

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251422
Site Address:	74 Oak Avenue, Wokingham, RG40 1LJ
Expiry Date:	8 August 2025
Site Visit Date:	19 June 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the erection of an open-sided pergola and alterations to existing rear garden levels.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Public Open Space
Strategic Development Location
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
JCEB Areas of Search for Sand and Gravel
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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250686	Householder application for the proposed loft conversion into habitable accommodation, including the installation of a rear dormer and the installation of roof lights.	Approved 14/05/25
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways: No objection

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The application site consists of a two storey, detached property located on Oak Avenue, part of the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL) site. The dwelling is in an established residential area with the northern end of the road characterised by detached properties that are similar in design and appearance. The application site is also located in designated 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.

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.

Principle- Countryside: The application site is situated within countryside and is therefore, subject to Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy. CP11 does not permit development outside of development limits unless it falls within exemption criteria including:

2. It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings;

4. In the case of residential extensions, it does not result in inappropriate increases in

scale, form or footprint of the original building;

The pergola will appear proportionate to the size of the site. It would not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion away from original buildings and is appropriate in scale, form and footprint in relation to the dwelling. The change in levels does not fit neatly into any category in CP11, however it is a minor engineering operation within the residential garden as part of a domestic landscaping scheme and does not conflict with the overall objective of CP11 to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment. For the reasons above, the proposal is therefore considered compliant with policy CP11 in this respect.

Character of the Area:

The open sided pergola will be approx. 3m in width, 4m in length and 2.50m in height. Given the application site corner location, the pergola would be somewhat visible from the public realm. However, the pergola is an open sided structure and physically less dominate/unobtrusive structure, and such structure is common within residential gardens and would not harm the character of the area. Furthermore, there are other examples of pergolas along Oak Avenue including no.72

The inclusion of the horizontal venetian slat contemporary timber fence would slight project above the exiting boundary wall given the staged and slopping nature of the garden and boundary wall. Thus, it would be visible from the public realm. However, such addition would be minor and similar to trellising effect and would not harm the street scene.

The existing ground levels to be raised to make rear garden level by approx. 0.63m and introduce a retaining wall and steps. It will not be seen from the public realm and will not harm the streetscene or general character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The majority of the pergola would be screened by the existing fence and vegetation and with it only being only single storey as well as the pergola set away from the main dwelling of no.76. The pergola would be located to the side of no.76 main dwelling and would not impact the rear of no.76. Given its location, the pergola would not result in loss of privacy or considered to be overbearing.

The topography of the site, no.72 is set higher up in comparison to no.74 and the top of the pergola would be somewhat visible from the neighbouring garden. It would not be an overbearing feature to the detrimental of the neighbour's amenity, patio area or windows given it's set significantly away from any rear habitable windows of no.72. The scale of the pergola is not excessive, but modest open structure in form & scale and which is screened by the existing boundary treatment and additional venetian slating (stated on plans as 2m above neighbours ground level), therefore, the pergola would not cause any significant harm with regards to neighbouring amenities.

The proposed level increase (0.63m) is not sufficient to significantly elevate users of the garden to a height that would enable direct overlooking into neighbouring gardens or habitable rooms.

The fence is constructed with horizontal Venetian-style slats, which have small gaps allowing for some diffusion of light rather than creating a completely solid visual barrier, thus reducing the overbearing impact.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal will have no impact on access or the level of parking. None of the works will impact the public highway.

Amenity Space: Given the pergola is a garden which is part of the outdoor amenity space, there would be no reduction to amenity space. The alterations to existing rear garden levels would not have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

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:	7 August 2025
Earliest date for decision:	7 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	7 August 2025