

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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| Application Number: | 250025 |
| Site Address: | 1 Culford Close, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 3AS |
| Expiry Date: | 13 March 2025 |
| Site Visit Date: | 03/02/2025 |
| Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use from amenity land to residential curtilage, following a garage conversion and changes to fenestration. | |

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Local Authorities
- Borough Parishes
- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Landscape Character Assessment Area

PLANNING POLICY

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| National Policy | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) |
| Core Strategy (CS) | CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals |
| MDD Local Plan (MDD) | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC07 – Parking |
| Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP) | DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation |
| Other | Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List |

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant Planning Application or Planning Appeal History to the current application (i.e. being substantially the same development).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objections.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections, subject to a condition.
WBC CIL – The proposed development would not be CIL Liable.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

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| Parish/Town Council | Earley Town Council – No objections. |
| Ward Member(s) | No comments received |
| Neighbours | No comments received |

APPRAISAL**Site Description:**

The application site relates to a two storey, link detached property located in an established residential area. The surrounding area is characterised by link detached, properties set in discernible groupings which are distinguished by repeated house type.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Character of the Area:

The application site is situated at a visually prominent location, positioned at the corner junction of Crutchley Road and Hawkedon Way. Properties within the immediate area are mostly open-fronted, two storey link detached dwellings set back from the highway, with landscaping at the front typically consisting small trees and hedges which help soften the street scene and create a spacious verdant character.

The proposal seeks to convert a portion of amenity land into residential garden space by enclosing the southern side, grassed area of the property with a 1.7-metre brick wall matching the existing structure.

Brick walling and close-boarded timber fencing are common boundary features

among similarly positioned corner plot sites bordering Hawkedon Way. The majority of these boundaries are set slightly back from the pavement and often incorporate soft landscaping elements, such as grass verges, hedgerows, or small shrubs, which help to soften their appearance within the streetscape.

The proposed wall would be constructed directly adjacent to the footpath, enclosing a small grass verge and a group of shrubs next to the dwelling, thereby reducing the amount of visible green amenity space from public roads. However, the more appreciable green infrastructure within the front driveway would be retained. There is no consistent pattern in the area regarding the proportions and arrangements of roadside open spaces or the distances between boundary treatments and the footway. A similar brick boundary wall exists at the corner plot of No. 13 Eriswell, positioned directly against the public footway without any amenity space or landscaping to soften its appearance from the public realm. Additionally, the bend in Hawkedon Way near No. 1 Culford Close naturally directs the eye away from the wall, preventing it from obstructing views along the road. The design also incorporates a curved edge connecting to the front wall of the dwelling, which helps soften its visual impact, reducing the perception of a harsh boundary and maintaining a sense of openness within the streetscape. As such, this aspect of the scheme would not adversely impact the character of the area.

The proposal seeks to remove the existing garage door and replace it with a set of windows on the front elevation. While garage doors are a characteristic feature of the immediate area, its removal would not appear incongruous, as the proposed windows are designed to reflect the proportions and style of the existing fenestration. This ensures the alteration remains in keeping with the character of the property and the wider street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The new windows on the front elevation would overlook the front driveway and public realm. As these windows would maintain over 10 metres separation from properties across the street any overlooking concerns are minimal.

In terms of loss of light and overbearing, the proposed development would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable impacts to any neighbouring amenities.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would result in the loss of a garage space, however the two remaining off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards. As such, there are no highways issues.

Landscape and Trees:

There are no protected trees on the application site that would be impacted by the proposal. The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the application and raised no objections to the proposed development, provided that a condition is imposed requiring the retention of vegetation within the front driveway, in the interest

of visual amenity. A suitable condition will be attached to any approval.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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

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| Conditions agreed: | Not required |
| Recommendation: | Approval |
| Date: | 18 February 2025 |
| Earliest date for decision: | 7 February 2025 |

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| Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer) | <i>MC</i> |
| Date: | 19.02.2025 |