

GARAGE CONVERSION

AT

2 HAMPSHIRE WAY, WOKINGHAM, RG41 3AX

PLANNING STATEMENT

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. SITE DESCRIPTION	3
3. PLANNING HISTORY	4
4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	5
5. ASSESSMENT	6
Relevant planning policy	6
Principle of the Development	6
Impact on character	7
Residential amenity	9
Highways and parking	10
6. CONCLUSIONS	12

Version: A

Author: EP

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the conversion of an existing double detached garage, into ancillary/incidental habitable accommodation for the residents of 2 Hampshire Way.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of Hampshire Way, within the settlement area of Wokingham.
- 2.2 The property faces north with its side and front elevations facing Hampshire Way, as it curves around the side of the property. There is a detached garage set back behind the rear elevation of the property, adjacent to the road. There is a driveway in front of the garage with a boundary wall enclosing the rear garden. In front of the house, there is a triangular shaped area of front garden which has recently had hardstanding installed. There is a square-shaped rear garden behind the property.
- 2.3 The application site lies within the built-up development area of Wokingham (Major Development Location). The site is not subject to any landscape or ecological designations and lies within Flood Zone 1.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Previous, recent planning applications at the site are listed below:

Year	LPA Ref.	Description	Decision
2024	242286	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed installation of porous hardstanding in the front garden	Granted
2024	242287	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed garage conversion and repositioning of the boundary wall	Refused – permitted development rights were removed for garage conversions and walls under permission 17895 (dated 27.7.82)
2024	241677	Householder application for proposed dropped kerb and new driveway, garage conversion to create habitable accommodation and erection of new front boundary wall	Refused – due to loss of front garden and landscaping to side of house.

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 It is proposed to convert the existing garage to living accommodation, ancillary/incidental to that of the main house 2 Hampshire Way. The garage would be converted into a family room, storage and a small WC.
- 4.2 Externally, the changes would comprise replacing the two garage doors at the front with windows and the remainder of this elevation would be brick. The existing door would be replaced in the same location and slightly raised and a small window inserted on the side elevation next to the door. There would be no changes to the roof or to the remaining two elevations.
- 4.3 There would be no change to the location of the existing boundary wall. The existing driveway in front of the garage would be changed to soft landscaping.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 The main issues to consider in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle of the Development
- Impact on Character
- Residential amenity
- Highways and parking

Relevant planning policy

5.2 The application will be assessed against the following planning policy documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework 2023
- Wokingham Core Strategy 2010 (WCS)
- Wokingham Managing Development Delivery 2014 (WMDD)
- Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD 2021 (WBDG)

Principle of the Development

5.3 Policy CP1 of the WCS states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. 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 and have no detrimental impact upon the landscape.

5.4 Policy CC01 of the WMDD states that planning applications that accord with the policies of the development plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy CC02 states that development limits for each settlement area defined on the proposals map.

5.5 The application site is within an area suitable for development. However, the application proposes no new built form, nor a change of use as the garage would still be used as ancillary/incidental accommodation to the main house.

- 5.6 It is noted that there have been two previous applications on this site which involved conversion of the garage, both of which were refused. However, one of these was a Certificate of Lawfulness (ref 242287) which established that a planning application was required for the garage conversion, due to permitted development rights being removed for such conversions when the properties were built.
- 5.7 The second application (ref 241677) was also refused, however the refusal did not relate to the conversion of the garage, and instead related to the loss of the front garden and landscaping to the side of the house. This application does not propose the loss of any vegetation and in fact, the area of soft landscaping at the side of the house would increase as a result of the proposal.
- 5.8 It is noted in this regard that the previous application to convert the garage was for the same rooms internally as now proposed, that is a family room, storage and a WC, and no objection was raised on this basis. It is considered therefore that the principal of the garage conversion in this location is acceptable, subject to compliance with other plan policies as discussed below.

Impact on character

- 5.9 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 5.10 Policy CP1 of the WCS states that proposals should maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale and mass with a high quality of design, and that contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and the way they integrate with their surroundings.
- 5.11 Policy CC03 of the WMDD states that development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieved the following criteria including protecting and retaining trees, hedges and other landscape features, and incorporate high quality,

ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme. Policy TB21 states that proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

- 5.12 In this case, there will be minimal changes to the appearance of the building, as it would not change size, shape or height. The main changes would be the replacement of the garage doors on the front elevation with windows, which would be visible in the street scene. The windows however would match that of the existing property and represent a minor overall change in appearance only. The brick would match that of the existing garage. The additional window and minor change to the existing door would be on the side elevation facing away from the road and as such not visible in the street scene.
- 5.13 It is noted that other properties nearby, such as 5 Bedfordshire Way, and the next-door neighbour at 4 Hampshire Way (planning ref 031724) have similarly converted their garages with no adverse impacts on the street scene. The image below shows the conversion at 4 Hampshire Way.



