

## **DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT**



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

<b>Application Number:</b>	250303
<b>Site Address:</b>	5 Broad Street, Wokingham, RG40 1AU
<b>Expiry Date:</b>	06.05.2025
<b>Site Visit Date:</b>	08/04/2025
<b>Proposal:</b> Full application for the proposed installation of a replacement shop front door.	

### **PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**

- Adjacent to Listed Building
- Conservation Area – Wokingham Town Centre
- Non-Designated Heritage Asset
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Listed Building Buffer Zone

### **PLANNING POLICY**

<b>National Policy</b>	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
<b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
<b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b>	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets
<b>Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)</b>	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
<b>Other</b>	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Decision &amp; Date</u>
243189	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 232808 for replacement of the commercial shop entrance door.	Refused, 16/01/2025
242688	Application for submission details to comply with	Approved,

	the following condition of planning consent 232695 dated 22.12.2023. Condition 5 relates to noise impact assessment.	22/11/2024
240455	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 232808 dated 10/01/2024. Condition 3 relates to external materials, condition 4 to details of windows and doors, and condition 5 to details of dormers.	Approved, 29/05/2024
232647	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 232115 dated 25/10/2023. Condition 3 relates to the submission of a Construction Method Statement.	Approved, 22/11/2023
232808	Full application for the proposed alterations to roof/loft conversion to provide 2 no x 2 bedroom flats and replacement sash windows in rear elevation.	Approved, 10/01/2023
232695	Prior approval submission for the proposed change of use of part of the ground floor plus the first and second floors of the commercial premises to form 9No. dwellings.	Approved, 22/12/2023
232130	Full application for the proposed changes to fenestration, addition of roof light and installation of balustrades.	Approved, 26/10/2023
232115	Prior approval submission for the proposed change of use of part of the ground floor plus the first and second floors of the commercial premises to form 8 no. dwellings (Use Class C3)	Approved, 25/10/2023
230588	Application for non-material amendment to planning consent 223135 for the removal of existing night safe bezel and infill with brick.	Approved, 20/03/2023
223135	Full application for the removal of all existing signage, external ATMs, Nightsafe Bezel and making good where removals affect the building. Following the closure of the retail bank	Approved, 16/11/2022
09729	Alterations and extensions to existing branch bank premises.	CA, 12/04/1979
03791	Extension to Bank Premises	CA, 20/02/1976

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### Internal

WBC Built Heritage Officer – Objects to the proposed development

### External

None consulted.

## REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	The Wokingham (Civic) Society - The building's prominent location and historic use as a bank since 1905 contribute to the character of Broad Street. Its traditional features, like solid wooden doors and large windows, reflect early 20th-century banking architecture and should be retained to preserve its historic identity.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

## APPRAISAL

### Site Description and Proposed Development:

5 Broad Street occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Broad Street and Rose Street, within the core of Wokingham Town Centre and the Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area.

This application seeks permission for the replacement of shopfront entrance doors, following a recent refusal of an identical proposal submitted as a non-material amendment under planning reference 243189.

### 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.

### Impact on the Character of the Area and Built Heritage:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high quality design. 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.

Policy TB24 of the MDD relates to Designated Heritage Assets. Section 2 states that

*the Borough Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:*

- a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.
- b. Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk.

#### Heritage Value of 5 Broad Street

No. 5 Broad Street, originally opened as the London & County Banking Co. in 1905, is an impressive example of the Edwardian Queen Anne Revival style. The building was part of a bank that evolved into Westminster Bank in 1923 and eventually NatWest in 1970. Located on a medieval burgage plot, it holds architectural and historical significance, contributing to the character of Wokingham Town Conservation Area and complementing nearby listed buildings. The building features distinctive elements of the Queen Anne Revival, such as exaggerated detailing like swags and string courses. The oak-panelled front doors, likely the originals from 1905, and the original fanlight contribute to its architectural value. These features remain a key part of the structure's historical interest and contribute to the surrounding conservation area's character.

