DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252730
Site Address:	Hilltop Yard, Crest Close, RG10 9BQ
Expiry Date:	16 November 2026
Site Visit Date:	23 February 2026
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use to 1no. dwelling, including the erection of a single storey front and rear extension and partial side demolition with the insertion of roof lights, plus access and parking.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP15 – Employment Development CP17 – Housing Delivery
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB08 – Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Standards TB21 – Landscape Character
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	M2 – Safeguarding sand and gravel resources M4 – Locations for sand and gravel extraction
Wokingham Borough Local Plan	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements SS10 – Meeting our housing needs CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Update (LPU)	C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C3 – Active travel C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging C6 – Technology and innovation in transport ER2 – Employment uses outside of Core Employment Areas H1 – Housing mix, density and standards H8 – Conversion and sub-division of buildings FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity HC5 – Environmental protection HC8 – Noise pollution HC9 – Contaminated land and water
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Twyford Neighbourhood Plan

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
151285	Full application for the proposed conversion of existing workshop (B1c Use Class) to a single detached dwelling (C3 Use Class) with associated access and parking.	Approved 20/08/15
140778	Proposed conversion of existing workshop (B1c) to detached dwelling (C3) with erection of first floor extension, new access and parking.	Refused 26/03/15
141558	Proposed change of use from existing workshop (Use Class B1c) to a single detached dwelling (Use Class C3) with ground floor extension and creation of first floor, access and parking.	Refused 02/10/14

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Environmental Health – No comments received **WBC Drainage** – No objection subject to condition **WBC Highways** – No objection subject to an EV charging point to be specified on the proposed plan **WBC Landscape and Trees –** No objection subject to condition **WBC CIL** – Development would be CIL liable as it involves the creation of a new dwelling **WBC Ecology** – No objection subject to condition

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

WBC Waste Services – No comments receieved **WBC Cleaner and Greener** – No comments received
External
Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Twyford Parish Council object to the proposal for the following reasons: • Out of keeping with neighbouring properties • Out of character with the street scene **Officer comment:** *An assessment of the proposal's design is contained within the report.*
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	3 letters of representation have been received relating to the following matters: • Neighbours have requested reserved parking within Crest Close. If parking is allowed at Hilltop Crest Yard then residents should also have that privilege/ there should be a permit scheme **Officer comment:** *The dwelling proposed under this application is provided with dedicated off-road parking within the red line application site boundary. This will ensure future occupiers of that dwelling will be provided with sufficient parking and reduce risks of further on street parking outside the application site. Existing parking issues or parking arrangements for other residents (outside of the application site boundary) is not a matter of consideration under this application.* • Proposal will result in overflow parking onto Crest Close **Officer comment:** *The proposal has been reviewed by WBC Highways who have confirmed that two spaces on site is sufficient for this scale of development.* • Proposal will remove existing views from existing properties **Officer comment:** *The application is to convert this existing building with the overall maximum height remaining unaltered. Notwithstanding this, loss of views are not a material planning consideration.* • Schemes have been refused in the past

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

	Officer comment: *This is noted; see planning history section of the report. An application for conversion of the office to a dwelling has also historically been approved. The history of the site will be discussed where necessary in the assessment.*

