

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
200863	28/05/2020	Wokingham Town	Wescott

<b>Applicant</b>	Wokingham Borough Council
<b>Site Address</b>	75 London Road, Wokingham, RG40 1YA
<b>Proposal</b>	Full application for the proposed change of use from HMO (Use Class C4) to supported living (Use Class C2), plus erection of two storey rear extension with 3 no. rooflights and solar panels and erection of detached rear outbuilding to form a meeting room following demolition of existing outbuilding, with associated parking, cycle and bin storage.
<b>Type</b>	Full Planning Application
<b>Officer</b>	Adriana Gonzalez
<b>Reason for determination by committee</b>	Applicant is Wokingham Borough Council

<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Planning Committee on Thursday 21 May 2020
<b>REPORT PREPARED BY</b>	Assistant Director – Place

<b>SUMMARY</b>
<p>The application proposes a change of use and redevelopment of the site to provide supported living accommodation (Use Class C2), specifically for young vulnerable adults aged 18+. The proposed scheme would include the erection of a two storey rear extension to the existing property, as well as an outbuilding to accommodate all necessary facilities.</p> <p>The site is within a sustainable location, adjoining Wokingham Town Centre with excellent transport links. The proposal includes office and overnight accommodation for a member of the management team to be on site 24 hours, 7 days a week.</p> <p>The site has remained vacant and unkempt for several years; the proposed scheme offers the opportunity for positive improvements in visual real terms, whilst providing much needed accommodation and support for young vulnerable people within the Borough.</p> <p>The proposed development would result in an increase in bulk and mass of buildings on site compared to that existing. However, it has been demonstrated that the proposal would not be so significant as to result in any harm to the local character, nor to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and future occupiers of the site. Paragraphs 1-48 provide further details to these material considerations, and subject to conditions 1-12 the application is recommended for approval.</p>

<b>PLANNING STATUS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major development location - Wokingham</li> <li>• Archaeological Site</li> <li>• Green Route – London Road</li> <li>• Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Linear Mitigation Zone – 5Km</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:**

### **Conditions:**

#### **1. Timescale**

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

#### **2. Approved Plans**

This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered 4087.001; 4087.002; 4087.1001 PL3 & 4087.2001 PL1 received by the local planning authority on 02/04/2020. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

#### **3. External Materials**

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall be of a similar appearance to those used in the existing building unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

#### **4. Obscure Glazing**

The ensuite windows at first floor in the east and west side elevations of the development hereby permitted shall be fitted with obscured glass and shall be permanently so-retained. The windows shall be non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the finished floor level of the room in which the window is installed and shall be permanently so-retained.

**Reason:** To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3.

#### **5. Restriction of Permitted Development Rights - Windows**

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning, (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no additional windows or similar openings shall be constructed in the first floor level or above in the side elevations of the development hereby permitted except for any which may be shown on the approved drawing(s).

**Reason:** To safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3.

## **6. Ancillary Accommodation**

The outbuilding hereby approved shall be used as ancillary accommodation to the main C2 use Class and the building shall remain in use as a single building and not be used, sold or sub-let as separate buildings.

**Reason:** A separate unit of accommodation of this nature may not be acceptable in this location in the interests of the amenities, character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP4, and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC01, CC07, TB07, TB08.

## **7. Parking to be Provided**

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.

**Reason:** To ensure adequate on-site parking provision in the interests of highway safety, convenience and amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

## **8. Access Surfacing**

No building shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been surfaced with a permeable material across the entire width of the access for a distance of 10 metres measured from the carriageway edge.

**Reason:** To avoid spillage of loose material onto the highway, in the interests of road safety. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.

## **9. Cycle Parking to be Provided**

Secure and covered parking for cycles must be provided in accordance with the approved drawing(s)/details. The cycle parking/storage shall be permanently so-retained for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

**Reason:** In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 9 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

## **10. Drainage Details**

No development shall take place until full details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The details shall include:

1. BRE 365 test results demonstrating that infiltration is achievable.
2. Full calculations demonstrating the performance of soakaways.
3. Groundwater data confirming seasonal high groundwater levels in the area.
4. A drainage strategy plan indicating the location and sizing of SuDS features, with the base of any SuDS features located at least 1m above the seasonal high water table level.
5. Details demonstrating how any SuDS for this development would be managed throughout the lifespan of the development and who will be responsible for maintenance.

