

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260157
Site Address:	204 London Road, Wokingham, RG40 1SN
Expiry Date:	19 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	30 January 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed raising of the roof to create first floor habitable accommodation and alterations to the roof of the existing ground floor side and rear extensions.	

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 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 CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
990209	Proposed Formation Of Vehicular Access To Dwelling.	Approved 31/03/1999

130577	Proposed conversion of garage to create habitable accommodation to dwelling.	02/07/2013
130759	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed conversion of garage to habitable room.	Refused 08/05/2013

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC CIL – Not CIL liable.
WBC Ecology – No objection.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One objection. Concerns relate to: - Overbearing scale and proximity to the boundary will result in detrimental impact to no. 52 Harman Close. - Loss of light to the garden and property at no. 52 Harman Close. - Design is out of keeping with the area. - Loss of privacy to occupants of no. 52 Harman Close. - Noise and disturbance during construction to the occupants of no. 52 Harman Close. - Builders close to the rear boundary will impact the occupants of no. 52 Harman Close to use their garden. - A tree recently removed at the host site has removed natural screening.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a detached chalet-bungalow located on the northern side of London Road, Wokingham which is a Green Route road. There are no protected trees on site.

To the east of the application site is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling and to the west, a two-storey detached dwelling.

There is no prevailing character to dwellings along London Road. The properties vary in size, age and design, with many having already benefited from alterations and extensions in a variety of forms.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the removal of the existing roof and the erection of a taller roof to create first floor living accommodation. The existing side and rear single-storey extensions would also be removed and re-built with a dual pitch roof form.

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 principle of a residential extension in this location is acceptable in principle providing that it complies with the wider policy objectives contained within the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery (MDD).

Character of the Area:

There is no prevailing character to the design and form of properties along London Road. Properties vary in age, design style and size with many of the properties having been altered and enlarged over time.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character. The Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) SPD gives advice on residential developments.

The proposed development seeks to raise the roof of the existing chalet-bungalow to create a full-height two-storey dwelling. Page 57 of the BDG states that for roof alterations 'The eaves and/or ridge heights of a property should not be raised unless buildings in the local context are significantly higher'. Following the removal of the existing roof, a new roof would be erected which would be approximately 1.77m taller than the existing ridge height. A third party has raised concern regarding the 'double storey' not being in-keeping with surrounding properties.

In assessing the proposal, consideration has been given to the prevailing character and scale of development within the immediate vicinity. While the existing property is currently single storey with a loft room, the dwellings immediately adjacent to the site on both sides are two-storey properties. As such, the proposed increase in height would not appear incongruous or out of keeping within the established pattern of development of surrounding properties.

Given the presence of two-storey dwellings either side of the site, the proposal would read as a continuation of the existing built form rather than appearing as an isolated or overly dominant feature within the street scene. The scale, massing and overall proportions of the dwelling would therefore remain consistent with neighbouring properties and would integrate appropriately with the surrounding residential context.

Accordingly, the proposed roof increase and resulting two-storey form are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the public realm and would not result in harm to the visual amenity of the street scene.

The application proposes a traditional material palette which would comprise of render at ground floor level, hung tiles to the first-floor elevations and slate roof tiles.

The surrounding street scene displays a varied palette of external materials, including examples of properties finished in render, hung tiles and slate roofing. As such, the proposed material palette would not appear incongruous within the context of the area and would reflect materials already present within the immediate locality.

Accordingly, the proposed materials are considered acceptable and would preserve the character and appearance of the street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The proposal seeks to raise the roof of the existing property in order to create first floor living accommodation. One third party has raised concern relating to the proposed development resulting in a loss of privacy to the occupants of no. 52 Harmar Close. In assessing the proposal, consideration has been given to the potential impact on the residential amenities of all neighbouring occupiers, particularly with regard to overlooking and loss of privacy.

The properties located immediately to either side of the host dwelling are existing two-storey dwellings which already provide first floor outlook towards the rear of the site and neighbouring gardens. As such, the introduction of a first floor within the host dwelling would not represent a materially different relationship from that which already exists within the immediate context. The proposal would therefore reflect the established pattern of development within the street.

Furthermore, the site is located within an area characterised by a medium density pattern of development within a major development location. In such urban environments, a degree of mutual overlooking between properties is typical and expected, provided that adequate separation distances are maintained.

In this case, the back-to-back separation distance between the host dwelling and the nearest properties to the rear (nos. 50 and 52 Harmar Close) would exceed 40m. This is significantly greater than the 22m minimum separation distance recommended on page 47 of the BDG for maintaining adequate levels of privacy between facing habitable room windows. The proposal therefore comfortably exceeds the Council's adopted design guidance in this regard.

