

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252001
Site Address:	9 Hart Dyke Close, Wokingham, RG41 2HQ
Expiry Date:	4 November 2025
Site Visit Date:	27 October 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of single-storey rear extension with 2 no. roof lanterns and pergola following demolition of existing conservatory. Loft conversion creating additional accommodation with 1 no. dormers and 1 no. rear Juliet balcony. Single-storey extension to garage including loft conversion creating habitable accommodation with 1 no. dormer.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Tree Preservation Orders
Landscape Character Assessment Area
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 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking TB22 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
072586	Proposed erection of single storey side extension to dwelling.	Approve 24th September 2007
173701	Householder application for the proposed erection of single storey rear extension to dwelling.	Approve 14th February 2018
250619	Pre-application advice for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to include 2no. roof lanterns following demolition of existing conservatory, loft conversion to create additional second floor habitable accommodation including 2no. dormers with 1no Juliet balcony to rear, plus changes to fenestration. Proposed erection of a single storey extension to existing detached garage along with loft conversion to create habitable accommodation including 1no. dormer.	Replied 15th April 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES**Internal**

WBC Highways – No Objection Subject to Conditions
WBC Landscape and Trees – No Objection
WBC Ecology Newts – No Objection Subject to Condition
WBC Ecology Bats – No objection subject to Condition

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 two-storey detached dwelling in the residential area of Wokingham and adjacent to countryside. The property has a detached double garage and driveway for off street parking, and private amenity space to the rear that overlooks open countryside. The host property is angled within its plot and faces at an approx. 45-degree angle towards its neighbour No. 8 Hart Dyke Close.

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: Erection of single-storey rear extension with 2 no. roof lanterns and pergola following demolition of existing conservatory. Loft conversion creating additional accommodation with 1 no. dormers and 1 no. rear Juliet balcony. Single-storey extension to garage including loft conversion creating habitable accommodation with 1 no. dormer.

The single storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing conservatory will have a flat roof and measure approximately 3m in height, 3m in depth and 11.3m in width. It will have two roof lanterns, 2 no. windows and 1 no. set of 3 panelled bifold doors on the rear elevation, and a window on the side elevation. The pergola will measure 2.5m in height, 3m in depth and 4.3m in width.

The loft conversion creating additional accommodation to the main dwelling would have 1 no. dormer and 1 no. rear Juliet balcony will measure 2.5m in height, 2.4m in depth and 9.7m in width. It will be set up and set down from the main roof line by 0.35m and set in by 1m at the north end and 1.9m at the south end. It will have two windows and a Juliet balcony on the rear elevation and no windows on the side elevations.

The single-storey side extension to the garage would measure approximately 3m in width and 5.8m in depth. It would be located adjacent to the side boundary and reduce the separation distance with no. 8 Hart Dyke Close by approximately 3m. The roof would have a steep pitch and flat square top approximately 2m in width. The existing roof would be raised by 1m and be approximately 5.5m in height to the top of the pitch. The eaves height would be 2.5m. The front elevation of the garage would have 2 no. windows and 1 no. garage door. There would be a rear dormer roof extension that would be set down and set in from the proposed roof; it would measure 3.4m in width, 2.2m in height and 2.7m in depth. It would have one rear facing window and no side windows. The ground floor rear elevation would have 2 no. double doors and 1 single door. There would be no windows on the side elevations.

There would be an additional bay window to the left of the front door that would measure approximately 0.5m in depth, 2m in width and be set back from the building line. The main front roof elevation would have a small dormer extension with pitch roof that would be set down and set in from the main roof line by approximately 0.4m. It would measure approximately 2m in width, 1.5m in height and 1m in depth.

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 Borough Design Guide (BDG) recommends that garages should not be sited in front gardens and should not project forward of the building line of a property. The BDG also recommends that front extensions should generally be no more than 1 storey in height and should not project significantly forward of the building line; and extensions should not generally project forward of the building line on the street frontage.

In this case, the street scene is a residential cul-de-sac of detached dwellings of a similar age, varying designs and some properties have garages that were originally built forward of the main building line. Also, some have extensions that can be viewed from the public realm. For example, no.10 (single storey link extension between garage & dwelling), no. 4 (first storey side extension with front gable), no.3 (Single Storey and two Storey Extensions), no. 6 (two storey front extension and single storey side extension) and no 2: (Part single storey, part two storey side extension and new access to highway). However, there are no other examples of detached garages forward of the principal elevation, that have been extended and increased in height. However, Denby Close (a continuation of Hart Dyke Close) merges with Hart Dyke Close, comprises detached dwellings with front dormer extensions on the front elevation of the garage roof. The dwellings have been built in an 'L' shaped footprint and located 1m closer to the highway than the proposed garage. Furthermore, the garages at Denby Close are approximately 6.25m in height which is approximately 0.75m taller than the proposed garage.

