

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260611
Site Address:	65 New Road, Ruscombe, Wokingham, RG10 9LN
Expiry Date:	12 June 2026
Site Visit Date:	13 April 2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. dwelling following demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuilding.	

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 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 CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

NO RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection
WBC Drainage – No objection subject to a condition
WBC Highways – Request further information
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to a condition
WBC CIL – CIL liable development
WBC Ecology Newts – No objection subject to a condition
WBC Ecology – No comments
WBC Waste Services – No comments
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments

External

Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Context: The section of New Road in which the application property sits is characterised by strong linear development, composing a range of dwelling styles. The street has a very consistent building line with generous front and rear gardens. Notwithstanding the range of dwellings throughout, the majority are considerably sized detached properties.

This application seeks planning permission for a new dwelling, replacing that of the existing 65 New Road. The replacement dwelling would be of a greater scale compared to the existing, with a footprint of approximately 164sqm, a ridge height of approximately 7.6 metres, a width of approximately 12.7 metres, and an overall depth of approximately 14.2 metres.

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.

Character of the Area: Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that 'maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment'. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted if development is 'of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area, 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'.

R1 of the Borough Design Guide (BDG) requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

R2 of the BDG requires development to respond to context, including incorporating existing features, taking advantage of landform and orientation, relating to neighbours

and minimising amenity, iconological and drainage impacts. R3 and R4 require housing to relate to the existing network of streets and spaces.

R7 of the BDG requires a consistent building line relative to existing buildings.

R9 and NR5 of the BDG note that height, bulk and massing should respond to the local context and the prevailing heights in the area.

General

The primary and most significant aspect of the proposal is the intention to replace a relatively modest dwelling with a substantially larger, two-storey building. As previously noted, New Road exhibits a diverse range of property styles, however, it is predominantly characterised by large, two-storey properties. Consequently, the proposed replacement dwelling would not appear incongruous within this context.

Siting & Scale

The new dwelling would occupy a similar position to the existing property, in accordance with BDG guidance, which advises that replacement dwellings should be sited in the same location as the original building. This is particularly relevant given the strong linear pattern of development along New Road. While the proposed dwelling would have a larger footprint, the additional form would not extend significantly beyond the established built envelope. Accordingly, the dwelling would remain well-aligned with the existing building line.

In terms of height, the proposed ridge level of approximately 7.6 metres is considered acceptable, as it broadly reflects the prevailing building heights along this section of New Road, where substantial two-storey dwellings are the common characteristic. By way of comparison, the adjoining properties have ridge heights of approximately 7.2 metres at No.67 and 8 metres at No.63. The proposal would therefore sit comfortably between its immediate neighbours and maintain an appropriate and proportionate relationship within the established street scene.

Although the replacement dwelling would be notably larger than the existing property, its scale would be comparable to other extended dwellings on the street and therefore would not appear out of character. Furthermore, the proposal maintains generous separation distances to adjacent properties, preserving the spacious character of the road.

Design

The existing property is of limited architectural merit and does not contribute significantly to the character of the area; therefore, its demolition raises no concerns.

The proposed design adopts a traditional residential vernacular that is broadly consistent with the surrounding context, complemented by contemporary elements such as an oak-framed entrance, high-level front fenestration, and a Juliet balcony to the rear. These features are considered positive, reflecting changes in architectural attitudes within the context of New Road. Given the variety of styles present along the street, the design would not detract from the overall character of the area.

The dwelling proposed does include a flat crown roof, which although can be discouraged in certain settings, the arrangement proposed here is suitable. This design feature is already present on several other dwellings along New Road and therefore would not adversely affect the street's character.

Material specifications have been provided and notably include white render and aluminium grey window frames. In addition, while not explicitly stated, the submitted plans indicate elements of timber detailing. Taken together, these contemporary finishes are considered appropriate and would contribute positively to the evolving character of New Road without appearing visually discordant.

Summary

In light of the above, the proposed replacement dwelling is considered to have an acceptable visual impact and would accord with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the recommendations of the BDG.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking

The internal layout of the property has been carefully designed to avoid the inappropriate placement of fenestration. The centrally placed first-floor side facing windows would serve non-habitable rooms and therefore would not constitute any concerns on overlooking grounds. The rear facing fenestration at first floor level would provide oblique views of adjacent sites, however, this would not result in direct overlooking.

Loss of Light & Overbearing

Despite the increase in scale compared to the existing dwelling, the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant loss of light or overbearing impact, having regard to the footprint, siting and separation distances to neighbouring properties.

The proposed dwelling would not extend beyond the rear elevation of No.67 and, when considered alongside the separation distance between the two properties, this would adequately mitigate any potential overbearing or loss of light impacts to this neighbouring site.

In relation to No.63, it is acknowledged that the proposed replacement dwelling would have a greater presence than the existing built form. However, the proposal complies with the Borough Design Guide and the British Research Establishment (BRE) 45-degree test, and as such would not result in an unacceptable loss of light. Furthermore, the first-floor element does not extend across the full depth of the building, with a single-storey element to the rear further reducing massing. On this basis, the LPA is satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to an unacceptable sense of overbearing or loss of light to this neighbouring property.

Noise

Consideration has been given to the potential noise impact arising from the proposed air source heat pump (ASHP) at the side of the dwelling. The unit would be positioned at an acceptable distance from the nearest habitable windows of neighbouring

property, ensuring that any noise generated would not adversely affect residential amenity. This assessment is supported by the Environmental Health Officer, who raises no objection on noise grounds.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: WBC Highways raise no objection in principle to the development; however, they have requested alterations to the parking layout to facilitate improved manoeuvring. Whilst officers understand this request, there are no proposed changes to the existing frontage and it is evident that the existing driveway can accommodate acceptable parking and turning for three vehicles, as required. Furthermore, any alteration to the existing layout could result in an increase in hardstanding, which would be viewed negatively in the context of the green infrastructure along New Road. Accordingly, the existing layout is considered acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage: The site lies within Flood Zone 1. The Drainage Officer raises no objection, subject to a condition requiring that no development shall take place until details of the proposed drainage strategy for the site have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA. However, having regard to the scale of the development and the availability of sufficient permeable land to the rear of the site, it is considered that such a condition would be disproportionate and onerous in this instance.

Landscape and Trees: An amended site plan has been submitted showing the trees and hedges to be retained, together with temporary protective fencing around the root protection areas of retained vegetation. This overcomes the Tree Officer's previous concerns, and no objection is therefore raised on these grounds.

Ecology: The LPA is satisfied with that the level of survey work is adequate to confirm the status of roosting bats on site, and it is not considered necessary to undertake any additional survey or obtain a licence from Natural England. Nonetheless, as confirmed by the Ecologist, there remains a very small possibility that bats could be encountered during the works, such that the precautionary approach outlined in paragraph 4.6 of the submitted survey report is to be conditioned.

The site lies within a Red Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts, and NatureSpace initially raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the development on this protected species. Following extensive correspondence between the Local Planning Authority, the Agent, and NatureSpace, it was agreed that these matters could be satisfactorily addressed through participation in the District Level Licensing scheme. The necessary licence has since been issued to the applicant, and NatureSpace has confirmed that its initial concerns have been resolved, subject to securing compliance with the license through condition.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable and the application is therefore recommended for 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 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	4 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	12 April 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	4 June 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Modest Development Location of Ruscombe*
- *Bat Roost Habitat*
- *Great Crested Newt Impact Zone (red)*