

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251671
Site Address:	28 Dark Lane, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8JU
Expiry Date:	9 September 2025
Site Visit Date:	08/08/2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of two storey side and rear extensions alongside a two storey front extension with new bay window, together with alterations to the main roof to facilitate a loft conversion with roof lights, following demolition of the existing side garage and rear extension.	

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity 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 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
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 CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity

Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List
--------------	---

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant Planning Application or Planning Appeal History to the current application (i.e. being substantially the same development).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No objections, subject to a condition.

WBC Highways – No objections.

WBC CIL – The proposed development will be liable for CIL.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Wargrave Parish Council, RG10 8BG – Objection. Concerns regarding bulk, massing, and impact on the character of the street scene, as well as potential impacts on neighbouring amenity. If approved, requests obscured glazing to prevent overlooking and a traffic/construction management plan.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 The Walled Garden, RG10 8LL – Objection. Concern that the second-floor front-facing triangular window would overlook the rear patio area, causing loss of privacy. Suggestion that the cill height be raised. 26 Dark Lane, RG10 8JU – Objection. Five concerns raised: (1) disproportionate scale and massing compared to neighbouring dwellings, (2) design not reflecting the consistent style of the group of six houses, (3) overshadowing and loss of light to No. 26, including tree removal, (4) overlooking from new side windows and rooflights, and (5) construction access across private driveway with risk of damage and disruption. Request for a Construction Management Plan. 24 Dark Lane, RG10 8JU – Objection. Concern that the proposed design is disproportionately large and stylistically inconsistent with the group of six houses. Second-floor redesign would further increase bulk and scale. 22 Dark Lane, RG10 8JU – Objection. Concern about the

	scale of the extension, which would double the size of one property within the group, altering the established character of the row. Also raises significant concerns about disruption, noise, damage, and access issues associated with construction works on the private road. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>A degree of disturbance from construction activity is inevitable; however, it is not considered that the level of disruption arising from this householder development would be so significant as to warrant the imposition of restrictive planning conditions. The construction period would be temporary and intermittent, and it is noted that the application site benefits from a front driveway that could accommodate construction vehicles and associated equipment, thereby reducing the potential for disruption to the public highway.</i> <i>Should excessive noise, dust, or disturbance occur during or as a result of the development, this would be appropriately managed under separate legislation, including the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (statutory nuisance), the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (construction site noise and vibration), and the Highways Act 1980 (obstruction of the public highway). These statutory powers provide sufficient safeguards to address any unacceptable impacts that may arise during the construction phase.</i> 20 Dark Lane, RG10 8JU – Objection. Concern that the proposal would significantly alter the look of the end property with modern glazing, inconsistent with the established mock-Georgian character. Scale would create a dominant structure disproportionate to neighbours. Dark Lane, RG10 8JU (Dr Ryder) – Objection. Concerns that the proposal is excessive in scale, overbearing to neighbours, reduces spacing between properties, harms street character, and sets a negative precedent. Notes lack of a Construction Management Plan, with potential disruption to traffic and access. Requests that site vehicles and deliveries be contained within the application site. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>A degree of disturbance from construction activity is inevitable; however, it is not considered that the level of disruption arising from this householder development would be so significant as to warrant the imposition of restrictive planning conditions. The construction period would be temporary and intermittent, and it is noted that the application site benefits from a front driveway that could accommodate construction vehicles and associated equipment, thereby reducing the potential for disruption to the public highway.</i> <i>Should excessive noise, dust, or disturbance occur during or as a result of the development, this would be appropriately managed under separate legislation, including the</i>
--	---

	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1990 (statutory nuisance), the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (construction site noise and vibration), and the Highways Act 1980 (obstruction of the public highway). These statutory powers provide sufficient safeguards to address any unacceptable impacts that may arise during the construction phase.</i> Please refer to the officer's assessment below, which provides a full response to the above comments.
--	---

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, detached property located in an established residential area. The surrounding area is characterised by detached, set in discernible groupings which are distinguished by repeated house type.

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 site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable 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.

Character of the Area:

The application site is located on a service road running parallel to Dark Lane which is distinguished by large detached, Georgian style houses which are built on expansive plots and set well back from the roadside. Houses are situated at relatively equal distances from the road in a formal suburban layout. The area is also characterised by predominant gaps at first-floor level above side garages which provides glimpses of leafy green gardens to the rear; this marked feature creates a certain rhythm in the street which makes an important contribution to local distinctiveness.

The Borough Design Guide (BDG SPD) states that any alteration and extension to an existing building should be well-designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to the local. The BDG SPD also states that any alteration or extension to an existing building should be well-designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to the local character and street scene, and

relate well to the neighbouring properties. The Section R23 of the BDG states that where the pattern of gaps between buildings creates a regular rhythm along a street that contributes to local character, then alterations or extensions should not interrupt that rhythm.

