

29 Denton Road, Wokingham, RG40 2DX

Planning Statement

March 2026



SOLVE
planning



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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1. This document is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission for the following:

Change of use of building from a chiropractor practice (Use Class E) and a flat (Use Class C3) to a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), together with associated internal alterations.

Figure 1: Site Location



- 1.2. The extent of the site is shown on the Site Location Plan at Figure 1.
- 1.3. The proposal seeks permission to convert the existing chiropractor practice at ground floor level and existing one bedroom flat at first floor level into a single family dwelling. The dwellinghouse will contain 3 bedrooms and will deliver a high standard of accommodation for future occupiers.
- 1.4. By introducing a family sized dwelling, the proposal will return the building back to its original and intended use and will positively contribute towards the Council's housing stock of family sized dwellings. Importantly, as noted in the Council's draft Local Plan Update, which is currently undergoing examination, the Local Housing Needs Assessment (2023) indicates a significantly greater need for larger, family sized dwellings (3 and 4 bedrooms) in the borough than

smaller units (one and two bedrooms). Accordingly, the proposed family sized unit will better respond to local housing need than the existing one-bedroom flat at the property.

- 1.5. The proposed dwellinghouse is high quality in design, complies with national space standards and is sustainably located on the edge of Wokingham town centre close to the train station and local bus services. The dwelling is also within walking distance of shops, employment locations and other Wokingham town centre amenities.
- 1.6. This Planning, Design and Access Statement represents the proposals in the context of the key relevant planning policy considerations and is set out under the following headings:

-  Existing Site & Planning History
-  Proposed Development
-  Planning Policy Context
-  Planning Considerations
-  Conclusion

- 1.7. This report should be read in conjunction with submitted planning drawings and the following reports that also accompany the planning application:

-  Sustainability Statement, prepared by Bluesky Unlimited
-  Arboricultural Survey, prepared by Arbor-Eco Consultancy
-  Drainage Strategy, prepared by JUDWAA



Section 2

Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1. The site comprises a detached two-storey building believed to have been constructed in the early to mid-twentieth century. It is finished in brick and render and has a pitched tiled roof. It occupies a roughly rectangular shape plot located on the south side of Denton Road at the junction of Denton Road and Sturges Road. The building provides an active frontage to both roads.
- 2.2. Vehicle access to the property is provided via Denton Road on the site's northern boundary. The site incorporates a gravel car park with space to park 3-4 cars. A small garden area fronts Sturges Road and is enclosed by a low wall.
- 2.3. The building is currently in use as a chiropractor practice (Use Class E) at ground floor level and a flat (Use Class C3) at first floor level. It was originally in use as a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) however in the mid-1990s the use of the building is believed to have changed to the current mixed use.
- 2.4. The building has been extended to the rear via a single storey extension.
- 2.5. The site is located on the edge of Wokingham town centre at the end of a residential street , Denton Road, which contains predominantly detached houses.
- 2.6. Photographs of the application site are provided in the figures below.

Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the site



Source: Google maps

***Figure 3: Eastern
elevation
application site***



***Figure 4: View of
gravel area
adjacent to the
north (side)
elevation of the
building***



Figure 5: View of west elevation of the building from Sturges Road



2.7. In terms of immediate surroundings, the site is surrounded by residential properties as follows:

- ▣ To the east lies 27 Denton Road which comprises a detached two storey dwelling with a frontage to Denton Road.
- ▣ To the south lies 10 Sturges Road which comprises a detached two storey dwelling with a frontage to Sturges Road.
- ▣ To north the site fronts onto the Denton Road street scene on the opposite side of which lies a mix of detached houses, a block of flats and a place of worship (Wokingham Quakers). The ground of the corner property (No. 30 Denton Road) has been converted into a veterinary clinic.
- ▣ To the west lies Cockpit Path pay and display car park.

2.8. The site is sustainably located close to shops, restaurants, supermarkets, services and other town centre uses in Wokingham Town centre located just north of the site. Additionally, the site is 0.5 miles (a 12-minute walk) from Wokingham railway station and bus stops on Broad Street are within an easy walking distance of the site (0.2 miles). The major employment and commercial hub of Reading is within a 20–25-minute journey by train and London is accessible by train in under an hour, with many other towns and villages accessible via a short bus or train ride. The site is also within walking

distance of schools (such as Westcott Primary School, Westende Primary School and St. Crispin's Secondary School which are 0.5 miles from the site) and other facilities such as doctors surgeries. Therefore, the development is in a highly sustainable location.

