

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251837
Site Address:	46 Bearwood Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4SY
Expiry Date:	25 September 2025
Site Visit Date:	08/08/2025
Proposal: The householder application for the proposed creation of a new 3- metre-wide vehicular access to the front of the property, including installation of a tarmac hardstanding area to provide off-street parking for two vehicles, alongside the removal of a 2-metre section of front boundary hedge.	

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
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
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design HC10 – Odor, fumes and dust
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
961333	Proposed Single Storey Rear Extension To Dwelling To Form Conservatory.	Approved – 30 April 1996
030120	Proposed single storey rear extension to dwelling to form conservatory and pitched roof on existing rear extension.	Approved - 16 June 2003
250934	Householder application for the proposed first floor rear extension, new first floor dormer window, new front porch and changes to fenestrations.	Approved – 05 June 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objections.
WBC Ecology – No objections.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Barkham Parish Council: Objection. The Council raises concerns that the proposed new access onto The Lilacs is too close to the junction with Bearwood Road, directly opposite the Post Office, an area already prone to congestion. The existing access via Bearwood Road is considered sufficient and safer. The new access is seen as a risk to driver and pedestrian safety, potentially reducing visibility despite hedge trimming, and may increase traffic congestion and conflict points. Historical kerb modifications on this stretch may indicate previous efforts to restrict access. Overall, the Council considers the proposal unnecessary, unsafe, and likely to exacerbate existing traffic issues, and recommends refusal.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, detached house located in an established residential area that is primarily characterised by detached properties that vary in style and architecture.

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.

Character of the Area:

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy development plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

Policy CP3 also states that proposals should “contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping.

Figure 4.37 with the Brough Design Guide SPD advises that front gardens should include space for soft landscape.

Bearwood Road is characterised by an abundance of mature trees, boundary hedgerows and grass verges, which together provide a distinctly green and verdant setting. The symmetry and uniformity of boundary treatments and landscaped front gardens is a positive feature that contributes significantly to the character and appearance of the area.

The application site lies at the junction of Bearwood Road and The Lilacs and is currently accessed via Bearwood Road. The proposal seeks the formation of a second 3-metre-wide access from The Lilacs. In the context of both Bearwood Road and The Lilacs, the creation of an additional opening would not appear out of place, given the predominantly residential nature of the immediate area and the prevalence of driveway openings along both streets.

However, to facilitate the proposals, a tall mature hedgerow that previously extended around the junction boundary has been removed – a feature that is both common and distinctive along the eastern edge of Bearwood Road. In addition, a portion of the grass verge adjacent to the pavement on The Lilacs would also be lost.

Given the site’s prominent corner location, and the fact that soft landscaping is a characteristic feature that makes a positive contribution to the verdant character of

the area, the loss of this hedgerow is considered visually harmful. In the interests of protecting and enhancing visual amenity, it is therefore considered necessary that soft landscaping is reintroduced in this area. While indicative planting has been shown on the submitted site plan, a more detailed landscaping scheme will be secured by condition to ensure that appropriate replacement planting is provided and maintained, thereby mitigating the impact of the hedge removal and preserving the verdant character of the street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Due to the nature of the proposals, there are no loss of light, overlooking or overbearing concerns.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and has raised no objections to the proposed development, noting that as 'The Lilacs' is an unclassified road, planning permission will not be required (in respect of Highways) for the proposed access.

Barkham Parish Council has raised objections to the new access due to its sitting close to the junction with Bearwood Road, would result in increased traffic flow and increase the risk of accidents, a negative impact on visibility for both drivers and pedestrians.

However, given that the site relates to a single residential dwelling, the additional access would not generate a material increase in traffic or frequency of vehicle movements. Typical daily movements for a single dwelling are limited in nature, and the proposed access would simply provide an alternative means of entry and exit without significantly altering traffic patterns. With respect to visibility for drivers and pedestrians, as well as any previous alterations to the kerb, any impacts on safety would be assessed by the Council's traffic management team under separate Highways consent. This ensures that the design and location of the access will comply with relevant highway safety standards and provide appropriate mitigation, maintaining safe conditions for all road users.

The applicant will also be required to gain separate Highways consent for the proposed width and location of the new dropped crossing. As such, no highway impacts related to this planning application are raised.

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:	18 September 2025
Earliest date for decision:	25 August 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>BJC</i>
Date:	19.09.25