planting and ecological enhancement measures. These measures as outlined in the sustainability statement will be used to ensure the development complies with this policy.

Town/Parish Council representations

- 6.34 Below is a summary of the points of concern raised by West Woodhay Parish Council
- Accuracy of the Application and Ownership Boundaries
 - Concerns that the description of development is misleading, as submitted plans show works (including a new access, driveway, turning circle and parking areas) not referenced in the application description.
 - It is stated that the application form incorrectly answers questions relating to new access and changes to parking.
 - The Parish Meeting raises significant concerns that the blue-line boundary, which must show all land within the applicant's ownership, is incorrect and potentially misleading.

- The full Western Lodge landholding is not shown, despite space on the plan to do so.
- The blue line is drawn in a manner that appears to include land not in the applicant's ownership, including land and barns belonging to a third party (Mr & Mrs Miles).
- The blue line extends beyond the stated "Existing Site Access" onto neighbouring land.
- The applicant now refers to ownership as the "Lake House Estate," raising questions about whether agricultural land historically associated with Western Lodge has been transferred; if so, objectors indicate this may affect an ongoing dispute about an alleged unauthorised track.
- If ownership has *not* changed, the omission of parts of the Western Lodge landholding from the blue-line boundary remains unexplained.
- Objectors state that because the accuracy of red- and blue-line boundaries is a fundamental validation requirement, the application should not progress until corrected.
- Previous Appeal Decision
 - A previous proposal for a new access onto West Woodhay Road was refused at appeal, with the Inspector finding it harmful to the rural character of the AONB.
 - Objectors consider the current application to reflect elements of that previously rejected scheme.
- Encroachment onto Agricultural Land
 - The proposed driveway, turning circle and parking areas are considered by objectors to extend onto agricultural land beyond the residential curtilage, constituting an unjustified change of use.
- Impact on Landscape and Rural Character
 - Concerns that the proposed works would urbanise a quiet rural lane and cause visual harm within the AONB, reducing tranquillity and creating a suburban appearance contrary to local and national policies.
- Lack of Justification
 - Objectors consider that no evidence has been provided to justify the need for the new access, driveway or increased parking, nor any benefits that could outweigh harm to the landscape.
- Highway Safety
 - Concerns regarding additional traffic movements from a new access onto a narrow, unlit lane with no pedestrian refuge, which is considered to increase safety risks and contribute to suburbanisation.
- Other Matters
 - Objection to the proposed increase in parking spaces.
 - Concern about the absence of a lighting plan.
 - Queries regarding the extent of spoil movement required for the proposed garage level and where this spoil would be deposited.
 - Concerns raised regarding the recent infilling of an historic fishpond, including whether the works required planning permission and whether the material used may be contaminated.

6.35 A number of the matters raised by the Parish Council and residents have been addressed in the report. For clarity, the following provides a full officer response to the key points raised, particularly those relating to land ownership and the accuracy of the submitted blue-line boundary.

6.36 The Parish Council expressed concern that the proposed parking area would encroach onto agricultural land. In response, the applicant submitted an amended plan which relocates the parking to ensure it sits wholly within the established residential curtilage.

- 6.37 Concerns have also been raised regarding vehicles travelling from Lake House across the land towards Western Lodge and then exiting via the agricultural access onto the public highway. This route does not fall within the red-line boundary and is not within the description of development. As such, it is not a material consideration for this planning application. However, the matter may need to be reviewed separately by the Enforcement Team to determine whether any breach of planning control has occurred.
- 6.38 Concerns have been raised regarding the nature of land ownership between Lake House and Western Lodge, including whether agricultural land historically associated with Western Lodge has been transferred and whether this has implications for the long-running dispute regarding an alleged unauthorised track.
- 6.39 Land ownership disputes or changes in land ownership are not material planning considerations unless they relate directly to the ability to implement the development. The planning system does not have authority to settle on civil land ownership matters. Any dispute between parties regarding boundaries, rights of access, or historic land transfers falls outside the remit of the local planning authority.
- 6.40 The applicant has signed Certificate A, confirming that they have sufficient ownership or control to submit the application. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the planning authority must accept the certificate at face value.
- 6.41 The Parish Meeting has expressed concern that the blue-line boundary, which is required to show all land within the applicant's ownership, is inaccurate. It is stated that the blue line appears to include land not in the applicant's ownership specifically neighbouring land and barns belonging to Mr and Mrs Miles and omits land that should be included if the full extent of Western Lodge's ownership has not changed.
- 6.42 These comments are noted. However, while the blue line identifies land within the applicant's control, it is the red-line boundary that is of primary importance for validation and assessment purposes. The red line defines the land to which the application relates and within which the proposed works would be undertaken.
- 6.43 In this case, officers are satisfied that the red-line boundary is accurate and correctly identifies the site of the proposed works. The concerns regarding the precise extent of the applicant's wider landownership do not alter the assessment of the proposal before the authority.
- 6.44 The Parish Meeting considers that inaccuracies in the blue line mean the application should not progress. While the blue line should ideally show all land within the applicant's ownership, the local planning authority has discretion in validating applications and may proceed provided that the red line is correct and that the applicant has completed the ownership certificates. The perceived inaccuracies do not prevent a full assessment of the proposed development, nor materially affect the consideration of the issues directly relevant to this application. Therefore, officers consider the application to be valid and capable of determination.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions. It includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. However, where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted.