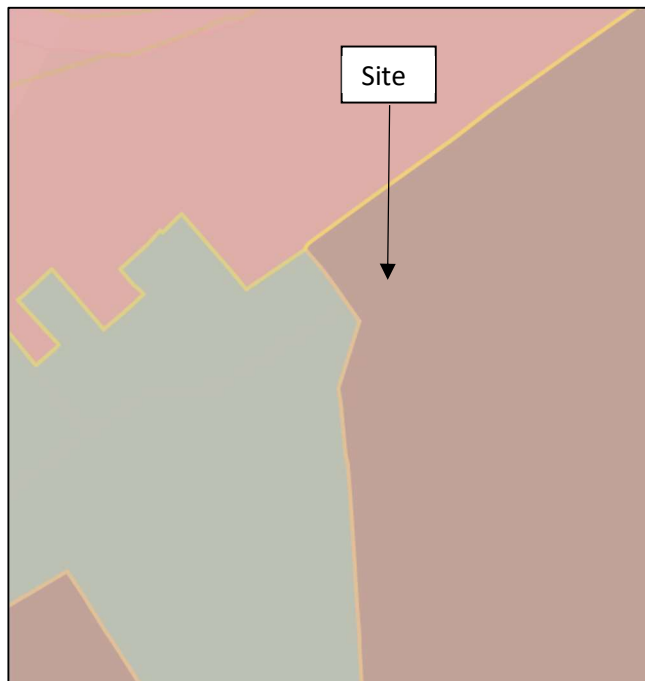
Designations

2.9. The site has the following designations according to the Council's adopted Policies Map:

- ▣ ***'Affordable Housing Thresholds: Within All Development Locations'***
- ▣ ***'Affordable Housing Thresholds: Within Major Development Locations'***
- ▣ ***'Scale and Location of Development Proposals: Wokingham Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone'***
- ▣ ***'Water Utility Consultation Zone'***
- ▣ ***'Potentially Contaminated Land Consultation Zone'***
- ▣ ***'SSSI Impact Risk Zone'***
- ▣ ***'Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Mode'***
- ▣ ***'Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone SU8168'***

2.10. An extract of the Council's interactive policies map is provided below.

Figure 6: Extract from Wokingham interactive policies map



2.11. Although not shown on the interactive policies map, the Council's Town Centre SPD indicates that the site lies just outside the Wokingham Town

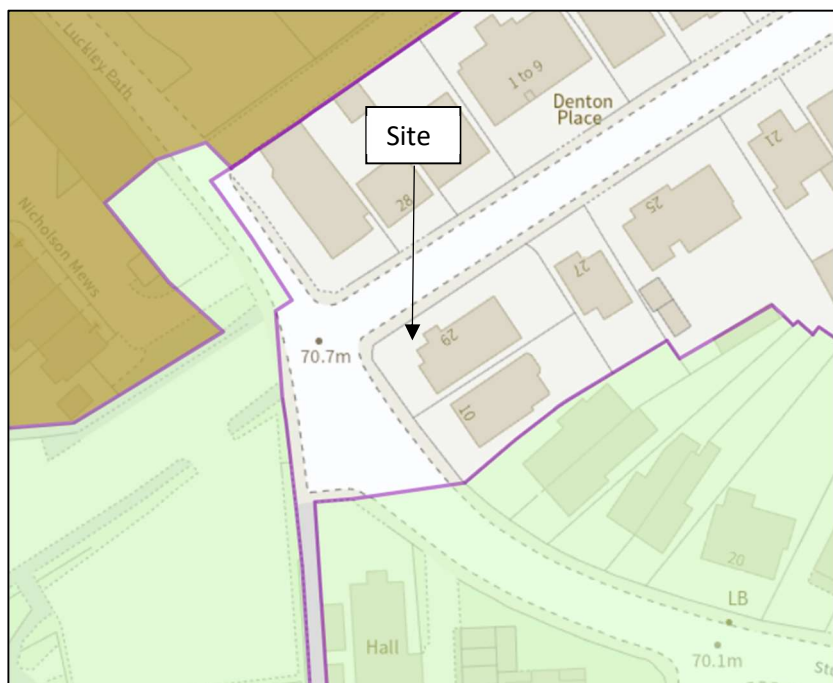
Centre boundary, see map extract below from the SPD which shows the town centre boundary line in black.

Figure 7: Extract from the Wokingham Town Centre SPD (2010) town centre map



- 2.12. In terms of heritage, the site is not in a Conservation Area. However, Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Areas is located approximately 25m from the site to the north and west, Murdoch Road Conservation Area is located a similar distance away to the south (see Conservation Areas shown in green in map extract below from the Council's interactive maps). An Archaeological Site lies to the north (see area hatched in brown in map extract below). There are no listed buildings on or in the vicinity of the site.

