



July 2025

Design & Access Statement

New Detached Chalet Bungalow to Rear of Semi-Detached Properties

AT:

**247, Finchampstead Road,
Wokingham, Berks RG40 3JR**



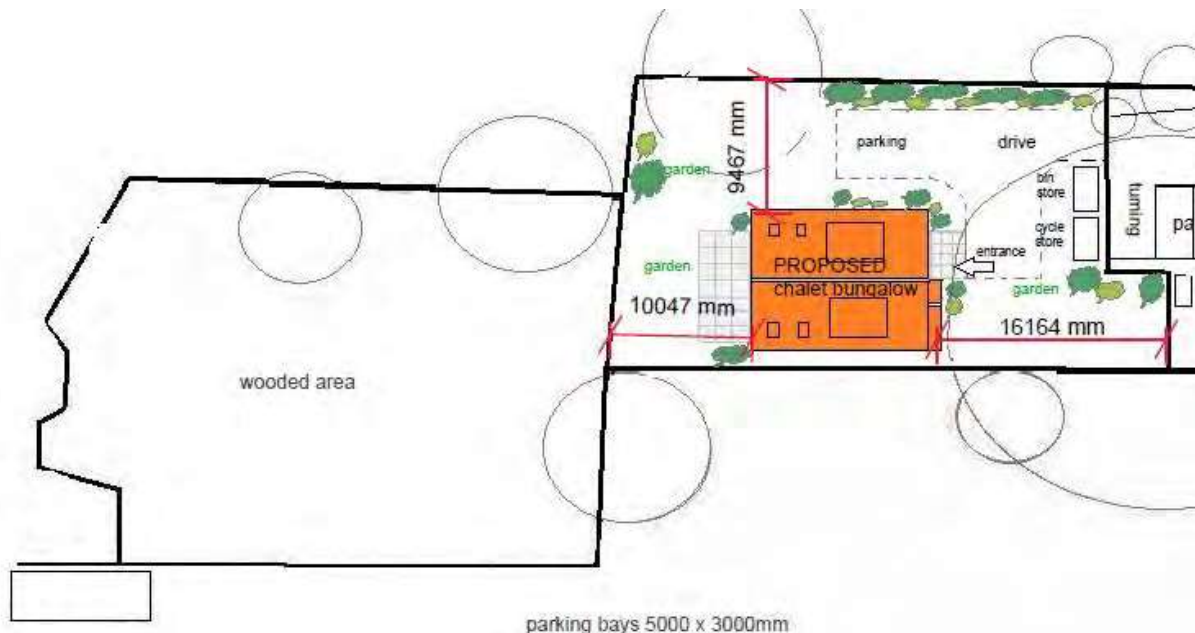
For: Russell Highbury Properties Limited

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of the construction of a detached chalet bungalow following the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of two four-bedroom semi-detached houses, to the front, at 247, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berks RG40 3JR.
- 1.2 A previous application Ref 232154 was submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for a two-storey five-bedroomed house, which was refused.
- 1.3 An appeal was submitted Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/24/3336778 and was dismissed 19 February 2025.
- 1.4 This revised proposal seeks to address the objections to the previous application.
- 1.5 The site lies within an existing established urban area and is adjoined by existing residential houses and a large commercial garage and sales centre. Properties on the road are of varying designs and sizes. The site is within the existing settlement boundaries and is therefore suitable for development. There are other examples of large, detached properties being built to the rear of existing properties in the immediate area.
- 1.6 This proposal would consist of a single chalet style property over two storeys. The proposal is to create a modern open three-bedroom home. The style is proposed to be attractive and will retain good amenity space with associated parking and access.
- 1.7 Other work includes fencing to demarcate the site and parking. The recent TPO's applied to the site are also fully respected and a detailed tree report will be submitted to support this.
- 1.8 Within this statement we set out the context of the planning application and provide a detailed breakdown as to how previous objections have been addressed to achieve a scheme that should be supported.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The proposal site relates to a detached chalet bungalow of an attractive modern design and appearance. This is to ensure the proposal blends with the existing established road. The property is within an urban area on a large plot with existing access to Finchampstead Road.



The whole site is a rectangular plot of approximately 0.16 hectares located on the western side of Finchampstead Road near its junction with Sandhurst Road. It falls within the settlement limits of Finchampstead North, which is a modest development location as per policy CP9 of the Core Strategy. Approval has already been granted for a pair of semi-detached houses to replace the original bungalow on the site.