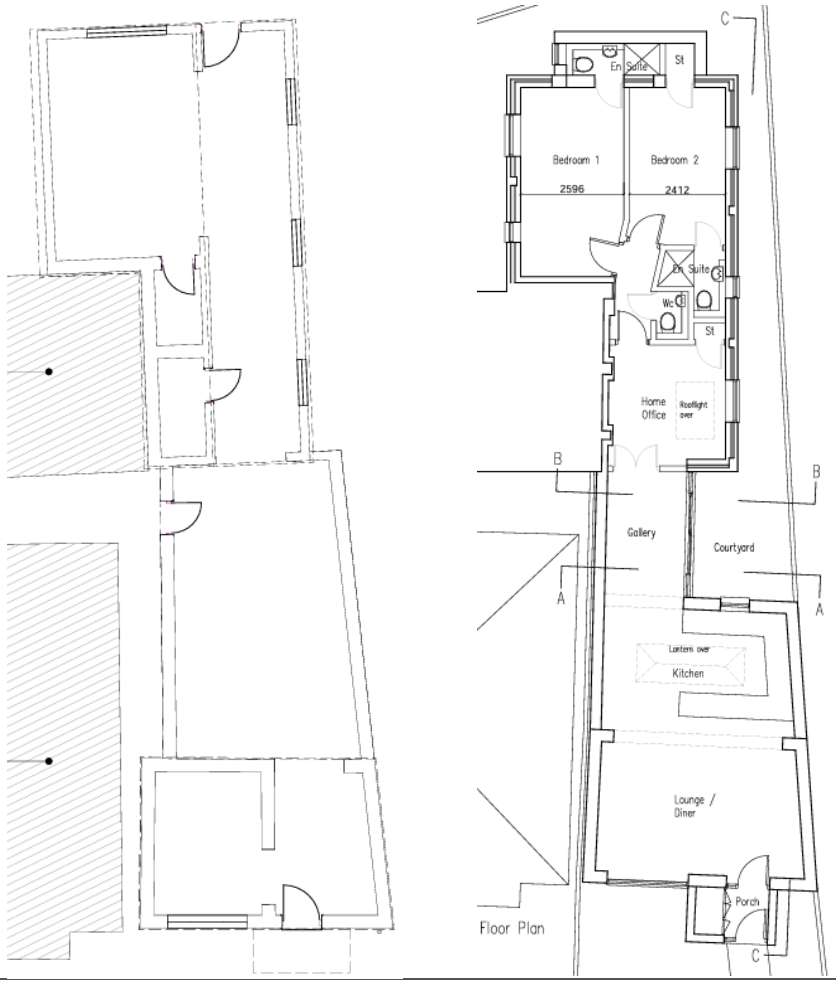
APPRAISAL

Site Description:
The application site comprises of a detached building which is being used as an office. The building is in a tandem arrangement between 1-8 Crest Close and Hilltop Farm Bungalow. The surrounding area is residential.

Proposal:
Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing building to a detached, two-bedroom dwelling. The existing building was previously two detached buildings that have been connected.

As well as the conversion, a front porch extension is proposed of a depth of 1.45m along with a rear extension of a depth of 1.1m.

A portion of the building is to be removed to make way for a proposed courtyard, and some alignment of the proposed side wall of the proposed kitchen to allow a continuously straight side elevation of the western side of the building.



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Left: Existing floor plan. Right: Proposed floor plan

It should be noted that the proposed floor plan is the same as that approved under application 151285.

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.

Principal of proposed use – residential
The spatial strategy for the Borough is outlined in policy CP9 of the Core Strategy. This directs development to within settlement limits. The settlement limits are split into three categories depending on the sustainability of those locations; Major, Modest and Limited development locations.

The application site is located on the boundary of the Major Development Location of Twyford and the Modest Development Location of Ruscombe. As such, the site is within settlement and therefore the principle of residential development accords with the spatial strategy. Because of its location within settlement limits, the site is deemed to be a sustainable location for future occupiers of the development. The application site is also located in a residential area, where the presence of the existing commercial building is an anomaly. As such, the in land use terms, the proposed dwelling would be compatible with its surroundings and the provision of a new dwelling in the borough would accord with policy HO7 of the NPPF which states that substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community. In light of Wokingham Borough not being able to demonstrate a 5YHLS, there is an evidenced unmet need of accommodation. Accordingly, substantial weight is given to the benefit of housing.

In terms of the NPPF, Policy S4(1) also supports development within settlements, stating these should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

Loss of existing use
Due to changes made in September 2020 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 have resulted in the Use Class of the existing building changing from B1(c) to E(g)(iii). It is noted that the applicant has presented the site as being an office use (use class Eg(i)). The use from E(g)(iii) to Eg(i) could have been carried out under permitted development.

Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy (in addition to Policy TB11 of the MDD Local Plan) states that any change of use from Class B1/B2/B8 should not lead to an overall net

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

loss of Class B floorspace, although noted that class B has been partly superseded by class E.

