

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Application Number:	242727
Site Address:	Land to rear of 12 Shepherds Hill, Woodley, Wokingham, RG6 1BB
Expiry Date:	31 December 2024
Site Visit Date:	29 July 2024 & 8 November 2024
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. three bedroom detached dwelling with associated parking, landscaping and front boundary wall following demolition of the existing detached garage.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
 Green Routes and Riverside Paths
 Affordable Housing Thresholds
 Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
 Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Woodley (Major Development Location)
 Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – Amber Risk Zone
 District Town and Local Centres – Shepherds Hill
 Nuclear Consultation Zone
 Landscape Character Assessment Area
 SSSI Impact Risk Zones
 Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone

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 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP17 – Housing Delivery
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB05 – Housing Mix

	TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens TB07 – Internal Space Standards TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
241865	Full application for proposed three bedroom detached dwelling with associated parking and landscaping following the demolition of the existing detached garage.	Approved 06/09/2024

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments received
WBC Drainage – No objection subject to condition(s)
WBC Highways – No objection subject to condition(s)
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to condition(s)
WBC CIL – Development is self-build
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received
WBC Ecology – No comments received

External

Thames Water Utilities Ltd – No objection subject to an appropriate drainage strategy, ensuring utility providing are liaised with.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objections
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	One letter of concern received: - Ensure construction does not block neighbouring driveways (Officer comment: This would be covered by a Construction Method Statement in the event of an approval.)

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of approximately 335sqm of land to the rear of no.12 Shepherds Hill's rear garden. The land is currently laid with several overgrown shrubs and trees, with the northern border enclosed by close boarded fencing. No.12's existing garage is also located on the land, accessed by a single width driveway that

faces onto the northern side of the Shepherds Hill roundabout.

The character of the area is a diverse mix of both residential properties and commercial units scattered around the oval roundabout. Dwellings range from single storey, semi-detached hipped roof bungalows to two storey gable roofed dwellings that range between semi-detached and detached.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the proposed erection of 1 no. three bedroom detached dwelling with associated parking and landscaping following demolition of the existing detached garage.

This application is a revised version of consent 241865. The changes to the proposals since this approval are as follows:

- The application red-line has been increased in size from 245sqm to 335sqm.
- The dwelling proposed is now larger in width but maintains the same architectural style.
- The entrance now consists of a two-way entrance/exit, bordered by brick walls and landscaping.

Principle of Development:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plans for the area are the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy 2010 and the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014. At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) constitutes guidance which the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must have regard to. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but is a material consideration in any subsequent determination.

Core Strategy 2010:

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the principle of development should be acceptable according to Policy CP9 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.

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014 (MDDL P):

Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan 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.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024):

The latest published assessment of housing land supply concluded a deliverable supply of 3.2 years as of the 31st March 2023.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states under paragraph 11 that where a local planning authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the most important policies relating to the application may be viewed as being out of date. It continues to advise that unless there are specific policies in the NPPF protecting the land subject to the application, that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF. This presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is commonly referred to as the ‘tilted balance’ as harm and benefits are not weighed equally, but tilted according to paragraph 11(d)ii).

Paragraph 11d(ii) requires the proposals to be considered against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole and the three pillars of sustainable development. These will inform the planning balance exercise carried out at the end of this report.

Summary:

The principle of the proposed development within the settlement boundary of Woodley is supported in principle by Policy CP9. Notwithstanding the above, the development would represent sustainable development in terms of the principle of development.

Character of the Area:

Policy Context:

With regards to well-designed places, paragraph 135 of the NPPF states planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

Similarly, paragraph 139 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. This is supported by paragraph 129 of the NPPF too, which states:

“Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.”

The National Design Guide section B1, paragraph 67 also states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Paragraph 68 follows on from this stating that houses and streets should establish an appropriate relationship with the pattern, sizes and proportions of existing houses in the local area.

Policy CP1(1) only supports development that maintains or enhances the high quality of the environment, with policy CP3 supporting development of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height and character to the area CP3(a) and which makes a positive contribution to the sense of place contributes to the buildings and spaces.

Assessment:

The overall scale of the dwelling and residential plot/garden proposed are in-keeping with the residential character of the roundabout and this is assisted by the subservient roof form and material choices proposed which would be commensurate/in-keeping with the adjacent neighbouring dwellings.

The dwelling would largely maintain the same building line as the adjacent no.32 Shepherds Hill, but the minor stagger proposed is reflective of the street's residential layout which is welcomed. Views from vehicles travelling westward would be numerous but they would be fleeting due to the cornered approach and the form of the dwelling would not be an alien addition to the street scene as there is little to no uniformity in the architectural character of the surrounding buildings.

The frontage would be characterised by a low brick wall and landscaping; this is reflective of the adjacent no.26 Shepherds Hill's frontage and the planting provision would help soften the impact of the development, and the areas of landscaping lost to facilitate it.

Policy TB06 of the MDD Local Plan seeks to avoid inappropriate development of residential gardens where there is harm to the local area and requires proposals to have positive contribution to the built form and surrounding spaces, integration with the layout of the surrounding area, appropriate hard and soft landscaping, amenity space, building separation and compatibility with the general building height. Based on the assessment above, the proposals are compliant with these requirements subject to conditions. The impact of the development would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The proposed first floor rear windows would retain an equidistant back-to-back

distance of 22 metres from nos.12 and 14 Shepherds Hill to the immediate south, this is acceptable and in accordance with the Borough Design Guide's recommendations to ensure privacy and prevent enclosure.