**Reason:** This is to prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

### **11. Landscaping**

Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished floor levels or contours, means of enclosure, car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

**Reason:** In the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

### **12. Protection of Trees**

a) Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a revised Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works, which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place on site.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

**Reason:** To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

### **Informatives:**

1. The applicant is reminded that this approval is granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to the development starting on site. Commencement of the development without complying with the pre-commencement requirements may be outside the terms of this permission and liable to enforcement action. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council for consideration with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details.
2. Whilst it would appear from the application that the proposed development is to be entirely within the curtilage of the application site, the granting of planning permission does not authorise you to gain access or carry out any works on, over or under your neighbour's land or property without first obtaining their consent, and does not obviate the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.
3. The Head of Highways at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham [0118 9746000] should be contacted for the approval of the access and surfacing works for the disabled parking area before any work is carried out within the highway (including verges and footways). This planning permission does NOT authorise the construction of such an access or works.
4. Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant or the Council's ecologist contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.
5. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant in terms of:
  - a full pre-application process was undertaken by the applicant;
  - addressing concerns relating to highway safety;The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.
6. The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. As an affordable housing development a claim for relief can be made. This is a matter for the developer. The Liability Notice issued by Wokingham Borough Council will state the current chargeable amount. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Wokingham Borough Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see - <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/cil-processes/>.

<b>PLANNING HISTORY</b>		
<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
193258	Pre-application advice for the proposed two storey rear extension to existing building following demolition of existing outbuilding and internal alterations	Replied 16/01/2020
183473	Pre-application advice for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and a first floor rear extension with dormer. A single storey out building following demolition of existing	Replied 14/02/2019
011100	Outline application for proposed demolition of no. 75 London Road and erection of 8 bedsits	Refused 19/07/2001
001886	Proposed erection of 8 bedsits and demolition of 75 London Road	Refused 26/10/2000

<b>SUMMARY INFORMATION</b>	
<b>For Commercial</b>	
Site Area	644sqm
Existing Use	HMO (Use Class C4) – currently vacant
Proposed Use	Supported living (Use Class C2)
Proposed Number of Units	4 bedrooms; 3 bed-sit rooms; 1 overnight staff accommodation
Existing parking spaces	1
Proposed parking spaces	1 (disabled car space); 4 (bicycles)

<b>CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>	
WBC Drainage	No objection subject to condition (10)
WBC Environmental Health	No objection
WBC Highways	No objection subject to conditions (7); (8) and (9)
WBC Trees & Landscape	No objection subject to conditions (11) and (12)
WBC Cleaner & Greener	No comments received
WBC Property Services	No comments received
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection

<b>REPRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>Town/Parish Council:</b> No comments received
<b>Local Members:</b> A letter of objection received from Cllr Maria Gee on the basis of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overdevelopment of the site</li> <li>• Additional outbuilding encroaches on the green corridor along the back of the houses</li> <li>• Parking and access not acceptable</li> <li>• Suggests that reducing the proposed footprint of the building would be more appropriate and would address concerns about parking and</li> </ul>

access, since a turning space could be provided and the number of parking spaces reduced

**Neighbours:** Ten letters of objections received from the occupants at nos. 65; 68; 70; 71; 72; 74; 77; 79 & 83 London Road, and no. 100 Wescott Road on the basis of the following:

- No Site Notice displayed on site
- No notification letter to neighbours received
- Lack of transparency on planning process

*(Officer's note: the Council records show that all relevant neighbours have been consulted for this planning application, in accordance with the Council's Statutory Requirements – these include all adjoining properties to the application site. Notification Letters were sent on 8 April 2020. However, in the interests of openness, a site notice was also posted by the applicant on 30 April 2020.)*

*All information submitted for this planning application is public and available to be consulted by any interested party via the WBC website.)*

- Overshadowing and overbearing impact to nos. 71 & 77 London Road
- Overlooking to rear neighbouring garden areas of nos. 71 & 77 London Road, and no. 100 Wescott Road
- Overdevelopment of the site
- Noise
- Detached outbuilding compounds to additional noise and loss of light
- Detached outbuilding could be used as additional living space
- Insufficient parking and highways safety
- Disturbance for neighbours
- Proposed development and use not in keeping with residential area
- Security risk for neighbours due to age and status of future occupants
- Impact on protected species (bats)

