

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260582
Site Address:	Manor Cottage, Barkham Street, Barkham, Wokingham, RG40 4PJ
Expiry Date:	1 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	29th April 2026
Proposal: Householder application for proposed erection of a single storey front porch extension, two storey side and part two storey/single storey rear extension and addition of new site entrance with new front gates alongside walls and railings.	

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 CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area 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 CC07 – Parking TB04 – Development in vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Burghfield TB05 – Housing Mix TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements SS5 – Development in the countryside H12 – Residential development of existing private gardens NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
31770	Two storey rear extension to provide sitting room enlarged kitchen and two bedrooms.	Approved 11 th November 1998

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways- No objection subject to condition(s)
WBC Digital Solutions Scanning- No comments received
WBC CIL- No comments received
WBC Ecology- No objection subject to condition(s)

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council

Barkham Parish Council objects for the following;

- The Parish Council welcomes the amendments made to the scheme, particularly the replacement of timber cladding with red/featured brick, which is considered more reflective of the character of the existing dwelling and surrounding area. However, it maintains an objection to the proposal on several grounds.
- Concerns are raised regarding the proposed porch alterations, with insufficient detail provided to demonstrate that the design would preserve the character of the dwelling and wider street scene. The Parish Council also notes inconsistencies within the submitted drawings, which reference both featured brick and stained timber cladding, and seeks clarification on the proposed materials and whether existing decorative brick detailing will be replicated. It recommends that samples and full details of external materials be secured through condition.
- Objections are also raised to the proposed walls, railings and boundary treatment, which are considered overly dominant and potentially out of keeping with the character of the area. The Parish Council considers that the reliance on hedge planting for screening may not provide a long-term solution and suggests additional soft landscaping to soften the appearance of the frontage.
- Highway safety concerns are raised in relation to the proposed entrance gates, which do not appear to be set back from the highway, potentially resulting in vehicles obstructing the carriageway when entering or leaving the site. The Parish Council considers that the gates should be recessed sufficiently and that confirmation from the Highway Authority is required.

	- Finally, whilst acknowledging that the scale of development has been reduced, the Parish Council queries the accuracy of the proposal description and considers that further clarification is required. Overall, it concludes that the application lacks sufficient detail regarding the porch design, materials, boundary treatments and highway arrangements, and therefore objects to the proposal until these matters are satisfactorily addressed.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 representation as follows; - The new plans for the outside of this house looks much more in keeping, fair play to the owners for changing out the cladding for bricks instead. You couldn't see the house much before because it was behind a tall hedge which was cut down recently so now the sides are showing and bear brick they match in ok

APPRAISAL

Site Description: This application site relates to a two-storey detached dwelling with associated parking and landscaping, located within the countryside setting of Barkham, Wokingham. The site is characterised by surrounding residential development of varied design and character, set within relatively large plots with generous levels of amenity space.

Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed erection of a single storey

front porch extension, two storey side and single storey rear extension with a new site entrance with new front gates alongside walls and railings. The application has since been amended, and revised plans have been submitted to omit the two-storey rear extension which consisted of an additional bathroom.

The proposed single storey front porch element will approximately be 3 meters in depth, 2.7 meters in width and 3 meters in height.

The two-storey side element will approximately be 11 meters in depth, 3 meters in width and 7 meters to the height of the ridgeline. This part of the development at ground floor level will accommodate part of the open plan kitchen/living space whilst at first floor level it will accommodate an en-suite to the existing bedroom along with a balcony and one additional bedroom with an en-suite.

The proposed single storey rear element will approximately be 4 meters in depth, 4 meters in width and 3 meters in height. This part of the development will accommodate the enlarged kitchen/dining space.

Planning History: The site has an established planning history. Planning permission was granted under application 31770 on 11 November 1998 for the erection of a two-storey rear extension to provide a sitting room, enlarged kitchen and two bedrooms.

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.

As the dwelling is situated within the Countryside Policy CP11 is relevant. Policy CP11 permits residential extensions in the countryside where they would not result in an inappropriate increase in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. For the reasons set out in this report, the proposal is considered to be proportionate to the host dwelling and would not result in an inappropriate increase in its scale, form or footprint.

Character of the Area: Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that developments are of appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to other adjoining land users. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

Manor Cottage is situated in the countryside location of Barkham. The site is surrounded by dwellings of similar scale and design. As aforementioned, there have been changes to the scheme to address concerns that were raised about the design and bulk of the proposed development. As part of these changes, the two-storey rear element has since been omitted from the proposal, and the applicant has retained the string course brickwork to ensure a level of visual continuity specifically as the dwelling is situated within a countryside location.

The Borough Design Guide (BDG) states that alterations and extensions to buildings should be well designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to the local character, and relate well to neighbouring properties.

