

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251704
Site Address:	Suncot, School Road, Barkham, Wokingham, RG41 4TR
Expiry Date:	27 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	3 October 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of first floor front, side and rear extension, roof extension with dormer windows.	

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 CP7 - Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP11- Countryside
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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251485	Application for certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a single storey outbuilding.	Refused 05/08/2025
210874	Full planning application for the proposed subdivision of the site and erection of 4 no. detached dwellings following demolition of existing outbuildings, with alterations to the existing access serving Suncot, provision of parking, boundary treatment, surface water attenuation measures and hard and soft landscaping.	Refused 11/05/2021
080067	Proposed erection of single storey side and rear extensions to form annexe.	Approve 12/01/2009
082114	Proposed erection of single storey rear and side extensions to form annexe.	Refused 01/10/2008
030600	Proposed single storey front and rear extensions to dwelling, chimney to side plus erection of replacement detached garage and store room.	Approve 19/05/2003

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways- No objection subject to conditions.
WBC Landscape and Trees- No objection subject to conditions.
WBC CIL- The proposed development will be liable for CIL based on the measurements of the floorplans.
WBC Ecology- No objection subject to conditions.

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 letter received raising the following objections Lack of clarity on boundary treatment: The planning documents do not clearly state whether the existing Cypress hedge on the western boundary with Cerney will be retained or if a new boundary wall or treatment is proposed. <i>(Officer Note: see other matters.)</i>

	Importance of hedge maintenance: • If the existing hedge is to remain, there is concern about past and potential future neglect by the owners of Suncot. The hedge has previously overgrown into Cerney's property, requiring significant remedial work, and regular maintenance on both sides is essential to prevent recurrence. <i>(Officer Note: This is not a material planning matter.)</i> Request for shared responsibility: • The Cerney owner will continue maintaining their side of the hedge and asks that the Suncot owners commit to responsible, ongoing maintenance of their side to keep the boundary tidy and manageable. <i>(Officer Note: This is not a material planning matter.)</i> Privacy and overlooking concerns: • The proposed roof, loft, dormer windows, and rear double gable may overlook Cerney's garden and rear rooms. There is a request that any west-facing windows be obscure-glazed and non-opening below 1.7 metres to protect privacy. <i>(Officer Note: Addressed in Neighbouring Amenities section within the report.)</i> Overshadowing and loss of light: • The increased height and massing of the extensions could affect natural light and cause overshadowing to Cerney's garden, particularly near the shared boundary. <i>(Officer Note: Addressed in Neighbouring Amenities section within the report.)</i> Construction impact and access: • Concern that construction access, scaffolding, or material storage could encroach on the boundary or damage the hedge. A construction management plan is requested to safeguard the boundary during works. Drainage and surface water runoff: • Additional roof area and hard landscaping may increase runoff, and reassurance is sought that drainage will be properly managed to prevent water flowing onto Cerney's land.
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	<i>(Officer note: WBC Drainage has not provided a comment, and the development is located in Flood Zone 1 and there is no flooding harm.)</i> Boundary definition and alignment: • Clarification is requested that no changes will be made to the existing boundary alignment and that any boundary treatments remain consistent with the current arrangement. Privacy measures along the western boundary: • Further clarification is requested on what measures, if any, are proposed within the development to maintain privacy along the boundary between Suncot and Cerney. <i>(Officer note: WBC Drainage has not provided a comment, and the development is located in Flood Zone 1 and there is no flooding harm.)</i>
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APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is currently occupied by a chalet style bungalow, with ample driveway space to the front as well as ample rear garden located within the 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.

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 in the countryside and is therefore to be considered under Policy CP11 of the adopted Core Strategy, which seeks to control development outside defined settlement boundaries. Relevant to this scheme, CP11 not permit development outside of development limits unless it falls within the exemption criteria below:

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

There would no inappropriate encroachment into the countryside resulting from the development, with the proposed works largely being within the envelope of existing built form. The proposal would also be of an appropriate scale within the context of the

site, which forms part of a street scene that is characterised by large two storey dwellings on the opposite side of the road.

In line with the above, the additional bulk from the proposed development would not harm the countryside setting and the proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy CP11 in this respect.

Character of the Area:

CP1 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed erection of first floor front, side and rear extension, roof extension with dormer windows. to maintain or enhance the quality of the environment.

CP3 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed erection of first floor front, side and rear extension, roof extension with dormer windows to be of an appropriate scale, mass, built form, height, materials and character to enhance the area together with a high quality of design.

The proposed works are extensive, comprising a number of extensions and raising of the roof to the existing dwelling. Nonetheless, when taking a general view of the proposed development, it is not considered that the works would fundamentally alter the character of the dwelling, especially when viewing the principal elevation of the property. In this respect, the sites contribution to the street scene would not significantly change as a result of the development.