- 5.14 In terms of landscaping, it is noted that the previous application on this site was refused partly due to the proposed loss of the landscaping to the side of the house. However, this application proposes removal of the existing hardstanding that comprises the driveway and replacement with soft landscaping. As such, this would be

an improvement to the green character of the area in this regard by increasing the amount of soft landscaping visible in the street scene.

- 5.15 The use of the building would still remain as ancillary/incidental to the residential use, which is the same as the existing garage. The use therefore would remain as appropriate to the character of the area.
- 5.16 It is considered therefore that the proposal would be beneficial in character terms due to the increase in soft landscaping to the side of the house, and would be in keeping with the existing character of the property and surrounding dwellings. It would be in accordance therefore with the relevant planning policies in this regard.

Residential amenity

- 5.17 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure developments create places that have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 5.18 Policy CP3 of the WCS states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjoining land users and their quality of life.
- 5.19 The garage is on the western side of the property, with the nearest neighbours opposite and to the rear of the property. The changes from garage doors to windows would be at ground level only and would have views onto the street towards the front, rather than any neighbouring private amenity space. The window on the side elevation would face into the garden of the application property and be at ground level only, and as such would not cause any overlooking. It is proposed to be obscure glazed in any case. There are no windows proposed to the rear or side elevation which faces the street.
- 5.20 There would be no loss of the existing external amenity space belonging to the property. It is not considered therefore that the proposal would result in any harmful impacts to neighbouring amenity or the future occupiers of this property and is in line therefore with the relevant planning policies in this regard.

Highways and parking

- 5.21 Paragraph 114 of the NPPF states that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users and any significant impacts on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated. Paragraph 115 is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.22 Policy CP6 of the WCS states that planning permission will be granted for schemes that provide appropriate vehicular parking and do not cause highway problems. Policy CC07 of the WMDD states that planning permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates how the proposed parking provision meets the standards set out in Appendix 2 of the WMDD and that the scheme retains an appropriate level of off-street parking.
- 5.23 The property has four bedrooms. Appendix 2 of the WMDD shows that for urban areas such as this location, two to three spaces should be provided for dwellings of this size. Parking for up to three cars will be provided off-road for this dwelling at the front of the house. Provision of hardstanding in this location was deemed lawful by Certificate reference 242286 and the parking area is shown on the submitted site plan. It is noted that Wokingham BC (WBC) Highways response to application 241677 stated that *“the new driveway will have sufficient space for three parking spaces to meet the WBC parking requirements, which is acceptable”*.
- 5.24 Access to this parking area will be achieved via a new dropped kerb, for which the application has already been submitted to WBC Highways, and the kerbs already marked out by the Council to be dropped. It is noted that in the previous application 241677, in relation to the proposed dropped kerb, WBC Highways stated that *“despite the proposed visibility splays not fully meeting the minimum requirements for a 30mph speed limit road, the proposal represents an improvement upon the existing access in terms of visibility and therefore is considered acceptable in this instance”*. There are no additional changes therefore required to the highway and the proposed dropped kerb will provide a safe and suitable access to the parking area.

- 5.25 It is considered therefore that the loss of parking spaces resulting from the proposal would not cause any harm in relation to highways and parking, as a suitable alternative parking area has already been established as appropriate. There would be no highway safety or amenity issues as a result of the proposals. It is therefore considered to be in line with the relevant policies in this regard.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposal is for the conversion of the existing garage to ancillary/incidental habitable accommodation associated with the dwelling 2 Hampshire Way. The existing hardstanding of the driveway would also be changed to soft landscaping.
- 6.2 The proposals would involve minimal changes externally, comprising the replacement of garage doors with two windows and brickwork to match the existing dwelling, and small changes to the side elevation door and an additional window to the side facing towards the garden. The side boundary wall would remain as existing.
- 6.3 The proposal would be beneficial in character terms by increasing the amount of soft landscaping visible in the street scene, and all materials would match that of the existing property. The nature of the application means that there would be no harm to neighbouring amenity. Whilst the existing parking spaces would be lost, three spaces would be provided to the front of the dwelling, which is sufficient for a dwelling of this size. The hardstanding required for the new parking area has already been deemed lawful and has been installed, and the number of spaces deemed acceptable by Wokingham Borough Council highways. A dropped kerb application has been made to the highways department and the installation is awaited.
- 6.4 It is therefore considered that the proposal would be in accordance with the relevant planning policies, and therefore can be approved.