

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	253066
Site Address:	China Cottage, 16 Longwater Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4NR
Expiry Date:	15 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	7 April 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a front canopy, single storey side/rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory, first floor rear extension and changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Limited Development Location – Finchampstead
Area of Special Character
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Tree Preservation Order

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
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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31084	Double Garage	Approve 13 th July 1988
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees – No Objection Subject to Conditions
WBC Built Heritage Officer – No Objection
WBC CIL
WBC Ecology – No Objection Subject to Conditions

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The site is a 19th century detached dwelling and to the south of the site is an open vehicular entrance, gravel driveway and double garage. It is located within Finchampstead Village Area of Special Character (AoSC) and is identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). The dwelling is set back approximately 8m from the front boundary hedge and there is one protected tree, a Sycamore (TPO-0229-1983) adjacent to the boundary with Oakridge House. The rear garden is enclosed by trees and tall hedges and is approximately 40m in depth.

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 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.

Proposal: The open front porch will measure 1.8m in width, 1m in depth, 2.4m to the top of the eaves and 3m to the top of the pitch roof.

The single storey side/rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory will facilitate enlargement of the study and reconfiguration of the internal space to create

an open plan lounge/kitchen/dining room. It will measure approximately 3 m to the top of the flat roof. The side elevation will have 2 no. windows, and measure approximately 7.4m in length and 1.2m in depth. The rear wall will have bifold doors; it will measure approximately 6.6m in length and occupy a similar footprint to existing conservatory.

The first-floor rear extension will facilitate an ensuite and have a flat roof. It will measure approximately 1.8m in width, 3.6m in depth, and the maximum height will be 5.2m.

Procedural Matters: Revised Proposed Floor and Elevation plans were received by the Council on 26th June 2026, and after the consultation date had ended. However, the revised proposed plans showed a minor amendment to show the location of external lighting. Therefore, the amendment was not considered to have a significant impact on neighbour amenity to warrant extending the consultation period.

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 street scene is detached properties of varying ages and designs. The landscape is verdant with grass verges and trees. Some properties are partially screened from the road by tall trees and hedging. The west facing rear boundary of the application site is adjacent to Finchampstead C of E School playground.

In this case, the front extension would project 1m forward of the building line and would be partially screened from public view by the boundary hedge. The single storey side extension would be screened from the public realm behind the hedge; be approximately 8m from the side boundary, set back 4m from the principal elevation and project approximately 0.5m from the adjoining side facing bay window.

Therefore, the proposal would not cause harm to the immediate street scene or Finchampstead Village Area of Special Character (AoSC) and would comply with policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

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.

Much of the application site at the rear is surrounded by tall hedges approximately 3m in height. The window to the first-storey rear extension would serve an ensuite and would be screened from the neighbouring school by tall trees. The ground-floor windows do not face habitable rooms. Therefore, the development would not harm neighbour privacy, access to sunlight, or appear overbearing.

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

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The applicant does not propose to increase the number of habitable rooms, and 3 parking spaces are proposed. According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development will require 3 parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m.

The proposed driveway has sufficient space to accommodate at least three cars, which is acceptable.

Landscape and Trees: The Officer raises no objection subject to conditions. There is one protected Sycamore visible from Longwater Lane. A Landscape Plan should be submitted to clarify the treatment of the rear and side gardens, including retained, removed and new planting; hard landscaping; and boundary details for the side garden. Should it be required during construction, the Officer has no objection to the pruning or removal of the evergreen shrubs/trees located in the rear garden to the north of patio / existing conservatory / rear main building wall.

Requested Conditions

1. CL4 - Simple Landscape Plan, CC1 - Boundary Treatments, R12 - Residential Boundary Treatments -WBC Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (June 2012)

Officer comment: The applicant has confirmed that no landscaping changes are proposed to the rear and side gardens, no additional hard landscaping and no changes to the boundary treatment. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to condition a Landscaping Plan if the application is approved.

