

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252667
Site Address:	Willow Tree House, St Annes Drive, Wokingham, RG40 1PB
Expiry Date:	27 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	12 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of single-storey front and rear extensions, raised roof and loft conversion.	

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 CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
061932	Proposed two storey side and single rear extension.	Approved 27/10/06
070421	Proposed single storey rear extension to dwelling.	Approved 06/06/07

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection

WBC CIL: CIL liable

WBC Ecology: No objection subject to conditions

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The property is a five bedroom, one en-suite and one family bathroom detached chalet bungalow with integral single garage.

‘Willow Tree House’ was formerly known as ‘Edgewood’.

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 settlement limits in the countryside and is therefore to be considered under 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:

2) It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings

4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building

The proposal represents a significant increase in mass and volume from the original dwelling plus the existing extensions. The volume calculations provided outlines the proposed development represents approx. 60.2% increase over the original dwelling plus the existing extensions and approx. 141.5% increase over the original dwelling development. It's important to note, whilst there will be further spread into the site because of the proposal, the main volume increase corresponds to raising the roof height.

As this proposal would largely use the footprint of the existing dwelling except for two small ground floor footprint extensions and primarily involves the roof being raised, and would remain set within the plot, the proposal would not significantly encroach into the open countryside. Furthermore, the height of the dwelling increase

corresponds with the heights of the recently approved and dwellings under construction on the adjacent development at 'Greenacres' (203544).

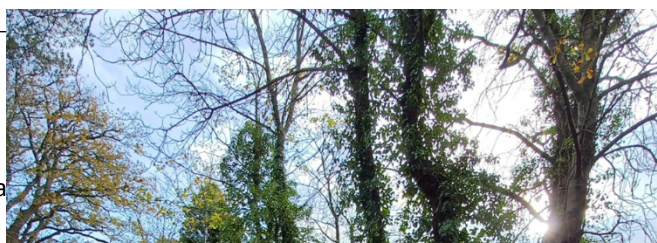


The proposal will not have an adverse impact or does not inappropriately encroach the surrounding countryside. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with policy CP11 in this respect. Based on the above, the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area:

The Borough Design Guide states "*porches should generally project less than 2m forward of the building line*". The pitched roof front porch would project approx. 0.90m forward of the building line, thus complying with the BDG. The proposed front porch would be a modest addition which would not harm the street scene.

The roof would be raised going from a chalet bungalow to a three-storey dwelling. Whilst the proposal will result in an appreciable increase in height from the existing chalet bungalow (over 3m height increase) and undoubtedly unbalance the pair of chalet bungalow. Given there are only 2 dwellings along St Annes Drive, there is no real context and as such the proposal would not harm the street scene or character of the area. It's also important to note that other dwellings nearby height has been increased such as Buckhurst Lodge (172543), although a smaller roof height increase in comparison to the proposal as well as similar height dwellings have been approved in close proximity to the site including the large 54 residential unit development on adjacent land at 'Greenacres' (203544) which comprises a mix of property sizes and designs. Therefore, the proposal does not cause an unacceptable harmful impact to the character or quality of the local area. Furthermore, given the dwelling set back from St Annes Drive and mature and established vegetation/trees which would act as natural screening to the front of the property and would not be particularly visible from the public realm, limiting its impact upon the street scene.



While the proposal would result in the loss of the original symmetry between the pair of matching chalet bungalows, which is acknowledged to be a poor design outcome, this harm must be considered in its context. The two dwellings would continue to appear as an isolated pair within the wider area, and the visual impact of the resultant asymmetry would be limited to the immediate setting. In addition, the recently approved adjoining development has already altered the character and visual coherence of the site and its surroundings, reducing the importance of retaining the former symmetrical relationship. As such, although the proposal represents an undesirable erosion of the original design symmetry, the overall harm to visual amenity and local character would be limited and is considered acceptable.