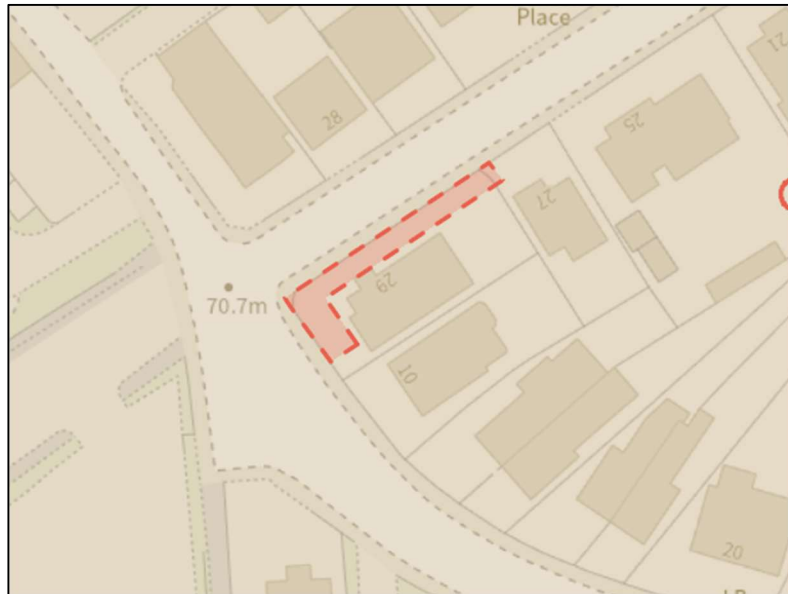
Figure 8: Heritage designations



- 2.13. The site is not covered by any Article 4 Directions.

- 2.14. The site is within Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk) and is not at risk of surface water flooding according to government flood maps.
- 2.15. A group TPO lies adjacent to the site's northern and western boundary, as indicated in map extract below from the Council's interactive map (TPO Number: 795/1996 Tree Reference: G1).

Figure 9: TPO map



- 2.16. The site is not in an area covered by a Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning history

- 2.17. The planning history for the application site, 29 Denton Road, available on the Council's website is included in the table below. Some of the application appear to have two different reference numbers, and in these instances, both reference numbers are included in the table below.

Date	Reference	Description	Decision
25/04/1996	961266 (F/1996/63221)	Proposed change of use from residential use to veterinary surgery and residential and single storey rear extension to form operating room sterilising room and storeroom.	Approved
27/03/2014	142357	Proposed change of use of the first floor from residential use (C3) to (D1) use.	Refused
27/03/2014	142358 (F/2014/0223)	Proposed change of use of part of ground floor from Class D1 to residential (C3) use.	Refused

		From a review of the officer's report this application was for a proposed two-bedroom flat.	
27/03/2014	142408 F/2014/0224)	Proposed change of use of part of ground floor from Class D1 to residential (C3) use.	Refused
20/10/2020	202188	Application for works to protected tree(s) TPO 795/1996, GROUP 1 T1, Lime - Repollard T2, Purple leaf plum - Fell T3, Yew - Prune to clear building by 2m. T4, Lime - Repollard	Tree consent
17/06/2022	212826	Full application for the change of use of ground floor from a chiropractic centre to a ground floor residential flat. The first floor flat will be unchanged	Approved

- 2.18. Most recently, permission has been granted for the change of use of the ground floor from a chiropractor to a residential flat under application ref: 212826. This would have resulted in the entirety of the building being in a residential (C3) use, which is what is proposed under the current application.



Section 3

Proposed Development

3.1. This application seeks proposed the following development:

Change of use of building from a chiropractor practice (Use Class E) and a flat (Use Class C3) to a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), together with associated internal alterations.

3.2. This will involve the following:

- ▣ The delivery of a family sized dwelling (3 bedrooms) thus assisting in meeting the housing needs of family sized households and returning the building back to its original use.
- ▣ The proposed accommodation will be arranged as follows:
 - Proposed ground floor: Kitchen, lounge, dining room, utility, snug and W.C
 - Proposed first floor: 3no. bedrooms and separate bathroom.
- ▣ Site access, parking and amenity space surrounding the building will remain as existing.
- ▣ Refuse and recycling storage will be provided within the site and collected from the site in line with residential collection arrangements.

