

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250594
Site Address:	Five Ten Apartments, Reading Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5PX
Expiry Date:	18 June 2025
Site Visit Date:	29 April 2025
Proposal: Prior approval submission for erection of 3no. dwellings forming apartments through upwards extension to existing detached block of flats following removal of existing apartment.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Green Routes and Riverside Paths
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals - Winnersh
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – Red Risk Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
Historic Flooding Points Consultation Zone

PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Section 55	Provides that 'development' includes the carrying out of building operations on land, and 'building operations' includes structural alterations or additions to buildings.
Section 57	Planning permission is needed for all development of land.
Section 187a	Enforcement for breach of conditions

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Section 7	Prior approval applications: time periods for decision
Article 3	In conjunction with Schedule 2, Part 20, Class A grants planning permission for new dwellinghouses on detached blocks of flats.
Article 4	Provides that the planning authority may give direction to restrict the effect of Article 3

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
060992	Proposed erection of 3 x 2 bedroom apartments and 2 x 1 bedroom apartments. Demolition of existing dwelling.	Approved 10/05/2006

072481	Proposed retention of dormers to front elevation of Flat 5 (loft flat)	Approved 16/08/2007
100305	Proposed erection of rear balconies to dwelling.	Refused 22/06/2010

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received
WBC Drainage – No objections
WBC Highways – Request further information (see main body of report)
WBC CIL – General CIL commentary

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Winnersh Parish Council's Planning and Transport Committee object to the application for the following reasons: • Overdevelopment of the site • Out of character • Insufficient parking for visitors and deliveries • Lack of amenities The Committee also noted that there were discrepancies between the application, planning statement and drawings.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

PART A.1 APPRAISAL

s.55	Does it constitute development?	✓	
s.191	Would it be contrary to an enforcement notice?		✓
s.187a Art.3 (4)	Would it be contrary to any condition imposed by any planning permission granted or deemed to be granted?		✓
Art.3 (5)	Are the building operations involved in the construction of the original building lawful?	✓	
Art.4	Is there an 'Article 4 Direction' in effect for the site?		✓
Sch.2 Pt. A	Does it consist of works for the construction of up to two additional storeys of new dwellinghouses immediately above the existing topmost residential storey on a building which is a purpose-built, detached block of flats, together with any or all: a) engineering operations reasonably necessary to construct the additional storeys and new dwellinghouses;	✓	

	b) works for the replacement of existing plant or installation of additional plant on the roof of the extended building reasonably necessary to service the new dwellinghouses; c) works for the construction of appropriate and safe [access to and egress from] the new and existing dwellinghouses, including means of escape from fire, via additional external doors or external staircases; d) works for the construction of storage, waste or other ancillary facilities reasonably necessary to support the new dwellinghouses.		
A.1(1)(a)	The permission to use any building as a dwellinghouse has been granted only by virtue of Class M, [MA,] N, O, P, PA or Q of Part 3 of this Schedule;	✓	✓
A.1(1)(b)	above ground level, the building is less than 3 storeys in height;		✓
A.1(1)(c)	the building was constructed before 1st July 1948, or after 5th March 2018;		✓
A.1(1)(d)	the additional storeys are constructed other than on the principal part of the building;		✓
A.1(1)(e)	the floor to ceiling height of any additional storey, measured internally, would exceed the lower of— (i) 3 metres; or (ii) the floor to ceiling height, measured internally, of any storey of the principal part of the existing building		✓
A.1(1)(f)	the new dwellinghouses are not flats;		✓
A.1(1)(g)	the height of the highest part of the roof of the extended building would exceed the height of the highest part of the roof of the existing building by more than 7 metres (not including plant, in each case);		✓
A.1(1)(h)	the height of the highest part of the roof of the extended building (not including plant) would be greater than 30 metres;		✓
A.1(1)(i)	development under Class A.(a) would include the provision of visible support structures on or attached to the exterior of the building upon completion of the development;		✓
A.1(1)(j)	development under Class A.(a) would consist of engineering operations other than works within the existing curtilage of the building to— (i) strengthen existing walls; (ii) strengthen existing foundations; or (iii) install or replace water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services;		✓
A.1(1)(k)	in the case of Class A.(b) development there is no		N/A

	existing plant on the building;		
A.1(1)(l)	In the case of Class A.(b) development the height of any replaced or additional plant as measured from the lowest surface of the new roof on the principal part of the [extended building] would exceed the height of any existing plant as measured from the lowest surface of the existing roof on the principal part of the existing building;		N/A
A.1(1)(m)	development under Class A.(c) would extend beyond the curtilage of the existing building;		✓
A.1(1)(n)	development under Class A.(d) would— (i) extend beyond the curtilage of the existing building; (ii) be situated on land forward of a wall forming the principal elevation of the existing building; or (iii) be situated on land forward of a wall fronting a highway and forming a side elevation of the existing building;		✓
A.1(1)(o)	the land or site on which the building is located, is or forms part of— (i) article 2(3) land; (ii) a site of special scientific interest; (iii) a listed building or land within its curtilage; (iv) a scheduled monument or land within its curtilage; (v) a safety hazard area; (vi) a military explosives storage area; or (vii) land within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome.		✓