There are two first floor windows proposed in each flank elevation to serve a bedroom and dressing room. Consideration has been given to the potential impact of these windows on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties.

The proposed windows would be positioned at a high level within the elevations, which would restrict direct outward views towards adjoining residential properties. Due to their elevated placement within the wall, views from these windows would be limited and would not readily allow for direct overlooking of neighbouring gardens or habitable room windows. Therefore, in this instance, the positioning of the windows would ensure that

any potential for harmful overlooking is appropriately mitigated and would not give rise to unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers.

There is also one standard sized first-floor window proposed in the eastern flank elevation to serve a landing area. Landings are considered to be non-habitable spaces, and as such typically experience only transient use by occupants moving between rooms. Consequently, the potential for sustained overlooking from this window would be limited.

Furthermore, the window would be positioned above the staircase, with the internal stair level set lower than the window. This arrangement would naturally restrict the ability for occupants to stand directly adjacent to the window and obtain clear outward views, thereby further limiting opportunities for direct overlooking.

In addition, the outlook from the window would primarily be towards the neighbouring property's front garden and driveway area. These areas are already openly visible from the public highway and do not constitute private amenity spaces in the same manner as rear gardens. As such, the proposal would not result in a detrimental loss of privacy to areas that would reasonably be expected to remain private.

Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any detrimental overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The BDG sets out specific guidance for extensions in order to limit adverse overshadowing and overbearing impact to neighbouring properties. The guidance for side and rear extensions states that the primary consideration is impact upon neighbours. Page 56 of the BDG states 'A gap should be retained between the building and the site boundary and this should be a minimum of 1m in width'. The footprint of the ground floor is not proposed to change and would maintain the existing 1m separation distance from both side boundaries. The flank walls of the proposed first-floor level would be set away from the western shared boundary by approximately 2.9m and more than 5m from the eastern shared boundary. The separation distances exceed those recommended in the BDG to ensure no adverse overbearing or overshadowing impact would be generated to neighbouring residential amenity.

One third party raised concern regarding the proposed development generating adverse overbearing impact to the occupants of no. 52 Harmar Close which is located to the rear of the application site. R16 of the BDG provides a summary of the council's minimum privacy and amenity distance guidelines. For back-to-back elevations, a 22m minimum separation distance is recommended in order to limit any sense of enclosure. In this instance, the separation distance between the rear elevation of the host dwelling and the rear elevation of no. 52 would exceed 40m. This distance significantly exceeds the recommended 20m in order to safeguard residential amenity and maintain adequate relationships between dwellings. Given the substantial separation distance, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable overbearing impact to the occupants of no. 52 Harmar Close.

R18 of the BDG states that dwellings must be designed to provide appropriate levels of daylight and sunlight to new and existing properties. The objection raised by no. 52

Harmar Close in respect of loss of light to their garden and property has been considered. However, the proposed development would comply with the 45- and 25-degree tests as advocated within the BDG and British Research Establishment publication 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, a guide to good practice'. In combination with the significant separation distance (more than 40m) of the neighbouring property from the host dwelling, it is concluded that there would be no detrimental loss of light impact to the neighbouring garden or property.

Disturbance during the build:

An objection has been raised in relation to potential noise and disturbance arising during the construction phase of the development. It is acknowledged that building works associated with residential extensions can result in a degree of temporary disruption to neighbouring occupiers.

However, the proposal relates to a relatively small-scale householder development. Works of this nature are commonplace within established residential areas and are typically undertaken over a limited period of time. As such, some level of temporary noise and disturbance during construction is to be reasonably expected and would not, in itself, justify the refusal of planning permission.

Given the modest scale and nature of the works, it is not considered necessary or reasonable to impose specific planning conditions controlling hours of construction. Such controls would generally be reserved for larger scale developments where construction activity may give rise to more significant and prolonged impacts.

Furthermore, matters relating to construction noise and disturbance are more appropriately controlled through separate environmental health legislation should any statutory nuisance arise.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The host dwelling benefits from a large front driveway and gravelled area providing on-site parking. The existing parking arrangements are not proposed to change and are considered acceptable to serve the development.

Amenity Space:

The Council's minimum garden length of 11m is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provided the space is usable. The existing garden extends to approximately 20m in depth, this would remain unchanged following the proposed development which is acceptable.

Ecology:

The application site borders land which is suitable for bat roosts. The council's Ecologist was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal. They commented: *"Provided informative I17 is included in the decision notice to remind the owner and their contractors that bats are protected as above and destruction of a roost or disturbance or injury to bats would be illegal, there are no objections to the development as proposed"*.

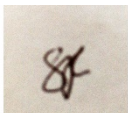
Conclusion:

For the reasons set out above and subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	6 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	18 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	16.3.26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Major Development Location

Green Route

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

Westcott Ward

Wokingham Parish