



Heritage Statement

54 Sturges Road, Wokingham, RG40 2HE

Project Ref: 2523



March 2026

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54 Sturges Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2HE

Proposed First Floor Rear Extension and Carport.

New Bay Window to Existing Ground Floor Rear Extension.

Project Information

Project Address: 54 Sturges Road, Wokingham, RG40 2HE

Conservation Area: Murdoch Road Conservation Area

Listing Status: Not Listed

List Entry No.: N/A

Building Use: Domestic / Residential

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a householder planning application for the proposed first floor rear extension and carport, together with a new bay window to the existing ground floor rear extension, at 54 Sturges Road, Wokingham, RG40 2HE.

The property is situated within the Murdoch Road Conservation Area and this statement has therefore been prepared to address the heritage and design considerations relevant to the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local planning policy.

2. Location and Site Description

54 Sturges Road is a semi-detached Edwardian property located mid-way along Sturges Road, Wokingham. The site falls within the Murdoch Road Conservation Area, which encompasses the surrounding residential streets and their character-defining built form.

The building is not listed, either nationally or locally, and is not within the curtilage of a listed building. There is no known below-ground archaeological significance in this location.

The property sits between the northern end of Sturges Road, where Victorian character dominates — characterised by two-storey dwellings with bay windows, steeply pitched gable roofs, red facing brick walls, and clay or plain tile roofs — and the more diverse, mid-20th century character found further to the south of the road. 54 Sturges Road, as an Edwardian property, reflects an intermediate period of construction and shares many material and formal characteristics with the wider Victorian streetscape.

The existing house was constructed approximately 130 years ago and is built with carefully detailed brickwork, render panel detailing, and a traditional pitched roof originally finished in slate. Windows have been replaced in UPVC, in a mock sash style consistent with the period character. The house retains many original features typical of Edwardian residential construction within this conservation area.

3. Setting and Character of the Conservation Area

The Murdoch Road Conservation Area is characterised by predominantly two-storey Victorian and Edwardian properties set informally along residential streets. The majority of properties along Sturges Road are Victorian in style, featuring front-facing bay windows extending into steep gable roofs, red brick construction, and non-interlocking plain or clay tile roofs. The streetscape is consistent and cohesive in scale, form, and materiality through much of the road.

The character of Sturges Road becomes more varied towards its southern end, where mid-20th century development — including properties of a different massing and materiality — reflects the later expansion of Wokingham. The modern Corpus Catholic Church towards the far end of the road is one example of this stylistic diversification.

54 Sturges Road, as an Edwardian property in the mid-section of the road, is consistent in its age, form, and materials with many of the adjacent and nearby properties, and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4. Heritage Asset and Significance

4.1 Designation

The sole heritage designation applicable to this site is its location within the Murdoch Road Conservation Area. The building is not listed nationally or locally. It is not within the curtilage of a listed building, and there is no known below-ground archaeological significance within the immediate area.

4.2 Significance

Heritage significance is understood to encompass the cultural, social, economic, and environmental values of a place, as set out in BS 7913:2013. The significance of 54 Sturges Road lies primarily in its contribution to the collective character of the conservation area rather than any individual historical, architectural, or archaeological merit.

The property contributes to the Murdoch Road Conservation Area through its Edwardian form, traditional brickwork, pitched roof, and consistent two-storey scale. It is a positive contributor to the streetscape, with original building fabric still present and a visual character sympathetic to the wider conservation area.

The property has no known significant historical associations with persons, events, or artistic or scientific movements. The building remains in its original residential use, consistent with its design intent.

5. Description of the Proposal

The proposed development comprises:

- First floor rear extension.
- New carport.
- New bay window to the existing ground floor rear extension.

The proposed first floor rear extension will read as a subservient addition to the main dwelling, positioned to the rear of the property and therefore with limited or no visibility from the principal street elevation. This approach is consistent with local design guidance requiring rear additions to be subordinate in scale and massing to the host dwelling.

The proposed carport will sit to the side or front of the property. Careful consideration has been given to its form and scale to ensure it does not compete with the primary elevation or detract from the streetscape.

The bay window addition to the existing ground floor rear extension will enhance the rear outlook and internal amenity of the dwelling. As a rear-facing element, its visual impact on the conservation area and wider streetscape is negligible.

Materials for all elements of the proposal will be selected to match or complement the existing host dwelling in appearance, using brick, render, and roof tiles consistent with the character of the property and the conservation area.

6. Assessment of Impact on Heritage

6.1 Impact on Conservation Area Character

The proposals have been designed to minimise any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Murdoch Road Conservation Area. The principal elevation of the dwelling will remain largely unchanged, preserving the existing contribution the property makes to the streetscape.

The first floor rear extension is not visible from the main street elevation, and its scale and form remain subservient to the host dwelling. This is consistent with both local design guidance and the pattern of development seen in comparable properties along Sturges Road, where rear and side additions of a similar nature have been considered acceptable.

The carport has been designed in scale and character to be sympathetic to the host dwelling and to avoid visual harm to the conservation area. Its form and detailing will reflect the Edwardian character of the property.

The bay window to the rear is a modest addition that enhances the amenity of the property without impacting the conservation area character.

6.2 Scale and Massing

The proposed development remains in keeping with the general scale of development along Sturges Road. The first floor rear extension follows the existing footprint of the ground floor and is not considered to be overbearing relative to the host dwelling or to neighbouring properties. The extensions are subservient to the main roof form and ridge line.

6.3 Neighbouring Properties

Careful consideration has been given to the relationship of the proposed development with neighbouring properties. The first floor rear extension has been positioned and scaled to avoid any unreasonable impact in terms of overbearing, loss of light, or overlooking. The proposals are consistent with the separation distances and design principles set out in the local authority's design guidance.

6.4 Archaeology

There is no known archaeological significance below ground within this part of Sturges Road or the Murdoch Road Conservation Area. No further archaeological assessment is considered necessary.

7. Relevant Planning Policy

The Government's planning policies for the historic environment are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting (NPPF paragraph 189).

Local planning authorities are required to identify and assess the significance of heritage assets affected by proposals and to take this into account when determining applications, so as to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should have regard to: (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Historic England's Conservation Principles confirm that new work or alteration is normally acceptable where the proposals do not materially harm the value of the place, and accept that the setting of heritage assets changes over time.

Changes to the setting of historic buildings and conservation areas should be sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, form, height, materials, and detailing, as required by local authority design guidance.

8. Conclusion

54 Sturges Road is a positive Edwardian contributor to the Murdoch Road Conservation Area. It is not listed and has no significant individual historical, archaeological, or artistic merit. Its significance lies in its contribution to the collective character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed development — comprising a first floor rear extension, carport, and bay window to the existing rear extension — has been carefully designed to preserve the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the conservation area. The principal street elevation is not materially altered, the proposed additions are subservient in scale and massing to the main dwelling, and the materials proposed will complement the existing building fabric.

The proposal causes no harm to the significance of the Murdoch Road Conservation Area and is consistent with the principles of the NPPF, Historic England's Conservation Principles, and local planning policy. The proposed development represents a sustainable improvement to an existing residential property, enabling modern living whilst respecting and preserving the heritage character of the area.