

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250815
Site Address:	Orchard Cottage, Wokingham Road, Hurst, Wokingham, RG10 0SB
Expiry Date:	29 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	2 May 2025
Proposal: Householder application for proposed two-storey front porch extension, followed by changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Local Authorities
Green Routes and Riverside Paths
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Areas of Special Character
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Ground Water Zones
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Householder
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Minor

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 CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk

	CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB22 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM5 - Protection of the Countryside DM10 - Flood Risk DM11 - Water Resources DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document A Design for Hurst

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
980015	Proposed First Floor Side Extension To Dwelling.	Approved 13/11/1998
060198	Proposed single storey rear extension to dwelling to form conservatory.	Approved 16/03/2006

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection.
WBC CIL – Not CIL liable.
WBC Ecology Newts – No objection, subject to conditions.
WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located on the western side of Wokingham Road which is identified as a Green Route road. The site is located towards the northern end of the road towards the village centre. The site does not form part of but is adjacent to the Hurst Village Centre Area of Special Character. The site is bounded by residential properties on the northern, southern and western site boundaries. Designated

countryside lies to the east. Properties along the road vary in age, style, size and design.

The host dwelling is set within a relatively large plot with the property set back from the road behind a large gravel driveway, lawned area and established hedging along the front boundary.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the erection of a two-storey front extension with full height glazing and a pitched roof. The extension would be constructed from render and vertical cladding.

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 principle of a residential extension in this location is acceptable providing that it complies with the wider policy objectives contained within the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery (MDD).

Character of the Area:

The proposed two-storey front extension would measure approximately 3m in width and would protrude approximately 1.3m from the principal elevation. The porch would also incorporate a canopy roof at ground floor level.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character. The Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) SPD gives advice on residential developments.

The porch has been designed to be a subservient addition to the property frontage. The pitched roof form is set down approximately 1.91m from the main ridgeline and maintains the eaves height of the host dwelling.

The BDG states that 'front extensions are only acceptable where the building is set well back from the street frontage in a large plot or where the building is set further back from the street than the prevailing building line' and highlights that the overriding consideration in all cases will be the impact on the street scene and local character.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the front extension would encroach the established building line of the host property, the application site is part of a row of properties that are sited centrally within large plots with no established building line. The host dwelling and surrounding properties are set well back from the road and are heavily screened from the public realm by mature trees and hedging along the front boundaries. Therefore, the relatively minor forward protrusion of the proposed extension and low ridgeline, would not be overly dominant within the street scene.

Furthermore, page 35 of the BDG highlights how in many parts of the Borough a green backdrop contributes significantly to the local character and specifies 'Local character may derive from the landscape character, or from the spaces between buildings as much as the buildings themselves'. The BDG emphasises the importance of how trees and planting along plot frontages, in gaps between buildings and in rear gardens contributes significantly to local character and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to mitigate potential impacts of development. A Design for Hurst Parish design statement also reiterates the importance of maintaining gaps and states 'The green gaps and rural vistas between buildings and settlements need to be preserved'.

The proposed front extension would be set centrally within the front elevation and would not encroach the existing flank walls or roofline. The design retains views into and through the site to the green backdrop beyond. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed front extension would have no detrimental impact to the character of the host dwelling or setting of Wokingham Road Green Route environment which is identified as a Green Route road. This is applied to key routes in the borough that are characterised by mature trees and landscaped boundary plots. Criterion a of Policy CC03 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 seeks for development proposals to provide new or to protect.

The proposed extension would be constructed from render, vertical cladding and roof tiles that would match the main house. The proposal would also replace the existing hung tiles on the host dwelling with the same vertical cladding proposed on the front extension. The proposed changes to the material palette on the front elevation would be a relatively minor change to the property frontage. The proposed render and cladding would introduce a new material palette to the host dwelling that would not be out of keeping with the local area. There are examples along the road of rendered finishes to property frontages as well as timber detailing features.

In summary, the proposed two-storey front extension would be proportionate to the main house and would contribute positively to the character of the local area and to the quality of the semi-verdant public realm.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking, Loss of Light & Overbearing:

Due to the siting of the front extension and significant separation distances from neighbouring properties, there would be no detrimental overshadowing, loss of privacy or overbearing impacts generated by the proposal.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The application seeks approval for a two-storey front extension and the Council's Highways officer was consulted. They raised no objection to the proposal summarising that there would be no net increase in the total number of habitable rooms, and no additional demand for car parking. The current parking arrangements are acceptable.

Landscape and Trees:

The application site is located on Wokingham Road which is identified as a Green Route road. The Council's Trees and Landscape officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal. They commented:

"The changes would be visually minimal as seen from the public road, especially due to the set back and screening boundary treatments. No trees of high amenity will be directly impacted by the scheme as they are not proximate".

Ecology:

The application site is in an area suitable for bat roosts. Bat survey 'Urban Tree Experts, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 31 March 2025' was submitted to support the application. The ecologist concluded:

"There are no visible features externally on the building which could be utilised by roosting bats or in which bats could access the building to roost and internally there are no potential roosting opportunities for bats. It is concluded that there is negligible potential for roosting bats within the property".

The site is also located in a red zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN) and within proximity of a pond. A Newt Avoidance Statement was submitted to support the application and the Council's GCN officer was consulted. They raised no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition relating to avoidance measures. They commented:

"The application site falls within a red Impact Risk Zone for great crested newts, indicating an area of highly suitable habitat and potential great crested newt presence. There is a pond within the application site and a high density of ponds within the surrounding landscape. There is a historic record of great crested newts within the application site and recent (2024) records in some of the nearest ponds. Great crested newts are confirmed to be present in the surrounding area and are very likely to be present within the application site.

However, given the nature and scale of the proposed development, potential for impacts on great crested newts is considered to be limited. The proposed extension is relatively small and located on existing hardstanding. The main risks are considered to arise from individual great crested newts entering the construction area when traversing between areas of more suitable habitat. For example, great crested newts could take shelter beneath building materials or become trapped within groundworks.

The applicant has provided a Great Crested Newt Statement (Non-licensed Avoidance Measures for Great Crested Newts). The avoidance measures therein are considered sufficient to control the risk of harm to individual great crested newts and resulting wildlife offence. I recommend a compliance condition is used if the Council is minded to approve the application".

Conclusion:

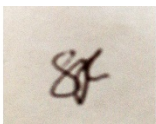
For the reasons set out above, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance, subject to conditions.

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:	Approve
Date:	27 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	26 April 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	28.5.25