

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260091
Site Address:	36 Magnolia Court, Headley Road East, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4SD
Expiry Date:	8 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	17/03/2026
Proposal: Full application for the change of use of an existing housing manager's flat to an age-restricted dwelling (Use Class C3)	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC07 – Parking TB05 – Housing Mix TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB09 – Residential Accommodation for Vulnerable Groups
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 C1 – Active and sustainable transport and accessibility C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design H7 – Specialist accommodation DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity DH3 – Shopfronts
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
232968	Full application for the proposed changes to fenestration to the existing conservatory.	Approved, 29/02/2024
181784	Full planning application for the proposed changes to fenestration, soffit and fascia board	Approved, 10/08/2018
25853	34 Sheltered flats plus a wardens flat and communal facilities	C/A, 08/08/1986

CONSULTATION RESPONSES**Internal**

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received.
WBC Highways – No objections.
WBC Built Heritage Officer – No comments received.
WBC CIL – No comments received.
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Woodley Town Council – No objections.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL**Site Description:**

The application site relates to Magnolia Court, a retirement complex comprising 34 independent one and two bedroom flats for individuals aged 55 and over, located off Headley Road East in Woodley.

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 CP2 (a) of the Core Strategy supports proposals that address the requirements of an ageing population, particularly in terms of housing, health and well-being. The policy ensures that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and

inclusive communities to meet long-term needs.

Policy TB09 (d) of the adopted MDD local plan (2014) supports, in principle, proposals that provide accommodation for specialist needs, including 'purpose-built accommodation' for the elderly

Paragraph 63 of the NPPF recognises that planning decisions should consider the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community (including older people)

Use Class

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of an existing (now redundant) Housing Manager's flat to an age-restricted dwelling (Class C3).

According to the submitted Planning Statement, Magnolia Court does not provide direct care services beyond a 24-hour alarm system. Residents live independently, with each flat comprising its own kitchen, bathroom, and living area, as demonstrated on the submitted floor plans.

Based on the Use Classes Order and Planning Practice Guidance, the proposed age-restricted dwelling is appropriately classified as a Class C3 (dwellinghouse) use rather than Class C2. The key distinction between these use classes lies in the level and nature of care provided. Class C2 relates to residential institutions where occupants require ongoing personal care or supervision, typically involving assistance with day-to-day activities such as washing, dressing, eating, and medical support, where such care forms an integral and often mandatory part of the accommodation.

In this case, the development does not exhibit these characteristics. Instead, it aligns with Class C3, whereby residents occupy self-contained dwellings independently, albeit with access to limited support services.

Appraisal

The proposed development would make a positive contribution towards meeting the identified need for accommodation for an ageing population through the provision of a market dwelling. This is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular Section 5, and Policies CP2 and TB09 of the Development Plan.

Character of the Area:

As no internal or external changes are proposed, there would be no impact on the character or appearance of the area.

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 70m² applies for a one storey, 2-bedroom dwelling. The proposal would accord with this requirement.

External amenity

Policy TB07 of the Managing Development Deliver Local Plan and Principle R17 of the Borough Design Guide require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity. Principle R16 of the Borough Design Guide requires that rear gardens are at least 11 metres deep and 1 metre set back from the boundary to allow access thereto.

Magnolia Court benefits from a private courtyard, which is considered sufficient to meet the amenity needs of residents, and the proposed development would not adversely affect this provision.

Neighbouring Amenity:

As no internal or external changes are proposed, there would be no overlooking, loss of light, or overbearing impacts that are materially different from the existing situation.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed the application and considers that, given the nature of the site's operations, the proposal is unlikely to result in any significant change in traffic impact or parking demand. No objection is therefore raised.

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:	25 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	11 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	02.04.2026