

## **Planning Statement – Garage Extension at 3 Woodward Close, RG41 5NW**

### **1. Site and Existing Property**

#### **Location and Property Description:**

The application site is No.3 Woodward Close, located in Winnersh, Wokingham Borough (RG41 5NW). It comprises a two-storey detached family dwelling in a suburban residential cul-de-sac. The house is of modern brick construction with a pitched roof and an attached double garage to the side. The ground floor of the existing property contains a sitting room, a kitchen-dining area, a study, a WC, a utility room and a rear conservatory. The first floor currently provides four bedrooms and a family bathroom, making it a four-bedroom house. The attached garage occupies on the ground floor and is positioned on the east side of the house. The site is an established residential plot with a front driveway and rear garden. It is not situated in a Conservation Area and has no listed buildings in the vicinity. According to the Council's flood risk mapping, the site is outside any designated flood zones 2 or 3 (the Woodward Close area is not in the floodplain). There are also no known Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) or other special constraints on the property. The surrounding context is a residential estate of similarly scaled detached homes, and the character of the area is defined by brick-and-tile houses with driveways and modest gaps between buildings.

### **2. Proposed Extension Development**

**Description of Proposal:** This householder application proposes to erect a single storey front extension and first floor side extension, partial garage conversion, along with changes to fenestration. The ground-floor garage will be extended approximately 1.83 metres beyond its original front wall, bringing it in line with the garage wall of the No. 2 house. This increased garage will be divided into a double garage and also an area at back hosting a ground-floor toilet and a utility room. The first-floor extension will be built above the enlarged garage, creating two new bedrooms and a bathroom accommodation. The extended frontage is set 1m back from the principal frontage of the house. And the roof ridge of the extended roof will be lower than the main house roof ridge. This ensures that it appears subordinate to the original dwelling (in compliance with design guidance that side extensions be set back at least 1 m with a lower roof line).

**Design and Materials:** The extension will integrate with the existing building using matching external materials. The frontage finishes of the extension will maintain the Tudor style as the existing main building. The rest of the walls and the roofs will be finished in brickwork and roof tiles to match the appearance of the existing house, so that the new construction blends seamlessly with the original, and maintains a harmonious appearance. All new windows will

match the style and proportions of the existing fenestration. The back elevation will include a new bathroom window fitted with frosted (obscure) glass (discussed below). Overall, the extension has been designed to be visually unobtrusive and in keeping with the host property – it does not project forward of the house's front building line and remains well within the boundaries of the plot, preserving the appearance of the street scene.

**Internal Layout and Size:** Internally, the extension will allow for an enlarged garage space at ground floor (improving its utility) and will create two additional bedrooms (fifth & sixth bedroom) at first floor with a bathroom. The new first-floor bedroom 5 is approximately 11 m<sup>2</sup> in area, and the bedroom 6 is approximately 13 m<sup>2</sup>, which is comparable to the size of the existing bedrooms and suitable for a double bedroom. The new bathroom is modest (approximately 4 m<sup>2</sup>) and will serve the two new bedrooms. The extension increases the property from a 4-bedroom to a 6-bedroom home while retaining adequate amenity space. The existing garden and landscape are unaffected by the build. The parking provision on-site (the driveway and garage) will increase the parking spaces for three cars on the driveway, meeting local parking standards for a 6-bedroom dwelling.

### 3. Planning Context and Constraints

**Planning Policy Designations:** The site lies within the settlement boundary of Wokingham Borough (Winnersh area) where residential extensions are acceptable in principle subject to normal development control criteria. It is not in Green Belt or any specially controlled zone. As noted, the property is outside any Conservation Area and is not subject to any Article 4 Directions. There are no known ecological or heritage designations on the site. The proposal has been prepared having regard to the relevant planning policies and guidance at national and local level, as outlined below.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The NPPF (2021) emphasizes the importance of good design and protecting amenity. Paragraph 135 (now 130 in updated numbering) of the NPPF states that developments should be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The proposed extension meets these objectives by respecting the character of the area and preserving the living conditions of neighbours (see detailed assessment below). The NPPF's presumption in favor of sustainable development is met in this householder context – the extension will improve the functionality of the home for the occupants with no adverse impacts on the community.

