DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	262372
Site Address:	Shaw Cottage, Bunces Shaw Road, Farley Hill, Wokingham, RG7 1UU
Expiry Date:	24 December 2026
Site Visit Date:	16 November 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the erection of replacement fencing and installation of driveway gates. (Part retrospective)	

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping TB21 – Landscape Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

NO RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to a condition WBC Public Rights Of Way – No comments
External
None

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No comments received.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	Six letters received in support of the development.

APPRAISAL
Context: The application site is located along Bunces Shaw Road, a rural lane characterised by a predominantly verdant setting and a sporadic pattern of residential

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development, synonymous with its countryside designation. The site comprises the main cottage, which has been extended over time, a detached garage positioned within the south-western corner of the plot, and a further detached outbuilding towards the south-eastern corner which provides parking and ancillary accommodation.

Planning permission is sought retrospectively for the installation of vehicular entrance gates and the erection of new and replacement fencing along the southern (front) and eastern boundaries of the site. The application follows an investigation by the LPA during which it was identified that elements of the boundary treatment had been erected without the necessary planning permission.

There appears to be some misunderstanding within the representations received as to why planning permission is required for the works. For clarity, gates, fences, walls and other means of enclosure exceeding 1 metre in height where adjacent to a highway used by vehicular traffic do not benefit from permitted development rights and therefore require express planning permission. It was principally the boundary treatment along the southern frontage with Bunces Shaw Road that gave rise to the identified planning breach and the subsequent requirement for an application.

The application also includes replacement and new fencing along the eastern boundary of the site, which is not adjacent to a highway. These elements were not a principal concern of the aforementioned investigation and were not the primary reason for seeking the submission of a retrospective application. Nevertheless, the applicant has elected to include these works within the current application.

Principle of Development and Impact on Character: 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 application site lies outside the defined development limits, within the designated countryside. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, whilst allowing development appropriate to a countryside location.

Policy S5 of the National Planning Policy Framework similarly provides support for identified forms of appropriate development outside settlements, subject to consideration of their wider environmental and planning effects.

The proposal relates solely to the erection and replacement of boundary treatments serving an established residential property and would not introduce a new or more intensive use of the site. Having regard to the limited nature of the works and their relationship with the established residential use, the development is considered acceptable in principle within this countryside location.

Bunces Shaw Road has a predominantly rural and verdant character, with frontages generally defined by open or low-level boundary treatments complemented by

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substantial mature landscaping. This vegetation provides a strong degree of enclosure and assists in softening views of the residential properties from the public realm.

The development introduces a more formal appearance to the site frontage, principally through the entrance gates and substantial timber gateposts. Whilst this represents a departure from the previously more open frontage, similar forms of boundary treatment are evident within the immediate street scene. Furthermore, the gates are limited in height and incorporate an open design which maintains a degree of visual permeability into the site. Consequently, they would not appear unduly dominant within the street scene and would not be wholly uncharacteristic of the established pattern of development along Bunces Shaw Road.

The replacement fencing along the southern and eastern boundaries would occupy broadly similar positions and be of a similar form to the pre-existing boundary treatment, albeit with additional fencing introduced along part of the eastern boundary. Having regard to its domestic form, siting and relationship with the established boundaries of the plot, the fencing does not give rise to any character concerns.

Importantly, the mature trees along the frontage are to be retained. These represent an important component of the site's verdant character and would continue to soften views of the boundary treatments from the public highway. The fencing would largely sit behind this established vegetation, ensuring that landscaping rather than built boundary treatment would continue to provide the principal visual contribution to the frontage.

Overall, whilst the development has resulted in a degree of formalisation compared with the previous arrangement, this change is not considered sufficient to harm the verdant character of the site, or the wider countryside setting. The development complies with polices CP1, CP3 and CP11 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity: There are no neighbouring amenity concerns associated with the development.

Highways: The proposed development would utilise the existing vehicular access from a narrow, lightly trafficked rural lane. The submitted plans show the addition of a gate across the access. The gate is set back from the highway, providing sufficient space for a vehicle to pull clear of the carriageway while the gate is opened or closed. As such, the gate would not result in vehicles waiting or obstructing the highway, and no highway safety concerns arise in this regard.

Landscape and Trees: The Council's Tree and Landscape Officer raises no objection to the proposed gates and boundary fencing. Existing vegetation, including the prominent eucalyptus tree, would be retained and would continue to assist in integrating the fencing into its countryside setting.

A landscaping condition has been recommended to secure replacement native shrub or hedge planting along the southern boundary. This recommendation follows the cutting back of existing conifers, which has increased the visibility of the close-boarded fencing and resulted in a degree of urbanisation along the country lane. Whilst these concerns are acknowledged, it is not considered the requested condition to be

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necessary or proportionate to the development under consideration. The condition would seek to remedy the visual consequences of works which do not form part of the current application. In any case, as established above, the retained frontage trees and other established vegetation would continue to soften views of the fencing.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable and the application 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:	Approve
Date:	23 November 2026
Earliest date for decision:	19 November 2026

Recommendation agreed by: **(Authorised Officer)**	HMM
Date:	**25 November 2026**

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PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Countryside*
- *Public Rights of Way (Bridleway)*