

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261693
Site Address:	4 Beehive Cottages, Trowes Lane, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1RP
Expiry Date:	15 September 2026
Site Visit Date:	3 August 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single 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 CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Swallowfield Village Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

None

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways- Request further information
WBC CIL- No response

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

4 Beehive Cottages is a single storey dwelling within the countryside, Swallowfield. The dwelling does not have a traditional countryside character as it is comprised of a red brick and white u-PVC fenestration, along with solar panels on the roof. The property has an existing shed to the side of the property, along the boundary with 3 Beehive Cottages. This end of Trowes Lane is characterised by single storey dwellings of varying design.

Proposal:

The proposal is for a single storey rear extension.

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.

Countryside:

The application site is located outside of defined settlement limits within the Countryside. As such, policy CP11 of the Core Strategy applies and has the overarching aims of protecting the separate identity of settlements and maintaining the quality of the environment. The policy outlines 7 exceptions for when development may be permissible in the countryside. One of the exceptions is relevant here:

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

As such, the principle of development will be accepted so long as the proposal is not an inappropriate increase in scale, form, or footprint of the original building.

It needs to be assessed as to whether the proposal would comply with the above to help understand if the development would be in keeping with the character of the countryside area. RD11 figure 8.19 of the Borough Design Guide provides guidance on volume uplift for replacement dwellings in the countryside. This is also used as a benchmark figure for extension uplift, with the benchmark figure being a 50% above and beyond the scale of the original dwelling.

The single storey rear extension does not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. This is because the development has a

depth of 4 metres and width of 5 metres which is single storey and only covers part of the width of the existing dwelling. The dwelling is being increased by 20m² which is an increase of around a third compared to the existing dwelling. A planning history search would suggest that previous extensions occurred in the past so it is likely that the scale has been increased further from the existing dwelling, although accurate dimensions could not be found. However, the NPPF footnote 25 identifies the existing building as being the property as existing on the date of the publication of the framework. As 4 Beehive Cottages is part of a row of 9 dwellings within this section of Trowes Lane, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an inappropriate increase in scale or footprint that would be out of character with the surrounding countryside. Therefore, the proposal is acceptable in this respect.

Design/ Character of the Area:

Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states proposals should be of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design.

R23 of the Borough Design Guide provides explicit guidance on extensions. For rear extensions, it states that:

- Rear extensions should not project more than four metres from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary
- Maximum eaves and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property

It also states that a gap should be retained between the building and the site boundary and this should be a minimum of 1m in width. This is echoed by R16.

It should be noted that the Borough Design Guide is a guide rather than hard policy requirements; ultimately each application will have to be assessed on its merits.

The single storey rear extension does not adhere to R16 design principle within the Borough Design Guide (BDG) in relation to separation distances as the proposal is set 0.3 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property The Meadows. But, given its proportionate scale and unimposing design, the extension would have an acceptable impact on the appearance of the dwelling and wider area. The proposal accords with R23 as it extends out 4 metres, and its height is not above the existing property height.

The proposed rear extension is single storey in nature and would not be visible from the public domain, and therefore the visual effect of the extension poses no harm to the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states proposals should not result in detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

R23 of the BDG states that the side walls of extensions must not contain windows especially at first floor level, to minimise any potential impact upon the privacy of

neighbours. It also states that the eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m within 2m of a side boundary.

Overlooking and loss of light:

The proposed single storey rear extension would extend 4 metres from the rear of the dwelling and would be single storey in nature. There is a window proposed on the side of

the extension facing No. 3 Beehive Cottages, however, this largely faces onto the timber shed and is over 4 metres from the boundary. The single storey nature of the extension and existing boundary treatment ensures that there are no issues on neighbouring amenity terms through overlooking or loss of light. The neighbouring property, The Meadows, extends out at the rear by a similar amount. The extension does extend out beyond 3 Beehive Cottages, but a significant separation distance between the extension and the boundary with 3 Beehive Cottages is proposed.

Overbearing:

To avoid being overbearing, guidance in the BDG states that the eaves height of single storey extension should not exceed 3 metres within 2 metres of a side boundary. The proposed development is set 0.3 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property The Meadows, but an eaves height of 2.5 metres raises no concerns on neighbouring amenity terms relating to the issue of overbearing. The rear extension is proposed to have a flat roof, with a roof light at its centre, meaning there is no extensive bulk or mass above the eaves which would lead to substantial overbearing. There are no overbearing concerns when considering 3 Beehive Cottages due to the separation distance proposed.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CC07 of the MDD states that development should retain an overall suitable level of parking. Parking provisions are set out in Appendix 2 of the MDD.

WBC Highways note that the proposal increased the number of habitable rooms from 4 to 5 and would require 2 parking spaces. They requested a parking plan to be provided showing two parking spaces of 2.5m x 5.0m.

Revised plans were provided on 13.08.2026 to demonstrate that the timber shed would be part demolished to allow for an additional parking space. This parking area is measured at approx. 14m deep and 2.7m wide and would therefore accommodate two vehicles which is acceptable parking provision for a dwelling with 5 habitable rooms. WBC Highways note that this is acceptable with the following conditions:

- CF4 – PARKING (AS APPROVED)
- CG5 - SURFACING OF ACCESS

Ecology:

Policies CP7 and TB23 seek to protect biodiversity. Both bats and Great Crested Newts are protected species. The site is in an amber zone for Great Crested Newts. Amber zones contain suitable habitat and Great Crested Newts are likely to be present. However, in accordance with guidance from NatureSpace, this site is in a location that does not require consultation with NatureSpace for householder scale development, despite being in the amber zone. Accordingly, no harm to protected species is anticipated.

Amenity Space:

Section 4 of the BDG provides guidance on the provision of amenity space and recommends that 11 metres is a generally accepted depth for private garden space. On this occasion the implementation of a rear extension measuring 4 metres in depth does conflict with this guidance as garden space of approximately 8 metres remains.

However, the garden space is almost 10 metres wide. In addition, land of almost 16 metres in depth which does not form garden curtilage, but is within the ownership of 4 Beehive Cottages, further extends the amenity space available to the property. Suitable amenity space is therefore maintained for current and future occupiers.

Conclusion:

For the reasons above, the proposal is acceptable in local plan policy terms and therefore 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	
Date:	07 September 2026
Earliest date for decision:	12 August 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	07/09/26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site	AWE: 12km Zone	This is the 12km Zone. A circular zone of 12km radius around all nuclear sites, for certain types of significant development due to the potential for such developments to pose an external hazard to sites.

Water Network Watercourse Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	watercourseName	form
1	No data	inlandRiver

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones - Minor | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Amber	Consult NatureSpace for any minor development that intersects a red or amber zone in this layer

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0111344322302&notes=11401&location=477272,163657%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Archaeological Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Archaeological Site	61

Wards | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Spencers Wood & Swallowfield Ward	0 m

Parishes | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Swallowfield CP	0 m