

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	243235
Site Address:	3 Eastcourt Avenue, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 1HH
Expiry Date:	28 February 2025
Site Visit Date:	20 January 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed single storey side and rear extensions, following demolition of the existing conservatory. The conversion of the loft space to create additional habitable accommodation with 1 no. front facing dormer and 1 no. rear facing dormer. The erection of a first-floor side extension. Plus, the conversion of the garage and changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Dev. Location (Earley)
Landscape Character Assessment Area

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 CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
171274	Householder application for the proposed erection single storey side extension; front and rear facing dormer extensions and conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation.	Withdrawn 19/10/2017

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways – No objection

External
None

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council raise no objection to this application subject to WBC imposing two conditions. The first being that the proposed ground floor element, with separate access to the side, should only be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling. The second condition they recommend is that the proposed window to the guest bedroom in the side elevation should be obscure glazing and non-opening below 1.7m above the finished floor level. <i>Officer comments: Ancillary accommodation will be assessed within the 'Ancillary Accommodation' section of the main report. Additionally, potentially overlooking concerns and needs for obscure glazing will be assessed in the 'Neighbouring Amenity' section of the main report.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Two neighbours have commented on this application and their comments are summarised below: - The first floor windows in the study should be obscure glazed below 1.7m to prevent overlooking. <i>Officer comments: Potential overlooking concerns will be assessed in the 'Neighbouring Amenity' section of the main report.</i> - The scale bar of the floor plans appears to be incorrect. <i>Officer comments: This has been checked, and the scale bar measures accurately to the stated scale on the proposed plans.</i>

APPRAISAL
Description of Development: This application seeks permission to erect a single storey rear extension to provide a family room, following demolition of the existing conservatory. The erection of a single storey side extension to provide an en-suite bathroom. Conversion of the existing loft space, and a first floor side extension to provide a study, games room and a bathroom. Plus, the conversion of the garage to create additional habitable accommodation and changes to fenestration. 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:

Rear Extension

The proposed single storey rear extension does not adhere to R16 design principle within the Borough Design Guide (BDG) in relation to separation distances as the proposal is set right on the boundary with the neighbouring property. But, given its proportionate scale and unimposing design, the rear extension would have an acceptable impact on the appearance of the dwelling and wider area. This element of the proposal is to the rear of the property where it would not be visible from the public domain which further demonstrates that it poses no harm to the character of the area.

Side Extension

The proposed single storey side extension does not adhere to R16 design principle within the BDG in relation to separation distances as the proposal is set approximately 0.65 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property. However, given its proportionate scale, limited bulk and unimposing design, the side extension would have an acceptable impact on the appearance of the dwelling and wider area. The side extension would be slightly visible from the public domain, but the proposed materials would match those on the dwelling. As such, this element of the proposal poses no harm to the wider character of the area.

Loft Conversion and First Floor Side Extension

The proposed loft conversion would be facilitated through the insertion of 1 no. pitched roof dormer and 1 no. rooflight to the front elevation, and 1 no. pitched roof dormer to the rear elevation. The dormers are positioned within the main roof, they are set back from the eaves line and the side of the roof, and they would not exceed the height of the ridgeline of the existing roof. This ensures that the dormers would appear as subservient features of the main roof, and as such they pose no harm to the character of the area.

The proposed first floor side extension has a hipped roof form and is set down from the existing roof by 0.45 metres. The first floor extension is contained within the footprint of the existing dwelling, and it does not extend above the proposed ground floor side extension. This ensures that the first floor extension would appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling. Additionally, with the proposed materials to match the existing dwelling, it is not deemed that the first floor extension would significantly impact upon the character of the area.

Garage Conversion

The proposed garage conversion will see the garage door being replaced with windows that will match the existing windows of the dwelling, additionally the bricks used will also match those of the existing dwelling. A mock pitch roof will also be added to the garage. This has a height of 0.95 metres when measured from the garage roof and has

a depth of 0.95 metres. It is not considered that the conversion of the garage and the introduction of the mock pitch roof would harm the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Rear Extension

The proposed single storey rear extension would extend 3.6 metres beyond the rear of the dwelling and would be single storey in nature. A window is proposed on the side of the extension, but given the single storey nature of the extension, there are no concerns relating to loss of light or overlooking. To avoid being overbearing, guidance in the BDG states that the eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3 metres within 2 metres of a side boundary. The proposed development is set right on the boundary with the neighbouring property, and an eaves height of 3.05 metres does not comply with this guidance relating to overbearing. However, given that the rear extension only extends approximately 0.5 metres beyond the rear of the neighbouring property, it is not deemed that this would have a significant overbearing impact, and the eaves height is deemed as being acceptable.

