

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260731
Site Address:	Oaklands Farm, Forges Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG27 0RB
Expiry Date:	22 May 2026
Site Visit Date:	13 February 2026
Proposal: Prior approval submission for the proposed enlargement of the existing bungalow through the erection of 1 no. additional storey to a maximum height of 7.3 metres.	

PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Section 55	Provides that 'development' includes the carrying out of building operations on land, and 'building operations' includes structural alterations or additions to buildings.
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Section 57	Planning permission is needed for all development of land.
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Section 187a	Enforcement for breach of conditions
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The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Section 7	Prior approval applications: time periods for decision
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Article 3	In conjunction with Schedule 2, Part 1 Class AA grants planning permission for the enlargement of a dwelling house by the construction of additional storeys
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Article 4	Provides that the planning authority may give direction to restrict the effect of Article 3
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
26/71	Outline application for the erection of a dwelling house for agricultural workers	C/A 25/02/71
987/71	Dwelling House for agricultural workers	C/A 25/11/71
322/73	Farmhouse	C/A 19/04/73
1403/73	Double Garage	C/A 27/09/73
980274	Application For Certificate Of Lawful Use Of Dwelling For Occupation By Non Agricultural Workers (Variation to condition 2 on approval 322/73)	Not proceeded with
000259	Application for certificate of lawful existing use of dwelling for occupation by persons not	Approved 11/05/00

	employed in agriculture.	
052072	Proposed single storey front & rear extensions to dwelling and raising of roof to form rooms in loft space with dormer windows.	Refused 26/08/05

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC CIL: CIL Liable

WBC Ecology: No objection subject to conditions

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

PART AA.1 APPRAISAL

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)			Yes	No
1	s.55	Does it constitute development?	✓	
2	s.191	Would it be contrary to an enforcement notice?		✓
3	s.187a Art.3 (4)	Would it be contrary to any condition imposed by any planning permission granted or deemed to be granted?		✓
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)			Yes	No
4	Art.3 (5)	Are the building operations involved in the construction of the original building lawful?	✓	
5	Art.4	Is there an 'Article 4 Direction' in effect for the site?		✓
6	Sch.2 Pt. AA	Does it consist of the enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of the construction of— (a) up to two additional storeys, where the existing dwellinghouse consists of two or more storeys; or, (b) one additional storey, where the existing dwellinghouse consists of one storey, immediately above the topmost storey of the dwellinghouse, together with any engineering operations reasonably necessary for the purpose of that construction?	✓	
7	AA.1 (a)	Has permission to use the dwelling house as a dwelling house only been granted by virtue of Class M, N, O, P, PA, or Q of Part 3 of Schedule 2?		✓
8	AA.1 (b)	Is the dwelling house located on: (a) article 2(3) land; or		✓

PART AA.1 APPRAISAL				
		(b) a site of special scientific interest?		
9	AA.1 (c)	Was the dwellinghouse constructed before 1st July 1948 or after 28th October 2018;		✓
10	AA.1 (d)	Has the existing dwelling house been enlarged by the addition of one or more storeys above the original dwelling house, whether in reliance on the permission granted by Class AA or otherwise?		✓
11	AA.1 (e)	Following the development would the height of the highest part of the roof of the dwellinghouse exceed 18 metres?		✓
12	AA.1 (f)	Following the development would the height of the highest part of the roof of the dwellinghouse exceed the height of the highest part of the roof of the existing dwellinghouse by more than: (i) 3.5 metres, where the existing dwellinghouse consists of one storey; or (ii) 7 metres, where the existing dwellinghouse consists of more than one storey?		✓
13	AA.1 (g)	Where the dwellinghouse is not detached and following the development would the height of the highest part of its roof exceed by more than 3.5 metres: (i) in the case of a semi-detached house, the height of the highest part of the roof of the building with which it shares a party wall (or, as the case may be, which has a main wall adjoining its main wall); or (ii) in the case of a terrace house, the height of the highest part of the roof of every other building in the row in which it is situated?		✓
14	AA.1 (h)	Would the floor to ceiling height of any additional storey, measured internally, exceed the lower of— (i) 3 metres; or (ii) the floor to ceiling height, measured internally, of any storey of the principal part of the existing dwellinghouse?		✓
15	AA.1 (i)	Would any additional storey that is constructed be on anything other than the principal part of the dwellinghouse?		✓
16	AA.1 (j)	Would the development include the provision of visible support structures on or attached to the exterior of the dwellinghouse upon completion of the development?		✓
17	AA.1 (k)	Would the development include any engineering operations other than works within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse to strengthen its existing walls or existing foundations?		✓