The single storey front porch element is set down from the eaves of the host dwelling and will accommodate a new entryway to the principal elevation. Whilst the front porch extends forwards onto the existing hardstanding by approximately 3 meters which is not typically advised, the porch is approximately 7 meters from the proposed new front fenceline and 10 meters from the highway, as such the proposed single storey front porch extension does not give rise to any concerns regarding harm to the character of the area.

The proposed two-storey side extension would introduce additional built form; however, it remains aligned with the existing dwelling and does not project further to the side, thereby maintaining the established building line. Whilst the Borough Design Guide (BDG) advises that extensions should generally be set down from the existing ridgeline, the extension is positioned to the side and rear of the dwelling and would therefore be largely screened from the public realm. Furthermore, the incorporation of a pitched roof that matches the existing dwelling helps to soften its appearance and ensures that the extension relates well to the host property.

The single storey rear element would introduce a flat roof design to allow for a balcony to be positioned at first floor level. The extension itself is positioned below the eaves of the host dwelling and is considered to be an appropriate and well-designed addition that would relate to the scale and character of the host dwelling. The extension would

not appear unduly prominent within the site and would be largely contained from public view.

As such, the development is considered a sympathetic and subservient addition to the host dwelling and is not considered to result in undue visual harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling or the surrounding area.

Furthermore, the proposed development has retained elements of the original brickwork, such as the string course brickwork and has made efforts to utilise materials that match/relate to the host dwelling, softening the impact of the overall development. Therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable and will have an acceptable impact on the character of the street scene. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and the advice and guidance contained in the Borough Design Guide.

Neighbouring Amenity: Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development to secure a “high standard of amenity for existing and future users”. This is reinforced by Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which requires development to be of an appropriate scale, mass, layout and height, and to achieve a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities or quality of life of adjoining occupiers.

As aforementioned, the proposed development is situated on plot which benefits from vast amenity space. The Borough Design Guide (BDG) emphasises that developments should retain some form of amenity space and provide adequate levels of privacy. Whilst the proposed development consists of fenestration changes and the introduction of a balcony to the rear, the proposed extensions are approximately 12 meters away from each neighbouring dwelling, ensuring that adequate levels of privacy are maintained, and the development does not overlook any primary amenity areas such as gardens or patios. Although the development results in some loss of private garden area, sufficient amenity space would remain to meet the needs of future occupiers.

Overall, having regard to its modest height, scale and relationship with neighbouring properties, the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity by reason of overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impact.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and the revised plan (Drawing No. NL.008C) indicates the northern access will serve as ingress only and the southern access will serve as egress only. This is considered as an improvement to existing visibility splays to the north, which is acceptable. Furthermore, the proposed development is set back from the highway and sufficient turning and parking space is available. Additionally, the applicant has demonstrated 2m x 2m pedestrian visibilities for frontage accesses where driveways meet the rear of footways to provide inter-visibility between drivers and pedestrians, which is welcomed, therefore no objections have been raised subject to condition(s).

Ecology: Whilst emergence and re-entry surveys undertaken in May and June 2025 are accepted as having been completed in accordance with recognised best practice and recorded no bats emerging from, or re-entering, the building, the Ecologist notes that the 2024 Preliminary Roost Assessment recorded bat droppings of varying ages

within the loft space together with a number of potential access points and roosting features. As no updated internal loft inspection appears to have been undertaken in 2025, the Ecologist considers there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the roost is historic or no longer in use.

The Ecologist also considers that biodiversity enhancements currently proposed are insufficiently detailed. In particular, the submitted plans do not identify agreed bat mitigation measures or ecological enhancements recommended within the ecological reports. Concerns are also raised regarding apparent changes to site conditions since the earlier ecological surveys, including the removal of vegetation, hedgerows and habitat features which may have provided bat foraging and commuting opportunities. Whilst the Council's Ecology Officer raises no objection to the proposal, conditions will be applied to mitigate the concerns raised above.

Other Matters: It is noted that Barkham Parish Council have objected to the proposal on a number of grounds. Whilst concerns have been raised regarding the consistency of the proposed external materials, the scheme has sought to retain the existing string course brickwork and utilise materials that match, or closely relate to, those of the host dwelling. This helps to maintain a cohesive appearance and ensure an appropriate level of visual continuity across the development. As a result, it is considered that the proposed extension would integrate satisfactorily with the existing dwelling and would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the property or the wider street scene.

Whilst they have also raised concern about the new front boundary wall; it is acknowledged that such features are not common along Barkham Street. However, the applicant has sought to mitigate this visual impact through the inclusion of hedgerow planting to the front of the gates. This soft landscaping would help to integrate the development into its surroundings, reducing the prominence of the boundary treatment and contributing positively to the street scene. As such, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area.

They have also raised concern regarding highway safety concerns. Whilst the concerns are acknowledged, the applicant has confirmed that the northern access will serve as ingress only and the southern access will serve as egress only, therefore the proposed access points can only be used for their designated purposes which have been deemed as safe and acceptable by the Council's Highways team.

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.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	23 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	1 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	30.07.2026