

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260747
Site Address:	29 Denton Road, Wokingham, RG40 2DX
Expiry Date:	2 June 2026
Site Visit Date:	22/04/2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of the building to 1 no. dwelling (Use Class C3).	

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP17 – Housing Delivery
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB22 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements SS10 – Meeting our housing needs C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging H2 – Presumption against residential losses NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity

Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
212826	Change of use of ground floor from chiropractic centre to a residential flat, with first-floor flat retained.	Approved, 17/06/2022
142408	Change of use of part of the ground floor from veterinary to residential (C3) use.	Refused, 27/03/2014
142358	Change of use of part of the ground floor from veterinary to residential (C3) use.	Refused, 27/03/2014
142357	Change of use of first floor from residential (C3) to D1 use.	Refused, 27/03/2014
96/63221/F	Change Of Use-From Residential to Veterinary Practice and single storey rear extension	Approved, 25/04/1996
36633	Single Storey Side Extension to Provide Reception and change of Use-from Residential to Veterinary Practice	Approved, 28/11/1990

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objections.
WBC Drainage – No objections.
WBC Highways – No objections, subject to a conditon.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections, subject to a conditon.
WBC Waste Services – No comments received.
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received.

External

Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments received.
South East Water – No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The site comprises a detached two-storey building located on the south side of Denton Road at the junction of Denton Road and Sturges Road.

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 (i) of the Core Strategy supports proposals that do not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land.

Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy highlights that the scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility.

The application site comprises a two-storey building originally constructed and used as a single dwellinghouse. In 1990, planning permission was granted for the change of use of the ground floor from residential use to a veterinary practice. Subsequently, in 1996, the remaining residential accommodation at first-floor level was also converted to provide ancillary accommodation associated with the veterinary practice, including an operating room, sterilising room and storage space.

More recently, planning permission was granted in 2021 for the change of use of the ground floor from a chiropractor practice to a self-contained residential flat. However, it is understood from the submitted Planning Statement that this permission was not implemented and the use of the building remains as a mixed-use premises comprising a chiropractor practice (Use Class E) at ground-floor level and a one-bedroom flat (Use Class C3) above.

The current application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the entire building from this mixed-use arrangement to a single three-bedroom dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), thereby returning the property back to its original use as a single-family dwelling.

In considering the proposal against Policies CP3 (i) and CP9, the loss of a commercial service use means that the development does not align with the scale of facilities and services in the area, as an existing service would be removed to accommodate a residential unit. However, the site is located within Wokingham, a major development location with a wide range of alternative accessible services and facilities. Whilst the proposal would involve the loss of the existing first-floor flat, this would be replaced through the creation of a family dwelling within the building. As such, the proposal would not result in a net loss of residential units and is therefore not considered contrary to Policy CP3 (i) of the Core Strategy.

Overall, the proposal results in the loss of a commercial use but is acceptable in principle, providing a family sized dwelling within a well-served Major Development Location.

Character of the Area:

Although the wider setting of the site within Wokingham Town Centre is characterised by a mix of commercial, retail and residential uses, the immediate surrounding area along Denton Road and Sturges Road is predominantly residential in character, comprising mainly dwellinghouses and small-scale residential accommodation.

The proposal relates solely to the change of use of the ground floor and does not involve any external alterations to the building. As such, the development would preserve the existing appearance of the host property and would not result in any material visual impact upon the surrounding street scene. Furthermore, the removal of the existing commercial signage associated with the existing business use is anticipated to result in a modest enhancement to the visual appearance of the frontage and reinforce the predominantly residential character of the immediate area.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area, and no objections are raised in this regard.

Neighbouring Amenity:

As the proposed works are entirely internal in nature, no concerns arise in respect of loss of light, overbearing impact or overlooking, and the proposal would not result in any material change to the existing relationship with neighbouring properties.

Housing Amenity:

Internal amenity:

Policy TB07 of the MDD Local Plan and R17 of the Borough Design Guides require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size of new dwellings achieves good internal amenity. The Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard sets out the minimum standard internal space requirements for new dwellings. A minimum standard of 84m² applies for a two storey, 4-bedroom dwelling. The proposal would accord with this requirement.

Double bedrooms should have a minimum area of 11.5sqm, single bedrooms should have an area of 7.5sqm, living spaces should have a minimum area of 27sqm and there should be provision for storage. The proposed bedrooms meet the required minimum and the combined total of that in kitchen, living and dining room is satisfactory. Sufficient built-in storage would also be available. As such, the proposal would accord with local and national space standards, therefore, is acceptable in this regard.

