

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252097
Site Address:	7 Remenham Hill, Remenham Hill, Wokingham, RG9 3EE
Expiry Date:	31 October 2025
Site Visit Date:	10 October 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of two-storey rear extension.	

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 CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

NO RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection
WBC CIL – No comments
WBC Ecology – No comments

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Wargrave Council	Parish	No objection
Ward Member(s)		No comments received
Neighbours		No comments received

APPRAISAL

Context: The application site is located on the northern side of Remenham Hill (A4130), at which point the immediate street scene is characterised by two storey semi-detached dwellings, with large gaps between the properties. The wider area is verdant in character due to the mature vegetation that line the streets, synonymous with its rural context.

The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and designated countryside outside of defined settlement limits.

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a two-storey extension to the rear of the existing property.

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 application site is located within designated Green Belt and outside of settlement limits in the open Countryside. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts with national policies for the protection of Green Belt land covered by Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that, *“The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”*. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves 5 purposes, the one most relevant to this proposal is, *“(c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment”*.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that, *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that the LPA should consider the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate, however, exceptions to this include: *“(c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building”*. This is reflected in Core Strategy policies CP11 and CP12 and MDD Local Plan policy TB01, with policy CP11 stating that residential extensions will normally only be permitted where it does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. Policy TB01 defines a “limited” increase in scale to an existing dwelling as a cumulative increase of generally no more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling.

The NPPF clarifies that the original building is considered as it existed on 1st July 1948 when the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 came into effect, or if constructed after this date, as it was built originally. In this case the original building is considered as it existed on 1st July 1948.

In accordance with local policy, to be considered a “not disproportionate” addition to the original dwelling, the scale of the proposed extension should not result in a cumulative increase of more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling. If the proposed development fails this test, it would not be considered acceptable in principle.

The applicant has submitted volume calculations as part of the application, initially including the pre-existing garage as part of the original dwelling. It is however unclear when this garage (demolished within the past few years), was originally constructed. The Agent suggests it may have been erected shortly after the main dwelling in the 1920s, though no evidence has been provided to substantiate this. Regardless, as the structure no longer exists, its volume cannot be included to offset the cumulative volumetric increase resulting from the proposed extension.

Based on the agreed figures, the volume of the original dwelling is calculated at 326m³, with the proposal increasing this to 474m³. This represents a cumulative increase of approximately 45% over the volume of the original building. Accordingly, the proposal cannot be considered a limited enlargement within the generally accepted 35% tolerance of the original dwelling. The scheme therefore conflicts with Policy TB01 of the MDD Local Plan.

That said, the 35% threshold is not an absolute cap, and each case must be assessed on its individual merits. The overarching aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by maintaining openness, an objective that cannot be fully assessed through volumetric figures alone.

In terms of visual impact, the proposed two-storey rear extension would not result in an excessive increase in bulk or massing at either ground or first floor level. The addition has been sensitively designed to remain subservient to the host dwelling in both scale and appearance, ensuring it does not dominate the original form. Owing to its discreet rear siting and sympathetic design, the extension would not appear intrusive or visually prominent in countryside views, and would therefore preserve the openness, rural character, and visual amenity of the surrounding Green Belt.

Although the recently demolished garage cannot be included in the volumetric assessment and does not form part of this application, it is acknowledged that the proposed development, by consolidating built form within the immediate surroundings, would represent a more coherent and contained layout than the pre-existing situation, thus benefitting the open setting.

Having regard to the modest degree by which the proposal exceeds the 35% threshold, the acceptable impact on openness, and the presence of comparable extensions within the locality, it is considered that the development would not be disproportionate in relation to the original dwelling. Consequently, the proposal would not harm the

openness of the Green Belt or result in undue encroachment into the countryside, and is therefore not considered inappropriate development in Green Belt terms.

Character of the Area: The proposed two-storey rear extension been designed with careful consideration of the site's context and the character of the surrounding built environment. The development is located entirely to the rear of the existing property, ensuring no adverse impact on the street scene or the openness of the front aspect. Whilst Local Policy is more concerned with the volumetric increase and not the nature of the extension proposed, in this instance, the intention to extend to the rear as opposed to the side of the property would be more in keeping with the street scene, comprising relatively uniform semi-detached dwellings, on a modest residential lane.

Architecturally, the extension largely mirrors the existing dwelling in both form and materiality. The gable addition would have matching brickwork and roof tiles to ensure visual continuity with the original building,

Following the submission of the amended plans, which comprise the reduction in ridge height, it is now considered that the overall massing and footprint of the extension remains subordinate to the existing dwelling, preserving both the spatial character and openness typical of Green Belt settings.

Neighbouring Amenity: Despite the increase in mass proposed, the extension would be sited centrally within the site's boundaries, thus sufficiently mitigating any loss of light or overbearing impact experienced by the adjacent sites.

The outlook from the Juliet balconies would provide oblique views of the neighbouring sites rear gardens, however, this would not result in direct overlooking. There are no first-floor side facing windows. As such, no overlooking concerns are associated with this addition.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The existing level of parking would be retained, and this is considered acceptable to serve the development.

Ecology: Three emergence survey bat reports have been submitted with the application. This identified one individual bat roost which would suffer total loss during the proposed development, a Protected Species Mitigation Licence will need to be obtained from Natural England for the works to go ahead lawfully.

The LPA are satisfied with the survey effort and its conclusions, thus raise no objection to the development subject to an EPSL being obtained from Natural England prior to the commencement of any development affecting bats.

Conclusion:

While the proposal would exceed the 35% guideline for extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt, the increase in volume is not considered to result in material harm to the openness or visual amenity of the area. The extension would appear proportionate and sympathetic to the host dwelling, with limited visibility from public viewpoints. On balance, the modest breach of policy TB01 is outweighed by the acceptable design, subservient form, and limited impact on openness. Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable when assessed against policy requirements as a whole.

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 October 2025
Earliest date for decision:	26 September 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	30 October 2025

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Green Belt*
- *Countryside*
- *Bat Roost Habitat*