The proposed front elevation consists of a new porch veranda, raising of the roof and installation of 2 dormers. The proposed new porch veranda is similar in character to the existing porch. The front elevation includes the removal of the existing bay windows for fenestration to match the existing windows on the property. The property is set back c.27.55m away from the street, therefore there is no immediate impact on the character of the area as the front elevation is not located on the front of the street.

The proposed side extension projects c.1.89m of the main South-East elevation projecting along the whole length of the dwelling (c.19.2m) and connects with the rear extension which projects c.5.77m of the existing rear side wall, connecting with the existing rear wall creating an infill extension to the rear of the property. The wrap around infill extension makes the dwelling become c.19.22m in depth and c.11.27 in width.

The proposed rear extension involves 2 new gables. When viewing from the rear, the first floor gable end on the right hand side comprises a large expanse of fenestration with a balcony. This is replicated on the left side, however, with the exclusion of a balcony.

The proposed loft conversion would be facilitated through a hip to gable roof alteration, the insertion of 2 no. roof dormers to the front elevation, 1 no. dormer and 2 no. rooflights on the North West elevation. The front and side dormers are positioned within the main roof, they are set back from the eaves line and the side of the roof, and it would not exceed the height of the ridgeline of the existing roof. This ensures that the dormer would appear as a subservient feature of the main roof. Additionally, the ridge height of the roof is not being increased to facilitate the loft conversion and therefore it is not deemed that the proposed loft conversion and raising of the roof would harm the character of the area.

CP3 of the Core Strategy requires the extensions to be of an appropriate material and character to the area together with a high quality of design. The proposed first floor front, side and rear extension, roof extension with dormer windows will be made subservient to the existing built form as the materials used to construct the extensions will mostly be made to match the rest of the main dwelling, with certain small changes. These are identified on the application form to consist of roof clay tiles to match the existing materials, part brick walls to match the existing with part oak timber panels and oak frame fenestration, oak windows however the existing windows are part black painted wooden windows with part brown painted wooden windows and boundary treatments on the front boundary (e.g. fences and walls) are proposed to be brick piers and timber gates with the existing being a hedge on either side of the existing dropped kerb and driveway. There are slight changes to the materials and finishes used for the walls, windows and boundary treatments however these positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The front, side and rear extensions are two storey , designed as chalet bungalow additions with accommodation in the roof void. They are located at a suitable distance from the neighbouring boundaries (c.2.48m with neighbour 'Cerney' and c.6.8m with neighbour 'Grantley' and do not provide any detrimental outlook onto neighbouring properties or neighbouring gardens.

The proposed 2.no dormers on the South East elevation (neighbouring boundary with 'Grantley') do not have any detrimental outlook onto 'Grantley'. The proposed dormers will have obscure glazing to prevent outlook into the neighbouring property 'Grantley', therefore no additional privacy measures are needed. With regard to the perception of overlooking from these roof features, the dormers are not directly on the boundary and there is also a tall hedge between the dwellings which limits the perception of overlooking. Therefore, there will not be a detrimental perception of overlooking from the neighbouring garden.

The proposed dormer and 2no. rooflights on the North West elevation (neighbouring boundary with 'Cerney') do not have any detrimental outlook onto 'Cerney'. The proposed dormer will have obscure glazing to prevent outlook into the neighbouring property 'Cerney', therefore no additional privacy measures are needed. The two roof lights on this side of the roof slope will also be high level. With regard to the perception of overlooking from these roof features, they will be orientated to the

front/side of the neighbouring dwelling and would not face the private rear amenity area. There is also a tall hedge between the dwellings which limits the perception of overlooking.

The rear double gable and balcony, will not provide any detrimental outlook to neighbouring properties as they are located at the rear of the property and face Suncot's garden and neighbouring rear gardens. The design of this feature also results in the roof form block any direct sideways views.

Loss of Light:

There is no loss of light on neighbouring amenities as there is no additional bulk onto the roof of 'Suncot', the proposal does not propose the roof extending past the existing maximum height of the roof. The overshadowing will be no greater than the existing. The limited raising of roof and introduction of dormers would not significantly add rise to the main dwelling and overshadowing in the garden given to its orientation.

Overbearing:

The limited raising of roof and introduction of dormers would not significantly add rise and height to the main dwelling. The overshadowing will be no detrimentally greater than existing, the proposed extensions retain the building as chalet style bungalow. The property is located a reasonable distance away from both neighbouring amenities and does not pose any risks of overbearing on neighbouring properties.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

WBC Highways states "The Highways received the revised site plan to address the Highways responses dated 28th October 2025.

There is no net increase in the total numbers of habitable rooms, and four driveway parking spaces are proposed. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions.

No negative impact on abilities for cycle storage is expected, which is acceptable. The applicant proposes to utilise the existing dropped crossing and to erect a set of timber gates. The proposed gates have set back from the edge of carriageway by at least 5m to avoid obstructing the free flow of traffic, which is acceptable."

