

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251537
Site Address:	26 Priest Avenue, Wokingham, RG40 2LX
Expiry Date:	24 September 2025
Site Visit Date:	8 September 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single storey, part first floor rear extension with roof lights and alterations to fenestration on the side of the rear elevations, following demolition of the existing single storey rear annexe.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location – Wokingham.

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 CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
97/66774/F	Single storey rear extension.	Approved 19th January 1998

070439	Single storey rear extension.	Refused 18th May 2007
250938	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a single storey detached outbuilding.	Approved 2nd June 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No Objection Subject to Condition
WBC Highways – No Objection
WBC Ecology – No objections

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The site is a traditional style detached dwelling in the residential area of Wokingham. It has a garage and driveway for off street parking. The front boundary is a low brick wall and green hedge.

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: Proposed erection of a part single storey, part first floor rear extension with roof lights and alterations to fenestration on the side of the rear elevations, following demolition of the existing single storey rear annexe.

The part single storey rear extension will facilitate a kitchen, dining and family area. It will have a flat roof and bifold doors to the rear garden and the rear elevation will be

approximately 9.7m in width. The separation distance of the southeast facing wall with the boundary will be approximately 1.4m. It will measure approximately 2.4m in height; the southeast facing wall extend beyond the original rear wall by approximately 8.7m, and the northwest facing wall extend forward by approximately 5.7m.

The part first floor rear extension with roof lights will facilitate 2 no ensuite bathrooms and 2 no, bedrooms at the rear. It will have a pitch roof, and the rear elevation will be approximately 8m in width. The separation distance of the southeast facing wall with the boundary will be approximately 1.4m. The master bedroom will have a pitch roof, the height to the top of the pitch will be approximately 7.2m and the eaves will be in line with existing. The master bedroom will measure approximately 4.4m in width and the southeast facing wall will extend beyond the original wall by approximately 6m. Bedroom '2' will extend beyond the existing rear wall by approximately 3m and be set back from the rear wall of the Master bedroom by approximately 3m. It will have a pitch roof in line with the existing roof line, and the eaves height will be the same as existing.

The southwest facing side elevation will have 2 no. additional windows on the first floor to serve the bathroom and ensuite, and 1 no. window on the ground floor to serve the family area. The northeast facing side elevation will have 1 no. additional window on the first floor to serve the ensuite; on the ground floor 2 no windows will replace 1 no. window and 1 no. door.

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 Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Maximum eaves height and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.
- The rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages is often important to the character of the area.

Priest Avenue is a residential road comprising detached houses of a similar age and design. The street scene is verdant with grass verges and small trees interspersed along the highway verge. The proposal would be partially visible from the public realm, and the separation distance with no 28 Priest Avenue would be reduced by approximately 1m to 1.4m. However, the rhythm of buildings and gaps between would not be significantly disrupted because the southeast facing wall of the first-floor rear extension would be set back from the principal elevation by approximately 8.8m. Also, the roof height would be approximately 1m lower than existing and the front hedge would obscure the view from the road. Therefore, the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation

ot character of the area.

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.

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to protecting residential amenity. It states the following:

- Rear extensions should not project more than 4 meters from the main rear wall where they are close to a boundary.
- The eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m within 2m of a side boundary.

Overlooking: The first-floor windows on the southeast and northwest elevations would be obscure glazed and not serve habitable rooms. Therefore, if the side windows were to be conditioned to be non-opening below 1.7m from the internal floor level, there would be no significant harm caused by additional overlooking to neighbouring amenity.

Loss of Light: 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. Figures 1 shows that the vertical 45-degree angle test for the first-floor rear extension would be complied with in relation to the nearest habitable window at no. 24 and is breached in relation to the nearest habitable window at no. 28. Figure 2 shows that the horizontal 45-degree angle test would be complied with in relation to the first-floor extension and the nearest ground floor rear windows to no. 24 and may marginally breach the first-floor side window and side window s that are borrowing light from the neighbouring property. Nevertheless, the affected side windows at no 24 are southwest facing and will continue to receive sunlight for most of the day. There are no side windows facing onto first-floor extension nearest to no. 28. Whilst a horizontal line of 45 degrees would marginally be breached in relation to the single storey rear extension and the nearest habitable window at no.28, the horizontal test is complied with in relation to the nearest habitable window on the first floor. Furthermore, the 45-degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, the breach is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given the neighbouring property would still have adequate access to natural light.

