

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	243022
Site Address:	12 Comfrey Close, Wokingham, RG40 5YN
Expiry Date:	23 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	9 January 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the single storey rear extension with 4 roof lights and partial garage conversion. Plus, patio extension and driveway extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Nuclear Consultation Zone

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 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

No planning history.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways – No objections subject to condition

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is a detached three storey property in Wokingham and falls within a major development location. The immediate surrounding area is a mix of detached and semi-detached properties with varying roof forms. The properties within this residential settlement are set back from the public highway which allow for small front garden and patios for parking.

The existing dwelling has a mix of brown and white bricks and a rear flat dormer and velux windows are located on the front elevation.

Proposal:

The proposed development includes single storey rear extension, installation of roof lights and a partial garage conversion, in addition to patio extension and driveway extension.

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:

In terms of policy CP3 'General Principles for Development', point (a) states that proposed developments should be of an appropriate scale, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high-quality design. The proposed development matches the existing activity and character of the area.

In terms of the Borough Design Guide, it states that single storey rear extensions should not project past the rear wall for more than 4m and the maximum eaves and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.

The Borough Design Guide also gives a small criterion in how a garage conversion should be balanced, when converting a garage, a potential parking space is lost so that must be replaced and shown.

The character of the area (Comfrey Close) is a modern and urbanised development. The houses are primarily detached and have some variations.

The proposed rear extension would extend beyond the rear wall of the main dwelling by approx 3.5m and so complies with the recommended depth in the Borough Design Guide. A patio would be created to create a level step from the rear doors. Owing to its location at the rear of the property, it would have limited visibility within the street scene. Furthermore, properties in the vicinity, such as the immediate neighbour (14 Comfrey Close) have rear extensions and therefore this element of the proposal would not be at odds with the character of the area.

The partial garage conversion would see the replacement of a garage door with a front window. The window would match those found on the dwelling and would be a minimal change in appearance when read in relation to the wider surrounding context.

The proposed extension to the driveway would see the loss of an area of incidental landscaping within Comfrey Close, but it is part of the frontage of the application site and within their ownership. Whilst the loss of this piece of soft landscaping is unfortunate, there is not considered to be substantial harm resulting from this when taking into account the layout and design of the wider close. There are examples of properties with entirely paved frontage. In this case a portion of the soft landscaping will remain and so the proposal will not result in a detrimental urbanising effect.

In terms of materials, these are to match the main dwelling and this would be secured via condition. It will also be conditioned that the new driveway is made from permeable materials.

Overall, in terms of built form, this would have very minimal impact on the street scene due to its location at the rear of the property and the proposed garage conversion being primarily internal with the change from one garage door to a window. In terms of the driveway extension, this would result in some change to the frontage of the property, but not to a detrimental degree to the host dwelling or surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy CP3 states that development should not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of adjoining land users.

Overlooking:

Rear extension

The proposed rear extension would not have any side windows and so would not result in overlooking to neighbouring properties. The velux roof lights would also not result in overlooking due to their orientation and positioning in the roofscape.

Garage conversion

The proposed garage would see the installation of a front facing window. However, there would be approx 20m separation distance between this window and the neighbour opposite. Overlooking is also minimised through separation by the road.

Loss of Light:

Rear extension

A 45-degree angle test was performed on both neighbours of the property from the nearest habitable room at 11 and 14 Comfrey Close. This line was not breached for either neighbour. As such, the proposed single storey rear extension would not result in a loss of light.

Other elements of the proposal

The other elements of the proposal are not considered to result in a loss of light to any neighbour.

Overbearing:

Rear extension and patio

The proposed rear extension would have the same building line as the most immediate neighbour (no. 14 Comfrey Close). The extension also complies with the Borough Design Guide in terms of depth and therefore would not result in overbearing effects. The proposed roof form of the rear extension would be double pitched, with the pitch closest to no 14 being smaller which again alleviates overbearing impacts. This is coupled with the separation distance between the dwelling and the site boundary of approx 0.5m. In terms of the proposed patio, there is already a similar that exists and the height of the patio would not be excessive but and is to level the extension with amenity space. This would not be considered to result in substantial overbearing impacts from or loss of privacy from the use of the patio.

Garage Conversion

The proposed partial garage conversion would not result in overbearing impacts due to primarily being internal alterations.

The proposal is therefore deemed acceptable in relation to neighbouring amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policy CP6 states that development should not cause highway problems. Policy CC07 states that sufficient parking should be provided on site as a result of development.

The proposal will not increase the number of habitable rooms. However, the size of the garage will reduce. WBC Highways noted that the existing garage does not currently fully meet the Council's requirements for car parking and so the garage conversion would not be classified as a loss of a parking space. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions, which is acceptable.

Notwithstanding this, the applicant has proposed a driveway extension to facilitate an additional parking space. WBC Highways have no objection to this in principle and it

will be expected that the existing dropped crossing will be utilised. The additional parking space would meet the required dimensions of 5m x 2.5m. However, WBC Highways have stated that the proposed parking will likely encroach the highway and recommend a condition to secure revised parking details. However, the 3 spaces shown, at the required measurements, and not shown as overhanging the public footway and therefore the condition does not appear necessary or relevant when applying the tests for conditions outlined in the NPPF. Given the parking provision was suitable without the driveway extension, there is insufficient justification to condition that the parking is provided in accordance with the approved plans at all times given as existing, there is sufficient parking provision.

The proposal is therefore deemed acceptable to Officers in light of policy CC07, despite comments from WBC Highways.

Ecology:

Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD seek to protect biodiversity.

The site has been identified as being located within an area that could host potential bats. However, the proposed development does not involve demolition or modifications to the existing roof therefore a bat survey was not required.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in relation to the aforementioned ecological policies.

Conclusion:

The proposal is acceptable in terms of national and local policies and therefore recommended for approval.

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 subject to the following conditions:

	1. Time Limit 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials
Date:	16 January 2024
Earliest date for decision:	20 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	17/01/25