

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250473
Site Address:	107 New Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6JW
Expiry Date:	6 June 2025
Site Visit Date:	28/04/2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed single storey rear extension, first floor extension, new front porch and changes to dormer roof and windows.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Tree Preservation Orders
- 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 Principles for Development CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand 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 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC07 – Parking
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant Planning Application or Planning Appeal History to the current application (i.e. being substantially the same development).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objections.

WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections, subject to a condition.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Wokingham Without Parish Council – No objection.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a one and a half storey detached house located in an established residential area that is characterised by detached properties that vary in style and architecture. A belt of tall trees, hedgerow and well landscaped garden area lines both sides of New Wokingham Road which provides verdant buffer within the street scene and offers screening to the dwellings.

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:

The proposal seeks the erection of a single storey rear extension, which would be similar in scale and design to the existing addition, along with the extension of the

existing rear dormer to create additional first floor accommodation. While the enlarged dormer would be relatively substantial in comparison to the host dwelling, it would remain appropriately set in from the ridge and sides of the main roof, ensuring it remains subservient to the overall roof form. Furthermore, the dormer would be located to the rear and would not be readily visible from the public realm. Given these factors, the proposals are not considered to result in any adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area.

The proposal also includes the addition of two front-facing dormer windows within the existing front roof projection. The dormers are modest in scale and would not appear out of keeping with the varied architectural styles along the street, where dormer windows of differing sizes and designs are a common feature. As such, the proposed dormers are considered to be acceptable in terms of their scale, design, and visual impact on the street scene.

The proposed single storey front extension to form a porch is modest in terms of height, depth and design. The proposal is clearly subservient and sympathetic to the host property, therefore, would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The new windows on the front elevation would overlook the front driveway and public realm. As these windows would maintain over 10 metres separation from properties across the street, any overlooking concerns are minimal.

The views offered from the fenestration proposed on the rear elevation would be similar to that shared from the existing arrangement and would be positioned over 22 metres away from the primary function rooms of neighbouring dwellings to the rear of the host property. As such, any overlooking or loss of privacy concerns are minimal.

With regards to the new ground floor windows, the existing boundary fencing would be high enough to sufficiently mitigate any overlooking concerns.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

The proposed extensions would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of overbearing or loss of light.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and notes that the proposal will not increase the number of habitable rooms. The existing driveway will be shortened to circa 15.3m, which has no significant impact to parking provisions. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions. As such, no objections are raised on highway grounds.

Amenity Space:

The remaining rear amenity space would exceed the minimum depth requirement of

11 metres. The proposal is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Landscape and Trees:

According to the Council's Esri mapping system, a TPO Silver Birch (Ref: TPO-1224-2008) is located within the front driveway of the application site, and a group of seven Oak trees, also protected under TPO-1224-2008, line the front boundary. However, a site visit conducted by the Case Officer confirmed that the Silver Birch tree is no longer present within the site.

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the application and advised that the remaining group of protected Oak trees would not be directly affected by the proposed development. Due to their distance from the works and the presence of the existing gravel driveway, their root systems will be protected from potential construction-related impacts. Accordingly, no objections have been raised, subject to the submission of a soft landscaping scheme prior to the commencement of development.

However, the Case Officer considers that such a condition is not reasonable in this instance. The site already benefits from a mature front boundary comprising a well-established hedgerow paired with two trees, both of which positively contribute to the character of the area. The proposed development would not involve the removal or pruning of any trees, and the scale of the front extensions is not considered substantial enough to warrant the imposition of a landscaping condition. As such, the inclusion of a soft landscaping scheme is not deemed reasonable in this case.

Ecology:

Policy N2 1 (f) of the NPPF seeks to 'minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity and include features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs...'

Policy N2 2 states that 'If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, then the development should be refused.'

Core Strategy policy CP3 sets out that development should c) have no detrimental impact upon important ecological features and d) maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species.

Core Strategy policy CP7 states that development which may harm habitats or species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, whether directly or indirectly will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that i) Mitigation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts; or ii) Appropriate compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided.

MDD Local Plan Policy TB23 states that planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they comply with policy CP7 and also demonstrate how they provide opportunities, including through design, layout and

landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing.

The application site is located within a verdant setting containing mature trees and vegetation and lies within an area where bat roosts have previously been recorded.

The supporting Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (GS Ecology, March 2025, Ref: ECO3765) concludes that the site and property has moderate potential to support a bat roost. This is due to its location within habitat of high suitability for commuting and foraging bats, together with the presence of numerous features that could provide suitable roosting opportunities. The assessment therefore recommends further surveys between May and the end of August to determine whether bats are present and, if so, establish the status of any roost identified.

No further surveys have been provided by the applicant.

Bats are protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England's standing advice, alongside the principles set out in Circular 06/2005 (*Biodiversity and Geological Conservation Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System*), confirms the importance of establishing the presence or absence of protected species, and understanding the extent to which they may be affected, *before* a planning application is determined. This ensures that the likely ecological impacts of a proposal are fully understood and can be appropriately taken into account as part of the decision-making process.

More specifically, paragraph 99 of the Government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System (referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework) states: "It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted."

Consequently, insufficient ecological information has been submitted to assess the likely effects of the development on bats, a protected species. The submitted Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment identifies the building as having moderate bat roost potential and recommends further bat emergence surveys, which have not been provided. In the absence of this information, the Local Planning Authority cannot establish that the proposal would not result in significant harm to bats or their roosts, nor whether any such harm could be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to comply with Policy N2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Policies CP3 and CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) and Policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014).

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Refusal
Date:	6 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	4 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	08.09.2026