

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242471
Site Address:	16 Pitts Lane, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 1BT
Expiry Date:	24 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	14/01/2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front porch and two storey side and rear extension following a single storey rear extension, changes to fenestration and a garage conversion.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Overhead cables 15m buffer
Water Utility Consultation Zones
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Tree Preservation Orders
Borough Wards
Sites of Urban Landscape Value
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
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 TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

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 history for this site.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – requested additional information (further details below)
WBC Landscape and Trees - requested additional information (further details below)
WBC CIL – Development is CIL liable
WBC Ecology – No comments received

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council raises no objection but requests that a condition be added to secure obscure glazing/fitted details on the two side facing windows serving bedroom 1, to protect the privacy and amenity of no. 14 Pitts Lane. <i>(Officer's note: this is discussed below in relevant section of this report.)</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	The ACER The Whitegates Residents Association note that the bottom window panes in the two storey side extension are shown as non-opening but does not state that the panes are obscure glazed. <i>(Officer's note: this is discussed below in relevant section of this report.)</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located in the major development location of Earley, along Pitts Lane, which is characterised mainly by two storey detached dwellings siting considerably back from the highway on very generous plots. There is an irregular

building line along the eastern side of Pitts Lane where the application site is located.

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:

There is a varied architectural character along Pitts Lane, where some properties have been extended over time. The proposed two storey side extension would remove the existing cat-slide roof to continue with the same ridge height and style of the main roof of the house, thus appearing like a seamless extension to the host property. This part of the extension would be set in from the side boundary, so that it would not result in any detrimental impact upon visual amenity and local character. It is noted that no. 14 Pitts Lane to the south has also a seamless two storey extension to the side, therefore the proposal would not be seen out of keeping within the street scene.

The proposed front porch extension would be single storey with a pitched roof of similar slope to the main roof of the house, and not projecting significantly forward of the main building line, as per the Borough Design Guide recommendations.

To the south side/rear, the proposal would seek to infill the space between the main house and the detached rear garage, with a single storey extension of similar gable-style roof. The rest of the extension to the rear would be part single storey with a flat roof and part two storey with a gable roof of lower ridge height compared to the main roof of the house, thus appearing like a subservient addition. Nonetheless, the extensions to the rear would have very limited views from the public realm, and so would not have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The new windows in the front elevation would overlook the public road, and those in the rear elevation would be in addition to existing windows and would have oblique views towards adjoining rear gardens, which is commonplace within urban residential areas. No windows are proposed at first floor towards the north-east side, so there

would be no overlooking concerns upon the amenities of no. 18 Pitts Lane.

With regard to no. 14 Pitts Lane, it is noted the concerns raised from Earley Town Council and the ACER Residents Association over potential overlooking from the two first floor side bedroom 1 windows.

In this respect, whilst the Borough Design Guide states that “*the side walls of extensions must not contain windows especially at first floor level, to minimise any potential impact upon the privacy of neighbours*”, in this case the 2 windows proposed on the east-west side elevation of the first floor rear extension would be at a separation distance of circa 12.3m from the side elevation of no. 14 Pitts Lane, which has no first floor windows on this side elevation as confirmed during the site visit. It is therefore considered that in this case, given the adequate separation distance, it is not considered that there would be any significant overlooking upon habitable rooms/private amenities of no. 14 Pitts Lane and it would not be reasonable to impose that the bedroom 1 windows are obscure glazed/partially fitted.

Loss of Light:

The proposed development does not fail the BRE Guidance for overshadowing in either plan (45 degree) or elevation (25 degree) form. With this in mind, the proposed would not detrimentally overshadow adjoining occupiers.

Overbearing:

The proposed two storey side extension towards the south-west side would be set in from the shared side boundary by approximately 1.4m, in accordance with the Borough Design Guide recommendations. No. 14 Pitts Lane is also set in from the shared side boundary by circa 4.3m, so that the proposal would not result in any overbearing impact upon this neighbouring amenities.

With regard to no. 18 Pitts Lane, it is noted that the proposed two storey rear extension would be set right up against the shared side boundary, however, no. 18 is also set in from the shared boundary by over 4m, so that there would not be any detriment upon this neighbouring habitable rooms/private amenities by way of an overbearing impact.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal will result in additional habitable rooms. The existing garage will be removed and the driveway will be reduced in length.

Due to the increase in habitable rooms and reduction in parking, the WBC Highways Officer has requested a revised plan which indicates three driveway parking spaces to be provided. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. In this regard, whilst the increase in habitable rooms is acknowledged, the extended dwelling would have 4 bedrooms which is commensurate with a typical large family dwelling, and there are already 2 parking spaces within the existing driveway, which in this case would be considered acceptable for a dwelling of this size.

The existing dropped crossing is considered acceptable.

Amenity Space:

The existing dwelling sits on a very lengthy plot, therefore the remaining rear amenity space would be in excess of the minimum 11m recommended in the Borough Design Guide, and capable of accommodating typical garden activities.

Landscape and Trees:

The rear of the site is part of the Bulmershe Site of Urban Landscape Value (SULV), it backs onto Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 3/1951, A1 on various trees alive in 1951. The south rear boundary is impacted by TPO 1152/2006, G2 on 2 x scots pine and the front south boundary features a beech tree number T7 of TPO 1152/2006.

The road features large individual and semi-detached houses, set back from the street, many of which have been altered over time.

The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer indicates that the rear and side TPO trees are not proximate, so will not be unduly harmed by the built form. The SULV is screened by mature trees and shrubs and will also not be affected. The side extension requires the removal of a hedge and relandscaping the front lawn. The Officer indicates that these changes to the green infrastructure could be accommodated by a landscaping condition. Given this is a householder application for a fairly modest proposal, and the majority of the built form to the side would be over the existing hardstanding to the side of the host dwelling, with no significant changes to the front garden/driveway, it is not considered reasonable nor necessary to impose a landscaping condition for the purpose of development hereby proposed.

The WBC Trees & Landscape Officer also indicates that should the driveway be extended to accommodate the 3 parking spaces as recommended by the WBC Highways Officer, these works may impact upon the rooting area of the TPO beech by the driveway and such impact would need to be informed by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) to BS5837: 2012. However, as mentioned above there would be no changes to the existing driveway as the 2 current parking spaces are considered acceptable to serve the development, therefore there will be no impact upon this TPO and no need for an AIA.

Ecology:

The site is located within habitat suitable for roosting bats. The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman ecological consultancy, Ref. R2808_PRA_a, dated November 2024). The report concludes that the property has been assigned low suitability for bats overall. The development proposals are considered unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost. As such, a European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licence would not be required for the planned works to go ahead lawfully. On this basis, no further concerns are raised on ecological grounds.

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 Council's CIL team have been consulted and indicates that the proposed development will be liable for CIL based on the measurements of the submitted floorplans, with a net increase in floor space of 103.92sqm.

Assumption of liability and any exemption forms will be required prior to the development commencing. This will be added as an Informative.

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

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	22 January 2025
Earliest date for decision:	13 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	22 January 2025