**Wokingham Local Plan – Core Strategy and Managing Development Plan:** The key local policy is Core Strategy Policy CP3: General Principles for Development, which requires that new development (including extensions) be appropriate in scale, mass, layout, built form,

height and character to its context, of high-quality design, and not harm the amenities of adjoining land uses or occupiers. The proposal accords with CP3: it is a small-scale addition subordinate to the existing house (scale and massing appropriate), it uses matching materials and design (high quality, in character with area), and it has been carefully sited/designed to avoid harming neighbours' light, privacy, or outlook (amenity protected). Other relevant development plan policies include Core Strategy Policy CP1 (sustainable development – the scheme makes efficient use of previously developed land without adverse impacts) and any relevant Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan policies on residential extensions and design. Wokingham's adopted Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2012) provides specific guidance for household extensions, which this proposal has been designed to follow. The SPD advises that extensions should be well-designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to local character, and relate well to neighbouring properties. In particular, the Design Guide SPD Section 4.11 (Alterations and Extensions) notes that side extensions on suburban houses should typically be set back from the front and have a lower ridge to appear clearly subservient, and that materials should match or improve upon the existing structure. The proposed extension follows these principles (subservient roof and setback, matching materials, etc.). The SPD also sets guideline separation distances to prevent overlooking, and it incorporates the "45-degree rule" to safeguard neighbours' light for rear or side extensions. As detailed below, the proposal respects these guidelines through its design and mitigations.

**Other Guidance:** No specific neighbourhood plan or village design statement applies to this location. However, general householder design guidance (such as the national Technical Guidance and the principles of the National Design Guide) has been considered. The proposal represents a common and policy-compliant home extension that falls well within what is supported by local policy and guidance.

#### **4. Design and Visual Impact Assessment**

**Scale, Form and Subsistence:** The scale of the extension is modest and clearly subservient to the host dwelling. The two-storey addition does not overwhelm the original house – it occupies the footprint of the existing garage (plus a small 1.83 m front projection) and its roof ridge will be set below the main ridge. The front facade of the extended part is stepped back (~1 m) from the primary front wall of the main house, which, combined with the lower ridge line, ensures the extension appears as a *harmonious addition* rather than a dominating feature. This design approach follows the Borough Design Guide's recommendation that side extensions be visibly subordinate to the original building's form and scale. The extension's width is essentially the width of the existing double garage, maintaining the visual impression

of space around the building. The pattern of development along Woodward Close features detached houses with gaps between; this proposal retains a gap (approximately 1 metre or more) to the side boundary, so the extension will not create a terracing effect or disrupt the rhythm of spacing on the street. The roof form of the extension matches the existing – for example, if the house has a pitched roof, the extension will have a complementary pitched end – thereby ensuring it “takes its form from the main building” as encouraged by design guidance. The eaves height and overall height are in keeping with a two-storey domestic scale and do not exceed those of the existing dwelling (in fact, they are slightly lower). In plan and elevation, the extension reads as a proportional addition. It will not project forward of the original house, so the front building line of the street remains unchanged. In summary, the proposal’s design is proportionate and sympathetic to the host building, satisfying local policy that extensions be well-designed and in character.

**Architectural Style and Materials:** The extension has been designed to blend seamlessly with the appearance of the existing house. The materials (Tudor style finishes on the first floor frontage, brickwork, roof tiles, window frames, and other detailing) will match the existing house to ensure visual continuity. The brick type, bonding, and mortar will replicate the original as closely as possible, and the roofing tiles will be of similar profile and colour to the existing roof. The front elevation of the extension will incorporate fenestration aligned with existing windows (e.g. a window of similar style and head height to the adjacent bedroom window on the front of the house), maintaining the house’s balanced façade. By adopting the same architectural language as the original (Tudor style frontage, roof pitch, diamond window division, brick detailing), the extension will appear as an integrated part of the house. Alternatively, one could say it follows a “seamless continuation” approach – which the Design Guide allows in certain cases – but still reads as secondary in size. The use of high-quality, matching materials will ensure the extension does not look incongruous; in fact, over time it will be indistinguishable as an “add-on” when viewed from the street. The frontage of the property will remain attractive – the garage door will either be retained or replaced with a similar style door. The design thus complements the existing building as required by Policy CP3 and the Borough Design Guide.