The basis behind this is outlined in paragraph 4.70, which
refers to an Employment Land Study (2006) which sets out that the supply of floor space for industry and warehousing needs to increase by 51,000m2 to meet forecast
Class B use growth in the Borough over the Development Plan period to 2026.

Whilst WBC Planning Policy were not consulted under this application, Officers have been advised on other developments involving the loss of smaller scale office premises that, based on latest monitoring, the modest loss of commercial floorspace is unlikely to lead to a net loss of B1 (now E(g)), B2 and B8 floorspace across the borough in light of recent permissions.

Policy CP15 does also include a qualitative element:

"Provision will be made for a range of sizes, types, quality and locations of premises and sites in order to meet incubator/start up, move on, expansion and investment accommodation needs and having regard to the needs of specific sectors of the business community."

As supporting paragraph 4.70 states a "*good supply of a range of sizes, types and location of available sites and buildings is a pre-requisite to a thriving economy*".

The site is currently in commercial use and its location in Twyford outside a Core Employment Area offers an alternative site and size of employment land within the borough. The existing commercial use therefore contributes to the mix envisaged by CP15. As a general principle, were such alternative sites allowed to be lost unchecked, without appropriate justification, this would run contrary to the qualitative policy aim to ensure variety in provision across the borough.

In this particular circumstance, the applicant has claimed (within their CIL form) that the building is still in use as an office. As such, marketing or similar information to demonstrate that the unit may not longer be viable or attractive as a commercial use is not applicable. The applicant has provided the following justification regarding the loss of the existing use:

- Buildings are approaching the point where further significant investment or partial demolition would be required to remain in operational capacity
- The site is tightly constrained and surrounded by established residential properties, which limits the intensity and type of commercial activity that can reasonably operate without giving rise to amenity issues
- Access arrangements, vehicle movements, noise, hours of operation and servicing requirements are increasingly incompatible with the surrounding residential context
- The buildings are not configured to meet modern commercial standards without disproportionate investment, and their size and layout limit flexibility for alternative commercial occupiers. While the site has continued in a limited commercial use, this has largely been a pragmatic interim arrangement rather than evidence of long-term viability or market demand

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

The above justification is considered limited, and not conclusive that a commercial use of some nature could remain and could continue to contribute to the provision of employment space within the borough.

However, Officers are mindful that the loss of the office has previously been accepted under planning permission 151285; albeit that previous scheme is no longer a 'fall back' position given the previous permission has expired. Nevertheless, historic decisions are material considerations in the determination of an application albeit attracting limited weight.

Neighbourhood Plan
The application site is located within Twyford, a parish that has an adopted neighbourhood plan (Twyford Neighbourhood Plan, 2023). Policy TW11 of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for residential development, which address local need in Twyford, and are based on the most recent evidence available. The plan discusses the need for smaller accommodation due to the existing housing stock being larger properties of 3+ bedrooms.

The adjacent parish of Ruscombe, does not have a Neighbourhood Plan.

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)
The application site is located within the designated Mineral Safeguarding Area and an area of search for sand and gravel.

Policy M2 of the JMWP plan states that a minimum plot size of 3ha will apply for proposals in the Minerals Safeguarding Area as smaller plots are assumed to be uneconomic. The site is below the threshold of 3ha and so does not pose a constraint to the development.

Policy M4 of the JMWP focuses on areas of search for sand and gravel. It states that built up areas and those areas of remaining resource of less than 3 hectares was excluded as being unlikely to be viable. Again, the site is less than 3ha in size so again does not pose a constraint to development.

Emerging Policy - Local Plan Update
Policy DM4(1) of the NPPF states:

When preparing and considering development proposals, relevant policies in emerging development plans may be given weight according to:

a. The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

b. The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

c. The degree of compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023–2040 ("LPU") is at an advanced stage of preparation, having been submitted for examination on 28 February 2025, with the examination hearing sessions now concluded. The Inspectors' post-hearings letter dated 4 August 2026 states that the LPU is likely to be capable of being found sound and legally compliant, subject to main modifications. That view is nevertheless expressly provisional and remains subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment, consultation on the proposed main modifications, consideration of representations and the Inspectors' final report. The LPU does not therefore form part of the statutory Development Plan, but it is a material consideration. Having regard to its advanced stage, the extent to which the examination has clarified outstanding soundness issues, and the remaining consultation and examination steps, the LPU and those policies not identified for deletion or substantive modification are afforded moderate weight in the determination of this application.

