

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261690
Site Address:	3 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Wokingham, RG4 6SZ
Expiry Date:	28 September 2026
Site Visit Date:	21 September 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of two front two storey gable extensions, raising of the ridge and eaves height with the formation of a dormer window to the front roof slope, erection of a single storey side extension, erection of a single storey rear extension, erection of a two storey rear extension, installation of two rear dormer windows, formation of a first floor rear balcony, alterations to fenestration, removal of chimney pots and associated external alterations.	

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements H12 – Residential development of existing private gardens NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
40091	Dormer extension in front elevation to form room in roof space	Approved 8 th October 1992
40146	Two storey side extension to provide sitting room and garage with bedroom and ensuite bathroom	Approved 17 th November 1992

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Digital Solutions Scanning- No comments received

WBC CIL-No comments received

WBC Ecology- No objection subject to condition(s)

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Sonning Parish Council raise no objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 representation as follows; - Whilst no objection is raised to the redevelopment of the property in principle, concerns are expressed regarding the potential future use of the proposed second-floor storage space as habitable accommodation due to the inclusion of front and rear windows. Concern is also raised regarding the retention and protection of mature trees within the site, which provide important screening to neighbouring properties.

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The application site relates to a detached two-storey dwelling located within Sonning, Wokingham. The dwelling occupies a generous residential plot and is set back from the highway, and benefits from private rear amenity space surrounded by boundary treatments. The surrounding area is residential in character and comprises predominantly detached dwellings set within spacious plots. There is variation in architectural style, however, dwellings generally share common characteristics including generous frontages and substantial parking provision.

Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed erection of two front two storey gable extensions, raising of the ridge and eaves height with the formation of a dormer window to the front roof slope, erection of a single storey side extension, erection of a single storey rear extension, erection of a two-storey rear extension, installation of two rear dormer windows, formation of a first-floor rear balcony, alterations to fenestration, removal of chimney pots and associated external alterations.

The proposal comprises a two-storey front extension measuring approximately 1 metre in depth and 18 metres in width. In association with these works, the existing roof would be raised to facilitate accommodation within the roof space, including the insertion of one front-facing dormer window and two rear-facing dormer windows.

The proposed single-storey side extension would measure approximately 7 meters in depth, 2 meters in width and 6 meters in height. In addition, a two-storey rear extension is proposed, measuring approximately 3 meters in depth and 14 meters in width. A

further single-storey rear extension would measure approximately 5 meters in depth, 11 meters in width and approximately 3 meters in height.

As part of the works, the roof has been raised to accommodate a storage space.

Planning History: Planning permission was granted under application 40091 on 8 October 1992 for the erection of a dormer extension within the front roof slope to create additional accommodation within the roof space. Subsequently, planning permission was granted under application 40146 on 17 November 1992 for the erection of a two-storey side extension comprising a sitting room and garage at ground floor level, with a bedroom and en-suite bathroom above.

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: Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that developments are of appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to other adjoining land users. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

The proposed dwelling is set back from the highway, with the principal elevation located approximately 18 meters from the highway edge. The frontage is characterised by a substantial area of open amenity space. Whilst there are changes to the front elevation, including the erection of a two-storey front extension, the Borough Design Guide (BDG) places emphasis on front extensions generally not exceeding one storey in height where they project beyond the original front building line. In this case, although the extension would project approximately 2 metres beyond the original frontage it would remain subordinate in scale to the host dwelling and would not appear unduly prominent within the street scene. The extension itself is set below the ridge height of the host dwelling and includes an additional gable end to further enhance visual continuity. As such, the proposal would preserve the spacious character of the plot and would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

Whilst the proposal would increase the overall built form of the dwelling, the extension has been carefully designed to reflect the established street scene. The Borough Design Guide emphasises that the eaves and/ or ridge heights of a property should not be raised in height unless buildings in the local context are significantly taller. In this instance, the increase in roof height would be minimal and would not appear unduly

prominent within the street scene. As such, it is not considered to result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The main bulk of the extension is set to the rear of the dwelling. Given the extensive plot and surrounding area, the development would have very limited visibility from the public realm and would not materially alter the character or appearance of the surrounding street scene. Furthermore, the scale, design and massing of the extension are considered proportionate to the size of the host dwelling and would not appear as an incongruous or overly dominant addition. Given the modest size of the site, the proposed development would appear as a sympathetic and subservient addition to the host dwelling.

Therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable and will have an acceptable impact on the character of the street scene. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and the advice and guidance contained in the Borough Design Guide.

Neighbouring Amenity: Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which requires development to be of an appropriate scale, mass, layout and height, and to achieve a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities or quality of life of adjoining occupiers.

The proposed extensions have been assessed in relation to their impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Whilst the development would increase the overall scale of built form on the site, the extensions would remain subordinate to the host dwelling. The proposal would also introduce additional windows within the north-west, north-east, south-west and south-east elevations.

Representations received raise concerns regarding potential overlooking from the proposed first-floor accommodation and associated dormer windows. In particular, concern has been expressed regarding the need for windows serving the second-floor storage accommodation. However, it is noted that the proposed dormer windows would be located approximately 42 metres from the nearest neighbouring property boundary. The Borough Design Guide advises that a minimum separation distance of 26 metres should generally be maintained between directly facing habitable room windows to safeguard residential amenity.

In this instance, the proposed separation distances significantly exceed the guidance contained within the Borough Design Guide. Furthermore, the site benefits from established boundary treatments which further reduce opportunities for harmful overlooking. Having regard to the relationship between the proposed windows and neighbouring properties, it is not considered that the development would result in a material loss of privacy, overlooking, loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The application form states that there is no change in level of driveway parking available, and no off-street parking is proposed. As a result, the proposal does not impact parking or access provisions, therefore, no comments from the Council's Highways team have been received.

Landscape and Trees: Whilst the site contains a number of trees, they not protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The proposed development is located to the front and rear of the dwelling and, having regard to its siting and scale, is not considered likely to adversely affect the root protection areas of the surrounding trees. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that the development would result in the loss of, or harm to, any significant trees on the site. Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable.

Ecology: The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Daytime Bat Walkover (Urban Tree Experts, Ref. SPH/NP/PEA-26/20.01, February 2026), Ecological Survey Report (Urban Tree Experts, Ref. SPH/ESR-26/16.07, dated 30 July 2026), Planning Statement and the submitted plans.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified occasional bat droppings within the roof space and recorded a number of features capable of supporting roosting bats, including slipped roof tiles, gaps within hanging tiles and openings associated with soffits and fascias.

The submitted emergence surveys subsequently confirmed the presence of roosting bats within the building. Surveys recorded soprano pipistrelle bats emerging from both front and rear roof features, together with a common pipistrelle emerging from the rear dormer. DNA analysis of bat droppings also confirmed historical use of the loft space by brown long-eared bats. The Ecologist advises that the surveys have confirmed four small soprano pipistrelle day roosts and one common pipistrelle day roost within the building. In addition, seven bat species were recorded foraging and commuting within and around the site. The proposal would therefore have the potential to impact protected bat roosts and associated commuting and foraging habitat.

The Ecologist is satisfied that sufficient survey effort has been undertaken to establish the nature and extent of bat use of the site. Appropriate mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures have been identified within the submitted Ecological Survey Report.

Whilst the Council's Ecologist has recommended a number of conditions, such as lighting, and works to trees, these are not considered necessary in this instance to make the development acceptable, to ensure that appropriate action is given to protected species; an informative will be applied reminding the applicant of their responsibilities in respect of bats and the relevant wildlife legislation. Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to warrant the imposition of further ecological conditions.

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.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	22 September 2026
Earliest date for decision:	26 August 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	24.09.2026