*(Officer's note: the impact upon the character of the area, neighbouring private residential amenities, highways safety and parking provision, and ecology will be addressed below in relevant sections of this report.)*

- Insufficient monitoring and management of disturbance due to staff being only part-time on the site
- Not possible to implement and monitor curfew and/or visitor curfew
- Cost of proposal excessive and should not be justified as an expense to local council tax payers
- No full annual forecast for maintenance and repairs costs have been presented
- No complaint management and action guarantee method statement submitted
- No details as to where potential rule offenders will be moved to

*(Officer's note: these concerns are not regulated by the Planning Act, therefore are not material consideration and as such cannot be given weight in this assessment.)*

<b>APPLICANTS POINTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This proposal would provide much needed semi-independent housing units in Wokingham for vulnerable young people</li> <li>• Sustainable location close to local services</li> <li>• Reuse of vacant housing on a 'brown-field' site</li> <li>• The proposal would ensure the building is more energy efficient</li> </ul>

<b>PLANNING POLICY</b>			
National Policy	<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework	
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	<b>CP1</b>	Sustainable Development	
	<b>CP2</b>	Inclusive Communities	
	<b>CP3</b>	General Principles for Development	
	<b>CP4</b>	Infrastructure Requirements	
	<b>CP6</b>	Managing Travel Demand	
	<b>CP7</b>	Biodiversity	
	<b>CP9</b>	Scale and Location of Development Proposals	
	Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	<b>CC01</b>	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
		<b>CC02</b>	Development Limits
<b>CC03</b>		Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping	
<b>CC04</b>		Sustainable Design and Construction	
<b>CC06</b>		Noise	
<b>CC07</b>		Parking	
<b>CC09</b>		Development and Flood Risk	
<b>CC10</b>		Sustainable Drainage	
<b>TB09</b>		Residential Accommodation for Vulnerable Groups	
<b>TB21</b>		Landscape Character	
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	<b>TB23</b>	Biodiversity and Development	
	<b>BDG</b>	Borough Design Guide – Section 4	

<b>PLANNING ISSUES</b>
<p><b>Site Description:</b></p> <p>1. The site is located to the east of Wokingham Town Centre past the junction of Wiltshire Road and London Road. It consists of a two storey detached, attractive red-brick Victorian property with gable-style roof, single storey flat roof projection to the rear, and a detached outbuilding to the western side boundary shared with no. 71 London Road. The property is positioned along main London Road, in a broadly rectangular plot of approximately 44 metres long by 15 metres deep.</p>



2. The building sits just outside Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area, it is not listed and comprises two ground floor reception rooms, a rear kitchen and WC, and bedrooms and bathroom in the upper floor. The site currently benefits from a single vehicle access driveway to the side of the dwelling which provides access to a paved parking area located at the rear of the building.
3. From the information provided in the Design and Access Statement, the lawful use of the premises is a House in Multiple Occupation (C4 use). The site visit confirmed that the building is currently uninhabited.
4. Although no Certificate of Lawful Use has been applied in respect of the C4 use, the site visit and information submitted confirmed that the property consisted of five bedrooms.

**Proposal Description:**

5. The scheme is for the change of use and redevelopment of the site to provide supported living accommodation for young vulnerable people aged 18+ (C2 use Class). The proposed accommodation would comprise of a ground floor ensuite bedroom with disabled access and six individual ensuite bedrooms in the first floor level with access to shared kitchen and living areas in the ground floor. The site would be managed by a housing management company who would provide at least 1 on-site staff member, 7 days a week, and the scheme has been designed to include overnight staff accommodation at ground floor level.
6. The existing building would be enlarged to the rear with a two storey extension to allow for all necessary facilities. The width of the proposed building would remain as existing – approximately 10 metres and the combined depth would be approximately 16.9 metres for a rectangular- shaped footprint. The building would have a maximum ridge height of 8 metres at its highest point (to the front), and the proposed two storey extension would have a half-hipped roof design with lower ridge height of approximately 7.6 metres.
7. The proposed outbuilding would have a rectangular footprint of approximately 5.6 metres in width and 6 metres in depth. It would be single storey with pitched roof design of maximum ridge height 5.4 metres. The outbuilding would include a meeting room with W.C, and would be located to the south-west rear part of the site, separated by approximately 1.6 metres from the rearmost wall of the main building.
8. The proposed vehicular and motor cycle parking space would be located to the front of the site, and the bin store to the western side of the plot, to the front of the dwelling with immediate access from the highway. A secure cycle store area would be provided within the rear private amenity area.

