

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242639
Site Address:	23B Pine Drive, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3LD
Expiry Date:	14 February 2025
Site Visit Date:	10 July 2024
Proposal: Householder application for proposed raising of the detached garage roof and eaves to facilitate first floor habitable accommodation including the erection of 1 No dormer and external enclosed staircase.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones

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
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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26086	Erection of three dwellings houses	Refused 26/08/86
26528	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two replacement dwellings	Refused 10/11/86
28869	Demolition of bungalow & erection of 2 chalet style bungalows & double garage	Approved 03/12/87
980617	Proposed Two Storey Rear Extension To Dwelling	Approved 25/06/98
241591	Pre-application advice for proposed raising a roof and eaves of the existing detached garage along with erection of a dormer to create habitable space plus external enclosed staircase.	Replied 31/07/24

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection

WBC Highways: No objection subject to conditions

WBC Ecology: No objection

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council

Finchampstead Parish Council: Object; out of keeping with the street scene due to it's excessive bulk, scale and massing. It is also built on the boundary.

If officers are minded approving this application, the following conditions must be applied:

1. The Velux windows must be installed no less than 1.8m above floor level.

2. The building should be ancillary to the main property, not a separate dwelling.

Officer response: The site is not visible from the street scene and located in black land approx. 50m from the road, therefore no material harm on the character of the area. The garage would be viewed in context to larger two storey and substantial chalet bungalows along Pine Drive.

The proposal would be approx. 1.40m from the boundary.

	The Velux windows are no longer part of the application. A condition will be implemented to ensure the garage shall not be occupied or used at any time other than incidental to the enjoyment of the residential dwelling located on the site.
Ward Member(s)	Councillor Rebecca Margetts: Objects The raising of the roof height of this garage is excessive and out of keeping with the street scene due to its excessive bulk, scale, and massing. The roof height will be raised by over 1.5m compared to all surrounding garages. Looking at the horizon, this garage will dominate the street scene, standing over 1.5m above. Adding the room and keeping the roof height reasonable would have been more sensible. Raising this roof height so significantly could make it an independent habitable accommodation, and I request that officers add a condition to ensure this does not occur. Officer response: The site is not visible from the street scene and located in black land approx. 50m from the road, therefore no material harm on the character of the area. The garage would be viewed in context to larger two storey and substantial chalet bungalows along Pine Drive. A condition will be implemented to ensure the garage shall not be occupied or used at any time other than incidental to the enjoyment of the residential dwelling located on the site.
Neighbours	23a Pine Drive: Velux window will result in a loss of privacy and overlooking. The raised roof will be overbearing. Officer response: The Velux windows have been removed, no overlooking or loss of privacy concerns. The Borough Design Guide states the minimum separation distance from flank wall to rear of dwelling is 12m. The separation distance from the side of the garage to the rear of 23a is approx. 18.75m and the ridge 21.40m, thus complying with the BDG. Given the significant separation distance and combined with the proposed garage being the East of number 23A, it would not be considered to be overbearing. Whilst the ridge height will be increased by 1.55m, along the rear boundary there is vegetation of significant height which would somewhat screen the increased height (see below). Furthermore, 23a Pine Drive does have a large rear garden and only impacts a section of the garden. Therefore, such introduction would not result in significant harm to neighbouring amenities.

	 Loss of a view is not a material planning consideration. 7a Pine Drive: Will this set a precedence where standalone garages can be turned into habitable accommodation? Officer response: A condition can be implemented to ensure the garage shall not be occupied or used at any time other than incidental to the enjoyment of the residential dwelling located on the site.
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APPRAISAL

Site Description: The property for which this enquiry relates is a two-storey detached dwelling with a detached garage located forward of the main dwelling. 23B Pine Drive is one of three dwellings located within the cul-da-sac of dwellings significantly set back from Pine Drive with its own private drive.

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.

The use of a garage/outbuilding as incidental to the main house typically refers to the ancillary or secondary function of the outbuilding in relation to the primary residence.