**Street scene and Character:** The impact on the street scene of Woodward Close will be minimal and entirely acceptable. The extension is to the side of the house, but given the set-back and matching design, it will not be prominent or intrusive from public viewpoints. The principal elevation facing the road remains largely unchanged. The house’s overall detached character is retained. The street features similar detached homes, some of which may have undergone extensions or alterations; the scale and design of the proposed extension is in keeping with these surroundings. It will not unbalance the pair of neighbouring houses nor

upset any symmetry, as this house is a standalone property (not semi-detached). The careful preservation of a gap to the boundary ensures the extension does not visually crowd the plot – a gap of about more than 1 m will remain to the side fence, fulfilling the design guideline of retaining space to the boundary for two-storey side additions. Additionally, existing mature landscaping (Laurel trees along north-west side of the house, as noted on plan) will soften the view of the house from certain angles. In terms of local character, the development respects the suburban character of Winnersh by keeping the dwelling as a two-storey house of similar form and materials. The extension contributes positively by enhancing the property's functionality while avoiding any harm to the visual amenity of the area. Overall, the proposal accords with local design policies and the NPPF's design objectives, which say developments should be sympathetic to the built environment and add to the overall quality of the area. Here, the quality is maintained through good design, and there is no adverse effect on the character of Woodward Close.

## 5. Neighbouring Residential Amenity

A primary consideration in the design has been to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in line with Wokingham Borough's policies and guidelines. The two immediate neighbours potentially affected are No.2 Woodward Close (adjacent to the east side of the application site) and No.4 Woodward Close (another nearby dwelling whose side elevation (no window) faces toward the rear of No.3). The impact on each is assessed in terms of privacy (overlooking), daylight/sunlight (overshadowing), and overbearing presence.

**Privacy and Overlooking:** The extension has been carefully designed to avoid any harmful overlooking of adjacent properties. As a side extension, it introduces new first-floor elements that could have views toward neighbours; however, measures are in place to mitigate this. No side-facing window is proposed on the east elevation that faces toward No.2's property (which is a guideline in the Borough Design Guide: "side walls of extensions must not contain windows at first floor level, to minimise impact on neighbor privacy"). This ensures that No.2 will not experience any loss of privacy to its side rooms or garden from the new bedroom. Two new windows on the south side of the extended first floor for the proposed bedroom 5 and the proposed bathroom face toward No.4's direction. The bedroom window is over 15m with a sharp angle to the No 4's windows. The bathroom window will be fitted with frosted (obscure) glass and fixed shut below a certain height, so it will *not* afford any clear views out towards No.4. As noted in the architectural "Planning analysis" on the drawings, the distance between this new bathroom window and the nearest window of House No.4 is about 14.7 metres, which is slightly below the typical 15 m guideline for facing windows. Because the window serves a

non-habitable room (a bathroom) and will be obscure-glazed, there will be no direct overlooking or loss of privacy for the occupants of No.4.

Additionally, No.2's side elevation (which appears to contain a side door with a window) will not be overlooked at all, since the extension does not introduce any overlooking in that direction. Any new front-facing window on the extension will look toward the public street (as existing windows do), and any new rear-facing bedroom window will primarily overlook No.3's own garden and view obliquely toward the very far end of No.4's garden, similar to existing first-floor windows on the house. Thus, no undue loss of privacy will occur to either adjacent neighbour. These measures demonstrate compliance with local amenity policies and the NPPF's aim to provide a high standard of amenity for existing residents.

