

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252342
Site Address:	Longwater, Longwater Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4NR
Expiry Date:	2 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	24 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a first-floor rear extension with balcony, front dormer extension, alterations to roof and changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Limited Development Location – Finchampstead

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
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 NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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120205	Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to dwelling to form conservatory.	Approve 18 th May 2012
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No Objection
WBC Ecology – No Objection Subject to Conditions

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

A detached chalet style bungalow in the residential area of Finchampstead. The property has a detached garage and gravel drive for off-street parking. The front boundary is a tall hedge and five bar wooden gate.

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:

The erection of a first-floor rear extension with balcony, front dormer extension, alterations to roof and changes to fenestration.

The maximum roof height will be approximately 6.4m and will not exceed the height of the existing pitch roof. The first-floor extension will provide a bedroom with an ensuite. It will have a flat roof and measure approximately 7.6m in width and 8m in depth.

The front elevation will be set back approximately 1m from the ground floor and approximately 2m from the ground floor side walls. The front dormer extension will measure approximately 6.6m in width, 1.2m in depth. 1.3m in height to the eaves and 2m to the top of the sloping roof. It will be set back and set in from the ground floor and the roof will be in line with the main roof.

The rear elevation wall will be set back from the existing ground floor wall, and the first-floor rear terrace will not extend beyond the existing rear wall. The terrace will measure approximately 6.5m in width, 3m in depth and balustrade will be approximately 1.8m in height.

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 street scene is detached properties of varying ages and designs. The landscape is verdant with grass verges and trees. Some properties are partially screened from the road by tall trees and hedging. The west facing boundary of the application site is adjacent to Finchampstead C of E School playground. The east facing boundary is adjacent to 'The Studio' which is a 1950s detached House with garage and a higher roof line than the application site.

In this case, the proposed maximum eaves height and ridge height would be no more than those of the existing property. The first-floor side elevations would be set in from the ground floor by approximately 2m and the front first floor elevation would be set back by approximately 1m. The first-floor extension would be more than 1m from the plot boundary.

Although the roof line of the front dormer extension would not be set down from the main roof, it would not disrupt the rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontage because the neighbouring property has a higher roof line. Furthermore, the application site is located next to a school playground and field. Also, the separation distance with the front boundary would be at least 8m and it would be partially screened from the public realm by tall hedging along the front boundary.

Therefore, although the front dormer extension roof would not fully comply with Borough Design Guidelines, it would not cause significant harm to the character of the area to warrant refusal of the application given that it is compliant with other aspects of policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation to 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.

Overlooking: There would be no windows on the side elevation of the first-floor extension. At the rear, the bedroom would have bifold doors plus a window that would be approximately 7m from the side boundary with 'The Studio'; and the bathroom window would have obscure glazing. The side balustrades to a terrace that would serve the main bedroom in the loft of the property would be approximately 1.8m in height from the internal floor level and would be obscure glazed. A condition is recommended to ensure these obscure glazed side balustrades are fully implemented prior to first use of the terrace. Therefore, subject to compliance with this condition, there would be no significant loss of privacy to neighbour 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. In this case, the dormer extension would be set back from the principal elevation of 'The Studio' and would not extend beyond the rear wall. Furthermore, Figure 1 shows that the vertical 45-degree angle test is complied with in relation to the nearest rear habitable room, and the first-floor window on the side elevation of 'The Studio'. Also, windows on the side elevation can only be afforded limited protection given that they effectively 'borrow' their outlook from across the application site.

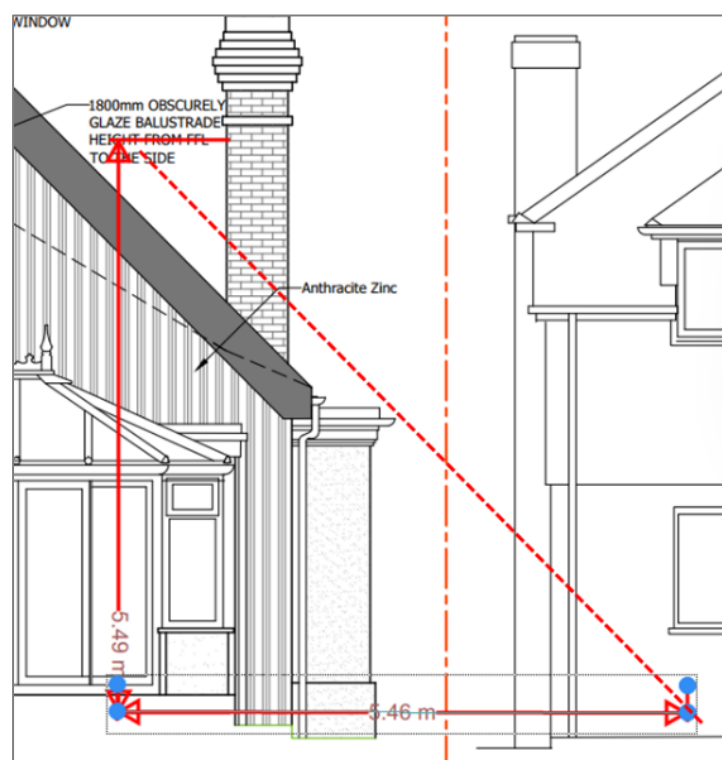


Figure 1 Vertical 45-degree angle test

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. In this case, the proposal would not be overly prominent in the street scene given that it would be smaller than some of the other detached properties in the street, it would be set back approximately 8m from the highway, the roof height would be the same as existing and it would be partially screened from public view by

tall vegetation at the front. The rear extension would not cause significant harm to neighbour amenity given that it would be located more than 1m from the side boundary and would not dominate the adjacent house.

Overall, the proposal would comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy regarding neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Highways Officer raises no objection and has commented: *“The total numbers of habitable rooms remain unchanged. All existing parking spaces and garage are retained. It is therefore expected that there is no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions. No negative impact on abilities for cycle storage is expected, which is acceptable.”*

Ecology:

The Ecology Officer has reviewed the Preliminary Roost Assessment (May 2025) and Bat Emergence Survey (Sept 2025), plus submitted plans and raised no objection subject to conditions.

Recommended Conditions

1. *No works shall commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from Natural England and a copy of the licence (or an email from Natural England that the site has been registered under a Bat Mitigation Class Licence) and the approved mitigation strategy have been submitted to the council. Thereafter mitigations measures detailed in the licence shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.*
2. *Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the protected species. Site Enhancements recommended in Section 5.2 of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Elite Ecology, Final Report V1 28 May 2025). 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.*
3. *No removal of trees or shrubs, brambles, ivy and other climbing plants, or works to buildings or structures that may be used by breeding birds shall take place between 15 February and 15 September inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds’ nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.*
4. *No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans shall be felled, uprooted wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the local planning authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless*

the local planning authority gives written consent to any variation.

5. *Prior to occupation a 'lighting design strategy for biodiversity' for designed in accordance with best practice including in accordance with Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:*
- a. identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats, birds and invertebrates and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
 - b. show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places."*

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide in terms of character of the area because the roof height of the first-floor front dormer is slightly higher than recommended. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the already mixed architectural character of the area would not be significantly harmed.

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:	27 November 2025
Earliest date for decision:	3 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	27/11/25