

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261165
Site Address:	Millgate House, Ruscombe Lane, Ruscombe, Wokingham, RG10 9JT
Expiry Date:	29 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	21 July 2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed creation of a new direct pedestrian access route from adjoining highway (Millgate Court) into curtilage of the site.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposal – Modest Development Location – Ruscombe
Ruscombe Business Park – Industrial Estate
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Area
Tree Protection Order

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 TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements HC9 – Contaminated land and water
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Ruscombe Village Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
041842	Proposed erection of 8 apartments (2 of which	Approve

	are duplex units) and a 2-storey office building. Amendment to consent F/2003/9870.	15 th December 2004
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – Requested Further Information
WBC Drainage – No Objection
WBC Highways – No Objection
WBC Landscape and Trees – No Objection Subject to Condition
WBC Ecology Newts – No Objection

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Ruscombe Parish Council would like clarification that the new access will be purely pedestrian and not 'goods in' as there were concerns raised regarding delivery drivers (e.g. Amazon) using it and causing congestion in the lane. Thank you. <i>Officer Comment: The proposed gates and path will provide pedestrian access to Millgate House (The Mill) only. The existing vehicular access will be retained.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One comment in support.

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Millgate Court is a private gated cul-de-sac accessed from Ruscombe Lane (B3024). It serves a small residential development of eight apartments with associated parking, as well as Millgate House, also known as The Mill, which is used as an office building. The Mill also has a separate gated pedestrian and vehicular access from Ruscombe Court.

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: The creation of a direct pedestrian access route from an unadopted road within Millgate Court to the office building entrance (The Mill).

The proposed stone paved path would measure approximately 4.2m in length and 2.3m in width. An incidental alteration to the proposed would result in the existing wrought iron fence with vertical spaced rods being modified to provide a gate opening inwards from the highway. The gates will be 1.8m in height, the same height and materials as the existing fence.

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 public realm in Ruscombe Lane (B3024) is a local distributor road that runs through the village of Ruscombe and provides a connection between Twyford and the wider area, including Waltham St Lawrence and Maidenhead. The road has a mixed character, serving both residential and commercial properties, including dwellings, business premises and Millgate Court.

In this case, the new pedestrian access would be set back at least 30m from the public realm in Ruscombe Lane and set at right angles to the highway. Also, the gates would be partially screened by trees on either side, be the same height and similar in appearance to the existing spaced railings. Therefore, it would not harm the character of the area.

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

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 requires development proposals to avoid harm to the amenities and quality of life of adjoining land users and occupiers, including users of open space. In this case, the proposed pedestrian path and gate would not result in overlooking, loss of light, or an overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policy CP3 in relation to neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raises no objection to the development. The proposed access width of 2.28m is considered acceptable, and the applicant has confirmed that the gate would open inwards to avoid obstructing the highway. As the gate would be formed by adapting the existing steel fence panel, Highways raise no objection to the proposed change in boundary treatment.

Millgate Court is a low trafficked, low-speed road with pedestrian provision on the western side of the carriageway only. The Officer is satisfied that the proposed pedestrian access would be acceptable in highway safety terms, as pedestrians

would be able to use the existing footway before crossing the carriageway to reach the access.

Separate consent is to be obtained from the WBC Traffic Management (TM) Team regarding the proposed dropped crossing. An additional dropped crossing on the opposite footway shall also be provided for accessibility, for which consent from TM should also be sought.

Flooding and Drainage: The site is within flood zone 1 and the Drainage Officer raises no objection to the development.

Landscape and Trees: The Tree and Landscape Officer raises no objection to the development. The Proposed Site Layout Plan shows several existing fastigate oak trees within the site, along the boundary with Millgate Close. These trees would be retained, with the new pedestrian access routed between two of them, although minor pruning may be required.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer raises no objection to the development and considers that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats.

Contamination: The Environmental Health Officer raises no objection to the development. However, as GIS records identify a number of historic land-use layers/potential contamination indicators overlapping with the site, the Officer has requested an informative in relation to unexpected contamination findings.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	24 July 2026

Earliest date for decision:	18 June 2026
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Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	24.07.2026