**Principle of Development:**

9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) 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.

10. Policy CC02 of the MDD sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map and therefore replaces the proposals map adopted through the Core Strategy, as per the requirement of policy CP9. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. As the site is within a major development location, the proposal is acceptable in principle.
11. 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.
12. The site is located in a sustainable location, and whilst it is termed as supported living, the proposal would still remain residential in nature which would reflect the dwellings seen along this part of London Road.
13. With regard to the proposed C2 use, paragraph 91 of the NPPF states that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles.
14. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy outlines that planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of (b) Children, young people and families, including co-ordination of services to meet their needs, whilst Policy TB09 of the MDD supports the need for proposals which provide accommodation for peoples' needs over a lifetime, including vulnerable adults, children and young adults leaving care. This is a significant material consideration. In this instance, the proposal would be in accordance with the principles of Policies CP2 and TB09, as the scheme would provide accommodation for young care leavers aged 18+, who require short-term supported accommodation with training or education to develop the necessary skills to live independently. Therefore this need would be met by the proposed facility.

**Character of the Area:**

15. London Road and the surrounding locality are residential in nature (although the site is very close to the boundary with the town centre), predominantly characterised by large, detached two storey dwellings of mixed architectural style and character, but with a clearly defined building line and fairly spacious gaps between buildings. The appearance of the host building is similar to its adjoining properties, all red-brick, Victorian-style, detached, two storeys with side gable projection. It was observed during the site visit that many properties around the neighbourhood have benefited from extensive additions and alterations in the past, including two storey rear extensions, so these are common features within the street scene. A clear example of this would be the adjoining property no. 77 London Road, with a recently finished two storey rear extension granted under planning permission Ref. 183051.
16. The proposed building would be internally re-modelled to provide seven individual ensuite bedrooms with access to shared facilities (sitting room, kitchen/dining, bathroom). There would be a single storey outbuilding in the immediate rear amenity

space of the property, which would comprise a meeting room and W.C. A staff office space and overnight accommodation would be also located within the main building.

17. R23 of the Borough Design Guide outlines a number of key considerations in relation to the design of extensions. Amongst others, these include consideration to be given to the built form, scale and mass of extensions (i.e. the design of proposed extensions must be well considered and should complement the existing building). Overall, alterations and extensions should respond positively to the context, maintaining or enhancing the street scene and local character. Extensions should usually be subservient to the host property.
18. The proposal would demolish the current gabled and flat-roof extensions to the rear of the house, leaving only the main part of the building, and would create a two storey extension to it which would extend approximately 8.7 metres from the original rear wall. The Borough Design Guide states that rear extensions should not project more than 4 metres from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed extension would be well over the 4 metres guidance, the proposed extension would be well set-in from both side boundaries, with a lower ridge height than that of the original house, and with a half-hipped roof of similar slopes and style to that of the main property, making the extension adequately subservient and respectful to the design and appearance of the original property.
19. Furthermore, the proposed external materials to be used would be similar to those of the existing building and neighbouring properties, which would contribute to retain and enhance the wider character and setting of the street scene. In addition, being the bulk of the proposal towards the rear with no alterations to the front elevation, there would be limited views if any from main London Road, and with no other public vantage points to the rear. As such, the proposed bulk and mass of the building, although notably larger than as currently existing, would not be considered to result in any harm to the local character and would be suitable for this plot.
20. The proposed outbuilding would be located to the rear of the plot, well screened by the proposed extensions to the main building, and due to its single storey nature, it would not be visible from the public realm. As such, it would not be considered to result in any detrimental impact to visual amenity or local character.
21. Overall, the proposed development is considered to be appropriate for the site in respect of its design, size, scale, mass and footprint. The appearance of the proposed extension would be similar to not only the residential properties it lies adjacent to, but would also appear sympathetic to other buildings in the wider street scene. It is recognised that the building as existing is in significant disrepair, and the proposal would bring the site into a community use which would not only enhance the appearance of the site but would also fulfil the need of such housing. As such, the proposed development is considered to accord with the NPPF, policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, and the principles contained within the Borough Design Guide.