PART AA.2 APPRAISAL

Development under Class AA is permitted subject to the following conditions under part AA.2 (2):

The materials used in any exterior work must be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing dwellinghouse

It is considered the submitted plans indicate that this would be the case.

The development must not include a window in any wall or roof slope forming a side elevation of the dwelling house.

It is considered the submitted plans indicate that this would be the case.

The roof pitch of the principal part of the dwellinghouse following the development must be the same as the roof pitch of the existing dwellinghouse.

It is considered the submitted plans indicate that this would be the case.

Following the development, the dwellinghouse must be used as a dwelling house within the meaning of Class C3 of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the primary use as a dwelling house.

This is noted.

Development under Class AA is permitted subject to the following conditions under part AA.2 (3):

Before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to:

3 (a) (i) Impact on the amenity of any adjoining premises including overlooking, privacy and the loss of light:

Overlooking/overbearing/loss of light: Given the significant separation distance to adjacent dwellings and natural screening, the proposal would not result in harmful overlooking, overbearing or loss of light.

3 (a) (ii) The external appearance of the dwelling house, including the design and architectural features of— (aa) the principal elevation of the dwelling house, and (bb) any side elevation of the dwellinghouse that fronts a highway:

The host property is a large bungalow set within a spacious plot with mature and established vegetation/trees along the front and side boundaries. The site is located along a rural lane where development is sporadic and properties are set well back from the highway. The surrounding area is characterised by mainly by two storey detached dwellings of varied architectural styles, materials and similar building heights. Therefore, the bungalow would be the outlier along Forges Lane.

The features of the existing building are to be carried up in the same roof form configurations as the existing building design, including the matching of materials, maintaining aesthetic consistency. The design respects the symmetry and proportionality of the existing building, retaining a coherent and harmonious

appearance in relation to the existing building.

Whilst the height and scale of the dwelling will increase, given it's set back from the road and the mature and established vegetation/trees which would act as natural screening to the front of the property and would not be unduly prominent from the public realm, limiting its impact upon the street scene. The scale and form remain well-proportioned and reflective of the existing design of the dwelling would not introduce an overly bulky or alien visual element and would represent a modest and subordinate building which relates well to the existing architectural design of the property.

3 (a) (iii) Air traffic and defence asset impacts of the development:

Due to the scale of the development and the location of the site it is not considered any harmful impact would arise with regard to air traffic and defence assets.

3 (a) (iv) Whether, as a result of the siting of the dwellinghouse, the development will impact on a protected view identified in the Directions Relating to Protected Vistas dated 15th March 2012⁴⁴ issued by the Secretary of State:

The development would not impact the identified views.

3 (b) before beginning the development, the developer must provide the local planning authority with a report for the management of the construction of the development, which sets out the proposed development hours of operation and how any adverse impact of noise, dust, vibration and traffic on adjoining owners or occupiers will be mitigated

This can be attached as a condition.

3 (c) the development must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the date prior approval is granted;

This can be attached as a condition.

3 (d) the developer must notify the local planning authority of the completion of the development as soon as reasonably practicable after completion

This is noted.