The additional bay window to the left of the front door would be set back from the principal elevation and the small front dormer extension with pitch roof would be set down and set in from the main roof line by approximately 0.4m. Therefore, the alterations to the front of the main dwelling would not cause harm the character of the area.

Prior to this application, pre application advice was sought from the Council for a similar proposal including a single storey extension to the detached garage and a loft conversion to create habitable accommodation including 1no. dormer. The original proposal for the garage included a roof with a shallow pitch measuring approximately 5.2m in height, a larger flat roof surface measuring approximately 5m in width and an increase in the eave's height to 3.5m. The pre application advice concluded that the enlarged garage would disrupt the balance and proportion of the overall property and compromise the visual integrity of the street scene. Furthermore, by raising the garage's eaves height to 3.5m, it would create a building out of scale with other garages in the street and be disproportionate to the main dwelling.

In this case, the garage extension differs from the pre application proposal in that the eaves height would be reduced by 1m to 2.5m. The maximum roof height would be the same and approximately 5.3m; however, the pitch would be steeper than the pre

application proposal and the flat roof surface width would measure approximately 3m less, reducing the overall bulk and scale of the roof when viewed from the public realm. The front elevation would have 2 no. windows and 1 garage door. The width of the rear dormer to the garage would be reduced from approximately 6m to 3m compared to the pre application proposal; it would measure 2.3m in depth and 1.2m in height. A small section of the dormer would be partially visible from the front, but it would be set back and not overly prominent when viewed from the public realm. It also noted that the orientation of the dwelling and the positioning of the proposed garage extension adjacent to the boundary, would be in line with the neighbouring garage at no. 8 Hart Dyke Close and would retain a separation distance of 6m with the nearest side wall of the dwelling. Also, although the proposed garage would have greater height and bulk than the existing structure and would be forward of the main dwelling house, the roof would be lower than the garage dormer roofs in Denby Close and set further back from the highway. Therefore, although the proposed garage extension would not fully comply with the recommendations in the BDG, it would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal does not fully comply with Policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy because the garage extension would be forward of the principal elevation of the main dwelling. However, it would not cause significant harm to the character of the area to warrant refusal of the application given the scale of the development and in relation to other garages in the street scene that have a higher pitch and front dormer extension.

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:

Overlooking: The new windows on the front elevation would overlook the front driveway and public realm. As these windows would maintain over 10 metres separation from properties across the street any overlooking concerns are minimal. The views offered from the fenestration proposed on the rear elevation would be no closer than the existing arrangement and overlook an open field. With regards to the new ground floor windows, the existing boundary fencing would be high enough to sufficiently mitigate any overlooking concerns. Furthermore, there is tall boundary vegetation that partially screens the neighbouring garden.

The proposed rear dormer includes three rear facing windows, two of which relate to non-habitable rooms (a bathroom and a dressing room) that would be condition to have obscure glazing. The rear dormer also includes a rear facing bedroom window with Juliette balcony. While this Juliette window would not look directly towards the rear windows of habitable rooms of No. 8 Hart Dyke Close, it would offer partial views over the rear garden of this neighbouring property. However, these views would be of such an oblique angle that they would not unduly impact of the privacy of No. 8 Hart Dyke Close. In addition, no significant additional overlooking would arise from the rear facing window in the proposed garage conversion. Therefore, there would be no significant harm caused by overlooking because of the proposal.

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. The proposed rear dormer extension to the main dwelling, and the raising of the garage roof with rear dormer would not impact neighbouring amenities in terms of loss of light.

Overbearing:

The proposed dormer extension to the main dwelling would be set in and set down from the main roof line. The ground floor rear extension and pergola would project beyond the existing rear wall by approximately 3.5m and be approximately 3m in height. The garage extension would be approximately 3m in width, and the eaves height would be approximately 2.5m. Although the garage extension would be forward of the building line of the main dwelling, it would be in line with the front wall of the existing garage and approximately 7m from the highway. It would be adjacent to the boundary with 8 Dyke Close, maintain a 6m separation distance with nearest side wall and the front wall would be in line with the neighbouring garage. Due to design of the sloping roof, only the central section would be taller than existing and limit the overbearing impact. Therefore, the garage extension would not have a significantly overbearing impact on neighbour amenity.

