

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252507
Site Address:	68-70 Peach Street, Wokingham, RG40 1XH
Expiry Date:	15 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	27 October 2025
Proposal: Full planning application for the insertion of 4 no. windows.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Conservation Area – Wokingham Town Centre
- Scale and Local of Development Proposals
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Landscape Character Assessment Area

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principle for Development CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Area of Special Character
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE2 – Environmental standards for non-residential development CE4 – Supporting a circular economy CE6 – Reducing energy consumption in existing buildings ER1 – Core Employment Areas ER4 – Employment and skills plans ER5 – The hierarchy of centres ER6 – Town, district and local centres and shopping parades ER8 – Wokingham town centre DH1 – Place making and quality design HC5 – Environmental protection HC8 – Noise pollution
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

	Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Wokingham Town Centre SPD
--	--

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
242941	Full application for the proposed installation of 4 no. first floor windows.	Approved 13/03/2025
242027	Prior approval submission for proposed change of use of the commercial premises on the first floor to 2 no. dwellings.	Prior Approval Refused 26/09/2024

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Built Heritage Officer – None received

External

None received

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The site refers to an existing commercial building within a shopping parade in Wokingham Town Centre.

Proposal: Within the original application, it was proposed that 6 No. windows were inserted within the northeastern first floor elevation. Following the receipt of amended plans, this has now been reduced to 4 No. windows only. The windows are proposed to match the existing first floor windows with regards to appearance, design and materials.

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.

Character of the Area and Built Heritage:

The application site is located with Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area within the main high street and forms part of Peach Place development. The site is also located within a proximity of several listed buildings (30 Market Place, Bush Walk, Wokingham Town Hall). For this reason, there is a heightened sensitivity to future development. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development must ensure the preservation of any nearby listed building, including its setting. Paragraphs 212-215 of the NPPF require consideration of the harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset and Policy TB24 of the MDD requires the conservation and enhancement of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, including views and setting.

Furthermore, Principle NR2: Non-residential development should be designed to contribute towards improving the character and quality of the area. The design guidance also notes that proposals should also add to the quality and character of the place and help to maintain or increase its appeal.

The proposal seeks to installed 4 No. windows within the first-floor side/rear elevation of the existing building. As such, the windows would not be readily seen from the principal elevation. The windows would be visible from the rear service yard/parking area and seen in the context of the existing built form. The proposed windows would have a similar appearance of the existing windows within the area, and it is therefore considered that the proposed windows would not cause harm to the character of the area. Further, the host property is a more modern building and not in of itself a heritage asset despite falling within the Conservation Area.

Given the size and location of the proposed windows, it is considered that it would not result in a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area. Further, the windows are proposed to be situated in the northeastern elevation which is not situated within a shopfront line visible to the public. The conservation officer confirmed that an insertion of the ventilation louvre in the eastern elevation would raise no serious concerns.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable detrimental impact to the character of the area, and it would serve the operational needs of the applicant for this unit.

In summary, it is considered that the proposal would complement the character and appearance of Wokingham Town Centre conservation area and would be sympathetic to its location in proximity to listed buildings given its location to the rear of the building away from the main Heritage Assets. No objections are therefore raised in this regard with regards to the proposed development.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposed windows are located at first-floor level and are side facing, these windows would look towards what appears to be a relatively new residential building (Planning Reference 142770) and as such these windows would look towards residential habitable rooms. The windows are set 5.5 metres from the application site. As such, it was considered with the original application for 6 windows that these proposed windows would result in overlooking and a loss of privacy.

Following discussions with the agent, the proposal has been reviewed to remove 2 of the windows which were closest to the neighbouring property windows. In addition, a further supporting plan has been submitted to demonstrate that the reduction in windows would remove the opportunities for overlooking towards and into the private habitable rooms of the neighbouring property. While some oblique overlooking towards the habitable rooms may be possible, given the oblique nature, this would not lead to any detrimental harm or offer opportunities for direct harmful overlooking. The alignment of the windows would now be as such where view towards the neighbouring obscurely glazed bathroom window would be possible, however due to this being obscurely glazed, the overlooking impacts are considered to have been reduced to an acceptable level. Given this, the concerns regarding overlooking have now been overcome.

As such, it is not considered the additional 4 No. windows would result in any loss of privacy which would result in detrimental harms. Due to the nature of the proposals, there are no loss of light or overbearing concerns. Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact upon the amenity of the adjoining properties.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would not alter the parking provision of the site or the access to the site. Therefore, no objections are raised in this regard.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area or cause harm to the amenity of the adjoining land uses. Consequently, it would be compliant with Policies CP1, CP3, and CP14 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD, the Policies CC01, CC04, TB15 and TB24 of MDD Local Plan, and Peach Place, Wokingham Shopfront Design Guide.

Other:

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:	Approve
Date:	20 November 2025
Earliest date for decision:	12 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>BJC</i>
Date:	05.12.25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS
Insert where relevant