

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251957
Site Address:	Apple Tree Cottage, MereOak Lane, Grazeley, Wokingham, RG7 1JY
Expiry Date:	17 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	12 March 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single-storey, part first-floor rear extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Countryside

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS5 – Development in the countryside C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
122051	Proposed erection of a first-floor side extension, single storey side extension to dwelling, following removal of existing porch.	Approve 4 th April 2012

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Ecology – No Objection
WBC Drainage – No Objection Subject to Condition

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: A detached dwelling in in designated Countryside, located close to the junction with Mortimer Road and Lambwood Hill in Grazeley.

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 outside any defined settlement limits (which are defined by policy CP9 of the Core Strategy) within the Wokingham Countryside. As such, any development is ordinarily resisted and the principle of development is only acceptable subject to meeting exceptions in Countryside policy.

Proposal: The erection of a part single-storey extension to provide an additional room on the ground floor, and a part first-floor rear extension to enlarge the existing bedroom.

The single storey extension will measure approximately 6m in width, 4m in depth and 2.5m in height. It will have a flat roof, 4no. windows on the east elevation, 1 no window on the north elevation and double doors to the south and west elevations.

The first-floor extension will facilitate the enlargement of the bedroom. It will measure approximately 3.4m in width, 1.3m l depth, 5m to the top of the eaves, 6.6m to the top of the pitch roof and be set down from the main roof by approximately 0.6m. The east facing elevation will have double doors that could potentially providing access onto the flat roof although it is noted there is no proposed balustrade to facilitate a balcony.

Location within Countryside: The site is located in Countryside and Core Strategy Policy CP11 states that to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain

the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

- 1) It contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough, or in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside; and
- 2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings; and
- 3) It is contained within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of replacement buildings would bring about environmental improvement; or
- 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
- 5) In the case of replacement dwellings, the proposal must: i) Bring about environmental improvements; or ii) Not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.
- 6) Essential community facilities cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use/replacement of an existing building.
- 7) Affordable housing on rural exception sites in line with CP9.

In the case, Exception 4 applies because the residential extensions are modest in scale. The single storey element would project approximately 2.5m from the original east facing wall, 5.5m from the original south facing wall and be approximately 2.5m in height to the top of the flat roof. The first-floor extension would be set down from the main roof line and set in from the first floor. Therefore, the development would not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form, or footprint of the original building.

Character of the Area: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The application site is located on a semi-rural road on a corner plot at the junction of 3 roads to Mortimer, Swallowfield and Reading. The dwelling overlooks open countryside to the front and rear. The front section of the boundary facing the highway is a low wall with open metal railings and hedging above. The side boundary facing the highway is a fence approximately 1.8m in height. A paved driveway provides off-street parking for several vehicles. The proposed first-floor extension would be set back 8m from the highway and only the side wall measuring approximately 1.3m in depth would be visible from the public realm. Approximately 0.7m of the ground floor extension would be partially visible above the fence and would be set back approximately 7m from the highway. Furthermore, there are no public rights of way close to the rear boundary.

Therefore, the development would not be prominent in the street scene and would not cause harm to the rural setting and character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation to character of the area.

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

There would be no harm to neighbour amenity in relation to overlooking, loss of light and overbearing.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policy CP3 in relation to neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: Policy CC07 of the Adopted Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates that the new scheme retains an appropriate level of off-street parking. The WBC adopted parking standards after development (Appendix 2 MDD Local Plan) states that 3 or more parking spaces are required following development for a 4 or more-bedroom dwelling. The proposal will provide one additional habitable room that could facilitate a bedroom. The driveway provides off-street parking for at least 3 vehicles which is acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage: The Drainage Officer raises no objection subject to conditions and has commented: *“The development is in Flood zone 1 and low risk from surface water flooding according to the EA mapping. There will be increase in impermeable area and we would have no objection to the principle of the development but as Drainage details have not been provided and the existing drainage details has not been mentioned, we would recommend the condition below:*

Requested Condition

No construction shall take place until Surface water drainage strategy report which include details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LLFA. The details shall include how the site currently drains and will be drained after proposed development with consideration to SuDS. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

Reasons: This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.”

Officer comment: In this instance, due to the limited scale of the development, the proposal does not significantly increase the risk of surface water runoff. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to add a drainage condition, were the application to be approved.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer raises no objection and has commented: *“According to the PRA inspections the house had occasional features within the roof that could*

support crevice dwelling bat species comprising occasional gaps beneath tiles of low bat roost potential but there are currently no potential features that could provide suitable crevices for any opportunistic use by roosting bats in the small area of the extension that will link at eaves level. . Three small-sized bat droppings were found on the roof of the log store against the western elevation of the house. According to the Ecologist, this is most likely to have been deposited by passing bats, possibly foraging or commuting over the property. However, the possibility of bats roosting in the low potential features cannot be discounted. The Ecologist states that the proposed works will not affect features of bat roost potential. They conclude it highly unlikely to result in the damage and/or destruction of a bat roost or cause disturbance, injury and/or death of bats. I agree no further survey to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats (i.e. emergence survey) is deemed necessary. I note the Ecologist states that thew PRA contains information regarding a mobile species so it will only be valid for 12 months. Provided that an informative is included in the decision notice and the development is implemented as proposed, there are no ecological objections to the development at proposed.

Recommended Informative

Bats are a protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately, and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.”

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:	13 March 2026
Earliest date for	10 February 2026

decision:	
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Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	13/03/26