An additional 0.11 hectares of land is within the same ownership but falls within designated countryside. This land is not included in the current proposal.

The site contains a disused single storey bungalow and associated domestic outbuildings. Mature trees and hedgerows delineate all boundaries.

The southwest corner within the countryside part of the site, which is covered by a woodland TPO, and a recent TPO was applied in September 2024.

The commercial development of Think Ford occupies the northern side. Residential properties adjoin the southern boundary and open countryside in association with Sand Martin Golf Course stretches along the west.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Recent TPO's applied to site. Tree Preservation Order No 1899/2022

NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

Application Number: 223614
Applicant Name: MR ANDREW RUSSELL
Site Address: 247 Finchampstead Road, Finchampstead,
Wokingham, RG40 3JR
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 2no.
semi detached 4 bedroom houses following
demolition of existing bungalow with associated
parking and access.
Date of Decision: 5 April 2023

Wokingham Borough Council in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations hereby **grants permission** for the above development to be carried out as stated in the application and the accompanying plans submitted to the Council subject to compliance with the following conditions, the reasons for which are specified hereunder.

Application Number: 232154

Applicant Name: Mr. ANDREW RUSSELL

Site Address: 247 Finchampstead Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3JR

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. detached five-bedroom dwelling with associated access and parking.

Date of Decision: 21 November 2023

Wokingham Borough Council, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations hereby refuses permission for carrying out the above development as stated in the application and the accompanying plans submitted to the Council for the reason(s) specified hereunder.

Reasons

1. By virtue of its backland location, excessive scale, tandem arrangement, this single dwelling would result in an incongruous form of development, alien to the established grain of development and would have a detrimental urbanising impact on the verdant garden landscape and the character and visual appearance of the area, contrary to the NPPF, policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Management Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC01, TB06 and TB21, and the advice contained in the WBC Design Guide SPD.
2. The proposed development would have an inadequate arrangement and quality of private amenity space, in combination with the lack of adequate outlook and limited daylight in habitable rooms. The development would therefore fail to safeguard the amenity for the future occupiers in conflict with Section 12 of the NPPF, Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, with Policy CC01, CC02, TB06 and TB07 of the MDD Local Plan. It would also conflict with the National Design Guide and WBC Design Guide.
3. Due to insufficient arboricultural information, it has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The loss of the tree would be harmful to the character of the area. As such, the scheme is contrary to policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and CC03 of the MDD Local Plan.
4. In the absence of a planning obligation to secure suitable avoidance and mitigation measures and access management monitoring arrangements, in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the LPA is unable to satisfy itself that the proposals include adequate mitigation measures to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in line with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. The proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the Southeast Plan, Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

4. Principal of development

1. The Council will resist inappropriate development of residential gardens where development would cause harm to the local area.
2. Proposals for new residential development that include land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will only be granted planning permission where:
 - a) The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:
 - The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area.
 - A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built-up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and
 - Existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage
 - Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries.
 - Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area
 - The materials and elevational detail are of high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary.
 - b) The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking.
 - c) The proposal includes access which meets appropriate highway standards.
 - d) The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development.

In terms of access, as Finchampstead Road is a 40mph road, visibility splays of 120m metres from 2.4 metres back from the highway will have to be accommodated to provide for any increase in use of the access to the proposed new development.

A report to support the revised access proposals will be submitted.

5. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Having taken on board the comments at planning and at appeal, the revised proposals seek to address these

The main issues were considered to be:

- a) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including in respect of its effects on trees.
- b) whether the proposed development would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers; and
- c) the effect of the proposed development on the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area.

Character and Appearance

The application site forms part of the rear garden of no. 247 Finchampstead Road (no. 247), which is a detached dwelling that occupies an end plot along a row of dwellings. There is planning permission (ref: 223614) to demolish the existing dwelling at no. 247 and erect two semi-detached dwellings fronting onto the street.

The site contains several trees along its perimeter that are subject to Tree Protection Orders (TPOs). An area of woodland also runs to the rear of the application site, with a golf course beyond.

The area of 'woodland' to the rear of the site is subject to a group TPO. And it is not affected by the application, other than providing an outlook.