Summary on principle of development
The principle of one additional residential dwelling development is accepted in this major development location and so would comply with local policy CP9 and policy S4 of the NPPF and so should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

The proposal conflicts with Policies CP15 and TB11 because it would permanently remove an active employment unit that contributes to the range of employment premises available in the Borough. The applicant has not demonstrated that continued employment use is unviable, and this conflict attracts moderate negative weight. The 2015 permission is a material consideration but attracts limited weight because it has expired and is not an available fallback. Against that harm, the proposal would provide one smaller dwelling within a defined settlement, make effective use of an existing building and contribute to the identified local need for smaller homes. Taking the development plan as a whole, and having regard to the Council's housing land supply position and NPPF Policies S4 and HO7, officers consider that these material considerations outweigh the identified employment-policy conflict.

Character of the Area:
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.

Policy DP3 of the NPPF states that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings.

The host building is enclosed by built form in a tandem arrangement. Accordingly, its presence in the street scene is very limited, with the building itself not being visible from Crest Close.

The proposed extensions to the front and rear of the building would be of a very modest scale and would have flat roof forms in keeping with that found on the main building. The height of the extensions would be in keeping and proportionate to the scale of the host

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

building. The proposal would also see a decrease in built form on the boundary with 1-8 Crest Close. In terms of materials, these are specified on the proposed plan as being render to the elevations of the building (to replace current timber panelling) and uPVC fenestration. Whilst the surrounding area primarily comprises of brick exposed properties, meaning render would be a contrast, the existing building already differs from surroundings in terms of its timber panelling. However, given the limited visual appearance of the building, the proposed materials would not be harmful to the surrounding area.

The proposed alterations to the building/ extensions/ materials are the same as those proposed under application 151285 which were deemed acceptable and Officers have no material reason to reach a different conclusion here.

Neighbouring Amenity:
Policy CP3(a) of the Core Strategy states that development should be without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. Policy CC06 of the MDD Local Plan states proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors (both existing and proposed) from noise impacts.

The site is bordered by Hilltop Farm bungalow to the west, 1-6 Baldwin Court to the north and 1-8 Crest Close to the east, as shown below:



In light of the very modest depth extensions to the front and rear, these would not result in overlooking, loss of light or privacy to surrounding neighbours.

The proposal would see the inclusion of a number of new side windows on both the side elevations of the building. Namely these are windows that would serve the proposed gallery, and bedroom 1. However, given the building is single storey, these windows would face onto boundary treatment rather than onto neighbouring properties. Accordingly, these windows do not pose loss of privacy concerns for neighbours.

Lastly, the change of use to a dwelling would result in some moderate change to noise levels within the surrounding area. This is because the existing use is likely only used within working hours, whereas a dwelling would have more constant operation. However, given the proposal is for a single dwelling, with noise anticipated to be that

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

akin with domestic life, this is not considered to be of substantial disturbance to neighbours, given the surrounding area is already residential.

Future Occupier Amenity:
Policy P3(2) of the NPPF outlines various standards which should be implemented for suitable living conditions. Policy R17 of the Borough Design Guide outlines the internal space standards for different sized residential dwellings. The proposal would see 1 x 2 bedroom dwellings. The minimum standard for a 2 bedroom house is 83 sqm. The proposed dwelling would measure 84 sqm and so would therefore comply. All habitable rooms would be served by windows. Whilst the outlook of some of these windows are not overly desirable due to their proximity to site boundaries, on balance they would not result in a level of accommodation that is worthy of refusal. Furthermore, the location of the proposed windows are the same as those approved on the previous application.

In terms of external amenity space, R16 of the Borough Design Guide states that the Council's minimum garden length of 11m is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provided the space is usable. The proposed dwelling would have a 10m deep front garden, which is slightly below standard, however would also have a courtyard centrally within the site, accessed via the gallery. Together, this provides two usable amenity spaces.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:
Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan stipulates minimum off street parking standards. Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should not result in highway problems.