The BDG states that *“dormer windows should generally be positioned within the main roof, by being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof”* and *“dormers should relate to the design of the existing building in terms of roof form, materials, position and window proportions”*. All the dormers do not project above the existing ridge line and the dormer is situated within the main roof whilst also being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof, therefore complying with the BDG. The dormers would be considered subservient additions given the overall size of property and land and therefore would be considered acceptable. The pitched roof dormer would relate well to the main dwelling’s roof form. It’s important to note the existing dwelling already has catslide dormers to the rear and front so, the dormer element of the dwelling is being retained albeit a different style and size.

The flat single storey roof rear extension does not exceed the recommended 4m depth for extensions within the Borough Design Guide as the depth is approx. 2.30m. With it being located at the rear it wouldn’t be visible from public locations. Hence, the proposal would not have any adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The windows to the front would overlook onto St Annes Drive and would be screened by mature and established vegetation along the front boundary of the

property, thus no overlooking concerns.

The openings on the east elevation would face mature and established with no neighbouring property on such flank, thus no overlooking concerns.

The openings on the west elevation would include a ground floor side window for the front porch, such outlook would be onto the driveway of Greenacres, thus no concern.

The en-suite and bathroom windows at first floor level in the front and rear elevation will be obscured glazed.

Given the nature of the application site and separation distances, the rooflights on the front and rear elevation would not result in harmful overlooking.

The proposed floor plans and elevations show the balcony would have full height solid wall on the end closest to Greenacres to limit any sense of overlooking onto neighbouring properties. The balcony would match that of the first-floor rear building line. Therefore, given its location and separation distance from Greenacres, such element would not result in harmful overlooking.

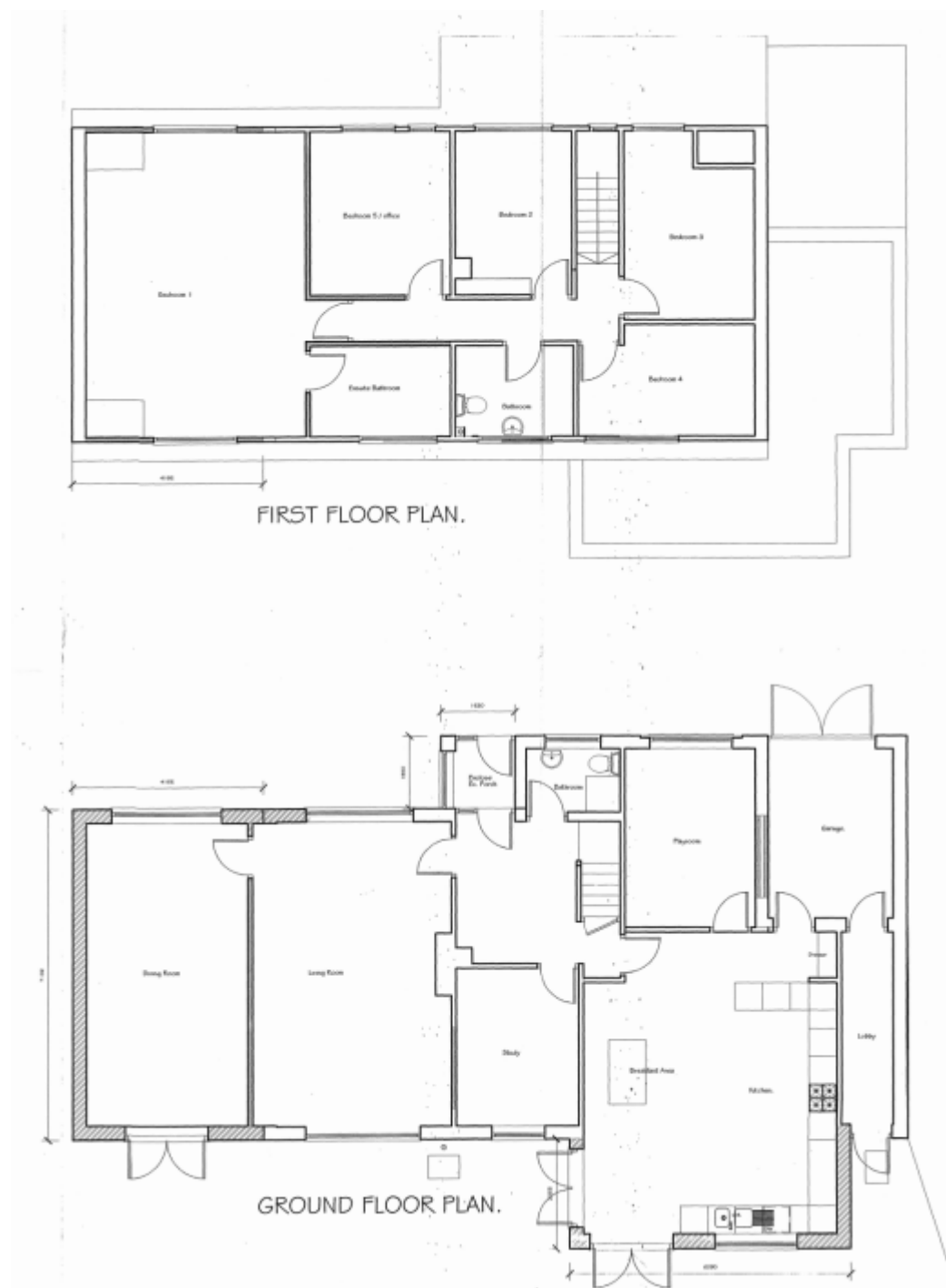
Loss of Light: Given the main dwelling would not project forward of the building line, it would not result in harmful loss of light to the windows at the front of Greenacres.