External amenity:

Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, and which promote

health and well-being through the provision of a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide (BDG) provides guidance on the provision of private amenity space and advises that a garden depth of approximately 11 metres is generally considered acceptable. The BDG further advises that private garden space should be functional and usable, being of a regular shape, receiving direct sunlight for part of the day, and providing sufficient space for activities such as sitting out, children's play, clothes drying and outdoor storage. It should also provide a level area suitable for these purposes and allow secure access to facilitate cycle storage.

In this case, private amenity space is proposed to the south-west of the dwelling. The garden would measure approximately 13 metres in depth and therefore exceeds the guideline depth set out within the BDG. However, concerns arise regarding the degree of privacy afforded to this space. The garden would be enclosed by a 1 metre high close-boarded fence and low-level hedging, resulting in the area remaining readily visible from the adjoining public realm. As such, the space cannot be regarded as wholly private in the traditional sense and would be considered unacceptable amenity space for future occupiers.

Whilst it would be possible to increase the height of the boundary treatments in order to create a more enclosed and private garden environment, such an approach would detract from the character and appearance of the area. The site occupies a prominent corner position at the junction of Denton Road and Sturges Road, where the prevailing character is defined by low boundary treatments and a relatively open street scene. The introduction of extensive high fencing would appear incongruous in this context and would erode this established sense of openness and obscure the front of the dwelling.

Notwithstanding the above, the site is of a sufficient size to accommodate an area of enclosed private amenity space for future occupiers, either within the northern or eastern parts of the site. Such an arrangement could be achieved without compromising the overall functionality of the site or the character of the area and would provide a more private and secure outdoor space for residents.

Given the site's prominent corner position and high visibility within the street scene, careful consideration would need to be given to the design, height, materials and appearance of any proposed boundary treatment to ensure that it integrates appropriately with the character of the area and does not result in undue visual harm. In this regard, further details would be required prior to the installation of any new enclosure. A suitably worded condition will therefore be attached to approval.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and considers that the three off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards. As such, there are no highways issues.

With respect to cycle parking provision, the Council's Parking Standards require three cycle parking spaces for a dwelling containing six or more habitable rooms. The

applicant should therefore demonstrate either direct access to the rear garden or the provision of a suitably sized cycle store. A suitable planning condition will be attached to any approval requiring the provision and retention of appropriate cycle storage facilities.

Landscape and Trees:

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer notes that the site occupies a highly visible corner location between two Conservation Areas (Wokingham Town Centre and Murdoch Road), and while it lies outside these designated areas, it remains within a sensitive landscape setting with strong public prominence. The surrounding area is characterised by a leafy residential street scene with low boundary treatments, hedging, and occasional street trees, and includes a group of protected trees (TPO-0795-1996) along the northern and Western Front boundaries which are to be retained.

The submitted arboricultural information confirms that the proposed development would not require any tree removal and would not result in adverse impacts on retained or adjacent trees, including those subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

However, the Trees and Landscape Officer seeks clarification on the intended landscape strategy for the site, particularly in relation to changes to the front garden, access path, and driveway, and how these would integrate positively with the wider character of the area and nearby Conservation Areas. While retention of the protected trees is supported, the Trees and Landscape Officer advises that the existing low timber boundary treatment should be reconsidered, with a hedgerow preferred to better reflect the verdant character of the street scene and provide improved privacy and visual integration. A condition is recommended requiring the submission of a detailed Landscape Plan, including details of retained, removed and proposed planting, hard landscaping works, and full details of existing and proposed boundary treatments across all site frontages.

However, the agent has confirmed that no external alterations are now proposed, including to the existing landscaping and access ramp/path, all of which are to be retained in their current form. The landscaping along the western edge of the site, which represents the most prominent and visually sensitive part of the site, would also be retained in the interests of visual amenity and the established verdant character of the area.

In light of this clarification, the scope for landscape change is considered to be minimal and it is not therefore considered necessary to secure a comprehensive landscape scheme by condition. Notwithstanding this, it is important that the existing vegetation is retained and adequately safeguarded. A suitably worded condition will therefore be imposed to ensure the protection and retention of these existing trees and shrubs in the event of any approval.

Flooding and Drainage:

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. The Council's Drainage Officer has reviewed the proposal and, noting that no external alterations are proposed, raises no objection.

Environmental Health:

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the application and notes that the proposal involves only internal works and that the scale and nature of the use would remain compatible with the surrounding residential character of the area.

In terms of amenity impacts, the Environmental Health Officer considers that the use of the building as a single dwelling is unlikely to result in unacceptable levels of noise or disturbance. Indeed, the proposed residential use may represent an improvement in amenity when compared to the existing commercial use, due to a reduction in visitor numbers and associated activity arising from the former chiropractor practice.

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:	Approval
Date:	21 May 2026
Earliest date for decision:	28 April 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	08.06.2026