

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261217
Site Address:	2 Castlemans Farm Cottages, Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Wokingham, RG10 9UY
Expiry Date:	13 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	30 January 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and part garage conversion to create habitable accommodation.	

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 CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits CP12 – Green Belt
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB01 – Development within the Green Belt TB21 – Landscape Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
11149	Two storey extension to form garage with bedroom at first floor	Approved 27/09/79
19350	Single storey side extension to provide garage	Approved 28/06/83
260155	Pre-application advice for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension along with partial garage conversion to create habitable accommodation plus changes to fenestration.	Replied 18/02/26

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Drainage: No objection subject to conditions
WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection
WBC Ecology: No objection
External
None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Wargrave Parish Council acknowledges that the proposal would cause some harm to Green Belt openness but considers that harm to be contained within the existing built envelope and not sufficient to justify a formal objection. However, a condition is requested removing all existing and future Permitted Development rights for this property to prevent further Green Belt harm.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL
Site Description: Two storey semi-detached dwelling. 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. 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. Countryside: Policy CP11 of the adopted Core Strategy which states that development outside defined settlement boundaries will be strictly controlled. Where acceptable in principle the countryside can accommodate some forms of development without detriment provided that the development type, form and design are sensitive to the location. CP11 states: 4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building

Whilst there will be further spread into the site because of the proposal. The development will appear proportionate to the size of the site. Due to the modest design and size of the proposal and as the property, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable harmful impact or does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with policy CP11 in this respect.

Green Belt: Policy CP12 of the Core Policy Strategy states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Policy TB01: Development within the Green Belt states the construction, alteration or extension of buildings ancillary to a dwelling in the Green Belt over and above the size of the original building(s) shall be limited in scale.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts with national policies for the protection of Green Belt land covered by Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that, *“The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”*. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves 5 purposes, the one most relevant to this proposal is, *“(c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment”*.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that, *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies: *“(c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building”*. This is reflected in Core Strategy policies CP12 and MDD Local Plan policy TB01. The supporting text of Policy TB01 defines a “limited” increase in scale to an existing dwelling as a cumulative increase of generally no more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling.

The NPPF clarifies that the original building is considered as it existed on 1st July 1948 when the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 came into effect, or if constructed after this date, as it was built originally. As such the original building does not include either of the two current extensions.

In accordance with local policy, to be considered a “not disproportionate” addition to the original dwelling, the scale of the proposed extension should not result in a cumulative increase of more than 35% in volume over and above the size of the original dwelling. If the proposed development fails this test, it would not be considered acceptable in principle.

Volume Calculations

Original property	343m ³
Property as it stands	416m ³ total- a 21% increase
Proposal	499m ³ total- a 45% increase

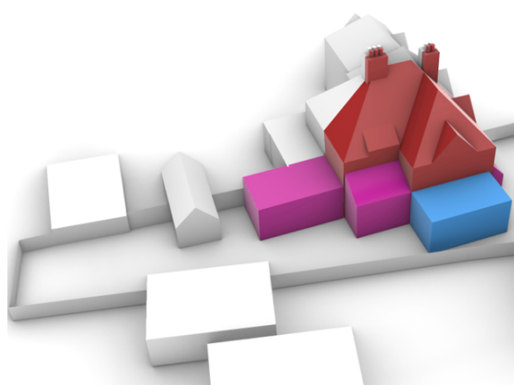
As shown in the table above, the proposal would increase the original building volume by 45% (not including the outbuilding) and therefore exceeding the guidance figure of a 35% increase in volume over the original dwelling as set out in Policy TB01.

In terms of the applicant's fall-back position, under a previous application (11149) condition 3 of permission read *"Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1977, there shall be no external alterations to the elevations of the dwelling as extended by this permission and no further additions or alterations (including windows) shall be constructed without the prior written permission of the District Planning Authority"*. However, given the permission was never implemented and has since lapsed, such condition never took effect. Thus, permitted development rights remain intact.

Proposal (499m³ total, a 45% increase)



Permitted Development (489m³ total, a 42% increase)



The applicant has demonstrated that a realistic fall-back position exists under permitted development (PD), which could be implemented at any time and would result in a comparable level of built form to that now proposed.

