

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242632
Site Address:	Lancambria, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1PY
Expiry Date:	30 December 2024
Site Visit Date:	26/11/2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of first floor front/side extension, playroom and garage conversion into habitable accommodation.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Green Routes and Riverside Paths
- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Landscape Character Assessment Area
- Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Minor

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation

Plan (JMWP)	
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
240807	Householder application for proposed garage conversion to create habitable accommodation, single storey front extension to create a porch ,single storey rear extension with changes to the fenestration.	Approved, 01/05/2024
072895	Proposed demolition of existing double garge and erection of single storey and two storey side extensions to dwelling with front dormer windows. Resubmission F/2007/0421.	Approved, 26/07/2007
070889	Proposed demolition of existing double garage and erection of single storey side and two storey front and side extension to dwelling with front and rear dormer windows plus single storey front canopy extension.	Refused, 05/04/2007

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No objections.
WBC Highways – No objections, subject to a condition.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections.
WBC CIL – No comments received.
WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two-storey detached dwelling sited along Basingstoke Road, a semi-rural setting characterised by a mix of residential properties and open countryside.

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.

The site is located outside of development limits, where Core Strategy Policy CP11 applies. Policy CP11 states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

- In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The Borough Design Guide provides more detailed advice relating to development in the countryside, including a guideline figure for extensions of a total maximum increase of 50% over the volume of the original dwelling.

The proposal involves the erection of a part single-storey, part first-floor front/side extension on the northern side of the property, including raising part of the roof to align with the main ridge and introducing a front-facing gable feature.

No volume calculations have been provided with this application. While the front gable is sizeable, it is not considered excessive due to the width of the principal elevation of the host property. Furthermore, it would remain set down from the main roof ridge, ensuring a level of subservience to the original dwelling.

In terms of scale and size, the proposed development would not constitute disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The extensions represent a minimal increase in floor area without significantly adding to the overall bulk or massing of the dwelling. Consequently, the proposed extension would not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

Character of the Area:

The proposal involves the erection of a part single-storey, part first-floor front/side extension on the northern side of the property, including raising part of the roof to align with the main ridge and introducing a front-facing gable feature.

The proposed gable element is relatively large in scale, and its prominence is further accentuated by its projection beyond the principal elevation of the host property. However, such a feature is not uncommon along Basingstoke Road, which is characterised by traditional properties with varied architectural styles and designs. Nearby properties, including Maytrees and Mayfield House, exhibit similar gable features and built forms to the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would not appear out of place or unduly prominent within the street scene. The front facing gable would be set down from the main roof ridge, ensuring a level of subservience to the original dwelling and the addition would be set well back from the highway. As such, the proposed extension would not adversely impact the character of the area.

The proposals also include the erection of a new entrance gate. Hard boundary treatments along this section of Basingstoke Road are typically low key, often not exceeding 1 to 1.2 metres in height. This contributes to the integration of residential development into the rural character and openness of the area. Following advice from the Case Officer, amended plans were submitted by the agent on 14/01/2025, now indicating the removal of the front brick wall and a reduction in the height of the gate and piers to 1.8 metres. The retention of the existing front boundary hedgerow, which would now be completely unobstructed, helps to preserve the verdant character of the area. Additionally, the reduced height of the piers and gates aligns with features found at nearby properties, such as Maytrees.

The proposed gates and piers would be set well back from the highway and are of a suitable design, sympathetic to the rural character of the area. Consequently, this aspect of the proposal is considered acceptable.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposed extensions and alterations would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of overbearing or loss of light impacts.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and considers that the four off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards. As such, there are no highways issues.

The Highways Officer has recommended a condition be attached to any approval, requiring that any annexe remain ancillary to the main dwelling to ensure acceptable access and parking arrangements. However, this proposal does not include an annexe. The two existing outbuildings immediately north of the house are to be retained. Considering the ample parking space available within the front driveway, no concerns are raised regarding highway safety, convenience, or amenity.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 according to Environment Agency mapping. There is also no increase in hardstanding or building footprint such that there are no drainage implications arising from the proposal. As such, the Council's Drainage Officer has raised no objections to the proposed development.

Landscape and Trees:

The site is situated within the Countryside and designated as part of a Green Route Enhancement Area. A site visit confirmed that no trees or vegetation within the front or rear gardens, in close proximity to the house, would be affected by the proposed development. Therefore, no significant arboricultural or landscape impacts are anticipated. Furthermore, following the submission of updated plans for the proposed entrance, the front boundary hedgerow will remain unpruned, thereby preserving the verdant character of the area. The Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the proposal and raised no objections.

Ecology:

The site is located in habitat which matches where bat roosts have previously been found in the borough.

The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the submitted Ecological Survey Report (Urban Tree Experts, October 2024, ref: SPH/BAS-24/24.09) and notes the findings of the bat ecologist. The report identifies a small number of gaps within the lead flashing around the chimney, between the soffit boards and fascias, and under the dormer window hanging tiles. During the site visit in August 2024, additional gaps were observed in the lead flashing around the chimney, under the dormer window hanging tiles, and a missing section of fascia board on the southern gable end elevation. These features have the potential to provide roosting opportunities or access for bats.

However, it is noted that repair works have since been undertaken, and gaps between the soffit boards and fascias—originally identified in August 2023—have now been sealed. The Ecology Officer considers that this sealing may be regarded as reckless and a deliberate obstruction of roosting opportunities.

The Case Officer acknowledges that these repair works were carried out outside the scope of the current planning application process. As the works were completed prior to the submission of the application and were not subject to any planning conditions or restrictions at the time, there is no mechanism for the LPA to require remedial action or impose retrospective mitigation measures. However, it remains the applicant's responsibility to ensure compliance with wildlife protection legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The submitted bat report confirms that the proposed works will result in the destruction of non-breeding day roosts used by a small number of common pipistrelle bats. However, the report concludes that new roosting opportunities can be successfully maintained through appropriate mitigation, compensation, and

enhancement measures. Before any works commence on the building, an EPSL (European Protected Species Licence) must be obtained from Natural England. The report also recommends that alternative roosting provisions be installed in advance of any works, specifically through the erection of bat boxes.

A Biodiversity Plan, submitted by the agent on 23/01/2025, includes the installation of two bat boxes affixed to a mature tree, in line with the report's recommendations. This mitigation strategy is considered acceptable.

Therefore, subject to the provision of an EPSL and the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, the development is not expected to result in any adverse ecological impacts.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	20 December 2024
Earliest date for decision:	25 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	06.03.2025