3 (e) that notification must be in writing and include—

- (i) the name of the developer;**
- (ii) the address of the dwellinghouse; and**
- (iii) the date of completion.**

This is noted.

PART AA.3 APPRAISAL

The provisions of paragraph AA.3 (prior approval process):

The application must be accompanied by-

- (a) a written description of the proposed development including details of any works proposed;*

- (b) a plan which is drawn to an identified scale and shows the direction of North, indicating the site and showing the proposed development; and*
- (c) a plan which is drawn to an identified scale and shows;*
 - (i) the existing and proposed elevations of the dwellinghouse*
 - (ii) the position and dimensions of the proposed windows and,*

A written description as contained in the application form and supporting statement along with the relevant plans have been submitted.

The local planning authority may refuse an application where, in the opinion of the authority—

- (a) the proposed development does not comply with, or*
- (b) the developer has provided insufficient information to enable the authority to establish whether the proposed development complies with the conditions, limitations or restrictions applicable to the development in question.*

As indicated above, satisfactory information has been submitted enabling the local authority to determine the application.

The local planning authority must notify each adjoining owner or occupier about the proposed development by serving on them a notice which:

- (a) describes the proposed development, including the maximum height of the proposed additional storeys;*
- (b) provides the address of the proposed development; and*
- (c) specifies the date, which must not be less than 21 days from the date the notice is given, by which representations are to be received by the local planning authority.*

a)

Given the application site location has no adjoining neighbours/dwellings touching the boundary, no neighbour letters have been sent out.

Where the application relates to prior approval as to the impact on air traffic or defence assets, the local planning authority must consult any relevant operators of aerodromes, technical sites or defence assets and where appropriate the Civil Aviation Authority and the Secretary of State for Defence.

This is noted.

Where an aerodrome, technical site or defence asset is identified on a safeguarding map provided to the local planning authority, the local planning authority must not grant prior approval contrary to the advice of the operator of the aerodrome, technical site or defence asset, the Civil Aviation Authority or the Secretary of State for Defence.

This is noted.

Where the application relates to prior approval as to the impact on protected views, the local planning authority must consult Historic England, the Mayor of London and any local planning authorities identified in the Directions Relating to Protected Views

dated 15th March 2012 issued by the Secretary of State.

This is noted.

The local planning authority must notify the consultees referred to in sub-paragraphs (6) and (8) specifying the date by which they must respond, being not less than 21 days from the date the notice is given.

This is noted.

The local planning authority may require the developer to submit such information as the authority may reasonably require in order to determine the application, which may include assessments of impacts or risks, statements setting out how impacts or risks are to be mitigated; or details of proposed building or other operations.

This is noted.

The local planning authority must, when determining an application, a) take into account any representations made to them as a result of any consultation under sub-paragraphs (6) or (8); b) have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, so far as relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application.

Case law has established that the local planning authority can only have regard to matters relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval.

The site and access to the site lies within 400m of the Thames Basin Heath (TBH) but outside Special Protection Area (SPA).

The application site lies within 400 metres of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA). However, the proposal relates solely to the extension of an existing dwellinghouse and would not result in the creation of any additional residential units or net increase in dwellings. As such, the development would not give rise to additional residential occupancy or recreational pressure on the TBHSPA. Therefore, a legal agreement is not required even though its within 400m of TBHSPA.

There are no other particular aspects of the NPFF that would be able to be considered relevant to the subject matter of the prior notification application.

The site is not located in a potential contamination land zone.