## **Neighbour Amenity:**

### Overlooking:

22. R15 of the Borough Design Guide requires the retention of reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms, with separation of 22 metres to the rear and 10 metres to the street. R23 notes that the side walls must not contain windows, especially at first floor level.
23. There is a minimum 27 metres separation to properties across London Road and 24 metres separation across the rear boundary to the nearest properties; this is considered sufficient to ensure an adequate level of privacy between neighbouring properties, in accordance with the Borough Design Guide. Whilst there would be diagonal sightlines from the rear elevation across the side boundaries towards the rear gardens of nos. 71 and 77 London Road, this is commonplace within an urban context, and therefore would not warrant as a reason to refuse the application on overlooking or loss of privacy grounds.
24. The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows at ground and first floor along the side elevations of the site, which would face towards nos. 77 and 71 London Road. The site visit confirmed that no. 77 has two windows on the side wall facing the application site but which serve non-habitable rooms, and in any case, the proposed first floor windows at no. 75 have been designed to be high-level, which would mitigate any potential loss of privacy upon neighbouring residential amenity areas.
25. The proposed outbuilding would include new windows, however these would be at ground level, facing the private rear garden of the application site, and much screened by the existing boundary treatment. As such, no loss of privacy would be anticipated to occur.

### Sunlight and Daylight:

26. R18 of the Borough Design Guide aims to protect sunlight and daylight to existing properties, with no material impact on levels of daylight in the habitable rooms of adjoining properties.
27. In respect to neighbouring property no. 77, the site visit confirmed that it has two first floor windows on the flank wall facing the application site. However the windows are currently obscure-glazed and appear to serve a bathroom and closet room (as shown in approved plans of planning permission 183051). Whilst the proposed rear extension would be of a significant mass and scale, it would be separated by approximately 2.9 metres from the shared side boundary, and only projecting slightly forward (1.9 metres) from the rear wall of the approved two storey extension at no. 77, which the site visit confirmed has been already implemented under planning permission 183051. The applicant has submitted a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment – in accordance with the BRE Daylight and Sunlight Guidance – which demonstrates that there will be no adverse impact on neighbouring habitable spaces in terms of daylight and sunlight.
28. In respect to no. 71, the site visit confirmed that the nearest part of this property to the application site is their linked side garage, and there are no first floor windows on

the flank elevation facing the application site. Moreover, the occupant at no. 71 verified in their objection letter that the two windows on their ground floor extension which face towards the extension serve their kitchen, which is considered a non-habitable room. Whilst the proposed rear extension would be considerably extending beyond the rear walls at no. 71, there would be a separation distance of approximately 2.7 metres between the west side wall of the proposed building and the shared side boundary with no. 71. The applicant has submitted a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment – in accordance with the BRE Daylight and Sunlight Guidance – which demonstrates that there will be no adverse impact on neighbouring habitable spaces in terms of daylight and sunlight. This has also been confirmed through the 45 degree line test in respect to rear windows at no. 71.

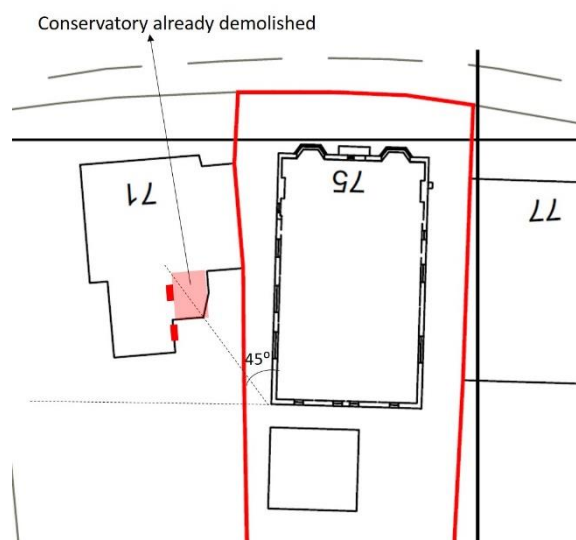


Fig. 1: 45 degree test performed in respect to neighbouring property no. 71 London Road