The evidence indicates that the PD scheme would deliver an approximate 42% increase in volume compared to the 45% proposed. Whilst the PD scheme could be constructed without the need for planning permission, it is materially similar in scale, layout and function to the current proposal. However, the submitted scheme represents a more coherent and better designed form of development. The illustrative comparison shows that the PD fallback (blue & purple) would likely comprise a series of fragmented additions distributed across the dwelling, resulting in a disjointed and visually cluttered form. In contrast, the proposal (green) consolidates the additional built form into a single, unified extension that reads clearly as subservient to the host dwelling, aligning with the established building line, and avoids projecting further into the plot. This results in a more harmonious relationship with both the original dwelling and neighbouring properties.

Furthermore, the consolidation of development reduces site coverage and limits the

spread of built form, whereas the dispersed PD fallback would lead to a greater footprint and a stronger perception of overdevelopment with further spread of development onto the site. It is also noted that the green area in the above plans includes an existing garage to be converted and incorporates the footprint of the existing flat roof kitchen which would not be additional volume but included within the existing volume of the property thus reducing the overall proposed % increase.

The appeal decision at Fredericks (APP/X0360/D/16/3145284) along the same road for a two-storey rear extension, confirms that the 35% guideline within Policy TB01 is not a fixed or absolute limit, but a guide to inform the assessment of proportionality. In the Fredericks case, a larger increase (54%) was nevertheless found not to constitute disproportionate development. The Inspector also confirmed that PD fallback rights are a material consideration to which weight can be afforded in assessing whether a proposal is disproportionate, even where no detailed fallback scheme has been pursued. The Inspector afforded this “moderate weight” in concluding that the proposal would not be significantly greater in scale than what could be carried out under PD and therefore would not be disproportionate. The existence of a realistic PD fallback and the Fredericks appeal decision do not, in themselves, demonstrate that the current proposal is not disproportionate. Each proposal must be assessed on its own merits having regard to its scale, design, impact on openness and the specific circumstances of the site. However, both are material considerations which inform that assessment and attract weight in the planning balance.

Whilst the proposal exceeds the 35% guideline by around 10% (potentially less, taking into account the existing garage and kitchen) and the numerical guideline in the supporting text to TB01, the degree of conflict is limited in this instance and only attracts moderate weight having regard to the fallback position. Overall, the proposal is compliant with TB01 insofar as the extension to the dwelling is considered to be limited in scale. The existence of a realistic permitted development fall-back carrying a broadly comparable volume, together with the superior design quality of the submitted scheme, significantly reduces the harm arising from that conflict. In this instance, the proposal is considered preferable in planning and design terms to the form of development that could otherwise be carried out as permitted development.

The assessment must instead focus on whether the proposal results in a disproportionate addition and harms openness. Given the limited numerical difference between the proposal and the fallback position together with the addition sensitively designed to remain subservient to the host dwelling in both scale and appearance, ensuring it does not dominate the original form. Given its sympathetic design, the infill extension would not appear intrusive or visually prominent in countryside views, and would therefore preserve the openness, rural character, and visual amenity of the surrounding Green Belt.

Taking the above into account, the changes would not result in disproportionate additions to the original building. Consequently, the proposal would not harm the openness of the Green Belt or result in encroachment into the countryside and is therefore not considered inappropriate development in Green Belt terms.

Character of the Area: The garage conversion would involve part of the garage being used as a utility room. A new side access door would be added; such is a minor

addition and not result in harm. The garage door would remain so no external change to the front elevation, thus no harm.

The single storey rear extension would be approx. 7.05m in depth, which would not comply with the recommended 4m depth for extensions within the Borough Design Guide. However, it would be located to the rear it wouldn't be visible from public location, and the site has sufficient garden space to accommodate for such sized extension. Hence, the proposal would not have any adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

The addition has been sensitively designed to remain subservient to the host dwelling in both scale and appearance, ensuring it does not dominate the original form. Owing to its discreet rear siting and sympathetic design, the extension would not appear intrusive or visually prominent in countryside views, and would therefore preserve the openness, rural character, and visual amenity of the surrounding Green Belt.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The rear & side openings would be screened by the existing boundary treatments, thus no overlooking concerns.

