

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252319
Site Address:	1 Alexander Walk, Shinfield, Wokingham, RG2 9SQ
Expiry Date:	11 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	4 September 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of amenity land to residential garden plus the associated erection of boundary fencing.	

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
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 TB21 – Landscape Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
Application for estate: 181499	Full planning application for the erection of 249 dwellings, new public open space, landscaping, surface water attenuation, access and associated works at land to the south of Cutbush Lane, Shinfield.	Refused committee 25/06/19 Allowed at appeal 10/03/20
200659	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 181499(Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/W/19/3238203)dated 10/03/2020. Conditions 3 Phasing strategy. 4 Materials & Boundary Treatments. 6 Parking Management Strategy. 8 Bicycle storage & Parking facilities. 9 Walking& Cycling Strategy. 13 Construction of Roads & Footways Strategy. 14 Construction	Approved 27/01/23

	Management plan. 16 Hard & soft landscaping proposals.20 Landscape Management Plan.	
251918	Householder application for the proposed erection of single-storey side extension.	Approved 09/10/25

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection

WBC Highways: No comment

WBC Landscape and Trees: Object

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Shinfield Parish Council: The proposed relocation of the fence line by 1m set back from the public walkway raises significant concerns. This adjustment would reduce the width of the public realm, potentially impeding pedestrian access particularly for individuals with mobility challenges, pushchairs, or wheelchairs. The walkway serves as a shared community asset, and its narrowing could compromise both usability and safety. The current setback contributes to a sense of openness and enhances the streetscape. Extending the fence to the edge of the public walkway would create a more enclosed and potentially oppressive environment, negatively affecting the character of the area and diminishing visual amenity for passers-by. We are also concerned about the precedent this change could set. Permitting such encroachment may encourage other properties to similarly infringe upon public or semi-public space, leading to a gradual erosion of communal areas and the open feel of the neighbourhood. The justification provided "improved proportions and aesthetic appearance" is subjective and insufficient to outweigh the potential negative impacts on the community. No evidence has been presented to suggest that the current fence line is problematic or that the proposed change is necessary. For these reasons, SPC respectfully requests that planning application 252319 be refused.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Two storey 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.

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.

However, the change of use from landscaped amenity land in a relatively modern estate forms an objection in principle. Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that *‘Development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable’*.

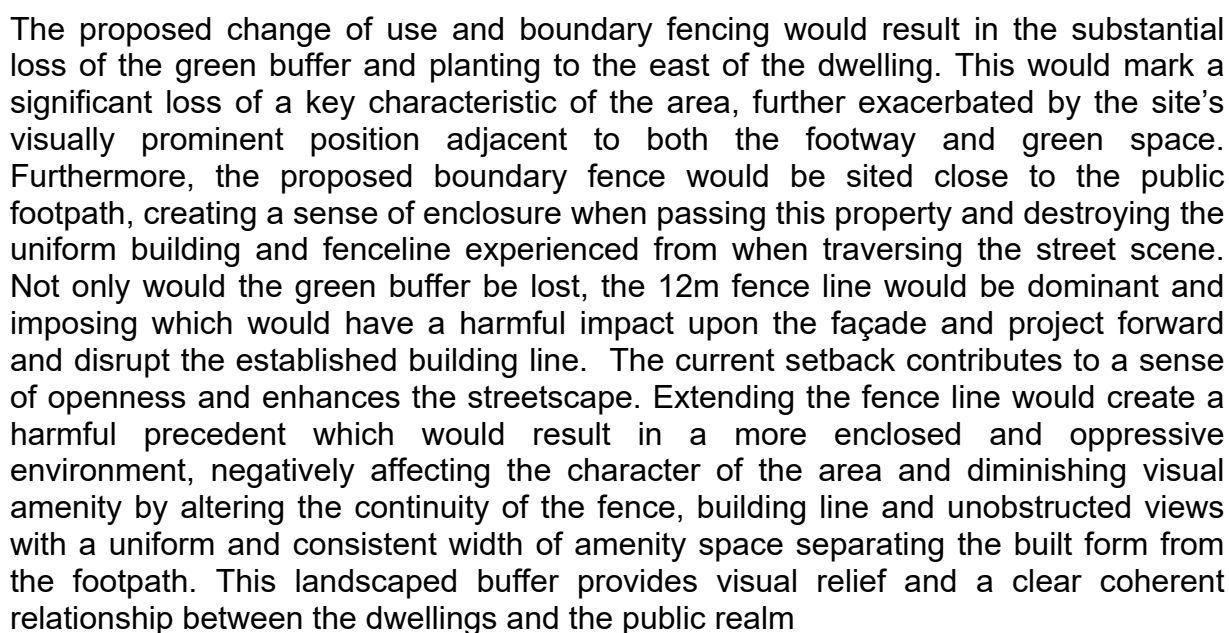
Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states ‘Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape’. Landscaped amenity spaces are valuable features in newer estates wherein the separation distances/ road widths are within the tolerances of WBC’s adopted policy. Therefore, the principle of development alone is unacceptable.

Character of the Area: The existing fence comprises of 1.8m high timber closeboarded fence set back from the public footway by 2.11m. The proposal is to remove the existing fence line and replace using identical material and the same height of 1.8m and move the fence line to 1m set back from the public footway.

Initially the fence line was proposed adjacent to the public walkway and revised plans have been submitted with a 1m set back from the public walkway.