3.3. Extracts of the proposed plans are provided in figures 10 – 12.

Figure 10: Existing floor plans

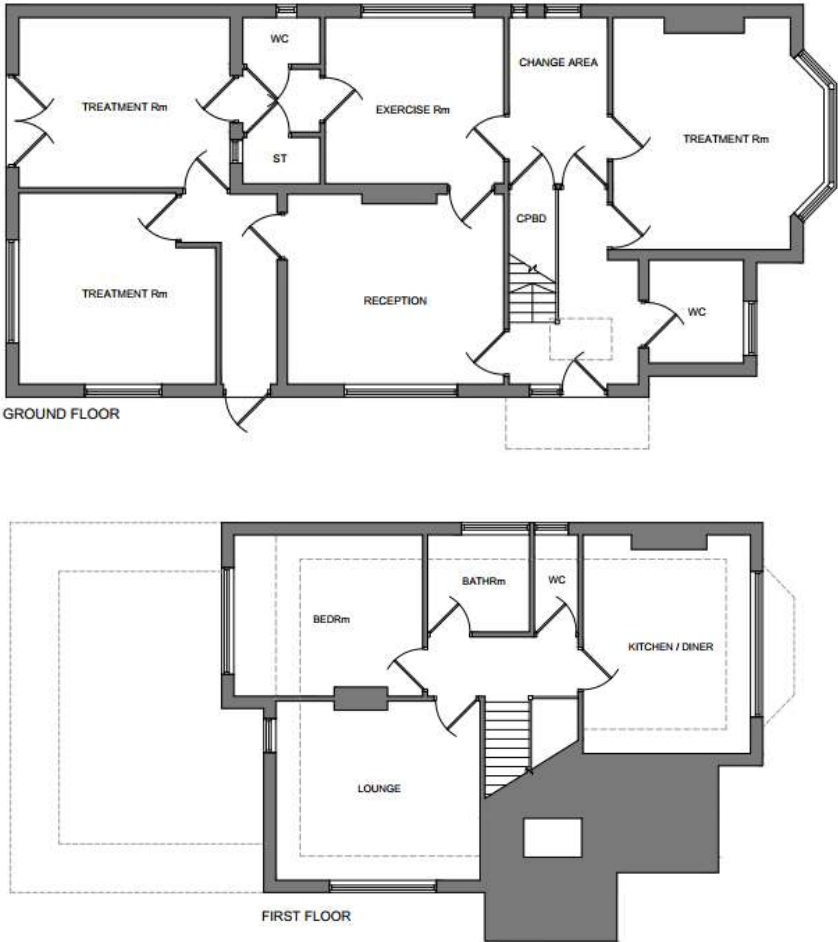


Figure 11: Proposed floor plans



Figure 12: Existing and Proposed Elevations (no external changes or works proposed)





Section 4

Planning Policy Context

- 4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination under the planning acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise.

- 4.2. The development plan for the purpose of the application proposal comprises the following:

- ▣ Wokingham Core Strategy (adopted 2010)
- ▣ Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (adopted 2014)
- ▣ Wokingham Interactive Policies Map

- 4.3. The following national policy and guidance are material planning considerations:

- ▣ National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
- ▣ MHCLG Planning Practice Guidance (2024)
- ▣ MHCLG National Design Guide (Updated January 2021)

- 4.4. The following Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents (SPG/SPD) is also relevant:

- ▣ Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- ▣ Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD (2011)
- ▣ Sustainable Design and Construction (2010)
- ▣ Borough Design Guide SPD (2012)
- ▣ Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (2022)
- ▣ Parking standards calculation document

Emerging Plan Local

- 4.5. The Council is currently preparing the Local Plan Update (LPU). The Regulation 19 version of the LPU was published for consultation in late 2024. The

Regulation 22 submission took place in February 2025, and the plan is now undergoing independent examination. Hearings commenced in November 2025. Key stages remain outstanding, including the completion of hearings and subsequent main modifications, meaning limited weight can currently be broadly attached to the overall plan.

Draft NPPF

- 4.6. The Government consulted on proposed revisions to the NPPF until 10 March 2026. Twelve key policy changes contained in the draft NPPF are summarised below:

-  **A permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development** - establishes a rules-based approach to make development on suitable urban land acceptable by default, with a revised presumption in favour of sustainable development.
-  **Building homes around stations** - Supports housing and mixed-use development around train stations, with minimum density requirements of 40 dwellings per hectare for stations within settlements and 50 dwellings per hectare for well-connected stations outside settlements.
-  **Driving urban and suburban densification** - encourages higher density development in urban and suburban areas through redevelopment of low-density plots, upward extensions, and infill development, with clear expectations for minimum densities in well-connected locations.
-  **Securing a diverse mix of homes** - strengthens support for rural social and affordable housing, accessible housing for older and disabled people, and flexibility in unit mix for market sale housing.
-  **Supporting small and medium sites** - Introduces a category of “medium development” (10-49 units) with policy and regulatory easements to streamline planning and support faster delivery
-  **Streamlining local standards** - limits quantitative standards in development plans to specific issues where local variation is justified, avoiding duplication of matters covered by Building Regulations.
-  **Boosting local and regional economies** - gives substantial weight to business growth, supports specific sectors like logistics and AI Growth Zones, and seeks views on removing the town centre sequential test
-  **Supporting critical and growth minerals** - ensures adequate provision for extraction of critical minerals while restricting further coal extraction to align with clean energy goals.
-  **Embedding a vision-led approach to transport** - moves away from a “predict and provide” approach to transport planning, emphasising sustainable and well-designed transport systems.

- ▣ **Better addressing climate change** - Sets clearer policies for climate change mitigation and adaptation, including promoting sustainable transport, energy-efficient designs, and renewable energy.
- ▣ **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment** - changes to reflect Local Nature Recovery Strategies, emphasise landscape character, and introduces requirements for swift bricks and guidance on sites of local importance for nature.
- ▣ **Taking a more positive approach to the use of heritage assets** - provides clearer and more positive approach to heritage-related development, replacing the current policies it considers difficult to navigate.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.7. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2024. The NPPF in Section 2 (Achieving Sustainable Development) establishes that while planning decisions should be taken in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, they should also be made in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is at the heart of the Framework. This means, for decision-making, approving development proposals that accord with up-to-date development plans, and where there are no relevant policies, or the relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless the policies in the NPPF provide a clear reason for refusing the application or adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. Where an application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan then permission should not normally be granted.
- 4.8. Section 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 4.9. Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities) states decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lives.
- 4.10. Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages so that the potential impact of development on transport networks can be addressed alongside providing for improved transport infrastructure, promoting cycling, walking and public transport use and integrating patterns of movement into development proposals at a fundamental level.

- 4.11. Section 11 (Making efficient use of land) seeks to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions (paragraph 124).
- 4.12. Paragraph 129 states that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
 - b) local market conditions and viability;*
 - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
 - d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
 - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places*
- 4.13. Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience*
- 4.14. Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change), paragraph 149 requires plans to take a proactive approach to

mitigating and adapting to climate change. New development should avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and should help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- 4.15. Paragraph 170 requires the avoidance of inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).
- 4.16. Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Development should minimise impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. Proposals should also prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability (paragraph 187).

Wokingham Core Strategy (adopted 2010)

- 4.17. The following South Oxfordshire Local Plan (adopted 2020) policies are relevant to the proposed development.
- 4.18. **Policy CP1 - Sustainable Development** – requires proposals to meet several criteria, including maintaining or enhancing the high quality of the environment, minimising pollutants, flood risk, use of resources, and the need to travel by private car, limiting any adverse effects on water quality, and providing adequate drainage and recycling.
- 4.19. **Policy CP2 - Inclusive Communities** – requires developments to address the requirements of an ageing population, children, young people and families, people with special needs, including those with a physical, sensory or learning disability, and the specific identified needs of minority groups in the Borough.
- 4.20. **Policy CP3 - General Principles for Development** – requires development to be high quality in design, and an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character without harming to the amenities of adjoining land users. Proposals should be accessible, safe, and have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features or water courses. Development should contribute to creating a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings. Development should also contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities; not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land; and not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities/land or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available.
- 4.21. **Policy CP4 - Infrastructure Requirements** - requires arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other

facilities required for the development taking account of the cumulative impact of schemes.

- 4.22. **Policy CP5 - Housing Mix, Density and Affordability** – the policy supports residential development providing a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes.
- 4.23. **Policy CP6 - Managing Travel Demand** – the policy supports developments that provide sustainable forms of transport, choices in the mode of transport available and which minimise the distance people need to travel, provide appropriate vehicular parking, mitigate any adverse effects on the transport network and do not cause highway problems or lead to traffic related environmental problems.
- 4.24. **Policy CP7 - Biodiversity** - Sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.
- 4.25. **Policy CP8 - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area** - Development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.
- 4.26. **Policy CP9 - Scale and location of development proposals** - The scale of development proposals should reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility.
- 4.27. **CP13 – Town centres and shopping** - Wokingham and Woodley town centres, Lower Earley district centre, Shinfield Road centre, Twyford village centre and Winnersh centre are suitable in principle to accommodate town centre uses. The roles of all existing and new retail centres will be protected and maintained, in addition to local shopping centres and parades that meet the day to day needs of the local community. Losses of retail from primary retail frontages will not be permitted in order to maintain vitality and viability.
- 4.28. **CP14 - Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre** - Wokingham, as a major town centre in Berkshire is considered suitable for growth. Proposals should retain and enhance the historic market town character of Wokingham and maintain its position in the Berkshire retail hierarchy
- 4.29. **Policy CP17 - Housing delivery** – the policy states that provision will be made for the development of at least 13,230 dwellings and associated development and infrastructure in the Borough in the period 2006- 2026 for which substantial investment in infrastructure will be required.