Side Extension

The proposed single storey side extension would infill the gap between the existing garage and the rear bedroom. The side extension extends 3.2 metres from the side of the dwelling, but it does not extend beyond the side wall of the existing garage. No windows are proposed on the side of the extension and given the single storey nature, there are no concerns relating to overlooking or loss of light. To avoid being overbearing, guidance in the BDG states that the eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3 metres within 2 metres of a side boundary. The proposed development is set 0.65 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property, but an eaves height of 2.15 metres shows compliance with this guidance relating to overbearing.

Loft Conversion and First Floor Side Extension

The dormers proposed as part of the loft conversion are positioned within the main roof of the dwelling and would be sited away from the property boundary of no. 5 Eastcourt Avenue. It is therefore not considered that they would introduce any loss of light or overbearing impacts. In terms of overlooking, the dormers are on the front and rear elevations and their outlook is across the road and down the rear garden respectively. It is therefore not deemed that they would overlook the neighbouring properties.

The proposed first floor side extension is approximately 4 metres from the boundary with no. 5 Eastcourt Avenue, and therefore there are no concerns relating to overbearing or loss of light, especially given the proposed development would be to the north of 5 Eastcourt Avenue.

In terms of overlooking, a dormer window is proposed on the side of this extension serving the proposed games room. This window mainly faces the flank elevation of the neighbouring property, but the window would also provide oblique views into the neighbour's rear garden. To address concerns relating to any potential overlooking, the two windowpanes nearest to the rear garden of no. 5 will be obscure glazed and fixed shut. This has been annotated on the submitted proposed side elevation and a condition is recommended to secure this.

The neighbouring property, no. 5, has a dormer window that faces towards the application site and the first floor side extension. It is understood that the neighbour's dormer window serves a bedroom. The games room window would be facing towards this dormer window, however, the neighbour's window gains its outlook from across the application site and therefore only minimal protection can be offered. In this instance, it would not be reasonable or necessary to impose a condition requiring all of the windowpanes to be obscure glazed.

Garage Conversion

The proposed garage conversion will see a door being inserted into the side elevation. Given the single storey nature of the proposed new bedroom, the new side door does not raise any overlooking concerns. Overall, the garage conversion and introduction of the mock pitch roof poses no harm to neighbouring amenities.

Residential Amenity Space:

The proposals would not adversely harm the usability of the site's rear amenity space for current and future occupiers.

Ancillary Accommodation:

The government's 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard' finds that a single storey 1 bedroom dwelling/flat should have a gross internal area (GIA) of at least 39m². The BDG and MDD Local Plan Policy TB07 state that a 1 bedroom flat should have a minimum GIA of 50m². The proposed accessible bedroom with the en-suite bathroom has a GIA of approximately 25m². This therefore does not meet the internal space standard for a 1 bedroom flat. Additionally, there are no separate cooking facilities within the bedroom, and it appears that internal doorways have been widened for wheelchair access. Therefore, a condition requiring the converted garage and new side extension to be ancillary accommodation would be unreasonable in this instance and accordingly it is not recommended.

Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application, and they have no objection to the proposed development. The existing garage does not meet the council's current standards for parking a car, and therefore its conversion would not result in the loss of a parking space. The existing level of driveway parking is being retained, and it is deemed that 3 spaces is acceptable in this instance.

Conclusion:

For the reasons stated above, the proposal is acceptable in local plan policy terms and therefore is recommended for approval.

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.

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.

Conditions:

Officer recommended standard conditions: CA2, CA5, CB7, CT6

Officer recommended non-standard conditions: None

Consultee recommended conditions: None

Conditions agreed: Not required

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	27 February 2025
Earliest date for decision:	24 January 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	27/02/25