- 7.2 For the reasons given in this report it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with current development plan policies and material considerations do not indicate that planning permission should otherwise be refused. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

8. Full Recommendation

- 8.1 To delegate to the Development Manager to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the conditions listed below.

Conditions

1	<p>Commencement of development The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).</p>
2	<p>Approved plans The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed below:</p> <p>Location Plan 2418-PL01 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Elevations 2418-PL13 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Elevations 2418-PL14 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Floor Plans 2418-PL10 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Floor Plans 2418-PL11 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Roof Plan 2418-PL12 received 21st August 2025; Proposed Garage Plans 2418-PL17 received 21st August 2025; Sustainability Statement received 4th November 2025; Proposed Site Plan 2418-PL09-C received 23rd January 2026.</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.</p>
3	<p>Materials The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the plans and/or the application forms. Where stated that materials shall match the existing, those materials shall match those on the existing development in colour, size and texture.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the appropriate use of external materials. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy SP7 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041, and Supplementary Planning Document Quality Design (June 2006).</p>
4	<p>Hours of work No demolition or construction works shall take place outside the following hours, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority: 7:30am to 6:00pm Mondays to Fridays; 8:30am to 1:00pm Saturdays; No work shall be carried out at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.</p>

	Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies DM5 and DM30 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.
5	<p>Lighting strategy (National Landscape) No external lighting shall be installed to the dwelling or outbuilding until a lighting strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include a plan to show the location of any lighting, isolux contour diagram(s), an operation strategy (e.g. details of timed operation), and specifications all lighting to ensure that levels are designed within the limitations of Environmental Lighting Zone 1, as described by the Institute of Lighting Engineers. No external lighting shall be installed to the dwelling or outbuilding except in accordance with the above strategy.</p> <p>Reason: To conserve the dark night skies of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-24, and Policies SP2, SP8 and SP11 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.</p>
6	<p>Annex use The outbuilding/annex hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary and/or incidental to the residential use of the dwelling known as Western Lodge, West Woodhay, RG20 0BH.</p> <p>Reason: The creation of a separate planning unit would conflict with the strategy for the location of new development and be unacceptable in the interests of ensuring a sustainable pattern of development. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies SP1, SP2, DM28, DM30 and DM44 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.</p>
7	<p>Permitted development restriction (extensions/outbuildings)</p> <p>Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order with or without modification), no extensions, alterations, buildings or other development which would otherwise be permitted by Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C and/or E of that Order shall be carried out, without planning permission being granted by the Local Planning Authority on an application made for that purpose.</p> <p>Reason: To prevent the overdevelopment of the site and in the interests of respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding area. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SP2, SP8 and DM28 of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041.</p>

Informatives

1	This decision has been made in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development having regard to Development Plan policies and available guidance to secure high quality appropriate development. In this application whilst there has been a need to balance conflicting considerations, the local planning authority has secured and accepted what is considered to be a development which improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
2	The development hereby approved results in a requirement to make payments to the Council as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) procedure. A Liability

	<p>Notice setting out further details, and including the amount of CIL payable will be sent out separately from this Decision Notice. You are advised to read the Liability Notice and ensure that a Commencement Notice is submitted to the authority prior to the commencement of the development. Failure to submit the Commencement Notice will result in the loss of any exemptions claimed, and the loss of any right to pay by instalments, and additional costs to you in the form of surcharges. For further details see the website at www.westberks.gov.uk/cil</p>
3	<p>BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN</p> <p>The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:</p> <p>(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and</p> <p>(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be West Berkshire District Council.</p> <p>There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.</p> <p>Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements in the list below is/are considered to apply.</p> <p>EXEMPTIONS AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS</p> <p>The following are the statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024. 2. The planning permission relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies. 3. The planning permission was granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the original planning permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates* was granted before 12 February 2024; or (ii) the application for the original planning permission* to which the section 73 planning permission relates was made before 12 February 2024. 4. The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024; ii) planning permission is granted which has effect before 2 April 2024; or iii) planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where the original permission to which the section 73 permission relates* was exempt by virtue of (i) or (ii).

4.2 Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

4.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

4.4 Development of a biodiversity gain site, meaning development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the Biodiversity Gain Planning condition which applies in relation to another development, (no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee).

4.5 Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:
i) consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
ii) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
iii) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

4.6 Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network (High Speed 2) comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

* "original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permissions.

APPLICABLE EXEMPTION

The exemption that is considered to apply to this application is: Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

IRREPLACEABLE HABITAT

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

THE EFFECT OF SECTION 73D OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

If planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) and a Biodiversity Gain Plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan") there are circumstances when the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan is regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition subject to which the section 73 planning permission is granted.

Those circumstances are that the conditions subject to which the section 73 permission is granted:

- i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan, and
- ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat the conditions do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan.

PHASED DEVELOPMENT

If the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases, the modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 would apply if the permission were subject to the biodiversity gain condition.

In summary: Biodiversity gain plans would be required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun (the overall plan), and before each phase of development may be begun (phase plans).