Overbearing and Sense of Enclosure:

29. R16 of the Borough Design Guide recommends that for two storey properties, the minimum distance to limit sense of enclosure between new and existing developments should be 1 metre from flank to boundary and 11 metres to the rear boundary. R23 also states that two storey rear extensions must be carefully positioned and designed to minimise any potential impact upon neighbours. Given the generous dimensions of the plot and location of the proposed extension, the proposal would comply with these minimum separation distances.
30. Objections have been raised during the consultation period in respect to potential overbearing impact to residential amenities at no. 71 and 77. It is acknowledged that the footprint of the proposed building would be larger than that of the existing building. However, there would be approximately 2.9 metres separation distance between the proposed extension and the flank elevation of no. 77, and approximately 2.7 metres in respect to no. 71. Moreover, the large width and depth of the application site itself mitigates the physical presence of the proposed development, and it is considered that neighbouring amenities would not be unduly harm as a result of the proposed extension.
31. In regards to the proposed outbuilding, due to its modest size and scale, and positioning within the application plot separated 2.7 metres from the side boundary shared with no. 71, the proposed structure would not be considered to have significant levels of overbearing upon residential amenity areas.

### **Access and Movement:**

32. Highway Safety and Access: The site benefits from an existing vehicular access from London Road, which would be utilised with the current scheme, and it is considered acceptable for access by all modes of transport. It was evident during the site visit that the narrowness of the existing access would result in insufficient space to enable two cars to pass each other. However, there would be sufficient visibility on the approach to enable a driver travelling either direction from London Road to see a vehicle within the access and for them to allow that vehicle to exit the site before proceeding. Furthermore, it should be noted that this access is originally of the existing property, and the site visit confirmed that this is characteristic in a number of the surrounding properties in this part of London Road which all have narrow access ways, including neighbouring dwellings nos. 71, 75 and 77. It follows that the proposed access is unlikely to have significant impact on highway safety in the area.
33. Parking: The proposal includes 1 disabled parking space to be provided to the front of the property, however there is sufficient space to the east side – which is proposed to have hardstanding surface – which could accommodate 2 more car spaces. Due to the nature of the residential use (supported living accommodation for young care leavers), it is considered unlikely that the future occupiers of the unit would have car ownership, and the proposed parking space would be used either by visitors to the site or by management staff. Moreover, there are sufficient display car parks within close proximity (including WBC car park), as well as road side shorter term parking for visitors and easy access to the town centre and sustainable transport options. As such, in this instance the proposed level of parking is considered acceptable.
34. Sustainability: Policies CP1 and CP6 of the Core Strategy require that development be sustainable with a reduction in the need for travel and the promotion of sustainable transport, and Policy CP9 states that the scale of development must reflect the existing and proposed levels of facilities, services and accessibility at or in the location. The site is located within a major development area and adjoins Wokingham Town Centre, within immediate proximity of a variety of retail and leisure facilities and services. It is also served by several bus services and it is within commuting distance (1.3Km) of Wokingham Railway Station. Moreover, there is a secure cycle store proposed on the site. As such, subject to condition (9) the proposal is acceptable in terms of being sustainably located and in accordance with the principles of the Core Strategy.

### **Flooding and Drainage:**

35. Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding. The site and access thereto is located with Flood Zone 1, and so the proposal represents no additional flood risk or vulnerability. The WBC Flood Risk and Drainage Officer has raised no objections in this respect.
36. Policy CC10 of the MDD Local Plan requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow. Whilst there is a net loss of soft landscaping and increase in hard paving, surface water runoff will be managed via soakaway while foul water will discharge into an existing foul sewer network. The WBC Flood Risk and Drainage Officer has raised no objection, subject to additional Drainage System details by planning condition (10).

37. R23 of the Borough Design Guide also notes that parking spaces should be paved with permeable surfaces to avoid any increase in surface water run-off and should include for soft landscaping. Consideration has been given to these as shown in the Proposed Site Plan *Dwg 4087.2001 PL1*.

