

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250387
Site Address:	10 Cassia Drive, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 5YH
Expiry Date:	16 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	21 February 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed two storey front extension, and single storey rear extension. Plus, a garage conversion, installation of roof lights and changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Minor

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 CC02 – Development Limits CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
241451	Householder application for the proposed side extension and garage conversion.	01/08/24

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways: No objection subject to conditions

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council have no objection subject to following condition- as these proposals have a separate entrance, no part of the extension as hereby approved shall be used as a separate unit of accommodation for fee paying occupants, unless otherwise approved by WBC in writing and to ensure that adequate car parking is provided at all times, to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties, pursuant to Policies CC07 and CP3. <i>Officer response: A similar worded condition will be part of the decision notice.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	11 Cassia Drive: Object, loss of light to bathroom window. <i>Officer response: The height of the current plans remains consistent with the previously approved elevation plan (planning ref: 241451).</i> <i>11 Cassia Drive does have a first-floor side window and the increased height of pitched roof may affect how much sunlight it receives. However, given it's a non-habitable room (bathroom). The British Research Establishment's Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice states that windows to bathroom need not to be tested. Therefore, it would not have any significant adverse impact upon the neighbouring property.</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Two storey dwelling linked by garages.

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.

The proposed garage conversion/extension would have the potential to be used as a separate unit of accommodation which could be used independently from the main house without entering the main house or disturbing the occupants of it and it could also be independently accessed from the drive given it would have a separate front door for access. Whilst it does have an internal door linking the house to the garage, this could be removed without needing planning permission.

The ground floor plans show the garage conversion/extension would facilitate an additional bedroom. However, there is no kitchen or no toilet or showering facilities indicated on the proposed plans, so there would still be a dependency on using the main house for cooking/preparing meals as well as toilet/ showering facilities. The floor plans for the building do not contain the facilities required for day-to-day living and thus could not be occupied as a separate dwelling. Thus, the circumstances indicate that the proposal would be used ancillary to 10 Cassia Drive. The proposed usage of the garage would not result in a material change of use or the formation of an independent residential planning unit. As stated above, the proposed use would be purely ancillary to the main dwelling.

The proposed garage conversion into habitable accommodation would include a separate front entrance. This would be somewhat out of keeping with the pattern of development in the area but would not warrant a reason for refusal in its own right, as outlined below. A condition is recommended to ensure *“the garage conversion into habitable accommodation with its own separate entrance hereby approved shall only be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling house and shall not be used, sold or sub-let as separate dwelling”*.

Character of the Area: The proposal would differ to the current street scene and slightly alter the characteristics of the street as the garage door would be replaced by window and door. However, the new window would be similar to the existing in size and proportions of current ground floor window along Cassia Drive, meaning that the proposal would not negatively harm the street scene. The proposal meets the recommendations of the Borough Design Guide and is in line with policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

The Borough Design Guide states that *“side extensions should not project forward of the building line on the street frontage(s)” and “a gap should be retained between the building and site boundary and this should be a minimum of 1m in width”*. The side extension would not project forward of the building line and within the cul-de-sac, garages are in line with the existing building line. However, there would be no 1m separation distance. It is noted there is an existing garage already up to the boundary of the property. As such, an extension that does the same would not result in harm to the character of the area despite not being completely in accordance with the Borough Design Guide.

The side extension would be approx. 2.61m in width, 9.94m in length and 5.57m in height. Whilst the extension would be an increase in size compared to the existing garage, the proposal would still be considered a subservient addition which is suitable in scale and form which would not harm the character of the area. Within the roof space there will be an office area and 2 roof lights, such addition would not harm the character of the area.

The single storey lean-to-roof rear extension will be approx. 4.36m in depth, 3.79m in width and 3.37m in height. The proposal includes a rear window overlooking onto the garden and double doors looking onto the side boundary of no.11. Whilst the proposal exceeds the recommended 4m depth for extensions advocated within the Borough Design Guide. However, the host property has the garden space to accommodate for such sized extension and there are similar sized extensions in the surrounding area (11 Cassia Drive). Moreover, being located at the rear it wouldn't be visible from public locations.

As mentioned, the proposed garage conversion would introduce an additional front door to the principal elevation of this property. This new door would be proportionate in size to the front elevation and suitable spaced away from the existing door. While not reflective of other properties in the street, this arrangement but not cause any significant harm in visual terms.

The proposed materials are to match the existing, thus in keeping with the current characteristics of the property. Hence, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity: The scheme would add additional window at the front of the property due to the garage being converted into storage and a bedroom. Whilst the proposed window would face another property, it is noted that Cassia Drive, a public road, is located adjacent to the site. As such, the proposal would not result in a greater overlooking impact into residential properties than is currently present as the window at the front of the extension would overlook the street scene and therefore no harmful impact would occur.

11 Cassia Drive does have a first-floor side window and the increased height of pitched roof may affect how much sunlight it receives. However, given it's a non-habitable room it would not have any significant adverse impact upon the neighbouring property.

As a result of the proposed side extension, there is potential for loss of light to the front window of no.11 (see plan P1534-03). Whilst a line of 45* degrees would marginally be breached as a result of the extension, the 45* degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, the front facing window of no. 11 would be directly south of the proposed extension and thus would benefit from full daylight throughout the course of the day due to the sun path. Moreover, the 45-degree breach is minimal and only a limited amount of ambient light would be lost to a triple window of the living room, furthermore, the living room benefits from a secondary window on the front elevation therefore and this is not considered to be a reasonable reason to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the neighbouring property would still have adequate access to natural light. While the proposed side extension would be visible in oblique views from the front window of No.11, it would not be so significant in terms of its bulk and mass such that it would appear significant overbearing or detrimental to the outlook of this neighbouring property.

As part of the new bedroom a set of double doors have been added to the rear, this addition would not result in harmful overlooking as the existing fence would screen

the double doors.

As part of the rear extension a window would be added to the rear and would overlook onto the garden and double doors facing the side of no.11. These additions would not result in harmful overlooking as the existing fence would screen.

Given the rear extension is only single storey, there are no concerns with regards to overbearing or loss of light.

Therefore, it can be concluded given the proposal would not have any significant harmful adverse impact upon neighbouring amenities.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The numbers of habitable rooms will remain unchanged as six in the proposal. As the existing garage of dimensions 5.2m x 2.5m does not fully meet the council's requirement for car parking, there will be no loss of parking space. Two driveway parking spaces are proposed within the red line.

According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in Urban location will require two parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m.

The proposed driveway parking can be provided by utilising the dropped crossing, which is acceptable.

The garage has been removed from the proposal and the officer has requested a cycle parking condition, however given the nature of the application such condition is deemed not necessary.

Amenity Space: The proposal reduces the amount of amenity space available to the property but it would still be roughly rectangular in shape, receive sunlight for part of the day and be able to accommodate typical garden activities as set out in the Borough Design Guide. Therefore, the reduction in amenity space is not considered to have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

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, 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:	Approve
Date:	14 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	12 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	14/04/25