Therefore, although the proposal would not fully comply with the recommendations in the borough design guide, it would not have a harmful impact on neighbour amenity in relation to visual impact due to the orientation of the garage in relation to the neighbouring properties.

Overall, the garage extension would not fully comply with the Core Strategy in relation to neighbour amenity, but it would not cause significant harm to warrant refusal of the application, given that neighbours have adequate access to privacy, light and open space.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raises no objection subject to condition: *"A Pre-application (Reference 250619) has been submitted prior to the formal planning application. The Highways have provided recommendations based on the submitted scheme with 10 habitable rooms. This proposal will have the same numbers of habitable rooms with minor changes on the internal layout. In view of the nature of the new habitable rooms in the outbuilding, the Highways assume the outbuilding will be ancillary to the main dwelling. The applicant proposes to increase the numbers of habitable rooms from 8 to 10. As the existing and proposed garages do not fully meet the council's requirement for car parking, there is no gain or loss of garage parking space. Three driveway parking is proposed within the red line. According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in Urban location will require three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. As the proposed driveway will be accessed via the private road Denby Close, the Highways have no comment on widening of driveway and dropped crossing for the third parking space. The proposed parking provisions thus meet the council's parking requirement. The proposed garage remains suitable for cycle storage, which is acceptable."*

1. OUTBUILDING TO REMAIN ANCILLARY TO MAIN DWELLING

The garage hereby approved shall be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwellinghouse and the dwelling shall remain in use as a single dwellinghouse and not be used, sold or sub-let as separate dwellings.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety; to ensure acceptable access and parking

2. PARKING (AS APPROVED)

No part of any building(s) hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking space has been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking space shall be permanently maintained and remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times.

3. SURFACING OF ACCESS

No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable and bonded material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 6 metres measured from the carriageway edge.

Landscape and Trees: The Tree and Landscape Officer raises no objection and has commented: *"There are 2 protected trees on the site in the NE and SE corners of the rear garden: TPO1564/2017 T28 Oak, and T27 Oak. The development is a rear extension and poses no threat to the protected or other trees all of which can be adequately protected during construction. A single storey extension to the garage is proposed which will result in the removal of all or part of a Cherry Laurel hedge, and a shrub which conflicts with development. I have no objection to their removal although there may space to reinstate some of the hedge planting next to the boundary to maintain the landscape character.*

An Arboricultural Report to BS5837:2012 and a Tree Protection Plan has been received and is acceptable. I need no further information on trees unless there are any approved design changes."

Ecology Bats: The Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to conditions and commented: *"I have reviewed the Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2974_PRA_a, June 2005) and reviewed the plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.*

All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England in England. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

The PRA external inspection recorded slight lifting of the lead flashing and gap at the base of the southern chimney gap between the soffit and wall and against the southern brickwork chimney and ornamental gaps at the apex of each gable. In the internal inspection of southern blockwork gable with six small-sized droppings were observed at its base.

While the roof void is of a suitable size and condition for void dwelling bats and the lifted lead flashing and gap between soffit and chimney at the southern gable directly lead inside no evidence of bat species such as brown long eared bat were found. The

lifted tile to the front gable and other potential roosting features are suitable for crevice-dwelling bats such as pipistrelle. Evidence of crevice-roosting species is regularly hidden from view in areas such as gaps between tiles and internal linings/insulation including cavity wall.

