

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261495
Site Address:	22 Woodward Close, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5NW
Expiry Date:	28 August 2026
Site Visit Date:	10 August 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed dormer loft conversion with three rooflights, alterations to fenestration and conversion of the existing garage into habitable accommodation.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location – Winnersh
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) and associated Planning Practice Guidance.
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

The Local Plan Update remains an emerging plan. Its policies are material considerations to which weight is afforded having regard to their stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections and consistency with national policy. The statutory development plan remains the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan.

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
27088	56 Houses and Garages	Approve 17 th June 1957

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal
WBC Drainage – No objection
External
N/A

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	No objection raised.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL
Site Description: A detached dwelling with attached garage located at the end of a cul de sac in the residential area of Winnersh. The front garden is open and there is a hardstanding for off street parking. The northeast boundary is adjacent to the railway line. The rear boundary is a tall fir hedge at least 4m 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. Proposal: The loft conversion with rear dormer extension and garage conversion will facilitate the reconfiguration of the internal layout of the main dwelling. The proposed number of habitable rooms will be the same as existing. The loft conversion will provide a second-floor bedroom, a bathroom and unspecified space that could serve as a dressing room. The rear dormer extension will measure approximately in 8m in width, 3m in depth and 2.5m in height. It will have a flat roof and be set down 0.4m from the main roof ridge and set in 0.4m on either side. There

will be 2 no. rear facing windows and no windows to the side walls. The main front roof will have 3 no. rooflights.

The first-floor internal layout will be reconfigured to provide 3 further bedrooms, 2 no ensuite and a bathroom.

The garage conversion will facilitate an open plan kitchen diner. The garage door will be replaced by a window and there will be bifold doors to the rear. The existing ground floor will be reconfigured to provide a living room, WC and utility room. There will be 3 no ground floor windows on the rear elevation.

Character of the Area: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The street scene is a verdant cul de sac in a residential development comprising detached dwellings of a similar age and varying architectural designs. Properties have driveways for off street parking, and open plan front gardens laid to grass and vegetation. Several properties within proximity of the application site have been extended, for example, no. 23 has a loft conversion including a large rear dormer and a small front dormer and no. 25 has a first-floor side/rear extension with pitched roof and gable to rear. There are no other examples of garage conversions whereby the garage door has been replaced by a window.

The application site is located at the far end of the cul de sac and the replacement of the garage door with a window and the 3 no. roof lights on the front slope of the main roof would not be prominent in the street scene. Notwithstanding its limited visibility from the public realm, the dormer has also been assessed in relation to the scale, proportions and roof form of the host dwelling. Its width and bulk would not dominate the rear roof slope because it would be set in, set down and set back by 0.4m. It would therefore maintain the architectural integrity of the dwelling. Therefore, the proposal would not cause harm to the character of the area and would comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

Overlooking: To maintain privacy and limit a sense of enclosure, the Borough Design Guide (BDG) recommends a minimum back-to-back separation distance of 26m for houses with more than 2 storeys. The separation distance of the proposed dormer extension with the nearest habitable-room windows at No. 29 Woodward Close is approximately 20m which is 6m less than recommended in the BDG. Nevertheless, this separation is consistent with that of the existing first-floor windows. Although the dormer windows would provide a more elevated outlook, views towards No. 29 would be oblique rather than directly facing. Existing boundary vegetation would provide

additional filtering, but the acceptability of the relationship does not rely upon that vegetation being retained.

The BDG recommends a minimum front to-front separation distance of 10m, and the separation distance with the garage conversion window and the front elevation windows at no. 21A would be approximately 20m which is more than the recommended minimum distance.

The approximately 20m separation falls below the 26m guideline in the BDG. However, having regard to the oblique relationship, the existing pattern of first floor overlooking and the absence of direct-facing views, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy. Limited conflict with the numerical guidance is therefore identified, but the proposal would comply with Policy CP3 when considered as a whole.