The retention of amenity land is important in planning term as it provides a spacious character to the area and relief from built form which is characteristic of the surrounding area. The incremental loss of these spaces directly detracts from the visual amenity of the area and shall be resisted in planning terms.

The Approved Plan reference 6454 / PP / ASP6.7 REV J (Planting Plan) in relation to the discharge of condition application 200659 require this area to be planted amenity space with a hedgerow as part of the application for the estate- 181499.





The impact of the proposed change of use of existing amenity land to residential to include the erection of a new fence would therefore be two-tiered, with the inappropriate loss of landscaped amenity space highlighted within CC03 and TB21 of the MDD Local Plan and the overly hardening, obtrusive nature of the proposed fence and its location directly adjacent to the footway. Encapsulating the existing landscaped amenity verge to such a large extent leaves insufficient verge for any defensive/ mitigation planting,

The reason behind the change in the planning statement “improved proportions and aesthetic appearance” is not the case given the points raised in the report. Further correspondence shows a reason for the change is in relation to animal foul, which is not a material planning consideration. The applicant has provided examples of previous planning applications involving moving residential boundary fences onto adjacent amenity land or verges. It’s important to note that every application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Ultimately, the proposal negative impacts on the character of the area outweighs the reasons for the change.

It is of further note, that Policy 2 (point 7) of the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan requires the design of road and service layouts to allow space for new sustainable landscape works without the need for maintenance and upgrades to services damaging landscape works, as they mature. The proposal by encapsulating this landscaped amenity land would be contrary to Policy 2 of the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan as it would remove the existing sustainable landscape works.

The South of the M4 SPD outlines green infrastructure networks as integral to the function of development and should be valued, retained and/or enhanced when possible which the proposal detracts from to a detrimental extent.

Neighbouring Amenity: The proposal does not have any overlooking or overbearing

impacts on any neighbouring properties due to the location and height of works involved in the development. There is adequate street lighting provided and the fence would not block the natural light, therefore the proposal would not impact upon overshadowing.

Amenity Space: The proposal would increase the amount of the amenity space for 1 Alexander Walk by 1.11m in width at the front and at the rear with the 12m length remaining the same. However, this is an insignificant increase and given the above such encapsulation of amenity space would be unacceptable.

Landscape and Trees: The proposed application is to relocate the existing side boundary fence of the rear garden forward of the building line of the properties facing onto public open space so the location of the new fence will 1m back from the footway.

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable. Furthermore, policy TB21 requires proposals to retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to landscape character.

The open land, and associated planting, between the building line and the open space to the east creates a sense of openness to the public realm and which not only allows open and unrestricted views along this edge but also a softer approach to the development edge on the edge of settlement. The officer cannot support this application to move the fenceline as this will have a detrimental effect on the open character of the public realm and space on along the edge of the new development, and sense of openness to reflect the character of the countryside beyond the site.

As discussed, the proposed change of use, boundary fencing would result in the substantial loss of the green buffer to the east of the dwelling. As well as the proposal being out of character with the area in this respect, the incorporation of the amenity area into the residential garden and the loss of the green buffer would result in a significant loss of green infrastructure. This is clearly contrary to policy CC03, while the proposal would also fail to retain these features which contribute to the landscape character in conflict with policy TB12.

The Council's Landscape and Trees Officer has reviewed the proposal and concluded that the removal of the amenity space from the public realm and the new boundary fence would fail to visually enhance the setting. As the proposal would clearly be contrary to the aforementioned policies mentioned above.

Overall, it is considered that the loss of the amenity land and grass verge would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and would result in the loss of green infrastructure with no mitigation proposed. This is contrary to Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 as well as MDD Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Flooding and Drainage: LLFA has no objection as site is in flood zone 1.

Conclusion: It is considered that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area and would fail to retain or enhance the provision of green

infrastructure to the detriment of landscape character. The proposal is therefore unacceptable and is contrary to Policy 1 of the Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan, Core Strategy CP1 and CP3, TB21 and CC03 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and the recommendations expressed within the Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD (R12).

The retention of amenity land is important in planning term as it contributes to the spacious character to the area and relief from built form. Hence, in this instance, there are no amendments to the scheme that would make this proposal acceptable.

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:	Refuse
Date:	10 December 2025
Earliest date for decision:	6 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	10 December 2025

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 1**

#	NAME
1	Within South of M4 Strategic Development Location

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Modest Development Locations	Shinfield

Strategic Development Locations | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Strategic Development Location	South of M4

Thames Basin Heath SPA Mitigation Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone	7km Linear Mitigation Zone

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone -	AWE: 12km Zone	This is the 12km Zone. A circular zone of 12km radius

	Major Nuclear Site		around all nuclear sites, for certain types of significant development due to the potential for such developments to pose an external hazard to sites.
--	--------------------	--	--

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	Height Band	Wind Turbine	Aviation
1	All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet)	NO	YES

Submitted Sites Live | Total count: 1

#	SITE_REF	LUPP	ADDRESS
1	5SH025	Housing (C3 Planning Use Class).	Land south of Cutbush Lane

Risk of Flooding from Surface Water | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 1000 year risk extent

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Green	Consult NatureSpace for Major developments only

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000530000&es=11404&location=475984,168857%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Loddon River Valley

Archaeological Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Archaeological Site	17

Wards | Total count: 1

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Shinfield Ward	0 m

Parishes | Total count: 1

#	NAME	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Shinfield CP	0 m