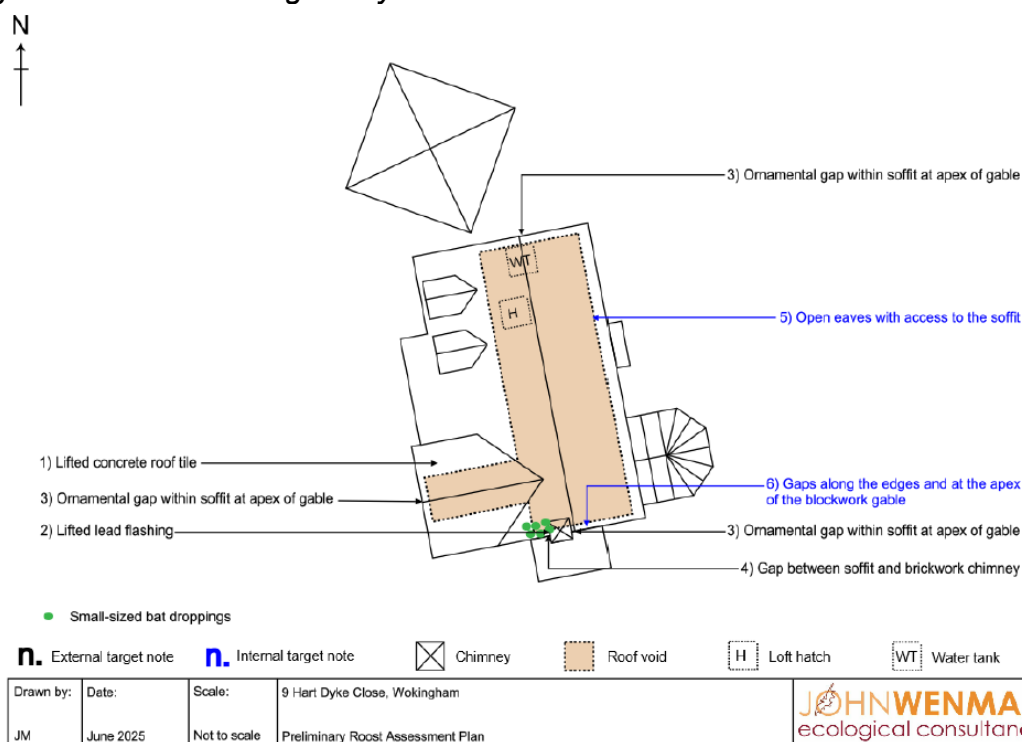


Figure 1. Preliminary Roost Assessment Survey Findings

Ecologist concluded that the loft conversion and extension to the house will not impact the confirmed roost at the southern gable end or any of other the potential roosting features they identified. They state that the existing soffits and gap under lead flashing at the southern end will be retained unaffected and the loft conversion will not change the availability of the southern gable wall, which will remain separate and insulated away from the converted living space, for roosting bats. There is a residual risk of indirect impact, and of a change in the status of the roost before he work begins, therefore, a precautionary approach to specific aspects of the work under a non-licensed method statement should be adhered to in order to avoid indirect temporary disturbance of the low suitability features to be retained across the southern elevation of the building as detailed in the Non-Licensed Method Statement Section 6.4, and to confirm there has been no change in the roost status. Provided that the proposed void conversion does not impact bat or the roost in the gable end I support the conclusion therefore it is unlikely that there would be any direct loss or if the precautionary mitigation measure proposed are secured by planning condition, there is no ecological objection to the development as proposed.

Condition: Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the council, all works are to be carried out in strict and accordance with the recommendations and proposed Non-Licensed Method Statement given in Section 6.3 and 6.4 of the submitted Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2974_PRA_a, June 2005). A suitably experienced ecologist must undertake a site walkover/check not more than three months prior to commencement of development to confirm that conditions have not changed since the most recent survey. Within one month of

substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be issued to the council.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Condition: At no time shall floodlighting or other forms of external lighting shall be installed unless it is in accordance with details which have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any lighting scheme shall be designed in accordance with the recommendation Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Lighting at Night (BCT). Such details shall include location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination and through the provision of appropriate colour contour plans and technical specifications clearly demonstrate that any areas to be lit will not disturb or negatively impact biodiversity.

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 CP3, CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23."

Ecology Newts: The Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to condition and has commented: *"The application site falls within an amber impact risk zone, indicating an area with suitable habitat for great crested newts and potential presence. There are three ponds within 500m of the application site, the nearest of which is approximately 285m north-east. However, satellite images show this pond is very small (circa 9m²) and may be a man-made water feature or fountain. It is also surrounded by buildings and is not near other ponds. For these reasons, it is highly unlikely to be used by great crested newts. The next nearest pond is approximately 410m south-east, and this is part of a cluster of ponds within suitable habitat. The applicant has supplied a GCN Habitat Assessment report (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, dated June 2025). This report concludes that as the development footprint is very small, only small areas of low-suitability habitat will be impacted, and the nearest ponds are relatively distant, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact great crested newts or result in an offence. I am satisfied that the report has been completed to a good standard and the conclusions are sound.*

To minimise the very low risk that individual great crested newts may be harmed while traversing the site, the report recommends some reasonable avoidance measures to be implemented during construction, such as storage of materials on pallets or existing hard standing and use of animal escape ramps in excavations. This approach represents best practice, as such I recommend compliance with the report as a condition of consent.

Condition: Great crested newt avoidance measures. The development hereby approved shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the details within the supporting document: GCN Habitat Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, dated June 2025)."

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide

because the separation distance of the first-floor extension with the neighbouring property is slightly less than recommended. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects given that there are other examples of garages with higher roof lines in the street scene and given that neighbours would still have adequate access to open space.

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:	04 November 2025
Earliest date for decision:	30 September 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	04/11/25