Whilst the rear building line of Willow Tree House would project ahead of Greenacres rear building line, given the more than approx. 2.50m from the side boundary, the rear outlooks of Greenacres would still have access to adequate natural light, thus no loss of light concern.

Greenacres has 2 rooflights on it's flank elevation adjoining Willow Tree House and given the roof height increase, loss of light may occur.



However, the dinning room (ground floor) and bedroom 1 (first floor) would still have access to natural light given the secondary windows to the front and the rear would not be impacted, thus no loss of light concern. See Greenacres plan below (ref: 061632).



Overbearing: The plot size is considered appropriate in the context of development in

the area and the size of the dwelling would be proportionate to its plot with good breathing space to side boundaries and neighbouring properties whilst also respecting the established buildings lines. The west flank of the dwelling would be over 2.50m from the side boundary of Greenacres, thus complying with the BDG and allowing for adequate breathing space between the dwellings.

Whilst taller in height, it's considered the proposal would not appear physically overbearing or oppressive to neighbours due to the spacious plots such that it would be significantly detrimental to their amenities.

Amenity Space: The garden space would be over 11m, thus complying with the BDG.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal would include an additional bedroom from 5no. to 6no.. WBC adopted parking standards after development requires for a 4 or more-bedroom dwelling to have 3 or more spaces. The proposed block plan shows 4 parking spaces, thus complying with highways standards.

Landscape and Trees: The site is located in the countryside in Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowlands, a moderate quality landscape with moderate sensitivity and a modest capacity for change. The site is accessed from London Road, a Green Route as per the designations map. The site setting is characterised by trees and is close to the Buckhurst Meadows SANG.

The site is generous with trees lining part of the boundaries as shown in the Tree Constraints Plan drawing – October 2025 which shows the existing house footprint in relation to the trees. The trees along the eastern boundary may actually be included within TPO 1359/2010. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment drawing shows the proposed footprint against the trees and their root protection areas. Tree T6 Oak canopy extends towards the rear of the dwelling such that it is within 2m.

The applicant confirmed that the scaffolding required for the building work will extend 1.5m from the wall of the building, and there would be a gap of 500mm between the scaffold and T6 Oak canopy.