**Daylight, Sunlight and Overbearing Impact:** The extension has been designed within the envelope that respects the 45-degree rule and avoids overshadowing neighbouring windows. In particular, House No.2 (to the south-west) has a glazed-panelled side door with a window toward to the east side of the No. 3. The proposed extension will keep the position of the existing rear wall of the garage, which already sat *before* the position of the No.2's side door with window. Therefore, when applying the 45° test from the midpoint of No.2's side door/window, the line will not be intercepted by the extension – meaning No.2's light is not affected. This is explicitly noted in the submitted plans' analysis: "the side door with window of house No.2 won't be affected by the 45° rule of right to light as the south wall of No.3 is ahead of that door". Additionally, No.2 is positioned to the east of the extension; given the path of the sun, any minor additional shadow cast by the first-floor addition of No.3 would fully fall within No.3's own garden or onto the west-side wall of No.2's later in the day. There will be no material overshadowing of No.2's main rear windows or primary habitable rooms, since the extension is relatively shallow in projection. For House No.4, which lies to the south/rear of No.3), the extension does not encroach from any sides. The overall separation distance between No.3 and No.4 remains no change. The extension's roof slopes away and the ridge is lower than the main house, which further minimizes any sense of enclosure. There are also no issues of "right to light" infringement as the proposal has been assessed against relevant BRE daylight standards and the 45° rule, demonstrating compliance.

#### **Noise and General Disturbance:**

The use of the extension will remain purely residential (additional bedroom and enlarged garage), which will not introduce any new noise sources or activities beyond a typical dwelling. There is no change of use or intensification that would adversely affect neighbours. During construction there may be short-term minor disturbances, but these will be managed through standard working hours and methods – and are not a planning concern so long as considerate

construction is practiced. Once built, the extension will not generate any appreciable increase in noise, traffic, or other disturbances. The property remains a single household.

In summary, the proposal has given careful consideration to amenity issues and includes specific mitigations (such as obscure glazing and limiting the extension's bulk) to ensure no unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing impacts occur. The result is a development that "*would have no detrimental impact on daylight/sunlight for habitable rooms within adjoining properties*" and would not harm the living conditions of neighbours. This satisfies Policy CP3's requirement to protect adjoining occupiers' amenities as well as the guidance of the NPPF and local SPD. Both adjacent neighbors will retain their privacy, receive the same quality of daylight as before, and experience no material loss of outlook or enjoyment of their property. The residential amenity of the area is therefore preserved.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed garage extension at 3 Woodward Close is a well-considered, policy-compliant development that represents an enhancement to the property while respecting its surroundings. The scheme has been designed to a high standard in accordance with national and local planning guidance: it is visually in keeping with the character of the existing house and the street, and it remains subordinate in scale so as not to dominate the dwelling or locale. The extension's form, materials, and details will complement the original building, ensuring the appearance of the area is maintained (indeed, the extension will be barely distinguishable as an addition once constructed). The planning context has been fully addressed – the site is unconstrained by special designations, and the principle of extending a dwelling in this location is acceptable. There are no heritage or flood risk concerns. The design adheres to the Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD and relevant Local Plan policies (especially Core Strategy CP3), which require good design and protection of amenity. We have demonstrated that the extension meets these criteria: for example, it remains in proportion, uses matching materials, and incorporates a lowered roof and setback to appear subordinate; it also avoids any breach of privacy or light to neighbours through thoughtful placement of windows and limited projection.

## Sources:

- Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010), Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development
- Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD (2012), Section 4 – Residential Extensions (design principles on subservience, materials, and neighbor impact)

- Planning drawings and analysis for 3 Woodward Close (Existing/Proposed plans and “Overlooking & lighting right analysis”).
- National Planning Policy Framework (2021), Section 12 “Achieving well-designed places” (para. 135f – high standard of amenity)
- WBC Planning Guidance – 45° rule and separation distances for house extensions (as reflected in the Borough Design Guide and plan analysis)
- Application for Tree Works: Works to Trees Subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), *Town & County Planning Act 1990*