

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252343
Site Address:	10 Mitchell Way, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4NQ
Expiry Date:	16 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	12/11/2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of amenity land to residential garden including alterations to boundary fence, plus the erection of a single storey front extension, single storey rear extension and changes to fenestration.	

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 CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design NE6 – Valued landscapes NE7 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value DH1 – Place making and quality design HC4 – Open spaces, sports, recreation and play facilities
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
191356	Householder application for the proposed conversion of existing garage into habitable accommodation.	Approved, 23/08/2019
050923	Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension to form conservatory.	Approved, 21/12/2005

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – Further information requested.

WBC Landscape and Trees – Objects to the proposed development.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Woodley Town Council – <i>“The Planning & Community Committee have considered the application and wish to object due to the unacceptable impact and loss of residential amenity land.”</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, detached property located in an established residential area. The surrounding area is predominately characterised by detached and semi-detached properties that are similar in design and appearance.

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 proposed loss of open amenity land, which is a landscape feature of the area, would result in the loss of Green Infrastructure and is therefore unacceptable in principle. Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan expressly states *‘development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable.’* The starting point is therefore that the loss of

this area of open landscaping is unacceptable and this is further reinforced by the material considerations set out below.

Character of the Area:

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate character.

Policy TB21 of the MDD Local Plan states that "Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape".

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that 'Development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable'

Principle R1 of the WBC Design Guide states that Residential development should be designed to contribute positively towards the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area. This may be achieved through blending in with a strongly positive existing character, responding where relevant to the positive elements of its historic context or, where the site is large enough to allow for a distinctive identity to be created, by establishing a new character that relates well to the existing.

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.

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 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.

Mitchell Way is an established residential area comprising a series of closes characterised by two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings. The application site occupies a corner plot at the junction of Mitchell Way and Dowding Close and is positioned adjacent to an area of open grassland to the south. This grassed verge follows the bend in the highway and widens to approximately 4.5 metres and contains two medium-sized trees. Collectively, this open area provides important visual relief within the otherwise close-knit residential layout, contributing positively to the streetscape by maintaining a sense of openness and acting as a spatial buffer between the roadway, footway and the surrounding dwellings.

The proposed change of use would remove a significant section of the existing landscaped amenity area, replacing it with boundary fencing set only around 1.4metres back from the southern boundary. This would erode a valuable area of open, green space that currently contributes positively to the verdant and open character of the street scene.

This harm would be exacerbated by the form and sitting of the new boundary fence. Unlike the existing boundary treatment, which follows the natural curve of the road, the proposed fence would introduce a rigid, rectilinear projection into the bend. This would appear visually discordant and disrupt the established curved alignment of the street frontage. As a result, the enclosure of this open space in an awkward, angular shape would create a contrived and visually jarring feature within the street scene. This aspect would be clearly visible on approaches along Dowding Close and partially from Mitchell Way.

A wider appraisal of the surrounding area, including both Mitchell Way and Dowding Close, clearly demonstrates that corner plots such as the application site are consistently characterised by generous areas of open amenity land, either as wide portions of open green space or as mature landscaping. These areas form an important and intentional part of the estate layout, providing visual interest, softening the built form, and maintaining a sense of openness at key junctions where two streets meet. This pattern is a defining characteristic of the local area. The proposed change of use of amenity land to residential garden would fail to reflect the prevailing character of corner plots within the estate and would result in an unacceptable and harmful alteration to the appearance of the area.

The development in this regard is contrary to Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy (2010) and Policy CC03 and TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) and the National Design Guide (2021) and the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012).

The proposed single story rear extension would have a flat roof form and would protrude 4.5 metres from the rear of the dwelling. As it would be modest in height, depth and design, it would not adversely impact the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

With regards to the new ground floor windows, the existing boundary fencing would be high enough to sufficiently mitigate any overlooking concerns.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

The proposed single storey rear extension would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of overbearing or loss of light.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that provide attractive, functional, accessible,

safe, secure and adaptable schemes.

Policy CP6 (g) of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that do not cause highway problems or lead to traffic related environmental problems.

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and considers that the two off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards.

Visibility

The Highways Officer notes that details of the proposed boundary fence have not been provided, though, the planning statement highlights that the new fencing would match the existing 1.8 metre high timber fence.

Dowding Close is subject to 30mph speed limit, which requires visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m to be achieved to the nearside edge of the carriageway in both directions. 2m x 2m pedestrian visibility at individual driveway is also required. The sightlines shall be across land within the applicant's control or highway land and shall be clear of obstructions to visibility exceeding 0.6m in height.

On this basis, the Highways Officer requested that the applicant demonstrate either that compliant visibility splays can be achieved or that the existing splays would be retained, and further confirm that the proposed fence line would not adversely affect forward visibility in accordance with *Manual for Streets*.

However, the Case Officer considers that it is not necessary to pursue further highway information, as the scheme is already unacceptable on character grounds, with the proposed enclosure of open amenity land giving rise to significant visual harm. Consequently, and in the absence of any evidence to demonstrate that the required visibility splays can be achieved or preserved, it must be concluded that the proposed fence would likely obstruct vehicle and pedestrian sightlines, resulting in a potentially harmful impact on highway safety. As such, the proposals would be contrary to Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6.

Landscape and Trees:

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer raises no objection to the proposed extensions themselves; however, they object to the proposed relocation of the rear boundary fence, which would enclose the existing area of amenity land within the private garden.

The Trees and Landscape Officer believes that the current grassed and landscaped strip, containing shrubs and two trees, forms an important green corridor leading into Dowding Close, providing open and unrestricted views into the cul-de-sac. Repositioning the fence to the back of the footway would remove this openness and create a tunnel-like effect at the entrance to the close, particularly given that the opposite side of the road is already defined by boundary fences and walls enclosing rear gardens.

In the Trees and Landscape Officer's view, the loss of this landscaped amenity space within the public realm would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene, contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP3 and Local Plan Policy CC03.

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

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Refusal
Date:	9 December 2025
Earliest date for decision:	12 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	10.12.2025