

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250827
Site Address:	287 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3NS
Expiry Date:	1 August 2025
Site Visit Date:	30 June 2025
Proposal: Householder application for proposed raising of the roof to create habitable accommodation alongside the insertion of 1 No. chimney and changes to fenestration. Followed by the demolition of the existing conservatory.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

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

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
26/68	Detached Bungalow	Approve 14 th March 1968

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No Objection
WBC Landscape and Trees – No Objection Subject to Conditions
WBC CIL
WBC Ecology – No Objection Subject to Conditions

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	<u>Objection received form one neighbour</u> - The proposed development includes two windows on a raised floor that would directly overlook the neighbouring bathroom and shower room that have obscure glazing. The proximity would compromise privacy and comfort. These rooms require ventilation, which could be hindered by the new windows. <i>Officer comment: Visual privacy in relation to neighbouring amenity is discussed in the main body of the report. Ventilation is a separate process from planning and covered by Building regulations.</i> - The houses and bungalows form a cohesive streetscape. The proposed development is out of character with the neighbourhood and contradicts the Finchampstead local plan. The raised floor exceeds the existing ridge height and resembles a new build rather than a sympathetic modification. <i>Officer comment: The impact of the development on the character of the area, and the ridge height, is discussed in the main report is discussed in the main body of the report.</i> - The proposed raised floor would reduce light and privacy to the neighbouring rear conservatory and obstruct views. <i>Officer comment: Privacy and right to light in relation to neighbour amenity is discussed in the main body of the report.</i>

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APPRAISAL

Site Description:

A detached bungalow and garage in the modest development location of Finchampstead North and on a Green Route. The bungalow is set well back from the road and has a large front garden laid to gravel hard standing. There are 2 no. large oak trees protected by TPO-0322-1987 within the curtilage and adjacent to the brick wall that forms the boundary with the highway.

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:

Raising of the roof to create habitable accommodation alongside the insertion of 1 No. chimney and changes to fenestration. Followed by the demolition of the existing conservatory.

The proposal is to build a first-floor front/side and rear extension ground floor that would occupy the same footprint and be above the existing ground floor. The proposal would raise the eaves height by approximately 2.8m from to 2.7m to 5.1m; and increase the ridge height by approximately 3.7m from to 4.3m to 8m. The principal elevation would be approximately 1m from the shared boundary with 285 Nine Mile Ride, and the rear wall would be approximately 1.8m away from the boundary.

On the first floor, the proposal would facilitate 2 no. bedrooms with front facing windows, 2 no. bedrooms with rear facing windows, an ensuite, dressing room and bathroom. On the side elevation facing 285 Nine Mile Ride there would be a bathroom window and a landing window; on the side elevation facing 287A there would be a small window serving an ensuite.

On the ground floor, internal walls would be re-arranged to facilitate a kitchen/dining area at the rear; an entrance hall, sitting room, 2 no. utility areas and a WC.

The existing flat roof to the WC, utility and garage measures 3m in height and would be replaced with a gable roof with side gable wall measuring approximately 4.5m to the top of the ridge and approximately 2.5m to the top of the eaves. The new roof

would extend up to the side boundary with 287A Nine Mile Ride and occupy the same footprint as existing.

The chimney would measure approximately 2.5m in height and the top of the chimney would be approximately 0.8m lower than the maximum height of the roof ridge.

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 Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Maximum eaves height and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.
- Side extensions should be set back by 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary.
- The rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages is often important to the character of the area.
- The eaves and/or ridge height should not be raised in height unless buildings in the local context are significantly taller.

The street scene is verdant with tall trees visible at intervals along the highway within the front gardens of detached dwellings. Properties are a mixture of bungalows and houses of varying ages and designs that are set well back from the road. Boundary treatments are either brick walls, fences or hedges and some properties are partially screened by tall vegetation when viewed from the public realm.

The application site is in a row of three bungalows set well back from the road and. The proposal would raise the eaves height of the main roof by approximately 2.8m and increase the ridge height by approximately 3.7m; and would be higher than the roof line of the immediate neighbours at 285 and 287A Nine Mile Ride. However, there are examples of two storey dwellings in the immediate street scene that would have similar roof heights to the proposal. For example, no.'s 286, 286A and 284 Nine Mile Ride were previously bungalows and have been converted or rebuilt to provide 2 storey detached dwellings. The chimney would measure approximately 2.5m in height would be approximately 0.8m lower than the maximum height of the roof ridge. Furthermore, the property would be set well back from the road and partially screened by the tall trees in the front garden. Therefore, it would not be overly prominent in the street scene.

There would be a separation distance of approximately 1m between the side wall of the first-floor extension and the boundary with no. 285. The raised garage roof would be subservient to the main roof line and in line with the main roof of the adjacent bungalow at 287A. Therefore, the development would not significantly impact the rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages or harm the character of the area.

Overall, the development would comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation to character of the area.