The floor plans show the ground floor will remain as a garage and the first floor will be used for a study which also includes a shower room. The agent has confirmed that *“the proposed use will be purely ancillary to the main dwelling”*.

Whilst the proposal includes a raise in the eaves and ridge height by approx. 1.55m to accommodate for a flat dormer on the east elevation. These changes would alter the existing garage but would still appear as an ancillary feature to the main dwelling. The garage would be viewed in context to larger two storey and substantial chalet bungalows along Pine Drive.

The detached garage is located to the front of the main dwelling. Whilst the detached garage would have no physical link to the main dwelling, the floor plans for the building do not contain the facilities required for day-to-day living and thus could not be occupied as a separate dwelling. Thus, the circumstances indicate that the proposal would be used ancillary to 23B Pine Drive. The proposed usage of the garage would not result in a material change of use or the formation of an independent residential planning unit. As stated above, the proposed use would be purely ancillary to the main dwelling.

A condition will be implemented to ensure the garage shall not be occupied or used at any time other than incidental to the enjoyment of the residential dwelling located on the site.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area: The proposed development seeks to introduce a raise in the eaves and ridge height by approx. 1.55m to accommodate for a flat dormer.

The proposed works seeks to make elevational changes in the form of altered windows and doors. The ground floor window and door on the east elevation will be kept, but with the addition of a first-floor window in the south elevation, two windows as part of the dormer in the east elevation and an external staircase with door on the north elevation. The stairs are to be fully shielded on north elevation.

The Borough Design Guide states that *“dormer windows should generally be positioned within the main roof, by being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof”* and *“dormers should relate to the design of the existing building in terms of roof form, materials, position and window proportions”*. The flat dormer does not project above the existing ridge line and the dormer is situated within the main roof whilst also being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof, therefore complying with the BDG.

Whilst the flat dormer would alter the appearance of the garage, it is considered that the alteration would be a subservient feature; not harming the character of the area. Furthermore, the site is not visible from the street scene and located in black land approx. 50m from the road as well as within the immediate area there are examples of dormers along Pine Drive including 25A Pine Drive. Therefore, this addition would not look out of place nor harm the street scene.

The proposed materials include gable covered with brick cladding to match dormer

colour of brown as well as UPVC doors and windows to match the existing, thus in keeping with the current characteristics of the site.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The proposed dormer would have 2 first floor windows on the east elevation, which would face the main dwelling and would not result in harmful overlooking. The shower room window would be obscured glazed.

The first-floor window on the south elevation would overlook onto the drive of 23c, this type of overlooking is not considered significantly harmful.

Loss of Light/Overbearing: Whilst the eaves and ridge height will be raised, given its significant separation from the rear wall of neighbouring dwelling (no.23a) combined with the proposed garage being the East of number 23A, it would not result in harmful loss of light or considered to be overbearing. There is also intervening vegetation along the boundary.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal will provide one additional habitable room through garage conversion.

As the applicant confirms that the new habitable room will be ancillary to the main dwelling, the proposal will increase the total numbers of habitable rooms from 8 to 9. There will be no changes to the existing garage and driveway parking provisions.

According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in Urban location will require three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m.

The retainment of three existing driveway parking will meet the council's requirement, which is acceptable.

No negative impact on abilities for cycle storage is expected, which is acceptable

Flooding and Drainage: The site is within flood zone 1 and we would have no objection to the development as represented by proposed floor elevations and roof plan drawing D2994-02 A dated September 2024.

Ecology: All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to kill or injure a bat or interfere with any roosting or resting site. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

The desktop study fails to include local planning history and the bat roosts recorded at 19A and 21A Pine Drive. TVERC and local bat group records have not been consulted. However, the officer is satisfied that the survey methodology and effort are adequate for the Ecologist to conclude that the property doesn't currently have any potential roosting features and can be characterised as having negligible potential for roosting bats. There are no ecological objections to the development as proposed.

The officer must draw the applicant, owner and their contractor's attention to the advice in section 7.2 and request WBC informative I17 is included in the planning decision.

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:	Approve
Date:	11 February 2025
Earliest date for decision:	8 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	11.02.2025