PART A.2 APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a 2/3 storey block of flats located on Reading Road, Winnersh, previously given permission under application 060992. The building includes three 2no. bedroom flats and 2no. 1 bedroom flats.

The building has a hipped roof form with dormers on its front and rear elevations. Two storey gable features are also present on both the front and rear elevations, with a narrow cat slide roof element on the south-eastern side elevation. The current ridge height of the building is approximately 8.85 metres.

The building has a car port leading to the existing rear parking area that is well enclosed by dense vegetation.

The immediate locale of the application site is characterised by predominantly single and two storey dwellinghouses located within relatively narrow plots but with generous garden depths. The road has an established linear development pattern that is rarely departed from. Immediately east of the application site is a single storey bungalow (no.508 Reading Road) and one door further down is another block of flats (no.506 Reading Road) which is visually similar in scale and architectural form to the application site.

To the west of the site is a small public pathway that leads to Chatsworth Avenue to the south but also prevalent along this footpath is a row of three terraced bungalows (nos.58-62 Chatsworth Avenue).

Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the erection of 3no. dwellings forming apartments, facilitated through an upwards extension to the existing detached block of flats following removal of an existing apartment.

The additional upwards extension would adopt the same architectural form as the existing property, including its roof forms and dormers.

Where any development under Class A is proposed, development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for prior approval of the authority as to—

(a) Transport and highways impacts of the development;

There are no proposed changes to the existing access off of Reading Road. WBC Highways do not consider that traffic generated from the two additional dwellings would have significant impacts on the wider highway network.

With regards to parking provision, a total of 10 parking spaces currently exist, with one additional space proposed. If implemented, the total number of flats would be 7. WBC Highways are satisfied that the provision is adequate to serve the occupants of the flats.

WBC Highways have raised minor concerns with the turning space available to the rear of the spaces but as this is an existing arrangement, it does not warrant a reason for refusal.

(b) air traffic and defence asset impacts of the development;

There are no air traffic and defence asset impacts associated with the development

(c) contamination risks in relation to the building;

The site is not designated as an area with potential contamination. As works are also exclusively restricted to the existing footprint of the building, there are no concerns on these grounds.

(d) flooding risks in relation to the building;

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of surface water flooding. WBC Drainage have no objections to the proposals as the works are exclusively restricted to the existing footprint of the building.

(e) the external appearance of the building;

As outlined above, the site's locale is characterised by predominantly single and two storey dwellinghouses located within relatively narrow plots but with generous garden depths. The main anomalies to this pattern is the application building and no.506 Reading Road but even then, their approximate 8.85 metre heights are not too detached from the standard heights of dwellinghouses, largely aided by the fact the second floors are embedded within the loft/roof form.

Approximately 200 metres west on Reading Road there is a modest cluster of three storey blocks of flats which have a maximum height of 12.5 metres. These buildings are well offset from Reading Road by large areas of amenity grassland and mature tree planting on their northern frontage, giving a spacious feel to their immediate surroundings.

Turning to the proposed development, the upwards extension would increase the ridge height of the building to approximately 11.8 metres. In the immediate context of the application site, the building's height would be a visually intrusive and dominant feature in a line of modest residential properties, dwarfing the adjacent properties (in particular no.508 Reading Road).

The aforementioned presence of other three storey blocks of flats along Reading Road are noted but the main difference between them and the application site is the provision of spacious amenity and landscaping provision to offset their form from the roadside/public realm. In comparison, the application site is much narrower with limited to no separation distances from the side boundaries. As a consequence of this, the 11.8 metre tall building would appear disproportionately large and cramped within this modest residential plot, exacerbating its visual harm in relation to neighbouring properties.

Overall, the proposed development fails to comply with A.2 (e) as the external appearance of the building would fail to maintain the quality of the environment and is unacceptable.

(f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the new dwellinghouses;

All the primary fenestration proposed would either be front or rear facing; the rear of the building is south facing and therefore flats facing this way would receive adequate natural light to the habitable rooms.

