

## **DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT**



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

|                                                                                                                                                               |                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Application Number:</b>                                                                                                                                    | 261524                                         |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                                                                                                                                          | 4 Orchard Estate, Twyford, Wokingham, RG10 9JY |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>                                                                                                                                           | 9 September 2026                               |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>                                                                                                                                       | 7 August 2026                                  |
| <b>Proposal:</b> Householder application for the proposed erection of a 2m fence on the side boundary adjoining the highway, including the removal of hedges. |                                                |

| <b>PLANNING POLICY</b>                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Policy</b>                           | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<br>National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>                        | CP1 – Sustainable Development<br>CP3 – General Principles for Development<br>CP7 – Biodiversity<br>CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b>                      | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development<br>CC02 – Development Limits<br>CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping<br>CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction<br>TB23 – Biodiversity and Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)</b> | SS1 – Sustainable development principles<br>SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy<br>SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements<br>CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings<br>CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development<br>NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity<br>NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows<br>NE5 – Landscape and design<br>DH1 – Place making and quality design<br>DH2 – Safeguarding amenity |
| <b>Other</b>                                     | Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<br>CIL Guidance + 123 List<br>Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| <b>PLANNING HISTORY</b> |             |                 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Application No.         | Description | Decision & Date |
| N/A                     | N/A         | N/A             |

| <b>CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>                |  |
|----------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Internal</b>                              |  |
| WBC Property Services – No comments received |  |

|                 |
|-----------------|
| <b>External</b> |
| None            |

| <b>REPRESENTATIONS</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parish/Town Council    | Twyford Parish Council have raised concerns regarding the removal of the hedge as they consider this to provide a positive contribution to the street scene and local character. |
| Ward Member(s)         | No comments received                                                                                                                                                             |
| Neighbours             | No comments received                                                                                                                                                             |

| <b>APPRAISAL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p><b>Description of Development:</b><br/>This application seeks permission for the proposed erection of a 2-metre-high timber fence along the side/front boundary of the application property where it joins the public highway, following removal of the existing boundary hedge.</p> <p><b>Principle of Development:</b><br/>The National Planning Policy Framework (2026) 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Character of the Area:</b><br/>Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy requires development to be of an appropriate scale, form and character to its surroundings, whilst Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to retain and enhance landscape features that contribute positively to the local environment. The Borough Design Guide SPD further advises that boundary treatments should contribute positively to the character of an area and the quality of the public realm. The NPPF (2026), requires development to add to the overall quality of an area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character, and respond appropriately to the prevailing built and landscaped context.</p> <p>The application site occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Orchard Estate and the adjoining turning head. As such, the side boundary is highly visible from a number of public vantage points within the street and makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The officer's site visit confirmed that the existing boundary treatment comprises a substantial established hedge which wraps around the plot and provides a soft, verdant edge to the public realm. The existing hedge forms an attractive and characteristic feature within the</p> |

street scene and helps soften the appearance of the dwelling when viewed from surrounding roads and footways. The landscaped boundary contributes positively to the spacious and verdant suburban character of Orchard Estate and provides a transition between the private residential curtilage and the public realm.

The proposal would result in the removal of a significant section of this hedge and its replacement with a continuous 2 metre high close-boarded timber fence along the side boundary adjoining the highway. Whilst timber fencing is a common form of domestic enclosure at the rear of properties, it is not advocated within the Borough Design Guide (BDG) for use on boundaries with the public realm as per design policy R12. In this instance the proposed boundary treatment would introduce a long, visually dominant and engineered feature into a highly prominent corner location. The development would materially alter the appearance of the site from a soft landscaped frontage to a more enclosed, urbanised and visually sterile frontage, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the street scene.

Although the applicant has identified examples of fencing further afield within Orchard Estate, the Council must assess the development on its own merits and in its specific context. Having regard to the immediate surroundings of the application site, the proposed 2-metre-high fencing would appear as an incongruous feature that would not reflect the prevailing character of the site's immediate setting. The officer's site visit did not identify comparable examples of extensive 2-metre-high fencing enclosing a prominent corner plot in the immediate locality, and it is considered that the proposal would appear unduly prominent when viewed from the public highway.

Furthermore, the loss of the existing hedge would erode an important green feature within the street scene and diminish the visual contribution currently made by the site to the character of the area. The proposed fencing would fail to provide the same landscape value, visual softness or sense of openness currently experienced along this section of Orchard Estate and would instead create a sterile frontage where a verdant boundary treatment presently exists.