#### Appraisal

The Council's Built Heritage Officer has reviewed the application and concludes that the existing front doors of 5 Broad Street, constructed from oak, panelled, and part-glazed with reverse ogee arched windows, are consistent with the building's original style and form. Evidence suggests these are the original 1905 doors, based on their fitment to the Portland stone ashlar and alignment with the fanlight. Both the doors and fanlight remain in their original positions, as confirmed by historic photographs, physical inspection, and the internal walling, which aligns with these features. While it is possible the doors were replaced during the 1920s rebranding to Westminster Bank, they are clearly of historical significance. Their style, material, and finish, despite modern repainting, contribute positively to the architectural interest of the building and enhance the character of the Wokingham Town Conservation Area, as well as the setting of nearby listed buildings.

The Built Heritage Officer notes that the proposed replacement doors lack architectural interest and fail to reflect the detailing of the original building. Installing such generic doors would harm the significance of the non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) and negatively impact the character and appearance of the Wokingham Town Conservation Area. The removal of the historic doors would diminish an important architectural feature that contributes positively to the NDHA and the

Conservation Area. Furthermore, the proposed replacements would not authentically replicate the original design, failing to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area, as required under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This would also harm the setting of nearby listed buildings, undermining their special interest.

However, the Case Officer is of the view that a contextual analysis of the street scene is essential to fully assess the visual and heritage impact of the proposed replacement doors in relation to the wider Conservation Area.

Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Broad Street forms one of the key historic routes through Wokingham Town Centre and is a defining component of the Conservation Area. The architectural character of the street is shaped by a largely consistent two and three storey built form, featuring a rich mix of Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian buildings with a blend of commercial and residential uses. Ground floor commercial units along this street often feature a mix of traditional and more contemporary shopfront treatments, including entrance doors of varied design, scale, and quality. Some doors are plainly modern interventions, while others retain or sensitively replicate traditional design elements.

Of particular relevance in this case is the adjacent row of Grade II listed buildings to the immediate north-west of the application site. These buildings also accommodate ground floor commercial uses and feature entrance doors of broadly similar scale and arrangement to the proposed replacements. While they do not replicate the highly ornate Queen Anne Revival detailing found at No. 5 Broad Street, their doors include simple, traditional elements—such as modest panelling and arched or glazed upper sections—executed in traditional materials and sympathetic proportions. This local context sets an important precedent for the acceptability of modestly detailed replacement doors, particularly when they maintain a coherent relationship with the historic façades they serve.

Following the submission of amended plans on 11/04/2025, the applicant has sought to address previous concerns by incorporating key traditional features into the proposed replacement doors. These include an arched upper glazed panel, a lower solid panel, and a slight reduction in overall glazing area. The design now more closely aligns with both the existing doors and the shopfronts of the nearby listed buildings, creating a clearer visual relationship with the adjacent heritage assets and contributing to the consistency of architectural language within this part of the Conservation Area.

While the proposed doors would not fully replicate the original features, the revised scheme represents a balanced compromise — respecting traditional design principles while accommodating the contemporary functionality required for an active commercial frontage. This approach maintains visual continuity along the historic

street scene without resorting to pastiche or unduly affecting commercial viability. To ensure the special architectural and historic interest of the building is safeguarded, further details of the proposed doors and associated joinery can be secured through a pre-commencement condition.

While it is acknowledged that the replacement doors would not *enhance* the historic or architectural significance of No. 5 Broad Street, the revised proposals can be considered to *conserve* the contribution the building makes to the Conservation Area. This is achieved by striking an appropriate balance between preserving traditional detailing and allowing for a modest level of modernisation necessary for the functionality of a commercial premises—such as increased glazing to improve visibility and attract footfall.

In light of this, and having regard to Policy CP3, Policy TB28 and Paragraph 216 of the NPPF, the Case Officer considers that the scale of harm resulting from the replacement of the doors is limited and that the significance of the NDHA is still broadly preserved. On balance, the public benefits of providing a viable and inviting commercial frontage, and the design amendments made to respect the surrounding context, are considered sufficient to justify approval.

#### **Neighbouring Amenity:**

Due to the nature and sitting of the proposals within a commercial setting, there are no loss of light, overlooking or overbearing concerns.

#### **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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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**

<b>Conditions agreed:</b>	Yes
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Approval
<b>Date:</b>	17 April 2025

<b>Earliest date for decision:</b>	10 March 2025
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<b>Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)</b>	<i>MC</i>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>01.05.2025</b>