

PLANNING REF : 252095
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 72 Church Road
: Earley, Reading
: RG6 1HU
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Valerie Walshaw
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/09/2025

COMMENTS:

As residents of 72 Church Rd (the neighbouring property to 74 Church Rd), we wish to object to this planning application (252095) on the following grounds.

- Overbearing Impact

It is clear from the Woking Council 'Comment on a planning application' web page (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/existing-planning-application/s/comment-planning-application>) and the 'About my neighbour's development' page (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/applying-planning-permission/frequently-asked-questions/about-my-neighbours-development>) that overbearing impact is a material consideration with regard to deciding a planning application.

We have been unable to find specific reference to, or definition of, overbearing impact in either the Core Strategy Development Plan (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Final%20adopted%20Core%20Strategy%20inc.%20cover.pdf>) or the Borough Design Guide (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/CD13.03%20Borough%20Design%20Guide%20Interactive%20SPD%20%281%29.pdf>). However, it does appear in Policy DH2 (Safeguarding amenity) of the Local Plan Update 2023-2040 Proposed Submission Plan (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2024-10/Local%20Plan%20Update%20-%20Regulation%2019%20Plan.pdf>) which states that "Development proposals must ensure there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of existing or future occupiers" and specifically that development proposals should "provide measures to avoid and/or mitigate against existing or potential impacts, in terms of visual intrusion, dominance or undue sense of enclosure, or an overbearing impact or harmful loss of outlook".

The proposed two-storey extension to number 74 would bring it to within approximately 2.3 metres of our property (number 72). Our property is a chalet bungalow i.e. only a one-and-a half-storey property, and in addition number 74 is set forward of the building line by at least 3 metres, meaning that the proposed extension would loom over both our property and our front garden.

Given the above, we believe that a reasonable person would conclude that the height, bulk, and proximity of the proposed extension would have a dominant and overbearing impact on our property. We also feel that this can only be fully appreciated by seeing the two properties first hand, and therefore we would like to request a planning officer to kindly visit our property to assess this impact in person.

- Loss of light

As with overbearing impact, it is clear from the 'Comment on a planning application' and 'About my neighbour's development' web pages, and the Local Plan Update 2023-2040, that loss of light is a material consideration with regard to deciding a planning application.

R18 in the Borough Design Guide provides guidance for assessing the potential impact of new development on the daylight in existing habitable rooms.

There are two windows in the side wall of our property that faces number 74. The largest of these (90 x 135cm, h x w of glass) is half way up the staircase of the property and provides daylight for the hallway, small mezzanine floor, and landing of the property. The other is one of two windows in an upstairs bedroom.

It is apparent from the drawings submitted with planning application that the proposed development would fail both the 25 and 45 tests (outlined in R18) for both these windows if they illuminated a "habitable room" or were the only source of daylight in a habitable room.

Consequently, it is clear that the proximity of the proposed development and the consequent shading of these windows would reduce the daylight coming through the windows to an ineffective level. The staircase window is the primary source of illumination for both the staircase and the hallway, and a significant contributor to light on the landing i.e. the entire central area of our home would be darkened by the loss of light from the staircase window.

As stated in R18, "Research, for instance by the World Health Organisation and MIT, has shown that natural lighting contributes to the health and well-being of residents". The loss of light from the staircase window would impact us every time we move between rooms in our home during daylight hours.

CP3 in the Core Strategy Development Plan 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 to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life".

We believe that the loss of light to the central area of our home, which would be caused by the proposed development, would be very detrimental to our quality of life, especially as we are both in our eighties. Again, we feel that this impact can only be fully appreciated first hand, and so reiterate our request for a planning officer to kindly visit our property to make an assessment.

In addition to the above, due to the fact that number 74 is set forward of the building line, it is clear that the proposed development will overshadow to some extent the front facing window of our property that is closest to number 74. This window provides illumination to a habitable room. However, due to the scale of the drawings provided in the planning application we have not been able to accurately determine whether this overshadowing fails the 45 test (outlined in R18). If the overshadowing of this window does fail the 45 test, we wish to include this in our objection to the

planning application.