A revised and updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment – Rev. A 8/12/25 was submitted that clearly showed the position of the scaffolding on the plan in relation to the closest trees, specifically a distance of 500mm from the canopy of tree T6.

The applicant submitted an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan on 17/12/25 which is in accordance with the CL7 condition, thus the condition is no longer required.

Ecology: The external inspection recorded raised or moved corners of some of the hanging tiles on both dormers, leaving gaps that could be used by roosting bats. On the rear elevation a section of missing mortar between the ridge and roof tiles which crevice dwelling bat species could exploit for roosting. The council's ecologist agrees with the characterisation that the property had low roosting potential, that the absence of bats could not be determined without further survey effort. The desktop study appears to take no account of the bats historically recorded at Greenacres

immediately to the west and local planning and bat survey records have not been requested or assessed by the Ecologists.

From one emergence survey completed 26 August 2025 the Ecologist concluded that Pipistrelle and Noctules are early emerging bat species after sunset, and as the first call from Pipistrelles were heard and seen 12 and 13 minutes after sunset, the bats are most probably roosting in the vicinity. The bat survey methodology is generally in line with best practice standards. The council's ecologist supports the Ecologist's conclusion that bats are not currently roosting at Willow Tree House. The report is valid only for 12 months from the site inspection. The council's ecologist agrees that whilst no bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost, this does not mean that they will not be present in the future as bats are known to be transient and use a wide variety of crevice like features opportunistically.

The submitted Ecological Survey Report (Bats) Ref: SPH/BAS-25/26.08 concludes (see extract below). Thus, the proposal would not result in harmful ecological impacts.

7.7 The cumulative evidence leads me to conclude that bats are not roosting at Willow Tree House, and the property has a negligible potential to support roosting bats therefore an EPSL is not required.

The officer did request a external lighting condition, however such would request would be considered excessive and omitted from the decision notice.

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 proposed development will be liable for CIL based on the measurements of the floorplans.

Please note that any changes to the floorplans listed will require a review of the CIL calculations. CIL is calculated and measured based on the approved floorplans listed within the decision notice.

CIL form 2 - Assumption of liability and any exemption forms will be required prior to the development commencing. All CIL forms can now be completed and submitted through the following link:

<https://pfi.exacom.co.uk/wokingham/cilforms.php>

Should you have any queries regarding CIL, please contact.
Developer.contributions@wokingham.gov.uk

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:	17 December 2025
Earliest date for decision:	26 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>JMM</i>
Date:	18 December 2025

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 2

#	NAME
1	Within South Wokingham Strategic Development Location
2	Outside Development Locations

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Countryside	Countryside

Strategic Development Locations | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Strategic Development Location	South Wokingham

Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone	5km Linear Mitigation Zone

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: Gatwick Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

Description

1 Please consult London Gatwick on the following: All buildings, structures & works exceeding 150 m AGL.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

Height Band Wind TurbineAviation

1 All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet) YES YES

Submitted Sites Live | Total count: 1

SITE_REF LUPP ADDRESS

1 5WK043 Housing (C3 Planning Use Class). Land at St Anne's Drive

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 5

FEATURE_TYPE FEATURE_NAME CONSULT

1 Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.]P867 Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

2 Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.]Q867 Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

3 Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.]Q868 Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

4 Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.]R868 Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

5 Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.]S870 Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
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1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	For Householder applications check HH Layer. Consult NatureSpace for all other types of development
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Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones - Minor | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
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1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Red	Consult NatureSpace for any minor development that intersects a red or amber zone in this layer
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SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
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1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000322300&res=11401&location=483814,169490%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)
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Water Utility Consultation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT_WHEN
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1	Water Utility Consultation Zone	South East Water Supply Area	New dwellings
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Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
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1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland
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Tree Preservation Orders Served or Confirmed | Total count: 1

#	TPO_REFERENCE	TPO_TYPE	RECORD_STATUS
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1	TPO-1359-2010	Woodland	Confirmed
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Wards | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
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1	Wescott Ward	0 m
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Parishes | Total count: 1

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