- 4.30. **Policy CC01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** - Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.31. **Policy CC02 - Development Limits** - the policy states that permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments, is within development limits and respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape.
- 4.32. **Policy CC03 - Green Infrastructures, Trees and Landscaping** – requires development to provide new or to protect and enhance the Borough’s Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to mitigate potential impacts of new development. They should also promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors, and support the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside. Proposals should protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and incorporate high quality landscaping. Development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable.
- 4.33. **Policy CC04 - Sustainable Design and Construction** - states that permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality sustainably designed and constructed developments. New homes should meet internal potable water consumption targets of 105 litres or less per person per day.
- 4.34. **Policy CC06 - Noise** - the policy requires proposals to demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors (both existing and proposed) from noise impacts.
- 4.35. **Policy CC07 - Parking** – proposals should demonstrate the following: a) How the proposed parking provision meets the standards set out in Appendix 2 of the MDD b) That the new scheme retains an appropriate overall level of off-street parking.
- 4.36. **Policy CC09 - Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)** - Development must be guided to areas of lowest flood risk by applying the sequential approach taking into account flooding from all sources and shall ensure flood risk is not worsened for the application site and elsewhere, and ideally that betterment of existing conditions is achieved.
- 4.37. **Policy CC10 - Sustainable Drainage** The policy requires all proposals to ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner.

- 4.38. **TB05 - Housing mix** – requires new housing development to deliver an appropriate housing mix which reflects a balance between the underlying character of the area and both the current and projected needs of households,
- 4.39. **TB07 - Internal Space Standards** - Proposals for new residential units, including change of use or conversions, should ensure that the internal layout and size are suitable to serve the amenity requirements of future occupiers. The Council will assess all development proposals against the following minimum standards.

Dwelling Type*	Minimum gross internal area (GIA) (sq m)	Designed occupancy (Bed spaces per property)
1 bedroom flat	50 (538.2 sq ft)	2
2 bedroom flat	61 (656.6 sq ft)	3
2 bedroom house	83 (893.4 sq ft)	4
3 bedroom house	87 (936.46 sq ft)	5
4 bedroom house	100 (1,076.4 sq ft)	6

*Five bedroom houses should provide 7 bed spaces and six bedroom houses 8 bed spaces

- 4.40. Household accommodation should in general provide two social spaces, such as a living room and a kitchen/dining room. The Council will seek the following minimum combined floor area for these spaces.

Designed occupancy (Bed spaces per property)	Minimum combined floor area of living, dining and kitchen space (sq m)
2 person	23 (247.57 sq ft)
3 person	25 (269.1 sq ft)
4 person	27 (290.63 sq ft)
5 person	29 (312.15 sq ft)
6 person	31 (333.68 sq ft)

- 4.41. **TB21 - Landscape Character** - Proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues. Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 4.42. **TB23 - Biodiversity and Development** – the policy requires proposals to provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing.



Section 5

Planning Considerations

- 5.1. This section considers the planning aspects of the proposals. The preceding sections have provided the context for this assessment of the planning merits of the proposed development. The proposals have been assessed in relation to the key planning policies set out in the previous sections and are considered in turn below.

Principle of Development

- 5.2. The application seeks permission to change the use of the building from a mixed use comprising chiropractor practice (Use Class E) and a one-bedroom flat (Use Class C3), to a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). The development would result in the loss of a Class E use from the site and introduce a family sized dwelling. However, the principle of development is considered acceptable in the context of the Core Strategy (2010, MDD Local Plan (2014) and the NPPF for the following reasons:

- ▣ Whilst the Council refused permission in 2014 for two applications proposing a change of use of part of the ground floor from Class D1 to residential (application 142408 for a proposed one-bedroom flat and application 142358 for proposed two-bedroom flat), these applications were not refused on matters relating to the principle of the change of use. Instead, they were refused for reasons relating to technical matters (standard of accommodation, impact on trees, infrastructure contribution matters, sustainability matters and impact on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA). The principle of the change of use of the chiropractor to residential was therefore not in dispute.
- ▣ The existing chiropractor use of the site does not benefit from policy protection, and its loss has been accepted by the Council in granting permission for the change of use of the ground floor of the building from a chiropractor to a flat (ref: 212826). The principle of development has already therefore been established at the site and, whilst this application is unimplemented, it remains a material consideration and the development plan context remains the same as when this application was determined in 2022.
- ▣ The proposed development would return the building back to its original and intended use as a single-family dwelling which is a planning benefit of the development.
- ▣ By providing a new home that will contribute towards meeting to the housing needs of larger households, the development positively accords with policy CP5 of the Core Strategy which states that permission will be

granted for residential development providing a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. Importantly, by converting the building into a family sized dwelling available on the open market, it will make a greater contribution towards meeting local housing need than the existing one bedroom flat, as confirmed the Council's latest Housing Needs Assessment (2023) and the indicative housing mix table in draft policy H1 of the Local Plan Update submitted for examination (see extract below). The table below identifies strong need for larger (3 and 4 bedroom units in the market housing sector)

Table 7: Indicative housing mix

Number of bedrooms	Affordable Housing	Total Market Housing
1 bedroom	17%	5%
2 bedrooms	38%	13%
3 bedrooms	33%	47%
4+ bedrooms	12%	36%

- ▣ Whilst the development involves the loss of the existing flat at first floor level, the existing flat will essentially be replaced with a family dwelling, resulting in no net loss of dwellings.
- ▣ The proposed dwelling is more in keeping with the predominantly residential character of the area and surrounding residential land uses on Denton Road than the existing chiropractor use. Being surrounded by detached family sized dwellings, the development will also introduce a housing typology that complements those found in the immediate surrounding area.
- ▣ There are several other chiropractors within the vicinity of the site, to serve the needs of residents:
 - Wokingham Chiropractic Centre (a 2-minute walk from the site)
 - Connection Chiropractic (0.3 miles or a 7-minute walk from the site)
 - Back2Normal Wokingham (0.3 miles or a 7-minute walk from the site)
- ▣ With the site being located outside of the Wokingham town centre boundary and not within a protected shopping frontage, the proposed loss of the chiropractor practice is not considered to harm the vitality or viability of the town centre through a reduced range of services as resisted by Policy CP14, as also noted in the officer report for application reference 212826 which granted permission for the change of use of the chiropractor practice to a flat in 2022.
- ▣ By delivering a family sized house in a sustainable location on a brownfield site, in flood zone 1 (low risk) and on the edge of Wokingham town centre and within walking distance of public transport, employment locations, shops, services and other amenities,

the proposal accords with NPPF and Local Plan policy objectives in terms of sustainable development.

- The site is also considered to be in an area adjacent to Wokingham town centre that is becoming increasingly residential in character, as identified in the recent granting of permission for 60 flats at 19-21 Market Place, Wokingham, RG40 1A (application reference 230881 on 16 December 2024). This site, although within Wokingham Town Centre, is nonetheless in proximity to the site (approximately 100-120m to the west). The proposed residential use of the site will therefore positively contribute to the increasingly residential nature of the area.

Figure 10: location of approved 60 flats at 19-21 Marke Place in relation to application site



- 5.3. The principle of the proposed is therefore acceptable and complies with policies CP13, CP14 and CP17 and the provisions of the NPPF.

Design Considerations

- 5.4. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that 'maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment'. Policy CP3 states planning permission will be granted if development is 'of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design' and contributes 'to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping'. Policy CC04 states that permission will only be granted to proposals seeking to deliver high quality sustainably designed and constructed developments. Reference is given within this policy to Code for Sustainable Homes, which is no longer applicable, but the overarching principles of the NPPF is on the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places.
- 5.5. The proposals will utilise the existing building, with no changes to the external appearance proposed. Only internal works are proposed.

- 5.6. As a result, the proposals will not result in any change to the existing design and visual amenities of the area, in compliance with policies CP1, CP3, CC04 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Quality of Proposed Residential Development

- 5.7. The internal space standards for new dwellings are set out in the Borough Design Guide and supported by Policy TB07 of the MDD. Additionally, the proposal needs to comply with the requirements of Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard in terms of room sizes. The proposed dwellings will meet the required internal spaces standards.
- 5.8. Occupants of the dwellinghouse will benefit from high quality outlook and good levels of natural light due to the space around the dwelling and its distance from neighbouring properties. The proposed internal layout of the dwelling will deliver a high quality, accessible space. Amenity space will remain around the existing building.
- 5.9. It is therefore considered that a good standard of accommodation has been provided for prospective occupiers.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.10. Given no external changes are proposed, the relationship with existing neighbouring built form will remain. The first floor of the building is already in residential use, and the internal change of use of the ground floor will not result in any harm to neighbouring amenity.
- 5.11. In terms of noise and disturbance, it is considered that the proposed use of the building as a single residence will not result in any undue noise and disturbance to the neighbouring properties. The development could result in some amenity improvements in terms of noise and disturbance to neighbours, due to potentially reduced visitors to the site compared to the existing chiropractor use.
- 5.12. The proposal therefore accords with policies CC3 and CP06.

