

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252928
Site Address:	60 Rochester Avenue, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4NB
Expiry Date:	9 February 2026
Site Visit Date:	26 January 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey side extension following demolition of the existing car port.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC07 – Parking
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
240158	Householder application for the proposed single storey rear side extension following demolition of existing conservatory and garage.	Approve 19 th March 2024
243025	Householder application for the proposed erection of an attached garage following demolition of the existing car port.	Approve 24 th January 2025

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC CIL
External
N/A

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No objection raised.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One comment received: One objection received on the following grounds: - The proposal does not comply with the Borough Design Guide Sec4 page 56 which requires a minimum distance of 1m from the boundary relating to a two-storey side extension & set back from the building line by at least 1m. It will if approved create a cramped form of development within the street scene. <i><u>Officer Comment:</u> The separation distance of the proposed side extension with the boundary is discussed in the main report.</i>

APPRAISAL
Site Description: The site is a 1950's two-storey semi-detached dwelling within a Major Development Location in Woodley. No. 60 Rochester Avenue is in a cul-de-sac at one end of Rochester Avenue and benefits from a car port, driveway and an open plan front garden. It has extant planning permission ref 243025 for the proposed erection of an attached garage following demolition of the existing car port. Principle of Development: The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. Proposal: Erection of a two-storey side extension following demolition of the existing car port. The two-storey side extension will measure 7.5m in height, 6m in depth and 2.3m in width. It will be set down from the main roof by 0.7m, set back from the principal elevation by 0.5m and would be adjacent to the side boundary. On the front elevation,

it will have a garage door and a window on the first floor. There will be no windows on the side elevation. There will be a roof light in the rear elevation, but no windows on the ground floor or first floor. The development will facilitate a garage and a fourth bedroom on the first floor.

Character of the Area:

Para 139 of the NPPF, makes clear that, *'Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents which use visual tools such as design guides and codes.'* Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials, and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Policy R23 of the Borough Design Guide (BDG, 2012) states that any alteration or extension to an existing building should be well-designed, contribute positively to the local character and original building, and relate well to neighbouring properties.

The application site is in a cul-de-sac and comprises semi-detached houses of varying ages and design with open plan front gardens and driveways. Rochester Avenue Beyond the immediate street scene, there are other examples of two-storey side extensions in Rochester Avenue that were granted permission prior to the adoption of current planning policies including the NPPF, the 2010 Wokingham Core Strategy, the 2014 Local Plan and 2012 Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. For example, in 1985, 36 Rochester Avenue (approximately 75m away) was granted permission for a first-floor side extension that was set back approximately 1.5m from the ground floor. Similarly, no's 43, and 84 are set back from the front ground floor. No. 92 (approximately 150m away) was granted permission in 2017 ref 172269 for a first-floor side extension adjacent to the boundary and abutting a similar extension at no. 94. However, the substantial 2m set back at first floor level at no's 92 and 94 was outlined in the officer's report to limit the terracing effect and to not be significantly harmful to the character of the area.

In this case, the front garage wall of the proposed two-storey side extension would be set back 0.5m from the principal elevation and in line with the first-floor front wall which is contrary to the Borough Design Guide SPD (BDG) that states: *'for properties in formal suburbia, whether detached, semi-detached or short terraces, the rhythm of the buildings and the gaps between them along the street frontage is often important to the character of the area. Side extensions should be set back from the building line by at least 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be set at least 1m from the plot boundary.'* Given that the proposed side extension would erode the existing separation distance with boundary at first floor level, and the first floor would not be set back, it would result in a cramped arrangement on site and would create potential terracing visual effect should the neighbouring property at no. 62 extend in a similar manner. Moreover, should this application be approved, a precedent would be set in this respect. This ad-hoc terracing effect would appear incongruous and contrived within the street scene where there is a clear and set style of semi-detached dwellings within the cul-de-sac at Rochester Avenue.

Therefore, the proposal would cause harm to the character of the area and does not comply with Section 12 of the NPPF, Policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and the Policy R23 of the BDG.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on neighbouring amenity. It states that the following the proposal should be well designed in relation to the original building, neighbouring properties and to the character of the local area.

Overlooking: There would be no windows in the side elevation, and the rear elevation roof would have a rooflight. Therefore, there would be no significant loss of privacy.

Loss of Light: The 45-degree angle test is advocated within the British Research Establishment's (BRE) publication Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice, to assess impact on daylight and sunlight levels to neighbours potentially impacted upon by adjacent developments. In this case, the side elevation of no. 62 has a door to the utility room and 3 no. windows that serve a hallway, WC and kitchen. There are no windows on the first-floor side elevation. Also, limited protection can be afforded to these side windows given that they effectively 'borrow' their outlook and daylight from the application site. The rear wall of the proposal would be set back approximately 5m from the rear wall of no. 62 and the main kitchen window or bedroom window. Therefore, there would be no significant overshadowing to neighbour amenity. Furthermore, the rear gardens are west facing and would continue to receive sunlight for much of the day.

Overbearing: The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to visual impact and states that the layout and design must have a balanced response to the local context in terms of provision of external space. In this case, the first floor of the side extension would not be set in from the boundary or set back at first floor level. However, it would be set back from the rear wall at no. 62, and the occupier would still have adequate access to private open space. Therefore, the height and bulk of the dwelling would not significantly harm the neighbouring occupiers in terms of overbearing appearance.

Overall, the proposal would not fully comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy regarding neighbour amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CC07 of the Adopted Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates that the new scheme retains an appropriate level of off-street parking. The WBC adopted parking standards after development (Appendix 2 MDD Local Plan) states that 3 or more parking spaces are required following development for a 4 or more-bedroom dwelling. Whilst the proposed garage is not of a size suitable for parking a vehicle, the site retains three off street parking spaces which is considered appropriate to serve a dwelling of this size.

N.B. If the applicant decides to widen the vehicular access or make alterations to

access e.g. new dropped kerb, separate planning permission is required from the Highways Department.

Planning Balance/Conclusion

The proposed two storey side extension would abut the side boundary at first floor level leaving inadequate separation space between its neighbour and therefore does not meet the design requirements set out in Para 131 of the NPPF, which states '*The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.*' Furthermore, it fails to meet policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy that requires development to '*maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment*', and be '*of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design*'. Therefore, the proposal, by reason of its poor design, excessive form and scale and inappropriate proximity to the site boundary, would result in an incongruous, cramped and contrived form of development within Rochester Avenue, causing a potential terracing effect and significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal is contrary Core Strategy Policy CP1, CP3, MDD Local Plan Policy CC01, The Borough Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the NPPF.

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:	N/A
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date:	04 February 2026
Earliest date for decision:	8 January 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	04/02/26