

PLANNING REF : 251237
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Magnolia Cottage
: 4 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Berkshire
: RG4 6TA
SUBMITTED BY : Mr And Mrs Simon and Jackie Ruffle
DATE SUBMITTED : 29/06/2025

COMMENTS:

We provide comments based on Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide (WBCDG) which we understand is an important document in the determining of planning applications. [CD13.03 Borough Design Guide Interactive SPD (1).pdf]

Our principal objections relate to daylight/sunlight impact and the overbearing nature of the proposed expansive and very significant alterations to No. 6. Our other comments focus on lack of appropriate information provision and discrepancies in the documentation

submitted. We would welcome a site visit from planning officer in consideration of our objections.

Daylight/Sunlight impact assessment

There is no light impact assessment provided with this application. The WBCDG states 'Dwellings must be designed to provide appropriate levels of daylight and sunlight to new and existing properties.', such as ' .to have no material impact on levels of daylight in the habitable rooms of adjoining properties.'

Based on the information under section R.18 of the above adopted guidance the proposed two-storey side development does not comply with the guidance in BRE 290 report. The 45 line would be well beyond the centre line of our living room and master bedroom fenestration. Indeed it would extend beyond the whole of the upstairs window and downstairs patio doors. As such it would have a very detrimental impact on our daylight/sunlight in key habitable rooms, as well as significantly diminishing the light in our garden. Our house is south facing and the east elevation proposed would run approximately 6 metres forward of our property line, with a wall to the height of 8.3 m for the proposed raised roof. Replacing the low single storey garage currently in this position, with this new two-plus storey extension would be overbearing and create shadow over most of the garden. Our front garden is our main leisure space and well used as such. The much smaller rear garden backs onto the A4, is north facing and reserved as a space for wildlife garden, bins

/storage and washing line.

Existing and proposed elevations and roof

The plans provided are not clear regarding the existing and proposed elevations. In particular the existing east elevation for No. 6 does not show the current low level garage which runs along the boundary with No. 4 at approximately 50 cm from the boundary fence. The elevation depicted is that of the main house, several metres away from boundary and proposed extension build line. The existing garage and enclosed corridor, which are both single storey, come between the boundary and current two-storey east elevation. This is estimated to be 6 m from the boundary based on the existing ground floor plan provided. The proposed extension which is two-plus storeys is planned to be 1 m from the boundary.

The proposed plans do not clearly depict the extent of the increase in volume of the property. This might be more obvious by superimposing existing dimensions on the plan elevation drawings. We understand this to be very significant as the current living

quarters are contained within two thirds of the extended proposed footprint, including roof alterations which will raise the height of the eaves and/or ridge. This aspect will mean that the height of No. 6 will be raised above that of the properties to either side. It is also clear from the drawings that the extensions will not be subservient to the existing property. Section 4.11 R.23 notes that extensions and alterations should be clearly subservient in most situations.

Three of the four elevations indicate roof lights with a note that these will match existing. However, no roof lights are indicated on existing elevation plans and we do not observe any on the property itself. Thus, would ask for confirmation and further details of these roof lights to be supplied.

The WBCDG also note under section 4.2 that ' the arrangement and form of buildings, including the building line and gaps between buildings; ' are elements which should be considered in the design of residential development, so as to contribute positively.

Section 4.11 Alterations and extensions R.23 notes a number of key considerations, including ' where gaps between buildings allow views to a green backdrop that contributes to the established, positive, character of the area, alterations or extensions should not close off such views; ' The proposed alteration of space around, alignment of building frontage and gaps between properties No. 6 and No. 4 is not consistent with the local character and will have a negative impact on the street scene.

We wish to stress that the remodelling of No. 6 is a highly significant increase in the volume of the residence, amount of two-plus storey footprint and height of the property. Prime concerns being it will result in an overbearing expanse of wall, together with the increase in mass and height resulting in detrimental impact on daylight/sunlight at No. 4, and negatively affecting the street scene and local character.

Bat survey

No such survey has been provided and understand this is a requirement in this area for proposals which include full modification to the roof.

Great crested newt statement requirement

We have a natural pond in our rear garden which provides habitat for a range of wildlife, including newts. The site is well within the specified 50 m of this pond and is within an amber risk zone area shown on the WBC planning constraint map. Believe therefore risk needs to be assessed.

Description of development

This is noted on the website as 'Householder application for the proposed alterations and extensions to an existing dwelling including the erection of two-storey side and rear extensions, alongside the addition of a front carport, a complete change in front facade which includes the removal of the existing front chimneystack together with changes to fenestration and roofline, with further modifications to side and rear elevations and the incorporation of roof lights.' The description isn't currently aligned with the documentation provided alongside the application (CIL and application documentation wording is different). It also fails to include the front extensions indicated on the location plan.

We are confused too by the householder/ownership situation. Our neighbours, who have been in the property for over 50 years are still in residence. The property checker on HM Land Registry notes 'No

recorded sales were found for this property since 1995' (records of

sales prior 1995 are not included online). The applicant, who is unknown to us, has signed Certificate A declaration.

Parking provision

There is a loss of garage and parking as noted on the Location Plan (drawing no P1638-03) and and proposed Plans and Elevations document (P1638-03). These indicate the erection of a 2 space car port of 3 m in height in the front garden. No description of paving surfaces for this could be located in currently submitted documents.

In the planning portal document PP-14043361 the section under 'Parking' indicates 'No' in response to the question '..will it affect car parking arrangements'. There is clearly an inconsistency here and with the arboricultural report, which indicates one car parking space under a carport, not two.

We note too that WBCDG says that garages should not be sited in front gardens, but should be to the side or rear of a dwelling. We are not clear if a carport counts as a garage, however its positioning would lead to it dominating the street scene and would require removal of 2 trees.

Trees and hedges

This site backs onto Green Route Enhancement area. The arboricultural report included in the submission indicates the removal of 5 trees, a section of hedging and a group of shrubs to facilitate proposals.

However, this is inconsistent with the section 'Trees and Hedges' on the Householder Application form which answers 'No' with respect to need of removal or pruning of any trees or hedges.