The high-level glazing on the north side elevation would not result in any harmful overlooking due to the natural screening along the side boundary.

Loss of Light: Given the extension is only single storey and would not project forward of no.1 rear building line, the proposal would not be considered to be overbearing or result in harmful loss of light.

Overbearing: Where new housing has flank elevations, these should be set away from the site boundaries to allow residents to have access for maintenance purposes and to access their garden areas. A distance of 1m from the site boundary is generally accepted as providing adequate access. The extension follows the existing party wall along the boundary with no.1 and more than 1m separation distance from the side boundary, this is considered acceptable.

The overall scale and massing of the extension is proportionate to the host property and consistent with typical residential extensions in the surrounding area. It does not introduce an excessive height, depth, or bulk that would dominate neighbouring outlooks.

Amenity Space: The garden depth would be 18.3m, thus complying with the minimum 11m depth advocated in the BDG, thus no concern.

Highways & parking provision: The garage will be partially converted. Whilst the space would not be sufficient enough to accommodate for a vehicle, the front drive could serve for 3 parking spaces. Thus, the site parking arrangement would be considered acceptable with no further bedrooms added.

Flooding and Drainage: The existing dwelling is within flood zone 1 and therefore would be no significant flooding issues. The comments from drainage have been

taken into consideration, however due to the scale of the scheme the provision of the existing drainage system is not required and considered to be excessive.

Landscape and Trees: The Site is located in Countryside and Green Belt. It is also located along Bath Road, which is a Green Route. There are no TPO trees within the Site. Despite these designations, views of the proposed development are limited to views from the golf course located to the east of the Site and these will be partially obstructed by an existing brick out building. Currently the Site is delineated along its northern boundary with the neighbouring property, Rosewell House, by a low flint stone wall with hedging. There are several trees at the end of the rear garden but these are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed works. Nevertheless, root protection areas of those trees shall not be compromised during the construction period and to this extent, all vehicles and storage of materials will need to be restricted to the existing front drive (CC03). The Council's Tree and Landscape Officer has no objection to the proposed rear extension and part garage conversion.

Ecology: The bat survey has been undertaken (Ref: R3159_PRA_a), which concludes that the proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost, and therefore a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation license would not be required. Thus, no ecological concern.

Other Matters:

The Parish Council has requested that permitted development rights be removed. However, the Council must be satisfied that any planning condition meets the tests set out within the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance, including that it is necessary and reasonable.

In this regard, Planning Practice Guidance advises that conditions removing permitted development rights will not normally be justified unless there is clear evidence that such restrictions are necessary to make the development acceptable.

In this case, no specific harm has been identified that would warrant the withdrawal of permitted development rights. Furthermore, the principal permitted development rights for extensions to a dwelling are contained within Class A of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The approved extension would largely occupy the area of the dwelling where future Class A enlargement rights would otherwise be exercised, thereby significantly limiting the scope for further extensions under those provisions. Any future development exceeding permitted development limitations would continue to require planning permission and would be assessed on its own merits.

In the absence of clear justification demonstrating why additional controls are necessary, it would be unreasonable and unnecessary to impose a condition removing permitted development rights.