The proposals seek the erection of a part first-floor, part two-storey wrap-around extension to the north and eastern elevations of the dwelling, together with three two-storey front extensions to form two bay windows and one gable feature.

The proposed extensions would alter the uniform rhythm of the frontage along the service road, where dwellings currently display a degree of visual cohesion through repeated built forms. This consistency is a positive attribute of the street scene. However, when considering the wider character of the area, it is evident that there is a mixture of house types and groupings. Both Dark Lane and the nearby junction at The Walled Garden comprise a variety of dwelling styles, including bungalows, terraces, and larger detached houses, each forming distinct but varied clusters. Accordingly, while consistency exists in parts of the area, there is also an established degree of variety in built form and architectural style.

Although the proposed extensions are of a considerable scale, they have been proportionately designed to achieve a balanced and symmetrical front elevation. Importantly, adequate separation from No. 26 Dark Lane would be retained through the preservation of the side garage, thereby maintaining the characteristic green gap and avoiding harm to the established rhythm of the street scene.

Furthermore, while the scale of the extensions would disrupt the established pattern of development along the service road, this impact would be less pronounced given the property's end-of-row siting. In this location, the dwelling has greater capacity to accommodate a larger extension without appearing unduly dominant or uncharacteristic. Together with the mature boundary planting along Dark Lane, the proposals would be visually softened and less conspicuous within the wider street scene.

Taken together, the proposals are considered to respect the character and appearance of the area, while avoiding undue harm to the wider street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

Figure 4.25 summarises the Council's minimum privacy and amenity distance guidelines, which are intended to safeguard privacy and reduce any sense of enclosure. For 1–2 storey dwellings, a front-to-front separation distance of 10 metres is advised, while a back-to-back separation distance of 22 metres is recommended.

The proposed new windows on the front elevation would overlook only the driveway and public realm. As these windows would maintain a separation of more than 10 metres from properties across the street, any potential overlooking is considered minimal.

Concerns have been raised regarding overlooking of the garden at 1 The Walled

Garden to the west of the application site. However, the proposed first-floor windows would be positioned approximately 35 metres from the east side wall of this property, a distance that comfortably exceeds the Council's guidelines and is sufficient to mitigate any loss of privacy.

With respect to the three new side windows at first floor level, it is recommended that the two south side facing windows, which serve non habitable areas and directly abut the neighbour at no.26 Dark Lane, are obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m in order to minimise overlooking into the rear garden and patio areas of this property. A suitable condition will be attached to any approval.

The views from the proposed rear-facing windows would be similar to those currently available from the existing arrangement. While the first-floor, guest bedroom window would be sited approximately 21.2 metres from the main rear wall of No. 36 Ridgeway, a shortfall of 0.8 metres is not considered to result in an unacceptable level of overlooking or loss of privacy and, therefore, would not warrant refusal of the application.

Based on the submitted plans it appears that the new roof windows would be sited 1.7 metres above internal finished floor level of the proposed game room. Nonetheless, a suitable condition will be attached to any approval to ensure this to safeguard the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

The proposed extension would be suitably positioned away from neighbouring properties and would not extend significantly beyond the rear wall of No. 26 and therefore is not considered to give rise to unreasonable overbearing or loss of light impacts.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and considers that the six off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards. As such, there are no highways issues.

Amenity Space:

The application site has a rectangular shaped rear garden with a depth of approximately 16 metres (when measured from the main rear wall). The proposed single storey rear extension would reduce the rear garden depth to approximately 10.7 metres. Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide SPD provides guidance on the provision of some form of amenity space and recommends that 11 metres is a generally accepted depth for private garden space.

Nonetheless, this shortfall is minor. With a garden length of 30 metres, the space would still comfortably accommodate activities such as sitting, playing, clothes drying, and outdoor storage, and therefore would not be detrimental to the enjoyment of the current or future occupiers.

Flooding and Drainage:

The proposed development is in Flood zone 1 according to the Environment Agency mapping with a low risk of surface water flooding. The Council's Drainage Officer has reviewed the application and has noted that the drainage details have not been provided, and the existing drainage details has not been mentioned. The Drainage Officer has subsequently recommended a condition be implemented which secures details of the surface water drainage system of the site prior to the commencement of development. Given the considerable new footprint proposed, a suitable condition will be attached to any approval.

Landscape and Trees:

There are no protected trees on the application site. Given the proposed developments distances to any mature trees within the site, it is considered that no tree or landscape related impacts would arise from the proposed development.

Ecology:

The site is located in habitat which matches where bat roosts have previously been found in the borough.

The supporting Preliminary bat roost assessment (Chase Ecology, June 2025, ref: W1154.001) found no evidence of bats during the internal and external inspections of the property and concludes that the potential for roosting bats is deemed to be very low. As such, the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect roosting bats or other protected species.

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approval

Date:	29 August 2025
Earliest date for decision:	11 August 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>BJC</i>
Date:	19.09.25