

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242764
Site Address:	Walden Acres, Wokingham Road, Hurst, Wokingham, RG10 0RU
Expiry Date:	27 December 2024
Site Visit Date:	26/11/2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed single storey rear extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Green Routes and Riverside Paths
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Landscape Character Assessment Area
- Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Householder

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character
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		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
564/57	Garage and access	Approved 02/09/1957
O/332/63	Outline residential development	Refused 02/01/1964 Appeal dismissed
O/239/65	Outline 2 houses	Refused 30/09/1965
O/92/66	Outline dwelling	Approved 14/04/1966
101/67	Detached house and garage	Approved 04/05/1967
O/88/70	2 houses	Refused 14/05/1970 Appeal dismissed
F/2002/6285	Replacement dwelling	Refused 16/07/2002
F/2002/7916	Replacement dwelling	Approved 09/04/2003
222032	Pre-application advice for the proposed subdivision of the site and erection of 3 no. detached dwellings with associated access and parking.	Replied, 16/09/2022.
230201	Full application for the proposed erection of three 2 storey dwellings with associated car port parking, bicycle storage and amenity space.	Refused, 23/03/2023 Dismissed at appeal on 03/11/2023

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections. WBC Ecology Newts – Further information requested.
External
None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	St Nicholas Hurst Parish Council – No objections.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL
Site Description:
The application site comprises Walden Acres, a two-storey detached dwelling sited along the north-eastern side of Wokingham Road, a semi-rural setting characterised by a mix of residential properties and open countryside.

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 outside of development limits, where Core Strategy Policy CP11 applies. Policy CP11 states that in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

- It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings.
- In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The proposed single-storey rear extension, while encroaching to a limited extent into the countryside, would project approximately 3.1 metres and would be restricted to a single storey. This level of encroachment would not be excessive and would not have a significant impact on the openness of the countryside. The proposed extension, being an infill development, is well-contained within the footprint of the existing built form and does not constitute a substantial expansion beyond the original building. Therefore, the proposal complies with Policy CP11 in this regard.

Character of the area:

The proposed single-storey rear extension would feature a pitched roof and project approximately 3.1 metres from the rear of the dwelling, aligning with the rearmost section of the side garage. The extension is modest in size and scale and, being set well back from the highway and screened by mature boundary vegetation, would not be visible from the public realm. Consequently, it would not adversely impact the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

In terms of overlooking, the proposed windows would be positioned at a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties to avoid any issues related to overlooking or loss of privacy. The proposal is appropriately located and of modest proportions, ensuring that it does not raise any unreasonable concerns regarding overbearing impact or loss of light.

Landscape and Trees:

The site is in Countryside, located on a Green Route and subject to 2 Tree Preservation Order (TPO) being 1901/2022, A1 on oak, ash and willow alive in October 2022 on the front boundary and 1827/2022, A3 on trees of all species alive in

October 2021.

As no trees or vegetation will be directly impacted by the new built form, the Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has raised no objections to the proposed development.

Ecology:

The application site is located within an amber zone, indicating the presence of suitable habitats where great crested newts (GCN) are likely to be present. A Reasonable Avoidance Measures Strategy (by Dr. Jonty Denton) was submitted by the applicant on 23/12/2024. The strategy concluded that habitats in proximity to the property—particularly the open ground between potential breeding sites to the west—are highly unsuitable for amphibians due to the close-mown lawns and amenity grassland. Additionally, the rear garden is fenced off at ground level, further restricting movement. As a result, the strategy concludes that it is highly unlikely that GCN will be adversely impacted by the proposed works. It is also noted that the location of the proposed extension is mainly hard surfaced.

The Council's Ecology Officer has reviewed the strategy and notes that it does not appear to have fully considered all ponds within the site, particularly a pond recorded in 2003 ('Walden Acres Pond'), which may still exist to the southwest of the dwelling. However, even if this pond remains active, it is located approximately 20 metres away from the rear elevation of the dwelling, where the proposed works would take place.

A District Licensing Officer has also reviewed the application and considers that, given the minor scale of works and the distance from recorded ponds, the proposal poses a low risk to GCN. To minimise any residual risk, the following precautionary measures should be implemented:

- Stop work if a GCN is found – All works must cease immediately, and a professional ecologist must be consulted if a GCN is discovered or suspected.
- Storage of materials – Construction materials should be stored properly to avoid creating refuge areas that could attract newts.
- Safe excavations – Excavations should be conducted carefully to prevent trapping newts, and all excavations should be inspected before work commences.

It is also good practice to include an ecological 'toolbox talk' delivered to site contractors by a professional ecologist before the start of works. The idea of the toolbox talk is to make sure contractors know what a GCN looks like, the legal protections afforded to GCN, and the RAMs which should be in place on site to avoid harm to GCN.

With these measures in place, the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in significant adverse impacts on great crested newts. A suitable condition will be attached to any approval.

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:	Approval
Date:	28 November 2024
Earliest date for decision:	25 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	31.01.2025