For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed boundary treatment would be out of keeping with the established character and appearance of the immediate area and would result in unacceptable harm to the visual amenities of the street scene. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to the NPPF and Policies CP3 and CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010), Policies CC03 and TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014), and the design objectives of the Borough Design Guide SPD.

**Neighbouring Amenity:**

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development does not result in undue harm to the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

The proposal comprises the replacement of an existing hedge with a 2m high timber fence along the side boundary adjoining the public highway. Having regard to its location, scale and relationship with surrounding properties, it is not considered that the development would result in any material harm to neighbouring residential amenity in terms of overlooking, loss of light, or overbearing impact. The proposed fence would principally adjoin the public realm and would not unacceptably affect the living

conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010).

**Residential Amenity Space:**

The proposed boundary fence poses no harm to the usability of the site's rear amenity space for current and future occupiers.

**Landscape and Trees:**

The proposal would necessitate the removal of a section of the existing boundary hedge along the side frontage of the site. No protected trees are affected by the development and the Council's Landscape Officer was not consulted given the scale and nature of the proposal. Whilst the loss of the hedge contributes to the concerns identified in respect of the character and appearance of the area, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any unacceptable impacts on protected trees or landscape features that would warrant a separate reason for refusal. The impact of the loss of the hedge has therefore been considered as part of the character and appearance assessment above.

**Conclusion:**

The proposed development would result in the removal of an established boundary hedge and its replacement with a prominent 2-metre-high timber fence along a highly visible side boundary adjoining the highway. By reason of its height, extent and location on a prominent corner plot, the proposed boundary treatment would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the prevailing character of the immediate area, causing unacceptable harm to the street scene. Whilst no adverse impacts have been identified in respect of neighbouring amenity or highway safety, the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area outweighs the limited benefits of the proposal. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

**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.

**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.

| RECOMMENDATION     |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Conditions agreed: | Not required |

|                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Recommendation:</b>             | Refuse           |
| <b>Date:</b>                       | 7 September 2026 |
| <b>Earliest date for decision:</b> | 11 August 2026   |

|                                                           |                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Recommendation agreed by:<br/>(Authorised Officer)</b> |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                                              | 07/09/26                                                                          |

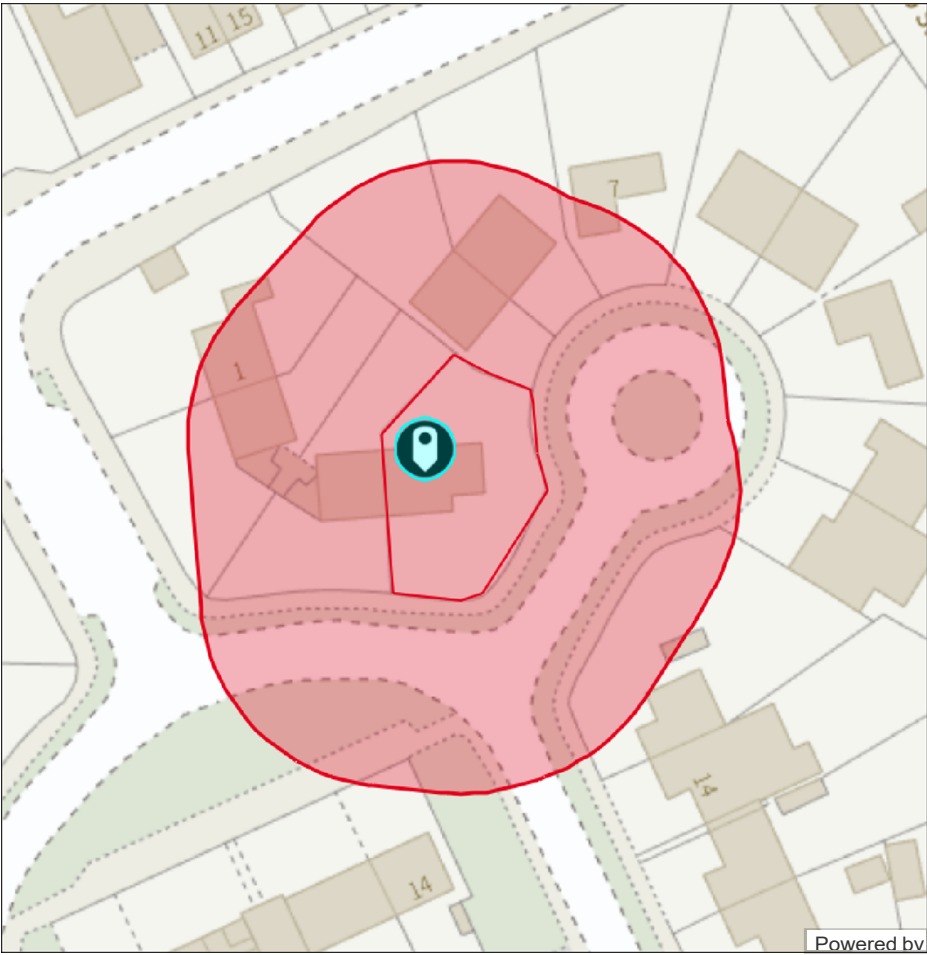
PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Near Me Report