The site is located at the end of the run of houses in the road, giving it individual merit. And on the one side is a garage & car dealership. Finchampstead Road is characterised by residential development that varies in its scale, form, and appearance. Most dwellings are set along the road, but there are examples of development to the rear of the houses to the main highway.

The siting of the dwelling to the rear will not impact on the street scene and as the last house does not impact on the general layout of houses as the garage creates a barrier to the residential development.

The proposed development has been greatly reduced in scale and bulk from the previous refused application. This has allowed the amenity areas to be greatly increased and a more uniform layout. The proposed dwelling faces the highway as other houses and retains a good-sized rear garden, with the addition of large side and front garden areas, affording a spacious and less cramped feel of the previous application. With its reduced bulk the proposals would blend into the background and would not be visible from the highway or create an overbearing to existing or the approved properties.

Screening to the commercial property would be created by evergreen plantings, Laurel or similar. And the revised proposal now presents no outlook of that boundary from any principal windows on the ground floor and only from the first-floor bedroom.

There are numerous backland/tandem dwellings nearby along Finchampstead Road and taking this into account the revised chalet bungalow, being more modest than the previous application, matches these developments.

The site has established trees and plantings, and the proposals have been designed to limit any impact upon these. The proposals would adopt soft landscaping and any loss of trees is supported by the Tree report and at appeal the decision stated “ I do not consider the loss of these trees would be detrimental to the character or appearance of the area.”

Whilst the council raised concerns regarding development within the root protection areas (RPAs) on a number of other trees at the site. The design has sought to protect these trees and the Tree Report further backs this up. At appeal the comment was made “from the evidence before me and my observations on site, I am satisfied that subject to relevant conditions (in relation to matters such as construction practices, routing of services, and areas of hardstanding) the health of the remaining trees on site could be suitably secured. Still, this does not overcome my concerns with the proposal’s design. “

The appeal found that the proposals for a five bedroomed home would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2010) (the ‘Core Strategy’) and Policies CC01, TB06 and TB21 of the Council’s Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (February 2014) (the ‘Local Plan’).

These policies seek to promote high-quality development that makes a positive contribution to the character of the area, including through respecting the layout of existing development. We feel that the reduced revised proposals now comply with these policies. And that the proposal would not conflict with Local Plan Policy CC03, in respect of its aims of protecting and retaining trees, hedges, and other green infrastructure.

The appeal noted that the proposed five-bedroom house would have limited useable garden space to the rear of the house, with garden predominately to the side and the front. The revised proposals create a rear garden and give the proposal a traditional front to rear position on the site. This still retains a large front and side garden, but a private rear garden area is also created. The side and front garden provide access to parking, bin & cycle stores and give an overall feeling of spaciousness to the site. The council offer no clear guidance on garden space, but the area of garden for the revised proposals can only be seen as generous by modern standards

The proposals seek to create a light airy home with large areas of glazing. On the lightly wooded site, this will create ample light for a good living environment and other than routine tree care will not put pressure to lop or remove any trees.

The revised proposals with the increased and more uniform garden space now provide suitable living conditions for future residents and comply with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, and Policies CC01 and TB06 of the Local Plan.

The council’s decision notice on the refused scheme referred to Local Plan Policies CC02 (‘Development limits’) and TB07 (‘Internal space standards’). These new proposals meet these requirements.

Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

The proposed application site is located within the zone of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is a European designated site protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitat Regulations).

The applicant previously provided an executed legal agreement under Section S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which would secure a financial contribution towards SPA access management and monitoring measures and would be agreeable to do so again as part of this application.

As a wider scheme, redevelopment at no. 247, is not viable or maybe unlikely to proceed without the additional proposed development sought under this application. As the associated costs incurred to obtaining approvals and meeting all the financial contributions, added to the increase in building costs, make the proposals less financially viable.

Conclusion

The proposed revised development would provide good living conditions and not cause any harm to the character of the area.

The revised proposals for a reduced structure comply with Policies and balance with other developments in the immediate area.

The Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and developments such as this help to address this shortfall in planning, as the proposals would provide a suitable dwelling in a sustainable location. The Council's Framework indicates that the development of small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements of an area. And there would also be wider socio-economic benefits associated with the delivery and subsequent occupation of the proposed dwelling.

When assessed against the Policies the revised proposals for a smaller detached chalet dwelling the benefits outweigh any adverse impact and as such the scheme should be seen as acceptable and approval forthcoming.

