

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250179
Site Address:	Sussex Lodge, Sussex Lane, Spencers Wood, Wokingham, RG7 1BY
Expiry Date:	4 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	31 January 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension following demolition of existing lean-to extension, conversion of attached outbuilding to create habitable accommodation along with internal and external alterations, repair and re-building of existing building fabric, creation of an opening in the rear garden wall, plus changes to fenestration. Erection of log cabin in garden (part-retrospective)	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Listed Building
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Spencers Wood
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – Green Risk Zone
Tree Preservation Orders
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
PRoW Within WB Consultation Zone
Listed Building Buffer Zone

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

	CIL Guidance + 123 List Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan
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PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
220993	Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed conversion of the attached outbuilding to habitable accommodation, plus changes to fenestration, installation of 6 no. rooflights, erection of 1 no. chimney and repair of existing chimney, demolition of the existing rear conservatory, erection of a rear canopy roof and single storey side extension and associated internal works to the main dwelling, the erection of a detached garage with first floor accommodation and a log cabin, plus installation of solar panels.	Refused 10/06/2023
223175/223176	Householder application/Listed Building Consent for the proposed insertion of windows to existing building to facilitate conversion of attached outbuilding to habitable space, erection of a single storey side extension following demolition of existing lean-to extension plus ground and first floor internal alterations to the main dwelling.	Approved 28/04/2023
240099	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of Listed Building consent 223176 dated 28/04/2023. Condition 3 relates to external materials; 4 to joinery details; 5 to outbuilding fenestration details; 6 to insulation and flooring details, and 7 to underfloor heating.	Refused 21/03/2024
240131	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 223175 dated 28/04/2023. Condition 3 relates to external materials; 5 to joinery details; 6 to outbuilding fenestration details; 7 to insulation and flooring details, and 8 to underfloor heating.	Refused 21/03/2024

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections WBC Public Rights Of Way – No objections WBC Built Heritage Officer – No objections subject to conditions
External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objections
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Sussex Lodge is a Grade II Listed 19th century former farmhouse predominantly constructed of brick (laid in a Flemish Bond) under a steeply pitched hipped slate roof. The property is a rectangular plan made up of 2 storeys and an attic, with flanking chimneys. A brick painted string course separates the floors around the entire property.

The dwelling is set relatively centrally on the plot and is surrounded by tall, mature vegetation that visually encloses the property on all elevations.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks part-retrospective approval for the proposed conversion of the existing outbuilding (currently used for storage, historic stables and a boiler room) to habitable space in the form of a bedroom, hallway and open plan kitchen/diner/living room. This would be facilitated by a small single storey side extension, insertion of windows, and doors plus additional insulation and underfloor heating at ground floor level.

Also included in the proposals are several internal alterations to the main dwelling, consisting of new door openings at ground and first floor level, replacement stairs to increase head height and the formation of a 'jack and jill' bathroom.

This application is a technical resubmission of applications 223175 & 223176, with its submission necessary to regularise several additional areas of unauthorised works completed since the consents were issued. A summary of the additional elements proposed under this application is below:

- Minor relocation of consented fenestration on the western elevation of the attached outbuilding.
- Minor increase in scale/height of the western single storey side extension's mono-pitch roof.
- Removal of door on eastern elevation of attached outbuilding, with the cavity infilled with brick walling.
- Repairs to existing external brickwork and re-pointing.
- Re-building of internal 'nibs' within the attached outbuilding.
- Part re-construction of the attached outbuilding's eastern elevation.
- Re-building and repair of internal walls.
- Installation of flinch plating to existing timber beams.
- Replacement and repair of rotten rafters and wall plates.

- Reconstruction of chimney in 'storage' room, plus installation of log burner flue within the chimney.
- Additional repairs and insulation measures within the 'storage' room (historic pantry).
- Creation of opening in rear garden boundary wall.
- Erection of a log cabin in the rear garden of the dwelling.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Impact on setting of Listed Building:

The proposed single storey side extension would lean to and connect to the existing gable roof form of the outbuilding. It would abut the southern end of the building and would be finished with brickwork and slate tiles to match the host dwelling. Whilst the Built Heritage Officer has raised concerns regarding the extension's immediate proximity to the southern elevation of the outbuilding and the minor increase in height upon that approved under 223175 (approx. 0.12 metres), its modest scale would result in negligible harm to the setting of the Listed Building and does not warrant a reason for refusal.

Details submitted regarding the new fenestration and internal layout are however relatively basic and therefore, to ensure the designated heritage asset is not adversely harmed throughout the construction process, further details regarding all of them will be required prior to the commencement of the relevant development. These will be attached as conditions.

In terms of insulation, the proposed method for the main attached outbuilding was previously considered acceptable under applications 240099/240131. In comparison, further details are required for the 'storage' room (historic pantry) due to the changes in level between the attached outbuilding. These details will be secured via condition.

