

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252280
Site Address:	7 Heather Close, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4PX
Expiry Date:	28 November 2025
Site Visit Date:	10 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a detached single-storey outbuilding.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Modest Development Location – Finchampstead
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
25515	Detached House and Garage	Approve 22 nd May 1986

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways – No Objection
External
N/A

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No objection raised.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL
Site Description: A detached house in the residential area of Finchampstead with off street parking and a garage. The property is located at the end of a short cul-de-sac and the principal elevation is angled at 90 degrees to the highway. Vehicular access is via an unadopted drive shared with no's 8, 9, 10 and 11 Heather Close. The front boundary is a tall hedge. 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. Proposal: Erection of a detached single-storey outbuilding forward of the principal elevation of the main dwelling house to be used as an office and for storage purposes. The external walls would comprise Thermowood panels. It would have a shallow sloping roof, double doors facing onto the main dwelling and a single window on the side elevation. It would measure 2.5m in height, 4.8m in width and 3.3m in depth. Procedural Matters A revised site plan was received by the Council on 25th November 2025, and after the consultation date had ended. However, the revised proposed plans showed a minor amendment to show the extension of the red line up to the adopted highway and to change the orientation of the outbuilding. Therefore, the amendment was not considered to have a significant impact on neighbour amenity to warrant extending the consultation period.

Character of the Area: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The street scene is detached houses of a similar age and design with open plan front gardens, garages and driveways for off street parking. The application site is located on a corner plot at the far end of a short cul-de-sac. The principal elevation is at 90 degrees to the highway, and the grassed area of the front garden is screened from public view by a tall hedge. There are no other examples of outbuildings in Heather Close that have been constructed in front gardens.

In this case the outbuilding would be single storey and have a flat roof. The maximum eaves height and ridge height would be less than the existing two storey property. The separation distances with the front boundary and the shared driveway would be at least 4m and the tall hedging at the front would provide partial screening from public view. The separation distance with the fence (approximately 1.8m in height) and vegetation (approximately 3m in height) that forms the side boundary with no. 24 Carolina Place would be approximately 1m. The rear wall of the outbuilding would be adjacent to the side boundary of no. 8 Heather Close comprising a hedge approximately 2m in height and the side garage wall.

The proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide (BDG) because it is forward of the principal elevation of the main dwelling and is not sited within a spacious plot. However, the application site cannot be easily assessed according to the BCG because it is set within an irregular building line, and the front garden is secluded due to its location at the back of the cul-de-sac. Also, the orientation of the principal elevation and the location of the doors and window on the front elevation of the outbuilding would provide a visual connection to the main dwelling. Furthermore, the front hedging would partially screen the outbuilding from public view. Therefore, the proposal would only have a limited impact on the street scene and would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would not fully comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy. However, given that it would comply with all other aspects of planning policy and would be of limited height and bulk, its location would not warrant refusal of this application.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

Overlooking: The front window and double doors would face onto the main dwelling. The side window would not face onto neighbouring habitable rooms and would be lower than the vegetation behind the fence that is approximately 3m in height. Therefore, the proposal would not significantly reduce privacy to neighbour amenity.

Loss of Light: The proposal would not result in loss of light to neighbour amenity.

Overbearing: The limited height and bulk of the outbuilding will not significantly harm the neighbouring occupiers.

Overall, the proposal would not fully comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy regarding neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raises no objection subject to the site plan being amended and has commented: *"The applicant proposes to erect an outbuilding to be used for home office. While the total numbers of habitable rooms cannot be identified from the submission, there will be one additional habitable room. It is relevant to note that the proposed red line does not connect with the public*

highways, which must be revised. According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in Urban location will require up to three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. The proposed driveway can accommodate three driveway parking within the red line, which is acceptable. Direct access to the garage remains suitable for cycle storage, which is acceptable.

Subject to the red line being revised, please condition:

1. OUTBUILDING TO REMAIN ANCILLARY TO MAIN DWELLING

The proposed outbuilding shall remain ancillary to the main dwelling and shall not be sold, leased or disposed of separately.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety; to ensure acceptable access and parking."

Ecology: The application site is in an area suitable for bat roosting. However, given that the proposal does not involve modifications to the main roof of the dwelling, it would not be reasonable to request a bat survey in this instance. An informative will be added to the decision notice stating that:

Bats are a protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately, and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide in terms of character of the area because the outbuilding is located forward of the principal elevation of the main dwelling. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects; also given that it would be located in a secluded spot at the rear of the cul-de-sac and

would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	25 November 2025
Earliest date for decision:	30 October 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26/11/25