The objections noted on the council's decision notice have all been addressed by the revised proposals.

The scale of the proposals has been significantly reduced and this now balances with other developments within the road. And therefore, now complies to the NPPF, policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Management Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC01, TB06 and TB21, and the advice contained in the WBC Design Guide SPD.

The revised proposals now provide private amenity space with a good outlook and adequate daylight and therefore meet with Section 12 of the NPPF, Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, with Policy CC01, CC02, TB06 and TB07 of the MDD Local Plan. It would also comply with the National Design Guide and WBC Design Guide.

A tree report is submitted with the application to support the proposals, which demonstrate that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order and the scheme meets policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and CC03 of the MDD Local Plan.

The applicant has and is willing to enter into an obligation for mitigation measures and access management monitoring arrangements, in terms that are satisfactory to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and that the proposals include adequate mitigation measures to prevent the proposed development from having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in line with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC. The proposal would be contrary to Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, Policies CP8 and CP4 of the Core Strategy.

DEVELOPMENT

The site is within a defined built-up area, within the settlement boundaries, where there is a presumption in favour of development. And the general principle of residential development in the location is acceptable.

The proposals seek to address the planning guidelines, access arrangements, parking and protection of trees on site.

IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The application site has been granted approval to demolish the existing run-down bungalow which is sited on a large plot and two construct two semi-detached properties along the frontage.

The further proposed property would complement the site and its surroundings. It also seeks to create no detrimental effect on the amenities of the neighbouring properties with all rights of light respected.

This coupled with the fact that the site is located alongside a large commercial car dealership and associated businesses, it is hoped it can be seen the proposals will benefit the site.

As such the proposal cannot fail to integrate into the surroundings

IMPACT OF TREES.

A tree report is attached to address the trees on site and their TPO's. The design has taken careful consideration of these trees in terms of both the siting of the house and the access.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

The proposal seeks to respect the neighbour's right of light and their amenity. Parking has been positioned away from the common boundary to further reduce any impact on neighbouring properties.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT PROVIDED

The proposed chalet bungalow will create natural light and ventilation, together with amenity space, to create a pleasant modern living environment.

The application also provides amenity space, parking, bin, and cycle storage all in line with National Policy.

HIGHWAYS CONSIDERATIONS

Access has already been approved in the previous application for two semi-detached dwellings and the proposal would utilise this access.

The parking arrangements are shown on the attached drawings, together with an access drive to the rear for further parking and turning.

Parking spaces are to be 5m x 2.5m with at least 6m behind to allow for safe manoeuvring. In line with Policy CC07 one electric charging point is to be included.

Together with this, the protection of the trees was our main consideration to ensure there was not excessive parking and driveway within the crowns spread of the trees.

A tree report is attached to justify and support the proposals in relation to this and a highways and access report is also provided by specialists to support traffic movements and access.

The proposal also provides dedicated secure cycle stores and bin

storage. The position of the proposal site also provides good

transport links.

IMPACT ON NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS

Whilst the construction proposed is modest, should the application be successful, the applicant is happy to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to secure contributions should this be deemed necessary.

DRAINAGE ISSUES

The drainage is to remain as existing as the increased run off would be minimal, but should Building Control require, a soakaway would be created, and the parking area is to be permeable material.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 where there is minimal risk from surface water flooding. Additionally, there are no surface water drainage issues with the site.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

It is proposed that the dwelling will meet National Guidelines in respect to conservation and renewable energy.

We hope it can be seen that the proposal will create a much-needed property and enhance the existing dilapidated site.

The applicant is also happy to enter into a Section 106 Agreement and if required to secure SPA Mitigation.

The building as shown on the attached drawings, is to be constructed in quality and sustainable materials. The internal layout seeks to create a home with a light airy feel. The sitting allows good amenity space and provides good light for the house. The area of land to the rear, whilst not a garden, would be retained as countryside, but will afford a pleasant outlook for the occupants.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 This statement sets out the details of the proposal. It has hopefully demonstrated that the principle of development is acceptable and that the proposal would be considered an appropriate development.
- 6.2 As the proposal now complies with all relevant planning policy and is appropriate development in the urban area, we respectfully request that permission be granted for the proposed development.





Attachments : Tree Report, Traffic Assessment