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

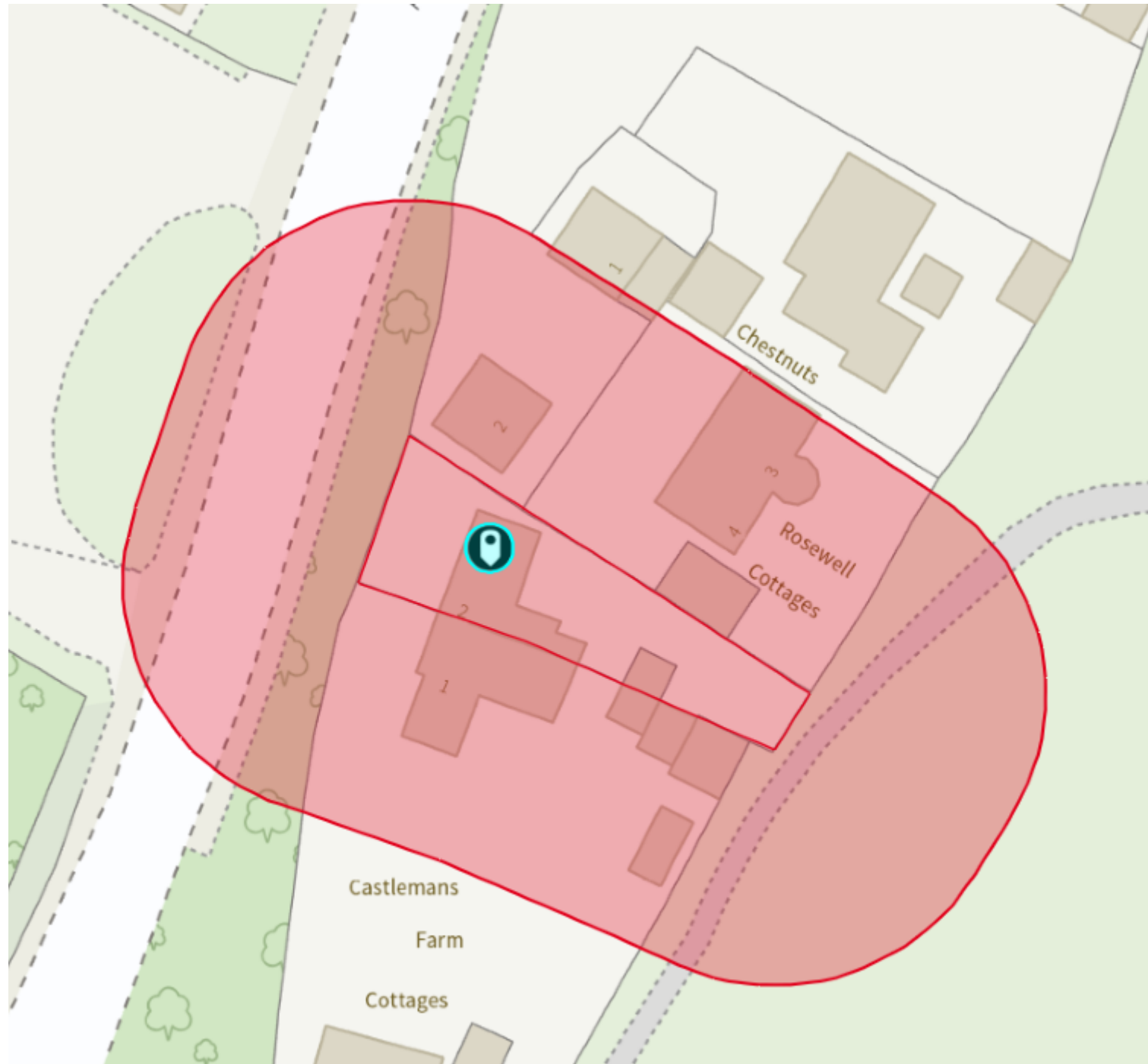
practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

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:	6 July 2026
Earliest date for decision:	16 June 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	6 July 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS



No legend

Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 1

#	NAME
1	Outside Development Locations

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Countryside	Countryside

Green Belt | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Green Belt	The Metropolitan Green Belt (inside borough)

Green Infrastructure Routes Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE
1	Green Route

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

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

Historic Flooding Points Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Historic Flood Point	Canhurst Lane

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: 4

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	ZV353	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
2	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	ZV354	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
3	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	ZW353	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team
4	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	ZW354	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	Amber	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	Amber	Consult NatureSpace for any minor development that intersects a red or amber zone in this layer

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	SSSI Impact Risk Zone Advice Hyperlink
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000530050&notes=&location=480601,176993

	%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)
--	-----------------------------

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	Thames Ward	0 m

Parishes | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Wargrave CP	0 m