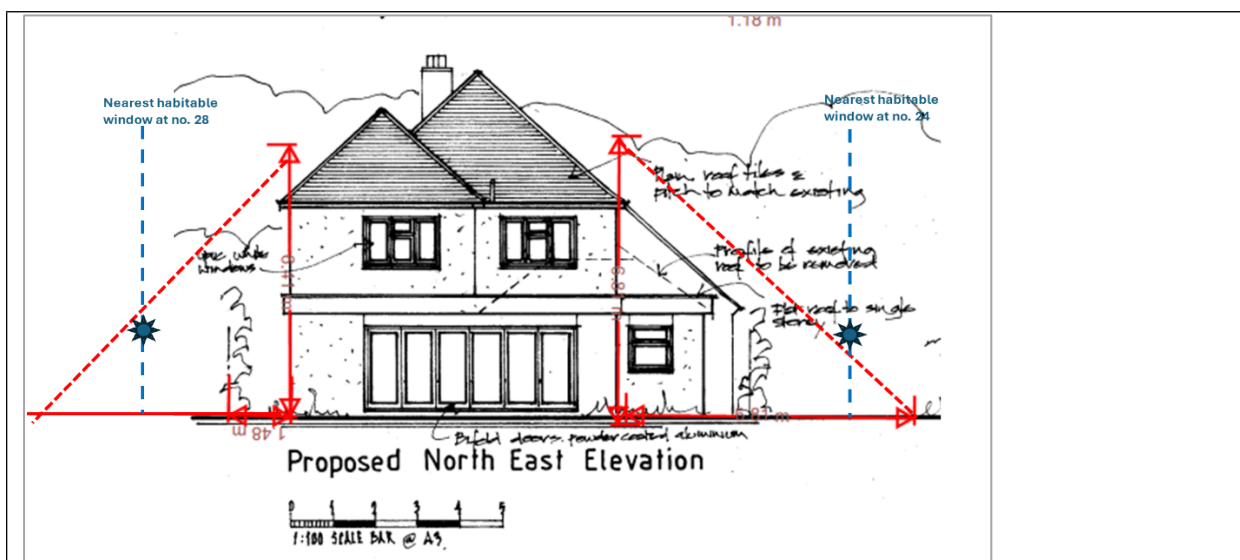


Figure 1 Vertical 45-degree angle test

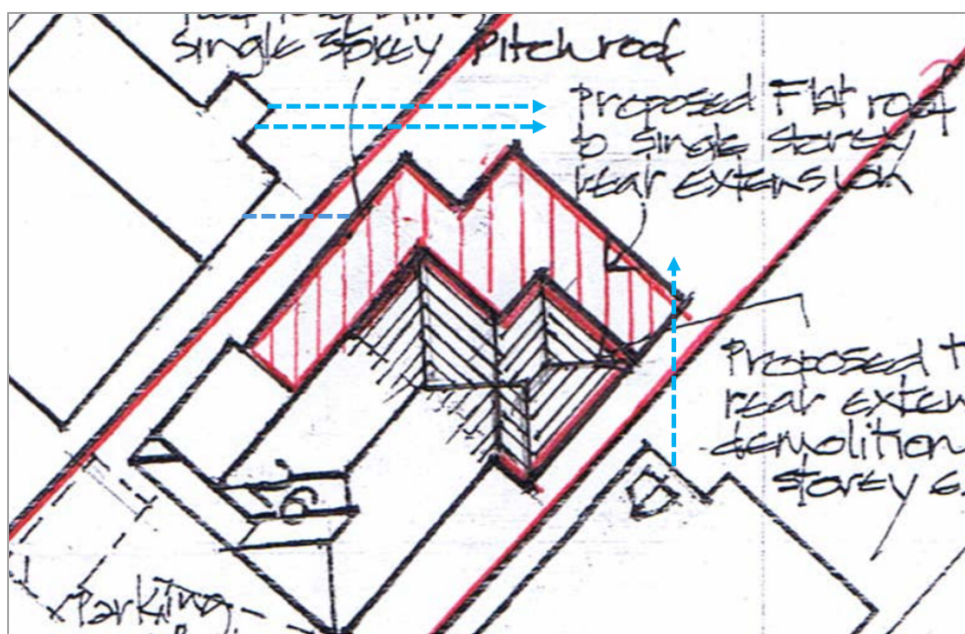


Figure 2 Horizontal 45-degree angle test

Overbearing: The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to visual impact and states that the layout and design must have a balanced response to the local context in terms of provision of external space. The BDG recommends that rear extensions should not project more than 4 meters from the main rear wall where they are close to a boundary. In this case the ground floor rear extension would protrude beyond the existing rear wall by 8.7m and the first-floor bedrooms would protrude by 6m and 3m respectively. The BDG recommends that a gap of 1m should be retained between the building and the side boundary. In this case, the separation distance with the side boundary at no. 28 would be approximately 1.4m; the distance at first floor level with the side boundary of no. 24 would be approximately 3m and at ground floor level approximately 1m. Nevertheless, the neighbouring property at no. 28 benefits from a two-storey rear extension and the first floor of the proposal would only project approximately 0.5m further back. Furthermore, the extension will be set within a spacious rear garden approximately 40m in length.

Therefore, although the height and bulk of the dwelling will have some visual impact when viewed from the rear, it would not cause significant harm to neighbouring amenity. It is noted that permission for a single storey rear extension was refused in 2007 due to overbearing impact. However, application 070439 was assessed against the Wokingham WOS3 of the District Local Plan and DP5 of the Berkshire Structure Plan, both of which have been superseded by the Wokingham Borough Adopted Plan (2014).

Overall, the proposal would not fully comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy regarding neighbour amenity.

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide in terms of neighbouring amenity in relation to loss of light and overbearing. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the neighbouring properties would still have adequate access to open space and sunlight.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: Highways Officer raises no objection and has commented: *"The total numbers of habitable rooms remain unchanged in the proposal. The existing driveway and garage will be retained. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions. No negative impacts on abilities for cycle storage are expected, which is acceptable."*

Flooding and Drainage: The drainage Officer raises no objection subject to condition and commented: *"The existing dwelling is within flood zone 1 and we would have no objection to the principle of the development, as represented by proposed floor plans drawing 03 dated 14/04 2025. As the footprint of the dwelling is increasing and neither the existing nor proposed drainage details have been provided, we would recommend the condition below:*

Recommended Condition

