

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261197
Site Address:	Garden Cottage, Wellingtonia Avenue, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG45 6AF
Expiry Date:	31 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	22 June 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of boundary fencing (retrospective).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Countryside
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Tree Preservation Order

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS5 – Development in the countryside NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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13396	Games room	Approve 20 May 1980
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees – No Objection

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection providing the fence meets the current height regulations. <i>Officer comment: The fence is approximately 1.7m in height and set back approximately 8m from the junction with Wellingtonia Avenue which is acceptable.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Garden Cottage is a detached dwelling located within approximately 1.7 hectares and set back approximately 120m from Wellingtonia Avenue where the boundary treatment is a closed board fence approximately 1.3m in height. The recently erected fence that replaces an open chain link fence approximately 1.3m in height, faces onto Hollybush Ride, and is set back approximately 8m from the junction with Wellingtonia Avenue. Vehicular access to Graden Cottage is via Hollybush Ride. Two rows of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders are located along the south and west boundaries. There are no protected trees along the east boundary adjacent to Hollybush Ride.

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 in Countryside where Core Strategy Policy CP11 applies and states that proposals outside of development limits will only be permitted that do not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings. Furthermore, proposals outside development limits will not normally be permitted except where it contributes to and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside. The proposal does not fall exactly within the exceptions set out in the policy although it is linked to a residential property where extensions should result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

Proposal (Retrospective): The erection of a closed board wooden fence adjacent to a Hollybush Ride which is a restricted byway that provides vehicular access to Garden Cottage and Simons Wood Cottage. The fence measures approximately 65m in length, 1.7m in height and is set back approximately 8m from the junction with Wellingtonia Avenue.



Figure 1 Junction of Wellingtonia Avenue and Hollybush Ride Google Street view Sept 2024



Figure 2 Previous fence as shown in Planning Statement



Figure 3 Site visit photo towards vehicular entrance at Graden Cottage taken 22 June 2026



Figure 4 Site visit photo towards Wellingtonia Avenue taken 22 June 2026

Location in Countryside and Character of the Area:

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

Policy CC03 of the Adopted MDD Local Plan states that new development should protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks and development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable.

Policy TB21 of the Adopted MDD Local Plan states that proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

Recommendation R12 of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide (BDG) states that boundary treatments should be designed to contribute positively to the character of the area and to the quality of the public realm.

Hollybush Ride has a verdant and secluded character, adjoining woodland and National Trust land. While some timber fencing exists around the property, it is not a prominent or positive feature of the wider area. Also, the new fencing is positioned next to the highway and screens existing vegetation. Figures 1 to 4 show that it has replaced an open chain-link fence, which previously allowed views through to the vegetation behind and helped maintain the area's green and spacious character. The replacement fence is 0.5m higher than the adjoining fence to the south and is less attractive than the existing vegetation along the boundary. To that extent, the development does result in some harm.

However, it is acknowledged that the site is already partly enclosed by similar fencing along the boundary with Wellingtonia Avenue and near its junction with Hollybush Ride. The fence is also set back from the main track along the ride. The proposal would therefore read as an extension of that existing enclosure, creating a site-specific context. Also, the fence is 0.5m lower than the brick pillars serving the established vehicular entrance and uses materials similar to the fencing along the southern boundary with Wellingtonia Avenue. Therefore, there is some precedent for the fence on this site.

Overall, the development does not fully accord with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and Policies CC03 and TB21 of the Adopted MDD Local Plan. However, having regard to the specific circumstances of the site, the degree of harm identified, and the precedent of the existing fence, the application is on balance acceptable.

This conclusion is based on the specific circumstances of the site and should not be regarded as setting a precedent for similar forms of development in other locations, which would be assessed on their individual planning merits.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

In this case the development does not cause additional overlooking, loss of light, and is not visually overbearing to neighbouring occupants at Simons Wood Cottage.

Landscape and Trees: The Tree and Landscape Officer raises no objection to the proposal. The Officer also agrees with the conclusions in the submitted Planning Statement that the newly erected timber fencing represents a significant improvement, offering enhanced privacy, security, and a consistent, high-quality boundary treatment. that the materials and appearance are appropriate to the semi-rural, verdant character of the area and integrate well with the surrounding vegetation.

There are several single, area and group TPOs primarily located in the southern portion of the Site and along the Site's southern perimeter where Wellingtonia

Avenue meets The Ridges roadways. The Officer has also confirmed that the protected trees within the site ref TPO-1862-2022 will not be impacted by the new fencing.

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:	Approve
Date:	29 July 2026
Earliest date for decision:	12 June 2026

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Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	MC
Date:	29.07.2026