

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	243234
Site Address:	39 Heathermount Drive, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6HJ
Expiry Date:	26 March 2025
Site Visit Date:	17 February 2025
Proposal: Householder application for proposed new roof and retrofit of existing property, part garage conversion and internal alterations to existing dwelling.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Modest Development Location - Pinewood (Crowthorne)
Tree Preservation Orders

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 CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Crowthorne Village Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
14/68	37 detached houses and garages, 12 flats in 2 three storey blocks, and siting of 12 bungalows Heathermount Drive, Edgecombe Park estate, Wokingham Without.	Approve 15 February 1968

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways WBC Landscape and Trees WBC Ecology
External
N/A

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No objection raised.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	Two comments received: 1. The new proposed building could compromise the light to the row of bungalows in Heathermount Gardens. <i>Officer comments: The proposal complies with the 45-degree angle test advocated by the British Research Establishment. In addition, the rear aspect of the bungalows in Heathermount Gardens is north facing and already shaded from the sun for much of the day and the proposed roof would not be visible above the existing trees. Therefore, the proposal would not have a significant impact on loss of light to the neighbouring bungalows.</i> 2. No general objections to the proposed design. Request consideration is given to the design of, and materials finishing the side balcony as it brings an elevated overlook much closer to the wall adjoining the drive at no. 41. <i>Officer comment: The applicant has revised the original plans submitted with the application and reduced the depth of the balcony to 1.8m. Moreover, as the balcony would be forward of the side elevation of no. 41, any increase in overlooking would be minimal.</i>

APPRAISAL
Site Description: The site is a 1970's detached dwelling in the residential area of Pinewood in Wokingham. The plot is subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 780/1996. It has a tarmac driveway and a garage for off road parking. The front garden has a grassed area with mature trees that partially screen the house from the road. The rear garden is triangular in shape with the south facing boundary being adjacent to a 3-storey block of flats and bungalows in Heathermount Gardens. 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: New roof and retrofit of existing property, part garage conversion and internal alterations to existing dwelling. The maximum height of the proposed split roof would be 7.2m, increasing the overall height by approximately 1.5m. The proposed garage would have a sloping roof, a single garage door and a window on the front elevation. The proposed utility room would be built within the existing garage footprint and would measure 4.2m in length and 2.2m in width. It would have a window on the rear elevation and the front facing internal wall. The front elevation of the porch would have a glazed window. A sloping roof with maximum height of 5.8m would replace the existing pitch roof above the front dining room window. This would facilitate an additional window to the first-floor front bedroom. On the SE side elevation, the increase in roof height would facilitate the addition of no. 3 slit windows to the first floor. On the NW elevation a proposed balcony accessed from the bedroom via double doors would measure 1.8m in width, 4m in length and have a balustrade approximately 1.2m in height.

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. Policy R9 of the Borough Design Guide (BDG) states that the height of residential buildings should respond to the prevailing heights and degree of variation in height in the local context, and position in the street hierarchy.

Policy R23 states that any alteration or extension to an existing building should be well-designed, contribute positively to the local character and original building, and relate well to neighbouring properties.

The site is one of a three detached houses of similar design and age within a staggered building line. The ground level of the site is lower than that of the highway; the property is set back and partially screened from the road by mature trees. The proposal would increase the overall height of the dwelling house by approximately 1.5m. However, the ground level slopes downwards from the road and so the impact of the increase in roof height would be reduced. The design of the front elevation is also in keeping with the character of the area. Therefore, this proposal would blend with other street frontages and not be overly prominent. Overall, the proposal complies with Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and Policy R23 in the Borough Design Guide.

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. R15 of the BDG states that buildings must be designed to provide reasonable levels of privacy to habitable rooms.

Overlooking: R23 of the BDG states that side walls of extensions must not contain windows especially at first floor level, to minimise any potential impact on the privacy of neighbours. The proposed first floor balcony would have double doors to replace a large window opening onto a balcony approximately 1.8m in depth and with a balustrade 1.2m in height. However, the balcony would be forward of the side elevation of no. 41 and not directly overlook the first-floor landing window and kitchen window on the ground floor. Therefore, any increase in overlooking would be minimal.

Loss of Light: The maximum height of the proposed split roof would be 7.2m, increasing the overall height by approximately 1.5m. The 45-degree angle test is 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 impacted upon by adjacent developments. The horizontal and vertical tests are complied with in relation to neighbouring properties.

Overbearing: The footprint of the house is not increasing. The maximum height of the proposed split roof would be 7.2m, increasing the overall height by approximately 1.5m. However, the ground level at no. 39 Heathmont Drive is set lower than no 41 and the proposal would bring the roof heights of each property broadly in line with each other. Therefore, there are no concerns related to overbearing.

Overall, the proposal complies with CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation to neighbourhood amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal will not result in any additional habitable rooms. Highways have no objection to the part garage conversion which retained a single garage. The existing driveway parking will be retained, and the level of parking is considered acceptable.

Landscape and Trees: The site is on a verdant maturing housing estate. The house is set back from the road, down a slope and features trees of various ages and species. Neighbouring dwellings are of mixed designs. The plot is subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 780/1996, A1, on Scots pine, oak, birch, rowan, Norway maple, beech, larch and red oak alive in May 1996, some examples of which impact the site. A red oak to the north of the front of the property is number 45997 of the Ancient Tree Inventory and is recorded as 'notable'.

From a landscape perspective the house is set back, and neighbouring properties are of dissimilar styles. The high quality of design and the use of complementary external materials suggest to me that the proposal will make a positive contribution to the street scene. Submissions state that no trees are to be removed. As it appears the proposed footprint will remain similar to existing, there will be scant direct impact upon trees by the built forms. However, the changes will involve large plant and

machinery so mitigation from harm during the demolition/construction phases will be required. The whole estate benefits from protected and developing trees resulting in a pleasing sylvan character.

To maintain the trees and the character they provide and to allow the application to comply with policies such as CC03, CP3 and TB21 two conditions are recommended: CL6: Retention of trees and shrubs and CL7: tree protection.

Ecology: I agree that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) Report to conclude that currently the property has negligible potential for bats. I support the recommendations for mitigation and enhancement set out in section 5.6 which may be secured by planning condition.

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations and biodiversity enhancements given in Section 5.6 of the submitted Preliminary Roost Assessment Report (Hampshire Ecological Services, December 2024).

Reason: To maintain wildlife and incorporate biodiversity enhancements in and around the development. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 15 Local Plan Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

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:	14 March 2025
Earliest date for decision:	6 February 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
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Date:	26/03/25
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