No construction shall take place until details of the existing drainage system have been provided, as well as details of how the proposed extension feeds into the existing drainage system, (or details of a completely new drainage system), demonstrating that flood risk will not increase on or off site. This should be represented on a drainage strategy drawing.

The above details shall be approved in writing by the LPA.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and shall be maintained in the approved form for as long as the development remains on the site.

This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF (2023) Section 14 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10."

Officer Comment: It should be noted that most of the proposed extension would be

built on an existing hard surface or within the footprint of the existing building. Hence, as the proposal does not significantly increase the risk of surface water runoff, it would not be reasonable or necessary in planning terms to impose an approved drainage strategy should this application be approved.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to condition and commented:

“The PEA external survey records moved tiles on the front southeastern corner and missing mortar from a bonnet hip tile. The eaves are covered in bitumen felt that has rotted leaving gaps that are suitable for crevice-dwelling bats to roost or provide access into the loft. The Ecologist is not unable to rule out or confirm the presence of roosting bats and the property was assessed as having low potential to support roosting crevice-dwelling bats.

A limited number of bats were seen and heard foraging in and around the site throughout the dusk emergence survey conducted on 20 August 2025. No bats were recorded emerging or re-entering. I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Ecologist conclude that that bats are not currently roosting in the property.

Whilst no bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost, this does not mean that they will not be present in the future as bats are known to be transient and use a wide variety of crevice like features opportunistically. The Ecologist states that the Ecological Survey Report SPH/ESR-25/10.08 ceases to be valid after one year from the survey, or if the site conditions change due to works that affect the site. I therefore request that Informatives I17 and I19 are included in the decision notice.

Requested Condition:

At no time shall floodlighting or other forms of external lighting shall be installed or affixed to any buildings on the site unless it is in accordance with details which have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. External lighting shall be designed in full accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Lighting (BCT). Details shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination and through the provision of appropriate.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 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	
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Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	17 September 2025
Earliest date for decision:	23 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>BJC</i>
Date:	19.09.25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Insert where relevant