Area of Interest (AOI) Information

Area: 2,947.74 m²

Date: Fri Jul 17 2026 10:37:23 GMT+0100 (British Summer Time)



Trees & Landscape

Tree Preservation Orders  
Served or Confirmed

- Single
- Group
- Area
- Woodland

Heritage & Conservation

Conservation Areas



Listed Buildings



Listed Buildings Consultation  
Zone

**Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 3**

| # | NAME                               |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Within Major Development Locations |
| 2 | Within Major Development Locations |
| 3 | Within All Development Locations   |

**Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1**

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                | NAME    |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Major Development Locations | Twyford |

**Mineral Safeguarding Areas | Total count: 2**

| # | Type      | SubType                                                                                                       |
|---|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Soft Sand | Construction sand: Palaeogene: Thanet Sand Formation, Lambeth Group, Harwich Formation, London Clay Formation |
| 2 | Soft Sand | Construction sand: Palaeogene: Thanet Sand Formation, Lambeth Group, Harwich Formation, London Clay Formation |

**Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1**

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                           | FEATURE_NAME           | PLANNING_NOTE                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---|----------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site | AWE: Special Case Zone | ONR also requests to be consulted on planning applications, irrespective of distance from nuclear sites, for special cases. Developments that either introduce a new hazard or change the existing external hazards posed to nuclear sites. |

**Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 1**

| # | Height Band                                 | Wind Turbine | Aviation |
|---|---------------------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| 1 | All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet) | YES          | YES      |

**Wokingham Borough Council Owned Land | Total count: 1**

| # | Address                                             | Tenure                           | Title_no |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Orchard Estate and Treacher Court, Twyford, Reading | Absolute Freehold Estate in Land | BK402752 |

**EA Groundwater Zones | Total count: 1**

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                   | FEATURE_NAME                    | CONSULT                                                                                                                          |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Groundwater Consultation Zones | Groundwater Consultation Zone 3 | Environment Agency (only if application involves contaminated land) – see separate sheet: When to consult the Environment Agency |

**BGS Radon Affected Areas | Total count: 1**

| # | FEATURE_NAME                              | CONSULT               |
|---|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Maximum radon potential is 1-3% of houses | Public Health England |

**Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 2**

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                                                                                | FEATURE_NAME | CONSULT                                    |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition. | UO486        | Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team |
| 2 | Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition. | UO487        | Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team |

### Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                        | FEATURE_NAME | CONSULT                                                                                             |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone | Red          | For Householder applications check HH Layer. Consult NatureSpace for all other types of development |

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

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                        | FEATURE_NAME | CONSULT                                                                                         |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone | Red          | 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 | <a href="https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0301000530050&amp;notes=&amp;location=480100,175861%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)">https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0301000530050&amp;notes=&amp;location=480100,175861%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)</a> |

### Potentially Contaminated Land Zones | Total count: 1

| # | FEATURE_TYPE                                    | OBJECTID |
|---|-------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Potentially Contaminated Land Consultation Zone | 1        |

### Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

| # | FEATURE_TYPE | Name |
|---|--------------|------|
|---|--------------|------|

|   |                                     |                                        |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1 | Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|

### Wards | Total count: 1

| # | Name of area                   | Closest Approximate Distance |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Twyford, Ruscombe & Hurst Ward | 0 m                          |

### Parishes | Total count: 1

| # | Name of area | Closest Approximate Distance |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Twyford CP   | 0 m                          |