Furthermore, there are no objections subject to conditions.

Amenity Space:

R16 of the Borough Design Guide states "The Council's minimum garden length of 11m is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provide the space is usable.' The proposed will result in a small loss of garden space, however there is sufficient space remaining making it acceptable.

Landscape and Trees:

WBC Landscape and Trees officer have stated that the site is located in the countryside along School Road, a Green Route as per the Policies Map. A feature of Green Routes

are well landscaped front gardens with often large mature trees in front verges, some of which are Veteran or Notable trees, and many of which are protected. The same is true of the site which has mature Oak trees to the front of the site that are protected by TPO1792/2021 which includes a group of 2 Oak trees (G1 on TPO and T1 and T2 on the Tree Protection Plan TPP) Also to the front of the site, but off-site is T1 on the TPO and T3 on the TPP).

the NW corner of the site, and single Oak tree T3. There is another protected tree halfway along the NW boundary T2 on the TPO and T5 on the TPP.

All of these trees will be retained. The only tree to be removed is T4 which is not protected by the TPO. This tree is to be removed to facilitate additional parking in the front driveway.

A tree report; BS5837:2012 Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and tree Protection Plan from ATS . The report includes a Tree Protection Plan which is acceptable.

I have no objection to the removal of T4 – but reiterate the Arboricultural Consultant's recommendation for replacing T4 . I am happy to accept the mitigation in written form and in this case there is no need to update the Tree Protection Plan/.

Furthermore, there are no objections subject to conditions.

Ecology:

The WBC Ecologist states "I have the Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2926_BES_a (Bat Emergence Survey (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2926_BES_a). I have also reviewed the plans and elevation submitted in support of the application. All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England in England.

A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

According to the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) two small sized bat dropping were found on the blockwork wall on the northern elevation of the house. The property had several potential bat access points to the exterior, such as gaps behind hanging tiles on the dormer to the south of the building, visible gaps where lead flashing around the chimney had lifted from the roof, and gaps under lifted roof tiles and under the hip tiles around the property. The features identified have the potential Other Householder Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council. to provide sufficient space, shelter, protection and conditions for use by individual crevice-dwelling bats. The droppings confirm the presence of crevice-dwelling bat species. The Ecologist stated evidence of crevice roosting species is typically hidden from view in areas such as gaps between tiles and internal linings/insulation. The property was assigned moderate suitability for bats.

Emergence surveys were completed on 25 June and 31 July 2025. High levels of

Common pipistrelle foraging activity from were recorded with occasional passes by Soprano pipistrelle and Brown long-eared bats. During the survey of 31 July four Common pipistrelle were observed emerging from 3 access points on the rear elevation of the house. The emergences were from roof tiles at the front near the verge, hip tiles on the northwest side of the house, and gaps underneath the hip files.

I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Ecologist to conclude that, the building acts a day roost with 3 separate roosting locations using 4 different access points. The planning proposals would require removal of roof tiles that could result in a permanent damage to pipistrelle bats. Agree that a European Protects Species Mitigation Licence to allow the proposed work to proceed legally. I support the proposal that a Licensed Ecologist or “Registered Consultant” would provide a toolbox talk to all contractors. The PRA proposes a soft -strip that would be undertaken from mid-November to February. Hanging tiles and dormer siles will be carefully removed by hand under the supervision of the protect Licensed Ecologist. I welcome the proposal for further roosting opportunities to be create access gaps such as bat tiles on the western and front elevations in accordance with Local Plan policy the NPPF and CIEEM Bat Mitigation Guidelines. The Ecologist proposes any roof membrane uses will be bituminous 1F felt or bat-safe membrane with a certificate proving it has passed the NE snagging propensity test. I request a planning condition requiring a copy of the EPSML or confirmation of registration under a Bat Mitigation Class Licence and implementation of the mitigation strategy set out in PRA section 7 or as approved by Natural England. Provided a copy of the EPSML is secured there are no ecological objections to the development propose.”

Furthermore, there are no objections subject to conditions.

Other matters:

Concerns have been raised regarding the retention of the western hedge. The plans will not increase the building footprint along this elevation, but the roof will be extended. The plans depicted the western hedge remaining and this is there is no good reason to doubt this. Any changes to the shared boundary would be a civil matter between the relevant parties.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the proposed erection of first floor front, side and rear extension, roof extension with dormer windows would not detrimentally harm the character and appearance of the area, would not significantly harm neighbouring amenity nor highway safety. It is compliant with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy as well as the provisions of the Borough Design Guide. Accordingly, it is recommended for approval.

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:	26 January 2026
Earliest date for decision:	14 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	26.01.2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zones

Green Infrastructure Routes Consultation Zone

Submitted Sites Live

Risk of Flooding from Surface Water

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone

SSSI Impact Risk Zones

Tree Preservation Orders Served or Confirmed