The conversion of the outbuilding to habitable space is considered acceptable in principle; New French doors and other openings/doors are proposed on both side (east and west) elevations and several internal walls would also be removed to create a more 'open plan' living area, plus the installation of insulation and underfloor heating. Based on the details submitted, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable harm to the setting of the Listed Building.

Underfloor heating is proposed across the whole ground floor. This would require the partial uplift of the existing historical paved flooring in the original kitchen which the Built Heritage Officer has no objection to. The applicant has provided an Underfloor Method Statement that was previously considered acceptable under applications 240099/240131 and therefore compliance with this statement will be secured via condition.

The existing staircase is also proposed to be replaced to ensure a taller head height within the dwelling. Elevational plans have been submitted regarding this which are considered acceptable. The Built Heritage Officer has requested a condition which requires details of the new staircase's enclosure in the second-floor attic room prior to the commencement of development but the Case Officer does not consider this to be necessary to make the scheme acceptable.

One additional doorway into two of the first-floor bedrooms is proposed. No objections are raised to its construction providing details of the finish/joinery are submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This will be attached as a condition.

The chimney within the storage (pantry) room is proposed to be re-built, with a log burner flue installed within the existing cavity. Subject to a method statement for the re-building of the chimney and further details on the proposed log burner flue, there are no objections to this element of the proposals.

Several elements of repair works to existing rotten timbers are proposed, as well as the re-enforcement of existing timber beams with steel flinch plates. Such measures are welcomed in that they ensure the long-term survival of the building, but details of their construction are limited. To ensure these works do not harm the Listed Building as a Heritage Asset, further details will be secured via condition.

On the eastern elevation of the attached outbuilding, a large area of the existing brick walling has been demolished and re-built without authorisation, including the infilling of a previous door opening. There are no adverse objections to this approach, however the works completed thus far do not respect the historic fabric of the dwelling, in that the brick patterns and mortar mix are considered inappropriate. As such, a method statement for the re-building of this wall will be secured via condition.

The proposed log cabin is sited in the south-eastern corner of the dwelling's garden. It has a footprint of 3.7 x 5 metres and has an L-shaped form, with a traditional gable roof. The building is used on an incidental basis and includes gym equipment and miscellaneous garden tools within. The log cabin is consciously sited a legible distance away from the main dwelling and is modest in form and as such, it would not have any adverse impacts on the setting of Sussex Lodge as a Grade II Listed Building.

A small opening is proposed within the garden's southern boundary wall to provide access through the site. The WBC Built Heritage Officer has no objections to this element of the proposals.

Overall, the WBC Built Heritage Officer concludes that the proposed development would result in 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of Sussex Lodge as a Listed

Building. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. In this regard, the public benefits of the proposals are the intention of returning Sussex Lodge as a Designated Heritage Asset back into its optimum viable use as a dwellinghouse. The less than substantial harm caused by the proposed development, subject to conditions, would be outweighed by the public benefits of the development.

It is important, due to the part-retrospective nature of the development, to impose time-sensitive triggers on the conditions that require further information.

Furthermore, restrictions to permitted development rights, in particular Parts 1 and 14 of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order, will be imposed on this permission to restrict further development that may further harm the setting of the Designated Heritage Asset.

Character of the Area:

As the proposals result in only a very small increase in built form on site, there would be no adverse harm to the prevailing character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

There are no neighbouring amenity concerns.

Residential Amenity:

The proposals would not adversely harm the usability of the site's rear amenity space.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and results in negligible increases in development footprint on site. There are therefore no objections on flood risk grounds.

Landscape and Trees:

WBC Landscape and Trees raise no objections to the proposals in terms of their impact on vegetation on/adjacent to the site and the prevailing landscape character.

Ecology:

The site is located within a Green Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts, the lowest risk zone. The scale of the proposals is negligible in terms of additional footprint and therefore there are no anticipated adverse impacts on these protected species.

Other Works:

It is noted that the conversion of the attic room to a 'bedroom' indicates no changes to the fabric of the Listed Building. It is clear from photos of the house that repairs, insulation and other works would be required to make this room habitable, works which would need further permission and a bat survey that assesses the site as a

whole.

Furthermore, if further changes to the proposals are required to comply with certain Building Regulations post permission, the applicant will likely be required to either seek variations to this permission or apply for a new consent altogether. An informative will be included regarding this on the decision notice.

Conclusion:

In summary, subject to conditions, the proposed development is considered to comply with the Development Plan and would not cause adverse harm to the setting of Sussex Lodge as a Designated Heritage Asset. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

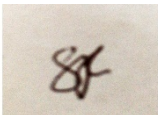
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	28 March 2025
Earliest date for decision:	24 February 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	1.4.25