Policy TR6(4) of the NPPF states *"Development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement."*

Upon consultation with WBC Highways, they have advised that the site is situated in a sustainable location, within walking distance of Twyford town centre and public transport.

In terms of traffic impacts, the change of use from an office to a single dwelling is unlikely to have a significant impact on the local highway network.

In terms of access, the existing site access and gates are to be retained. WBC Highways recommended that it be conditioned that permeable/ bonded material within 10m of the carriageway edge to avoid spillage onto the highway. However, given the site does not adjoin the adopted highway, this is not considered necessary. The access to the site is over a strip of land that is not highway land, and thus any spillage would instead fall onto non-highway land. The furthest point of the proposed dwelling is within 40m of the public highway; this is acceptable for fire tender access

Two parking spaces have been indicated which accord with the Council's standards, with the parking spaces measuring the required minimum of 2.5m x 5m. This vehicle parking shall be secured via condition. An electric vehicle charging point will be required

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

to be provided under separate Building Regulations and therefore it is not deemed necessary to impose a planning condition on this same matter when taking into account the tests for planning conditions under policy DM6(1) of the NPPF.

Two cycle parking spaces for a dwelling of this scale. On the proposed block plan, a proposed cycle shed has been proposed at the south of the site, following the demolition of the existing shed. This is acceptable, however full details and design of the cycle store will be secured via condition.

In terms of bin storage and waste collection, Manual for Streets sets out maximum carrying distances for households of 30m and refuse collection operators of 25m from the collection point. Kerbside collection is suitable for this site.

Accordingly, the proposal is acceptable in relation to highway considerations and policy, however conditions will be applied to secure the provision of the proposed parking, cycle storage details and access surfacing.

Flooding and Drainage:
Policy CC09 of the MDD states that all sources of flood risk, including historic flooding, must be taken into account at all stages and to the appropriate degree at all levels in the planning application process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. Policy CC10 states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner.

Policy F4(1) outlines when a Flood Risk Assessment is required to accompany a planning application. Policy F6(1) states that:

In areas falling within flood zones 2, 3a, or 3b (as defined in Annex F, table 1):

a. Development proposals should be refused if the use is incompatible with the risk from river or sea flooding, as set out in Annex F, table 3;

Policy F8(1) of the NPPF states that *"Development proposals which could affect drainage on or around the development site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, in ways which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. The systems employed should provide multifunctional benefits where possible, facilitating improvements in water quality, biodiversity and amenity."*

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore an area with a low risk of fluvial flooding. As such, the location is compatible for residential accommodation in terms of flood risk.

In terms of drainage, the Local Lead Flood Authority raise no objection to the development in principle, however there would be increase in impermeable area and as drainage details have not been provided (existing or proposed), this will be required to be conditioned. However, given the modest scale of new physical development (modest front and rear extensions of less than 1.5m in depth), the increase in the amount of impermeable area is limited. Given the site is located in flood zone 1 with a low risk of

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

surface water flooding (as confirmed by the LLFA), with no recorded drainage issues highlighted to planning officers, the requirement of a drainage strategy is not considered necessary in this instance, when applying the tests for conditions as outlined in policy DM6(1) of the NPPF.

Environmental Health:
Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states development proposals should seek (inter alia) *to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment; minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment; and avoid areas where pollution (including noise) may impact upon the amenity of future occupiers.*

The application site is located on potentially contaminated land. As new built form is being proposed, conditions will be secured to require a contaminated land assessment, remedial strategy and verification report. This is to ensure the end users of the development will not be exposed to land contamination. A contaminated land assessment has been submitted alongside this application, however the assessment was that submitted under the previous application instead and thus is now over 10 years old and the submission is not accompanied by clarification from an expert consultant that the conclusions remain accurate. Given the age of the submitted assessment and the proposed sensitive residential end use, an updated preliminary risk assessment is necessary to be secured via a pre-commencement condition.

Trees:
Policy CC03 of the MDD states that development should: (d) Protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features and (e) Incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme.

Policy N2(1)(d) states that proposals should conserve and enhance natural features such as established trees and hedgerows.