Consultee response- Ecology

All UK species of bats and their roosts (even if bats are not present) are protected by UK and international law. Bats and their roosts are afforded protection under The Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In the absence of the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England it is offence to:

- Deliberately take, injure or kill a wild bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a

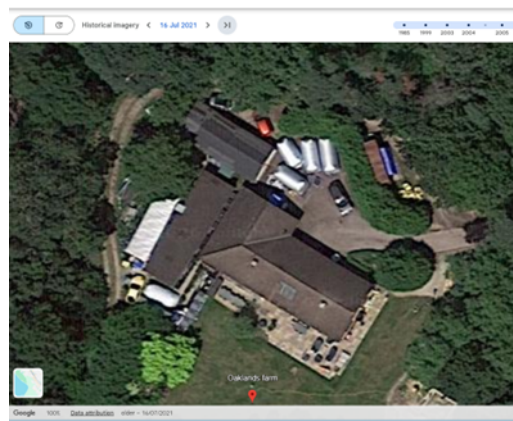
group of bats.

- Damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts), even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

Bat droppings were found in the roof space of the dwelling, at the base of both gable end walls, during the PRA internal inspection. DNA analysis of the droppings confirmed they are from the Soprano pipistrelle. According to the PRA there are no potential roosting features on the garage/timber store. Emergence surveys were carried out on 28 July, 19 August and 21 September 2025. On 28 July, six Soprano pipistrelle bats emerged from the southeast gable end.

The development proposals require removal the bungalow roof which would result in the loss of two bat roosts as well as soffits and wooden cladding potential roosting features for crevice-dwelling bats. The officer is satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Ecologist to conclude that a Bat Mitigation Licence must be obtained from Natural England to legally implement the development proposed which would result in the destruction of two Soprano pipistrelle bat roosts. In line with BS42020:2013 9.3.3 and D.6.2, if the application is approved a planning condition should be imposed requiring a copy of the European Protected Species Licence or a Bat Mitigation Class Licence and the mitigation strategy approved by Natural England.

All development must be implemented in accordance with the mitigation, compensation and enhancement recommended in detail in Section 5 of the Bat Survey Report. The proposals do not show two Ridge Roost Boxes as recommended by KJF Consultancy or suitable alternative approved by Natural England are proposed by the Designer and therefore that there would be a 'like-for like' permanent replacement of bat roosts



BS42020 Code of practice for planning and development paragraph 6.4.8 states:
“Where relevant, any report on survey activities should also include reference to any evidence of material events occurring on site, either before or after ecological surveys have been carried out, for example:

- a) removal or management of vegetation, including trees;*
- b) alteration or loss of other biodiversity features, such as hedgerows, ponds, ditches or buildings and features of value to protected species;...*

Such events should be described and the cause explained where known along with the implications, if any, for the main findings of the ecological report”.

Comparing aerial photos from 2021 and 2015 shows that large tree west of the garage and thick hedge southeast of the eastern access have been removed to facilitate the proposed development. The Ecologist failed to describe the tree and biodiversity habitat removal and features of value to protected species were undertaken prior to submission to facilitate the demolition and construction proposed. The PRA, Planning Statement don't include photos, a habitat plan or details of existing and proposed boundary treatments and features which should have been included in the Site Plan according to local and national validation guidance. The officer disagrees with the application form that there are no trees or hedges impacted by the proposals because of the proposed development of the access road and query whether development has commenced.



According to CP3 planning permission will be granted for proposals that: c) Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage landscape (including river valley) or geological features or water courses. And d) maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevation and streetscenes. Policy CP7 requires that development which may harm habitats or species of principle importance or whether directly or indirectly, will be only permitted where compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided. According to policy TB23 planning permission will only be granted where they comply with policy CP7 and also demonstrate how they provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing and ensure that all developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors.

The bat reports do not take account of the impact to wildlife including foraging and commuting bats of the tree felling and hedge and shrub clearance. In accordance with paragraph 187 of the 2024 NPPF and local plan policy a landscaping plan should be provided either prior to determination or secured by condition, to ensure compensation planting to maintain the favourable conservation status of bats on the site and the vegetation clearance undertaken will not lead to a permanent net loss of biodiversity habitat.

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:	Prior approval approval
Date:	20 May 2026
Earliest date for decision:	19 April 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	21/05/26