

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261378
Site Address:	8 Barford Drive, Wokingham, RG40 5AR
Expiry Date:	12 August 2026
Site Visit Date:	4 August 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection a side dormer to facilitate loft conversion to habitable accommodation along with changes to fenestration.	

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 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements H12 – Residential development of existing private gardens NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
N/A	N/A	N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Internal	
WBC Digital Solutions Scanning- No comments received	
External	
None consulted	

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: This application site relates to an end of terrace with associated parking and landscaping in the residential area of Wokingham. The site is surrounded by dwellings with similar prevailing architecture and design.

Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed erection a side dormer to facilitate loft conversion to habitable accommodation along with changes to fenestration. The proposed dormer will approximately be 7 meters in depth, 4 meters in width and 2.5 meters in height.

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: Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that developments are of appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to other adjoining land users. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Design Code place significant emphasis on securing good design. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.”*

Paragraph 139 further confirms 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 such as design guides and codes." As explained in this report, the design would have a harmful impact and conflicts with the Borough Design Guide SPD.

Barford Drive is a newly built development, and the dwellings share a similar and coherent architectural style and set of features. The properties are brick-built with pitched roof forms. The prevailing housing mix comprises a combination of small terraces, semi-detached and detached properties. Some properties within the development incorporate modest flat-roofed dormer windows; however, these are significantly different from the development proposed, as they are smaller subservient features with windows that do not materially disrupt the underlying pitched roof form.

In contrast, the proposed side dormer extension would occupy a substantial proportion of the southern roof slope and would appear excessively large, bulky and dominant. Rather than reading as a subordinate addition, the roof extension would dominate the roof plane and materially disrupt the simple pitched roof form that is a defining characteristic of the dwelling and the wider development. Its box-like appearance, together with its large scale, would create an incongruous addition that would detrimentally alter the roof form and be visually at odds with the established design of the surrounding properties.

The design concerns are further compounded by the absence of any fenestration within the side elevation. Consequently, the addition would not read as a conventional dormer serving habitable accommodation, but instead as a large, blank and featureless projection from the roof. The lack of windows or architectural detailing would fail to break up its bulk and would reinforce the perception of the structure as an awkward rooftop addition rather than an integrated dormer window. Whilst it is acknowledged that windows may have been omitted to avoid overlooking neighbouring properties, this does not justify the resulting design harm.

The proposed development fails to accord with a number of the design principles set out in the Borough Design Guide (BDG). In relation to dormer windows, the guidance states that *"dormers should relate to the design of the existing building in terms of roof form, materials, positioning and window proportions."* As set out above, the large flat-roofed addition would significantly disrupt the underlying sloping roof pitch, and the absence of any fenestration fails to relate well to either the existing property or other houses within the area. The development would also fail to meet the principles set out in Section 4.11 of the guidance by failing to contribute positively to local character and relate well to neighbouring properties.

The proposed dormer would be located on the southern roof slope, occupying the position of the existing chimney. As part of the proposal, the chimney would be removed. The removal of the chimney would diminish an element of the character of the dwelling itself and would also detract from the character of the surrounding development.

Whilst the roof extension would be located on the side roof slope, the orientation and position of the dwelling would make the proposal an easily visible feature within the street scene. The incongruous nature of the extension would cause it to stand out as an uncharacteristic and harmful feature within this newly built development.

Policy CP1 states that proposals will be approved where they “maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment”, and the development fails to achieve this.

Overall, the proposed dormer would result in a contrived and visually intrusive form of development that would erode the established character of the dwelling and the area and would appear overly dominant and incongruous within the street scene. As such, the proposal fails to achieve a high standard of design and is contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD, and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbouring Amenity: Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development to secure a “high standard of amenity for existing and future users”. This is reinforced by Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which requires development to be of an appropriate scale, mass, layout and height, and to achieve a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities or quality of life of adjoining occupiers.

The proposed dormer extension would not result in a detrimental loss of privacy to neighbouring dwellings to the south, due to the absence of windows in the side elevation. Whilst the dormer would be a large addition to the roof, it would not give rise to additional overshadowing or an overbearing impact that would materially harm the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The new rear window in the gable end would be approximately 26 metres from the rear elevation of the dwelling to the west. This would comply with the recommended separation distances in the Borough Design Guide SPD for fenestration above first-floor level.

The new front-facing window in the gable would be obscurely glazed and located approximately 18 metres from the flank elevation of the nearest dwelling to the east. This would also comply with the separation distances set out in the Borough Design Guide SPD.

For these reasons, the proposed development would not result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The application form indicates that changes to the existing parking arrangement are proposed. However, following discussions with the applicant, it has been confirmed that this is not the case and that no alterations to the existing parking provision are proposed. This is reflected in the submitted block plan, which does not show any changes to the parking layout.

As such, there is no change in level of driveway parking available, and no off- street parking is proposed. As a result, the proposal does not impact parking or access provisions, therefore, no comments from the Council’s Highways Officer have been raised.

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.

Conclusion: The proposed development is unacceptable, will result in material harm and is contrary to National and Development Plan policies for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development will result in a incongruous and contrived form of development that would fail to respect the character, appearance and characteristics of the property and the neighbouring houses, by reason of its size, scale, massing, and design. The proposed development is contrary to policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 12 of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date:	7 August 2026
Earliest date for decision:	9 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	12.08.2026