There are no protected trees on site. However, there was One potential tree of value – a juvenile silver birch (Betula pendula) was observed in the rear courtyard/open space along the northwest boundary.

Proposed landscaping and boundary treatment details will be secured via condition, and the landscape plan will need to identify whether the silver birch tree will be retained or felled. If to be retained, its protection measures will be secured through the condition. Similarly, if to be removed, suitable replacement planting to mitigate its loss will be secured.

Ecology:
Policies CP7 and TB23 require development to protect biodiversity interests, avoid harm to designated sites, habitats and species, and provide appropriate biodiversity enhancements.

Policy N2(1) (f) of the NPPF states that proposals should minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity.

The site is located within an identified bat roosting area and a green zone for Great Crested Newts.

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was submitted in support of the application which concluded that the site is unlikely to support protected and notable fauna such as amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles, The buildings also showed no evidence of the presence of bats and are unlikely to support roosting bats and therefore the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or their roosts. However, precautionary measures for amphibians, small mammals and nesting birds have been recommended, along with biodiversity enhancements. The WBC Ecologist has reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and has no objection to the application, subject to a condition to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the precautionary measures specified.

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not applicable to this scheme due to the development falling within the de minimum exemption at the time of submission.

Sustainability:
Policy CC2(1) of the NPPF outlines ways in which proposals should contribute to climate change mitigation and the transition to net zero. CC2(1)(d) states one of these ways is to take advantage of opportunities to reuse existing structures and materials. This is the case here whereby a conversion is proposed.

Policy CC04 of the MDD Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD require sustainable design and conservation and R21 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that new development contribute to environmental sustainability and the mitigation of climate change.
It should be noted that the above policies are out of date and were written before the Council's declared Climate Emergency. For this reason, the Council produced a Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (CCIPPS) (2022) which outlines what is expected of development proposals in light of the climate emergency.

In relation to policy requirements outlined in CC04, it should be noted that the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 has now been withdrawn, and now applicants must meet the interim Future Homes Standard (as required by Building Regulations) of a minimum 31% reduction in emissions, in line with the CCIPPS. However, it is noted this requirement is for new homes rather than conversions, and as such does not apply here.

With regards to water consumption, measures for internal water use for each dwelling at a standard of less than 110 litres per person per day is required. This water consumption standard to comply with the CCIPPS, which is a higher standard than that outlined in CC04 because Wokingham Borough is situated within part of the country classified as an area of serious water stress. This will be secured via condition.

Other Matters – Procedural
During the course of the application, the applicant amended the red line of the application site so that it connected to the adopted highway. This is a requirement of all planning applications.

Article 7(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (DMPO) requires that an application must include:
"a plan which identifies the land to which the application relates." Once validated, that land is fixed unless the LPA agrees otherwise. There is not provision in the DMPO that

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

gives an applicant a right to amend the application site boundary after validation; this is discretionary.

In terms of case law, Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v SSE [1982] discusses tests that can be applied to help establish whether a change to the red line boundary would be acceptable:

- Substantial Difference
- Procedural Fairness
- Minor vs Material

In terms of whether or not it is a substantial difference, the amended red line application boundary was increased to include the access strip from the highway onto the site. This is relatively minor in the context of the site.



Left: *Original red line application site plan (now superseded).* ***Right:*** *Updated, current red line application site plan*

The increase in site area within the red line transpired to not be in the applicant's ownership. Accordingly, signed certificate A (stating that all the application site is in the applicant's ownership) was not appropriate. Notice was then served under certificate D given not all owners and addresses were known. Whilst the change in ownership certificate was substantial, notice was served correctly (in the newspaper), the application re-validated and new consultation period was undertaken for all parties. As such, there has been procedural fairness.

In light of the above, the change is considered minor rather than material.

As such, the amended red line boundary (and revised ownership certificate) was acceptable to receive during the course of this application.

Planning Balance/ Conclusion

The application site is located within defined settlement limits and therefore the principle of residential development on this site is supported by policy CP9 of the Core Strategy.