Flat 6 would be largely north facing but does include secondary openings on the side elevations (west and east facing) to the majority of the habitable rooms. Due to their

height, minimal interruptions to natural light are also anticipated.

It is therefore considered that the development would achieve the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the new apartments.

(g) impact on the amenity of the existing building and neighbouring premises including overlooking, privacy and the loss of light;

With regards to the impact onto the adjacent bungalow (no.508 Reading Road), the existing building maintains separation distances between 0.4 and 1.2 metres from the boundary with no.508. Whilst no.508's north-western side elevation is blank, the depth of the application building means it is set back further into the plot than the bungalow, with plentiful views of the application building from the bungalow's rear garden:



There is therefore already a modest overbearing impact on the neighbouring dwelling and its primary rear amenity space immediately outside of the rear extension. With this in mind, the substantial proposed height increase of the application building would have a much greater overbearing impact on the neighbouring bungalow and their rear amenity space, exacerbated by the limited separation distances and the overall differences in scale between the neighbouring buildings. This overbearing impact is considered unacceptable and would detrimentally affect the amenities of the adjoining occupiers.

Aside from the above, it is not considered that there would be any adverse loss of light impacts to no.508; the footprint/depth of the building is not increasing, and the gardens are primarily south facing. Any loss of light impacts to no.508 Reading Road would be limited to its blank roof form which is acceptable.

Overlooking onto no.508 would be limited to secondary side windows which would be conditioned to remain obscured and limited in opening height. Subject to this condition, it is not anticipated that there would be any overlooking concerns in this regard.

Turning to the impact onto no.512 Reading Road to the west, the sites are separated by the public footpath and as such the buildings retain a separation distance of approximately 4 metres. Despite this, there is a significant stagger in the rear building lines of the two plots, with the application building extending a significant distance further southwards:



The application building lies immediately adjacent to the boundary with the footpath. Therefore, its appearance within the garden of no.512, and from the neighbouring property's rear fenestration, has a towering presence and a modest overbearing impact. In comparison, the additional storey proposed would only exacerbate the building's towering presence when viewed from the neighbouring property, especially as it aligns with the majority of no.512's primary rear amenity space. The impact of this additional massing within immediate proximity to the site boundary would have an adverse overbearing impact on the amenities of no.512 Reading Road, to the

detriment of their amenities.

With regards to overlooking onto no.512, subject to a condition obscuring and limiting the opening height of the additional windows proposed on the north-west elevation of the building, there are no anticipated overlooking impacts onto no.512 Reading Road. Loss of light to no.512 would also be limited to their side garage extension which is acceptable.

To the south, the application building would retain a separation distance of approximately 48 metres which is acceptable. Overlooking onto nos.58-62 Chatsworth Avenue to the south-west would be limited to their roof forms which is also acceptable.

Overall, the proposed development fails to comply with A.2 (g) as the proposed development adversely impacts the amenities of nos. 508 and 512 Reading Road by reason of overbearing.

(a) whether because of the siting of the building, the development will impact on a protected view identified in the Directions Relating to Protected Vistas dated 15 March 2012 issued by the Secretary of State

This is not applicable to the application site.

(b) where the existing building is 18 metres or more in height, the fire safety of the external wall construction of the existing building

This is not applicable to the application site.

(c) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building

This is not applicable to the application site.

2) Any development under Class A is permitted subject to the condition that it must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the date prior approval is granted.

This would be applied as a condition if the application is recommended for approval.

3) Any development under Class A is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must provide the local planning authority with a report for the management of the construction of the development, which sets out the proposed development hours of operation and how any adverse impact of noise, dust, vibration and traffic on occupiers of the building and adjoining owners or occupiers will be mitigated.

This would be applied as a condition if the application is recommended for approval.

4) The developer must notify the local planning authority of the completion of the development as soon as reasonably practicable after completion.

This is noted.

5) The notification referred to in sub-paragraph (4) must be in writing and must include—

- (a) the name of the developer;**
- (b) the address or location of the development; and**
- (c) the date of completion.**

This is noted.

6) Any new dwellinghouse created under Class A is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the primary use as a dwellinghouse.

This is noted.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed development fails to comply with requirements A.2 (e) and (g) as the building would cause adverse visual harm to the character of the area and would cause adverse overbearing impacts onto the adjacent no.508 Reading Road, to the detriment of their amenities.

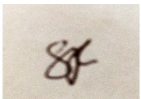
Therefore, whilst prior approval is available, it is refused on the grounds listed above.

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

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Prior Approval - Refusal
Date:	27 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	16 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	28.5.25