Flooding and Drainage

- 5.13. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with low risk of flooding from river or sea and low risk of surface water drainage. The proposals will not increase the flood risk of the site.

Highways Considerations

- 5.14. Policy CC07 requires development proposals to meet the standards defined within Appendix 2 of the MDD and that an appropriate level of off-street parking is provided.

- 5.15. The proposals will not result in any change to the existing access and parking provision. The site is of a size which will accommodate sufficient vehicular and cycle parking. Detail of dedicated cycle parking could be secured via an appropriately worded planning condition if considered necessary.
- 5.16. As the proposal does not propose a net increase in dwellings, it is unlikely to give rise to a significant level of traffic on local roads and could result in reduced traffic compared to the existing chiropractor use. Furthermore, prospective residents will also have access to non-car modes of transport with the site being close to public transport services in Wokingham town centre.
- 5.17. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site will be via Denton Road on the site's northern boundary as existing. Refuse servicing and deliveries will also be provided via Denton Road.
- 5.18. The proposal is therefore acceptable in highways terms.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)

- 5.19. This site is located less than 5km (measured from the access road to the application site) from the boundary of the SPA. However, as the development does not result in any net increase in dwellings, it will not result in an increased impact on the SPA and is therefore not considered to require mitigation.

Impact on Trees

- 5.20. An arboricultural survey has been carried out and this accompanies the submission.
- 5.21. The development does not require any tree removal and given there are no external changes proposed to the existing built form and site access / arrangements, the proposals will not detrimentally affect any trees on or adjacent to the site, including the Group TPO trees.
- 5.22. Refer to conclusions of supporting arboricultural documents

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 5.23. The proposals will not result in any external change to the existing building nor any works to trees within the site. It is considered that there will therefore be no impact to ecology of the site.
- 5.24. The proposals are considered to be exempt from BNG requirements given the proposals do not impact a priority habitat and will impact less than 25sqm of on-site habitat and 5m of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows. This is evident in the architectural plans supporting the submission, which demonstrates no change between existing and proposed site plan.



Section 6

Conclusions

- 6.1. This application seeks planning permission for the following:

Change of use of building from a chiropractor practice (Use Class E) and a flat (Use Class C3) to a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) together with associated internal alterations.

- 6.2. The proposal involves the conversion of the existing building from a chiropractor use and one bedroom flat into a single-family dwelling. The site was granted permission in 2022 for the change of use of the existing chiropractor into a flat (reference 212826), which is a material consideration. The existing chiropractor use does not benefit from planning policy protection and being located outside the town centre, the proposed change of use would not affect the viability or vitality of the town centre. There are several chiropractors present in the local area to meet continued needs of residents.
- 6.3. The proposal will return the building to its original and intended use which is wholly in keeping with surrounding residential uses. It will also introduce a housing typology, a single-family dwelling, that is reflective of house types in the local area and that better meets local housing need than the existing one bedroom flat given the acute need for larger homes identified in the Local Housing Needs Assessment (2023).
- 6.4. The proposed house will deliver a high standard of accommodation for prospective occupiers and will meet space standards. It will provide a good standard of daylight, ventilation, outlook and privacy for future occupiers.
- 6.5. The proposal is a minor form of development that will not result in a net increase in any housing units on site. It will therefore not materially affect local highway conditions. Car and cycle parking and refuse storage is provided in accordance with the Council's standards. Access arrangements to the site will remain as existing.
- 6.6. The change of use will not harm the neighbouring amenity of nearby residential uses given no external changes are proposed. Noise emissions will be limited due to the single dwelling nature of the proposals.
- 6.7. The site is a sustainably located property on the edge of Wokingham town centre in flood zone 1 and close to public transport services, employment areas and other town centre amenities.
- 6.8. In light of the above, it is concluded that the proposal will accord with the Wokingham Core Strategy (2010), the Managing Development Delivery DPD (2014), the NPPF and other material considerations. Planning permission should therefore be granted.

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