

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 (adopted June 2025)

Policy DM29

Residential Annexes

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.

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.

Supporting Text

11.92 The creation of an annexe to an existing dwelling, whether the main dwelling is located inside, or outside settlement boundaries can often create a useful facility for the support and care of family members. Although some types of residential annexe benefit from permitted development rights and so do not require planning permission, planning law in this area is complicated. Applicants are therefore advised to contact the Council at an early stage so that advice can be given on the need for planning permission.

11.93 Where permission is required, a residential annexe should be designed to ensure the dwelling curtilage as a whole provides genuinely flexible subordinate ancillary accommodation that can be adapted and re-adapted to meet the changing needs of family circumstances over time. This should include the option of absorbing the annexe back into the main dwelling accommodation if necessary, by the same or future occupiers. To meet these requirements it is essential that the annexe and main dwelling are directly connected physically and/or functionally. The annexe must therefore be in the same ownership as the main dwelling and share utility services, access, vehicular parking and private amenity space.

11.94 An annexe should usually be incorporated within or physically attached to the main dwelling and be of a comparatively modest size. It should be linked internally to the main dwelling, but may have a separate entrance.

11.95 Where an extension to provide an annexe physically attached to the main dwelling is not practical and a detached annexe is proposed, consideration will also be given to the size of the detached annexe, together with its spatial relationship and sub-ordination to the main dwelling. Unduly large or detached annexes can prove an economic and practical liability when vacated or when the property changes ownership and this can lead to pressure for the annexe to be severed and let separately from the main dwelling. This can create substandard accommodation with inadequate standards of access, amenity and space, which is unacceptable in planning terms.

11.96 Where the Council approves annexe accommodation, a condition will normally be attached to a planning permission to restrict its use to ancillary accommodation. Where an annexe would comprise self-contained living accommodation which would otherwise conflict with the development plan, the Council will require the applicant to enter into a Section 106 Agreement under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to prevent the severance of the annexe from the main dwelling, and/or limiting the occupation to a person dependent upon an occupant of the main dwelling such as dependent relative(s) or full-time carer(s). This will prevent the sub-letting of either property and ensure that such accommodation is required to meet a genuine family need.