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Policy S4 of the NPPF also states that development within settlement should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

Whilst the loss of an existing employment use would conflict with policy CP15 and TB11, the provision of housing is to be given substantial weight is to be given to the benefits of new homes under policy HO7 of the NPPF. The proposal will result in a smaller dwelling (2 bedroom) in the Twyford housing stock which there is a shortage of according to the neighbourhood plan.. However, it is important to note that while the earlier permission is a material consideration of limited weight; it has expired and does not represent an available fallback. The current proposal has therefore been assessed independently against the current development plan, the NPPF 2026, the present site circumstances and the evidence submitted with this application.

Other than the identified conflict with Policies CP15 and TB11, the assessment has not identified material harm in relation to character and appearance, neighbouring or future occupier amenity, highways, ecology, flooding and drainage, subject to the conditions identified below.

On balance, officers consider that the benefits identified above, principally the delivery of a smaller dwelling within the settlement in an area with an identified need for smaller accommodation, outweigh the moderate harm attributed to the loss of the existing employment use. Having regard to the development plan read as a whole and the other material considerations identified above, planning permission should therefore be granted.

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 – pre-commencement conditions agreed by agent
Recommendation:	Approve subject to the following conditions: 1. Time Limit

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

	2. Approved Plans 3. Materials as specified 4. Parking spaces to be provided 5. Cycle storage details 6. Landscaping scheme 7. Boundary treatment 8. In accordance with avoidance measures/ biodiversity enhancements specified 9. Water consumption 10. Land contamination 11. Remediation 12. Remediation implementation and verification 13. Unexpected contamination
Date:	9 November 2026
Earliest date for decision:	13 October 2026

Recommendation agreed by: **(Authorised Officer)**	
Date:	10/11/26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Affordable Housing Thresholds | Total count: 3

#	NAME
1	Within Major Development Locations
2	Within Major Development Locations
3	Within All Development Locations

Scale and Location of Development Proposals | Total count: 2

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Major Development Locations	Twyford
2	Modest Development Locations	Ruscombe

Mineral Safeguarding Areas | Total count: 3

#	Type	SubType
1	Soft Sand	Construction sand: Palaeogene: Thanet Sand Formation, Lambeth Grou Formation, London Clay Formation
2	Sharp Sand and Gravel	River Terrace deposits

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

3	Soft Sand	Construction sand: Palaeogene: Thanet Sand Formation, Lambeth Grou Formation, London Clay Formation

Major Nuclear Sites Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	PLANNING_NOTE
1	Consultation Zone - Major Nuclear Site	AWE: Special Case Zone	ONR also requests to be consulted on planning applications, irrespective of distance from nucle special cases. Developments that either introdu hazard or change the existing external hazards nuclear sites.

Aerodrome Safeguarding: Heathrow Consultation Zone | Total count: 1

#	Height Band	Wind Turbine	A
1	All works exceeding 150 metres (492.1 feet)	YES	Y

Wokingham Borough Council Owned Land | Total count: 1

#	Address	Tenure
1	land being part of the former Haines Hill Estate, Ruscombe, Twyford	Absolute Freehold Estate in Land

EA Groundwater Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Groundwater Consultation Zones	Groundwater Consultation Zone 2	Environment Agency (only if application in contaminated land) – see separate sheet: consult the Environment Agency

BGS Radon Affected Areas | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Maximum radon potential is 1-3% of houses	Public Health England

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 5

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	UI462	Ecology Officer, Infrastructure Te
2	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	UI463	Ecology Officer, Infrastructure Te
3	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	UJ463	Ecology Officer, Infrastructure Te
4	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	UJ464	Ecology Officer, Infrastructure Te
5	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	UJ465	Ecology Officer, Infrastructure Te

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone	Green	Consult NatureSpace for Major de only

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	IRZURL
1	https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000530050¬es=&location=480601,1 %20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre)

Potentially Contaminated Land Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	OBJE
1	Potentially Contaminated Land Consultation Zone	1

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	Name
1	Landscape Character Assessment 2019	Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlan

Wards | Total count: 1

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Twyford, Ruscombe & Hurst Ward	0 m

Parishes | Total count: 2

#	Name of area	Closest Approximate Distance
1	Twyford CP	0 m
2	Ruscombe CP	2.89 m

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.