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 Borough Design Guide (BDG) states that buildings must be designed to provide reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms. The west facing wall of the first-floor extension would have a bathroom window and a landing window facing onto the 2 no. dormer windows with obscure glazing side elevation of no. 285; and on the east facing side elevation there would be a window serving the ensuite. Therefore, if the proposed windows are obscure glazing and non-opening below 1.7m of the internal floor level, there would be no significant impact on neighbours' visual privacy

Loss of Light: The test advocated within the British Research Establishment's (BRE) publication *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice*, to assess impact on daylight and sunlight levels to neighbours potentially by adjacent developments is the 45-degree angle test. However, the 45-degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. The rear elevation of the property is northwest facing and has less light throughout the year than the front aspect of the property. Figure 1 shows that the horizontal 45-degree test would not be complied with in relation to the nearest habitable window and would be complied with in relation to the conservatory at no.285 Nine Mile Ride. Figure 2 Shows that the vertical 45-degree angle test is complied with in relation to both the nearest habitable room and the conservatory at no. 285. The proposal would not result in loss of light to a habitable room on the side elevation because the side dormer extension because the 2 no. windows serve a bathroom and en-suite.



Figure 1 Horizontal 45-degree test

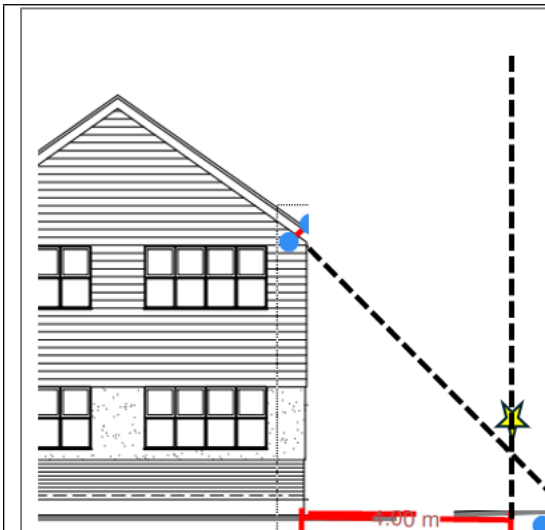


Figure 2 Vertical 45-degree angle test and approximate midpoint of neighbouring window shown in yellow

In this instance, as the vertical 45-degree rule is complied with, the proposal would not result in significant loss of sunlight to neighbouring amenity.

Overbearing: The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to visual impact and states that the layout and design must have a balanced response to the local context in terms of provision of external space. In this case:

- The extension will occupy the existing ground floor footprint and not extend further back from the existing rear wall.
- The garage adjacent to no 287A abuts the boundary; the eaves height would be 2.5m and in line with the height of the neighbouring single storey roof; the separation distance with no. 287A would be approximately 3m at first floor level providing a balanced transition.
- The separation distance of the first-floor extension with the boundary with 285 would be 1m at the front and approximately 1.8m at the rear which is less than 2m as recommended in the BDG. with the boundary. However, the property is situated within a generous plot and given that the proposal complies with planning policy in other aspects, this would not be a robust reason to refuse the application.

Therefore, the height and bulk of the dwelling will not significantly harm the neighbouring occupiers or dominate the adjoining bungalow.

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 and has commented: *“The total numbers of habitable rooms will remain unchanged as seven. The existing garage is retained, and three driveway parking spaces are proposed within the red line. The proposed driveway will have ample spaces for parking spaces of suitable dimensions by utilising the existing dropped crossing. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions. No negative impacts on abilities for cycle storage are*

expected, which is acceptable.”

Landscape and Trees: The Landscape and Tree Officer raises no objection and has commented: *“Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 322/1987, oaks T8 and T9 grow on the front boundary of the site. TPO 1632/2018, G1, on oak, Scots pine, birch, aspen and hornbeam bounds the rear of the plot. A green back drop of onsite and third-party trees not subject to a TPO can be seen over this single storey house, from the Green Route.*

The arb report includes root protection areas (RPAs) adjusted for TPO trees T1 and T2 of the submissions. The adjustments are incorrect as they are too far into the impermeable surface of the road, this will particularly be the case in this instance as recent service run excavations can be seen in the pavement and road outside no.287. The roots will likely be in the soft ground within and either side of the site. However, given the existing built forms and from a practical standpoint, in this case, I believe that sufficient ground and stem protection has been proposed. I have suggested a condition to include these important protection measures.

The scheme raises the roof height, and this will permanently obscure the green back drop, contrary to Design Guide policy R23. But, due to the set back and the single storey element of the proposal I feel that some trees will still be seen so that this verdant characteristic of the Ride will be maintained. I have suggested a condition to ensure this.

The building respects the building line, uses external materials which although not as the original, will not be out of keeping amongst the various finishes locally. The driveway layout will not change.

Overall, the application appears to comply with the T&L parts of the policies and guidance listed above.