2no. first floor windows are proposed, both are obscured and would serve either a hallway or a bathroom. Subject to conditions ensuring their obscurity and limitations to their opening height, there are no overlooking concerns regarding this fenestration.

The front facing fenestration would overlook the road and the commercial units on the opposite side of the road. This is acceptable.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

To the south-west of the site is the most northern corner of no.14's rear garden that is heavily vegetated. Given the generous depth of their garden, there are therefore no anticipated adverse loss of light or overbearing concerns in this regard.

Further west is no.26 Shepherds Hill. The dwelling would retain a separation distance of approximately 21 metres from no.26's eastern side elevation which is more than sufficient to overcome any anticipated adverse loss of light or overbearing concerns.

To the immediate east of the proposed dwelling is no.32 Shepherds Hill. Accurate 45 degree lines have been provided which demonstrate there would be no adverse loss of light to the neighbouring property's rear elevation.

On no.32's western elevation lies the entrance door, 2no. obscured first floor windows that either serve bathrooms or secondary openings to other habitable rooms and a secondary kitchen window. Due to the orientations of the neighbouring property and the proposed dwelling, there would be some minor loss of light to the no.32's western side elevation but as all the fenestration impacted is low in amenity value, the impact is acceptable and does not warrant a reason for refusal.

Likewise, the dwelling would retain a 1 metre separation distance from the boundary shared with no.32. Compared with the limited amenity value of the windows, there is also no anticipated overbearing impact.

Noise:

The proposed Air Source Heat Pump is well physically separated from the surrounding properties and therefore would not adversely harm their amenities.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

General

The site is in relation to an approved planning application 241865. The proposed numbers of habitable rooms have increased from 5 to 7 in this application.

The proposal will demolish the existing 5m x 3.5m garage and convert into a new dwelling with 7 habitable rooms. As the existing garage does not fully meet the

council's requirement for car parking, there will be no loss of a garage parking space. Two driveway parking spaces are proposed within the red line.

The traffic generated from one new dwelling is unlikely to have significant impacts on the wider highway network

Access

Two existing rear accesses will be utilised for the new dwelling, the access to the west will be the driveway entrance and the one to the east will be the driveway exit. It is expected that vehicles will access the site by utilising the existing dropped crossing, which is acceptable.

Similar to the approved planning application 241865, visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m have been demonstrated at the driveway exit to the left of the carriageway. As the existing accesses will be retained, it does not worsen the existing visibilities of vehicles/pedestrians, which is therefore acceptable.

Parking

According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, development of this scale in an urban location requires two driveway parking spaces within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m.

Two driveway parking spaces of suitable dimensions are proposed by utilising the existing dropped crossings, which is acceptable.

Cycle Parking

Cycle parking is proposed in the rear garden and is externally accessible. This is acceptable.

EV Charging Points

The applicant will be required to provide 1no. EV charging point as per Building Regulations.

Refuse Collection Arrangement

Kerbside refuse collection arrangement will remain suitable for this site.

Amenity Space:

External:

The Borough Design Guide's minimum garden length of 11 metres is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provided the space is usable.

The proposed garden space is approximately 0.2 metres deep but is also 12.2 metres wide. Whilst the garden does not meet the BDG's guidelines, this is acceptable in an

urban location such as this where neighbouring garden depths also fall much lower than that proposed (no.32 has a garden depth of 8.7 metres whereas no.26's is 9.3 metres) and the garden would benefit from a south-facing orientation.

Overall, the rear garden depth would be sufficient to serve the occupants of the dwelling and would be acceptable.

Internal:

Policy TB07 of the MDD and R17 of the SPD require adequate internal space to ensure the layout and size achieves good internal amenity.

The overall GIA, bedroom sizes and the cumulative living, kitchen and dining spaces all meet the minimum standards outlined in TB07 which is acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and has a low risk of surface water flooding. WBC Drainage have no objections to the proposals providing a drainage scheme is secured via condition. This will be imposed on the decision notice.

Landscape and Trees:

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping.

Several small trees are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development, the likes of which are not covered by the Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted as it related to the 241865 consent.

Despite this, the revisions to the scheme allow for substantially larger opportunities for replacement planting, as evidenced on the frontage and side boundaries. Subject to conditions ensuring the submission of a landscaping scheme, the retention of existing trees and an arboricultural method statement, WBC Landscape and Trees raise no objections to the proposals.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

As the proposals are classed as a 'self-build' scheme, the development is not liable for mandatory biodiversity net gains.

Ecology:

Great Crested Newts (GCNs):

The site is located within an Amber Risk Zone for GCNs. Despite this, the surrounding commercial environment is not suitable for use by the protected species and therefore there is no anticipated harm to this protected species as a result of the development's construction.

General Biodiversity Enhancements:

Paragraph 185 of the NPPF states that plans should identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. This will be secured via a planning condition.

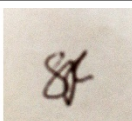
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

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, 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.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	12 December 2024
Earliest date for decision:	27 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	12.12.24