

Planning Statement for the Proposed Side Storage and Ground Floor to the Scout Hut

Site Address: St Paul's Scouts, Basingstoke Rd, Whitley, Reading, RG2 0QN

Date: 05 Oct 2025



1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for a proposed ground floor side extension to an existing Scout Hut located at the northeast corner of Whitley Wood Recreation Ground, Reading. The proposed extension will add 35.9 sqm to the building, to be used for ancillary storage to meet the increasing operational needs of the Scout Hut. The use class of the building (Use Class F2(b)) will remain unchanged.

The Scout Hut provides vital community services as a meeting place for local youth groups and the extension will enhance its functionality without altering its character or overall purpose. This statement demonstrates compliance with relevant national and local planning policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Reading Borough Council's Local Plan.

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The proposed structure is a lightweight construction with no deep foundation, supported only by a 25 cm thick raft foundation above ground level.

2. Site Context and Description

The site is located in the northeast corner of Whitley Wood Recreation Ground, surrounded by industrial uses to the north and west. The building has no immediate neighbouring residential properties, ensuring no impact on residential amenity. Existing parking spaces are available on the adjacent site to the west, ensuring no additional parking pressure on the area.

The proposed extension will be situated to the side of the existing Scout Hut and will occupy less than 17% of the current building's footprint. The extension's modest scale and design have been carefully considered to minimize visual impact and preserve the building's character within the park setting.

3. Proposal

The application seeks permission for a single-story side extension of 35.9 sqm. Key features of the proposal include:

- **Purpose:** Ancillary storage to support the Scout Hut's activities.
- **Design:** A simple, functional design in keeping with the existing building.

- **Footprint:** The extension will occupy less than 17% of the existing building footprint.
- **Location:** Situated on the northeast corner of the park, maintaining the openness and accessibility of the surrounding area.
- **The proposed structure:** is a lightweight construction with no deep foundation, supported only by a 25 cm thick raft foundation above ground level.

The extension is critical for meeting the growing storage needs of the Scout Hut, enabling it to continue serving the local community effectively.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal aligns with the NPPF's overarching objectives, particularly:

- **Paragraph 93:** Supporting the development of community facilities to enhance social well-being and sustainability.
- **Paragraph 130:** Ensuring developments are well-designed, functional, and add to the overall quality of the area.
- **Paragraph 149:** Supporting appropriate development in parks and open spaces where it does not compromise their function or openness.

4.2 Reading Borough Local Plan

The proposed development complies with the following policies:

- **Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm**
The extension's design respects the character of the existing building and the surrounding park, with minimal visual impact.
- **Policy EN8: Protecting Open Spaces**
The proposed extension location and mass does not compromise the openness or primary function of the park as a recreational space. The modest footprint ensures the park's integrity remains intact.
- **Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking**
Existing parking provision is adequate for the proposed extension, with no additional demand generated.

4.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

The proposal adheres to relevant guidance provided in the following documents:

- **Reading Borough Design Guide SPD:** The extension's scale, design, and materials are consistent with local design principles.

5. Assessment of Key Planning Considerations

5.1 Principle of Development

The Scout Hut is an established community facility under Use Class F2(b). The proposed extension supports its continued use without altering its purpose or character. The ancillary nature of the extension ensures no material change of use, consistent with local and national policies supporting community infrastructure.

5.2 Design and Impact on Character

The extension is designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing building. Its modest scale and placement to the side of the building ensure minimal visual impact. The materials and design will match the existing structure, preserving the building's cohesive appearance.

5.3 Impact on Open Space

The northeast corner location and small footprint (less than 17% of the existing building) ensure the park's openness and recreational function are maintained. The proposal does not encroach on usable green space or compromise the overall amenity of the park.

5.4 Impact on Neighbouring Uses

With no immediate residential neighbours, the proposal will have no adverse impact on residential amenity. Adjacent industrial uses are unaffected by the development.

5.5 Parking and Accessibility

The existing parking spaces on the adjacent site to the west are sufficient to accommodate any operational needs associated with the extension. No additional parking provision is required.

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6. Conclusion

The proposed side extension to the Scout Hut is a modest and well-considered development that addresses the operational needs of the facility while respecting the character and function of the surrounding park. The proposal complies with relevant national and local planning policies, including the NPPF and Reading Borough Local Plan, and will deliver significant community benefits without adverse impacts.

We respectfully request that Reading Borough Council grant planning permission for this development.

Submitted by:

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