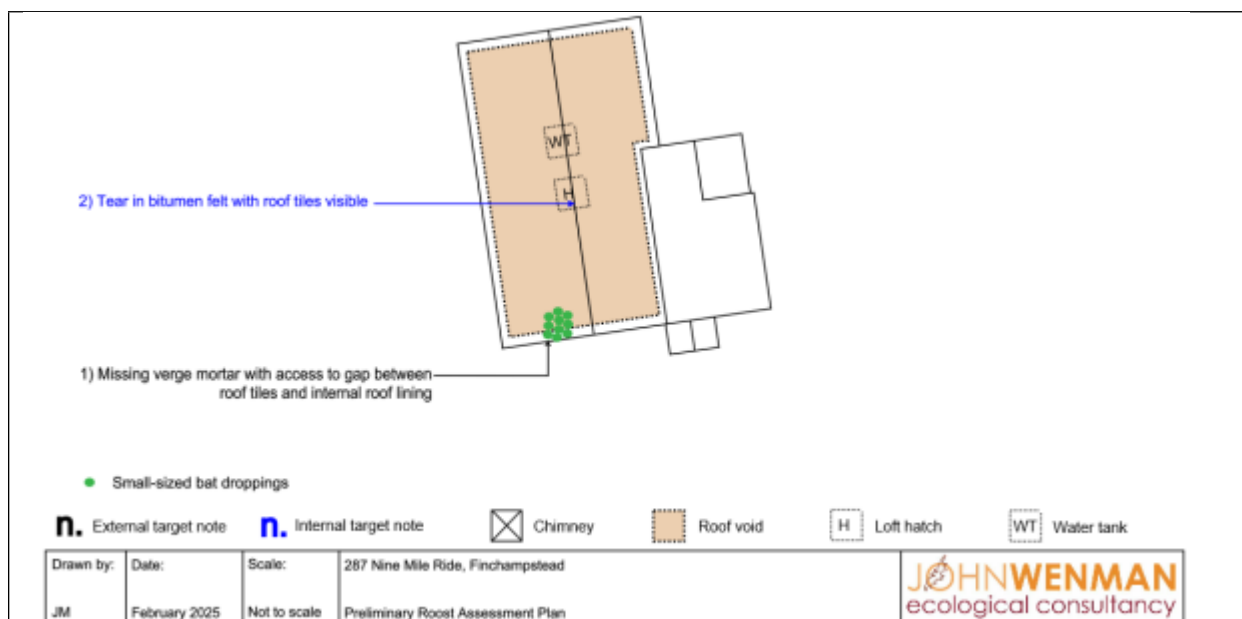
Suggested Conditions

CL6 Retention of trees and shrubs

CL7 – protection of trees (amended)”

Ecology: The Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to conditions and has commented

“I am satisfied that no further surveys are necessary and that provided adequate compensation bat roost features are integrated into the front elevation of the dwelling and all roofs are all constructed with with a bat-friendly roofing membrane i.e. Type 1F (bitumen and hessian) a European protected species mitigation licence is not necessary for the development to proceed lawfully.



Birds, bats and species active at night are sensitive to light pollution. Increase or the introduction of artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. In order to recommend approval of the development an external lighting condition must be secured to ensure bats and wildlife are not negatively impacted.

BS5837:2012 section 4.2.4 states that tree surveys should record the extent, basal ground levels and height of shrub masses, hedges, hedgerows and stumps. The trees which have been felled and impact hedgerows have not been assessed in the Arboricultural Development Report. To ensure that the site maintains and enhances habitat for wildlife in accordance with the NPPF paragraph 1987(d) and Local Plan CP3 and CP7 and MDD TB23 submission and approval of landscaping scheme should be considered, or the ecological enhancements should include provision of



native and wildlife friendly tree and shrub planting.

Requested Conditions

Condition: No operations shall commence on site development or other operation including pruning, dismantling/demolition works, soil moving, or any other operation shall commence until full details of a bat mitigation strategy and biodiversity enhancement scheme to include integrated bricks, bird box and native and wildlife friendly landscaping, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The scheme shall include the mitigation outlined in Section 6.2 of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2856_PRA_a) including integrated bat tube (such as an Ibstock enclosed bat brick, Habibat bat box, or a suitable functional equivalent) at the apex of the proposed front gable (as illustrated in

R2856_PRA_a Appendix 4). All roofs must only be lined with a bat friendly membrane i.e. Type 1F (bitumen and hessian) felt or a breathable membrane which has been issued a certificate by Natural England as suitable for use in bat roosts i.e. TLX Batsafe. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the details and timetable approved and thereafter retained and maintained. Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be submitted for approval to the council.

Reason: To ensure that bats, a protected and priority species, are not adversely affected by the proposals and incorporate biodiversity enhancements. **Relevant policy:** NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23

Condition:

At no time shall external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning. Any external lighting scheme which submitted be designed in line with best practice including [Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23](#)

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Condition:

a) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the Tree Protection Measures given in pages 12 to 28 of the Arboricultural Development Report (Woods Tree Consultancy, 7 May 2025) are in place on site.

b) All works are to be carried out in full accordance with the approved Tree Protection Measures.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected as set out in the approved Tree Protection Measures.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the approved Scheme Tree Protection Measures shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of value to wildlife, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03, TB21 and TB23.

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide in terms of neighbouring amenity because the separation distance of the first-floor extension with the neighbouring property is slightly less than recommended. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the neighbouring property would still have adequate access to open space.

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

Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	30 July 2025
Earliest date for decision:	31 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	31 July 2025