#### **Landscape and Trees:**

38. Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping, and Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character.

39. The site is located along London Road which is a Green Route, and very close to the edge of the Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area, where landscaping to the front and rear of properties contribute to preserve its character. The WBC Trees and Landscape Officer has raised no in principle objections to the proposed development. The Officer advises that it is important to retain the residential amenity and character of the property, with provision made for soft and hard landscaping at the front and rear of the building. A condition requiring the submission of a landscape proposal plan would be sufficient to address this concern (condition 11).

40. The site visit and tree survey report confirmed the presence of existing mature trees and hedges in the rear gardens of adjoining properties nos. 77 and 71, which root protection area extends into the rear garden of the application site. The WBC Trees and Landscape Officer has determined that the proposals shown for the protection of these trees on the Tree Protection Plan are acceptable in accordance with BS5837:2012. The Officer advises that a revised Arboricultural Method Statement is submitted, which will be secured via planning condition (12).

#### **Ecology:**

41. The Council's Inventory shows that the application site is not located within habitat that matches that where bat roosts have been previously found in the borough. As such, in this case a bat survey report is not required. Nonetheless, as noted in one of the objections received, there are existing mature trees on neighbouring rear gardens, which may host roosting bats. Therefore an Informative for the protection of bats (a protected species) will be included in the decision.

#### **Environmental Health:**

42. Noise and Disturbance: Concerns have been raised on the grounds that the proposed use, age and social status of future occupiers could result in greater levels of noise and/or anti-social behaviour. It should be noted that there is no evidence to support this and the scheme would provide on-site staff which would cover 24 hours, 7 days a week. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in an increase of the level of occupiers within the premises of the building. However, it is considered that the impact of the new development would potentially not be greater than that of its use as a HMO, and the external amenity areas would be used in the same way compared to a family dwelling. In addition, nuisance noise from vehicles on the site would be minimal, and vehicle parking would be limited to the front and front/side of the building.

43. Contamination: There is no known contamination.

**Amenity Space for Future Occupiers:**

44. R16 of the Borough Design Guide recommends that a rear garden should be minimum 11 metres in length to allow a variety of activities with an appropriate level of privacy for each of them, as well as a 1 metre setback from the site boundary to allow access thereto. In this instance, the existing garden is approximately 31.8 metres long, and it is acknowledged that the rear amenity space would be reduced due to the proposed extension to the main dwelling, parking/bicycle storage and outbuilding.

45. However, the proposed Site Plan shows a grass area towards the back of the rear garden, of approximately 16.1 metres in length, which would be considered sufficient to accommodate typical garden activities for future occupants, in accordance with the aforementioned design guidance. Moreover, the site is located in an area where public parks are within walkable distance. Side access to the rear is also provided, so overall there are no objections to the proposal in this respect.

**Waste Collection:**

46. The Borough Design Guide states that bin stores and recycling facilities must be placed in a position that meets the Council's Highways Standards, and they should be as close to the highway edge as possible and no greater than 10 metres from a point access for the collection vehicle.

47. The site visit confirmed that the site benefits from a side access gate to the western side of the building which could guarantee the appropriate collection of refuse, and this is also shown in the Proposed Site Plan with a proposed enclosed timber clad bin store for 3no. 660 litre waste bins to be located towards this access.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):**

48. Wokingham Borough Council adopted CIL on 6 April 2015. The proposed development will result in an increase in new build floorspace of more than 100sqm and therefore is liable for CIL.

**The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)**

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. The proposal is intended to support younger people, and this is acknowledged in consideration of the application. Aside from this, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups 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 upon protected groups as a result of the development.



**CONCLUSION**

The application is considered to be acceptable in principle as the change of use with extensions to the existing building would improve the character and appearance of the site, and would make a positive contribution to providing a much needed residential facility for vulnerable young adults within the Borough. The proposal would result in a significant extension to the original building in terms of its size and scale, however it is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the wider character and would be commensurate with other larger sized buildings in the vicinity. Subject to conditions, no harmful impact would occur with regards to neighbour amenity, highways, drainage or trees and landscape. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with national and local planning policy, and is therefore recommended for approval.

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