2. CL7 - Protection of Existing Trees etc. (small sites) amended.

Ecology: The WBC Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to condition and is satisfied that the proposed works do not require a protected species licence or further bat surveys, provided the development is implemented within 24 months of the emergence survey. However, it is noted that the Ecologist did not inspect the store in the south-western part of the site, which should be retained to protect the foraging and commuting wildlife corridor.

The WBC Ecology Officer is concerned that the provision of additional parking and the removal of shrubs, trees and vegetation from the south-western side of the site has harmed biodiversity, and with no compensation proposed, is contrary to BS42020 paragraph 6.4.8. The Arboricultural Development Report also omits the southern and western hedgerow, contrary to BS5837:2012, and the Tree Protection Plan fails to protect trees on the southern boundary, which should be retained.

The Ecology Report has not referred to the latest mitigation guidance. Future surveys and mitigation strategies should follow *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition, as amended March 2024) and the *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines* V1.2 (CIEEM, August 2025). However, the information submitted is sufficient to conclude that bats are not currently roosting in the property or affected features.

The Bat Survey Report shows one 2FE Schwegler bat box on the southern elevation,

but no agreed details for the bat tube or any bird box. In accordance with Local Plan Policy CP7, MDD Policy TB23 and NPPF paragraph 187, a condition should secure a biodiversity enhancement scheme including a Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace or two Schwegler 1A Swift nest boxes, and two 2FE Schwegler wall-mounted bat shelters or equivalent, on the south-east corner of the west-facing side elevation, away from light sources and at least 4m above ground level.

Requested conditions

1. Prior to the occupation of the development, a site plan and full details of biodiversity enhancements, include a Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace or two Schwegler 1A Swift nestboxes (or equivalent) and two 2FE Schwegler wall-mounted bat shelters (or Beaumaris Woodstone bat box or equivalent) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed and maintained in accordance with the approved timetable and maintenance proposal. Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations and biodiversity enhancements given in Section 5 of the submitted Bat Survey Report and the Preliminary Roost Assessment. Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be issued to the council.
2. At no time shall external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.
Officer comment: The applicant has provided a revised elevations plan to show the proposed external lighting. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to condition a Landscaping Plan if the application is approved.
3. CL7 Protection of Existing Trees

Built Heritage: The Council's Built Heritage Officer raises no objection subject to condition. China Cottage is a 19th-century building within the Finchampstead Village AoSC and, due to its age, architectural and historic interest and positive contribution to the AoSC, is identified as a non-designated heritage asset. The existing conservatory is of limited merit, and no concern is raised regarding its loss or replacement with a simple single-storey extension. The additional two-storey element is minor and acceptable, provided the existing tile hanging is retained, as this contributes to the NDHA's architectural interest. Further materials details are required, but the replacement timber porch would not harm the significance of the heritage assets. Provided the tile hanging is to be retained no objection is raised to the application from a heritage perspective.

Requested Conditions

1. Notwithstanding, and in addition to, the information shown on the approved drawings, no relevant works, or those above slab level, shall commence on site until details of materials and finishes have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details should include physical samples as applicable. The works shall then proceed in strict accordance with the approved details. These requirements include provision of information relating to:

1. the material, size, texture, colour, profile, and source of facing brickwork and jointing mortar (which is to be a matching orange tone laid in a Flemish bond);
 2. the material, size, texture, colour, profile, and source of hanging tiles;
 3. the material, size, texture, colour, profile, and source of roofing materials;
 4. materials and finishes to be used in the detailing of valleys, hips, ridges, gables, parapets, eaves and verges;
 5. the proposed rainwater goods
2. Notwithstanding, and in addition to, the information shown on the approved drawings, no relevant works shall commence on site until full working details of all windows and doors and related joinery, hereby approved, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include annotated elevations, sections and plans which are referenced to the approved plans. These details shall illustrate the nature of materials and finishes, framing elements, glazing, glazing units, glazing bars, and methods of opening. Drawings shall be at a minimum scale of 1:10 and with details at 1:5 as appropriate. The works shall then proceed in strict accordance with the approved details.

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 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	12 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26/06/26