Loss of Light: The BDG states that new development should ensure that there is no impact on daylight in existing properties. The 45-degree angle test is advocated within the British Research Establishment's (BRE) publication *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice*, to assess impact on daylight and sunlight levels to neighbours potentially impacted upon by adjacent developments. There are no side facing windows at no. 23 Woodward Close. Figures 1 and 2 show that the vertical 45-degree angle is marginally breached in relation to the rear ground floor window at no.23 and the horizontal 45-degree angle is complied with. Therefore, there would be no significant harm caused by loss of daylight to neighbour habitable rooms.

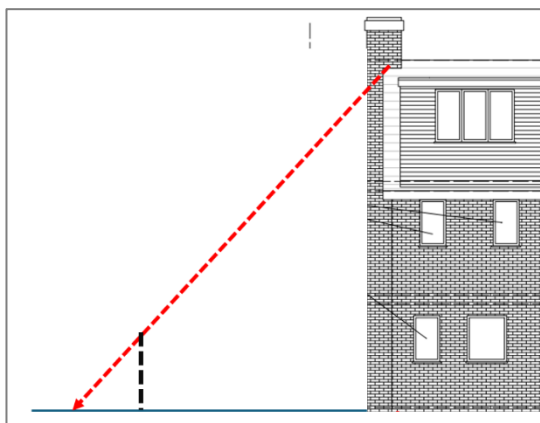


Figure 1 Vertical 45-degree angle test



Figure 2 Horizontal 45-degree angle test

Overbearing: The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) recommends that loft conversions and dormer windows should not project above the existing ridge line, dormer windows should generally be positioned within the main roof, by being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof. The proposed rear dormer extension would comply with the BDG recommendations being set down 0.4m from the main roof, set in on either side by 0.4m and set back from the rear wall by approximately 0.4m. Therefore, the proposal would appear subordinate to the main dwelling and would not be visually overbearing when viewed by neighbouring occupants.

Overall, the proposal would not fully comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy regarding neighbour amenity because the back-to-back separation distance with no. 29 Woodward Close is less than the minimum distance recommended in the BDG to maintain privacy.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: Policy CC07 of the Adopted Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates that the new scheme retains an appropriate level of off-street parking. The proposal would result in a 4-bedroom dwelling as existing. Applying the Council's adopted parking standard for a dwelling of this size, 3 parking spaces are required. The submitted site plan demonstrates that 3 independently accessible spaces can be accommodated measuring at least 5m by 2.5m, and the proposal therefore provides an appropriate level of off-street parking.

Ecology: The application site is located within an area designated as a suitable habitat for bats. A Preliminary Roost Assessment dated 25 May 2026 concluded that the dwelling has negligible suitability for roosting bats and recommended no further surveys are required and the proposal would comply with Policies CP7 and TB23. Nevertheless, the following Informative will be added to the Decision Notice:

Bat Informative

Bats are a protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately, and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

Flooding and Drainage: The Drainage Officer raises no objection and has commented: *"The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is defined as having a low probability of fluvial flooding. The proposal does not include a significant increase in the building footprint or impermeable area and is therefore unlikely to materially affect existing surface water runoff or drainage arrangements. Based on the information submitted, the development is not expected to increase surface water flood risk on-site or elsewhere. No specific surface water drainage conditions are recommended, and the LLFA has no further comments on this application."*

Planning Balance/Conclusion: The proposal accords with the principle of development within the settlement and would provide adequate parking without unacceptable effects on the character of the area, neighbouring living conditions or biodiversity. The approximately 20m rear separation falls below the 26m guideline in the BDG. However, this limited departure is outweighed by the oblique window relationship, the existing pattern of overlooking and the absence of direct-facing views. The acceptability of the proposal does not depend upon retention of boundary vegetation. Accordingly, the development complies with the development plan when read as a whole, and no material considerations indicate that permission should be withheld.

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.

RECOMMENDATION	
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Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	27 August 2026
Earliest date for decision:	21 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	27 August 2026