

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252668
Site Address:	27 Pitts Lane, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 1BX
Expiry Date:	14 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	25 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed installation of an additional vehicular access to the front of the property following part demolition of existing garden wall and extension of hard surfacing.	

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
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
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
030733	Proposed two storey side and rear extension to dwelling and single storey front porch extension.	Approved 13 October 2003
012081	Proposed first floor side extension to dwelling and two storey rear extension.	Approved 08 May 2001

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Highways – No Objection subject to conditions.
External
N/A

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council raises no objection to this application subject to WBC imposing the following condition that submission to, and approval by, WBC of a scheme demonstrating the retention of landscaping to the frontage, such scheme to be implemented within 12 months of completion of the parking area, as supported by Policies CP3 and CC03 and as defined in Section R14 of the Borough Design Guide. <i>Officer comment: such a condition would not be necessary given the assessment outlined in Character section of this report below.</i>
Ward Member(s)	Councillor Stephen Newton: Soft landscaping to be retained as much as possible please in accordance with Policy CP3. I do not have any issue with the access being widened. <i>Officer comment: see above.</i>
Neighbours	The ACER The Whitegates Residents Association: To widen driveway access and increase width of dropped Kerb -Comments from ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association ACER have no objections to widening the vehicle access 1) provided the remaining wall is retained, as stated. 2) Soft landscaping in the front garden is retained in keeping with the following: a) Policy CP3 requires development appropriate to the character of the area , to support fauna and flora and to include appropriate landscaping. b) Policy TB06 a. iv) requires appropriate soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. c) The Borough Design Guide in section 4 states that Parking Spaces should include space for soft landscaping ACER therefore request a landscaping condition in order to ensure compliance with Policy CP3, TB06 and the Borough Design Guide, as stated above. <i>Officer comment: see above re potential imposition of a condition to retain landscaping. Policy TB06 is not relevant to this Householder planning application as no new residential development is proposed. The proposal is for a drop kerb ancillary to the host property.</i> Comments on revised plans: ACER supports the improved vehicle access but objects to the amended plan's new entrance and dropped kerb due to inadequate landscaping. They argue the proposed planting is not visible enough to maintain the area's character and note that existing trees have been removed. They request refusal unless visible greenery is added.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application relates to a two-storey detached dwelling located in Earley within a major development location.

The dwelling has previously had a two-storey side and rear extension, single storey front porch extension, first floor side extension and two storey rear extension which was approved in 2003 (030733) and 2001 (012081), no alterations have been carried out since then.

This application seeks planning permission for the proposed installation of an additional vehicular access to the front of the property following part demolition of existing garden wall and extension of the existing hard surfacing.

Revised plans were submitted as part of this application on 03/03/2026. These revisions propose a separate dropped crossover, replacing the initial proposal which sought to widen the existing dropped crossover. The updated scheme was reviewed in consultation with the Highways Authority, who advised that the proposed kerb width of 4.2m may not be acceptable. Consequently, further revised plans were submitted on 02/04/2026, reducing the proposed kerb width to 3.6m.

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:

CP1 of the Core Strategy states that the proposed external alterations should maintain the high quality of the environment.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that the proposed external alterations should be of appropriate scale, mass, bulk, height, materials and of high-quality design.

The proposal would be a dropped kerb which would approximately measure 3.6m Metres and with existing of 3.6m.

The existing wall approximately measures 9.39m and the length that will be retained is 4.9m. Additionally, the Neighbouring property (no.25) has an existing Kerb of 6.4m.

The proposed dropped kerb would not result in any significant harm to the character of the area. Dropped kerbs are a common and established feature within this residential area, and numerous examples can already be found in the surrounding streets.

The site currently benefits from an existing dropped kerb, and the proposal would provide an additional access point to facilitate on-site parking. Furthermore, several recent applications for similar works have been approved in the vicinity of the application site, such as 35 Pitts Lane (231069) and 75 Pitts Lane (232854).

Additional hard surfacing would be required across the verge, which is currently laid to grass and soil. Earley Town Council has suggested that the frontage landscaping be retained; however, the site visit confirmed that the grassed area is poorly maintained and makes a limited contribution to visual amenity.

In this context, the introduction of a small area of hardstanding to enable safe and practical access would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the street scene – although it does not improve the street scene and replicated at other properties would begin to erode the characteristic verges within the area. The conversion of the front garden and installation of a dropped kerb at No. 31 Pitts Lane demonstrates that such vehicular access and hardstanding are established and a common characteristic within the street scene

As highlighted by Earley Town Council, concerns have been raised regarding permitted development rights, particularly in relation to hardstanding and landscape alterations. Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, permitted development rights would not apply in this instance, as the kerb in question lies outside the curtilage of the property. Instead, it is situated on highway land rather than within residential amenity land, to which WBC's Highways team have raised no objections.

Moreover, the loss of a small section of highway verge would negate the requirement for landscaping provisions in this instance.

Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area and is compliant with policies CP1 & CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The nature of the proposals does not warrant any overlooking concerns.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

As this is a ground-level alteration, it does not create any overbearing or loss-of-light impacts on neighbouring properties.

The applicants have followed WBC Highways' recommendation to create a separated access to facilitate vehicle manoeuvring in the revised plans. Part of the existing wall will remain unchanged but will not result in any impact on neighbouring amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Highways were consulted for this proposal who outlined that they had no objection with the proposals to accommodate four car parking spaces subject to conditions.

The proposals are for the installation of a new dropped crossover to create a carriageway drive. WBC Highways have provided their comments on the revised plans provided by the applicant. The revised plans propose a separate dropped crossover, in contrast to the initial plans which proposed widening of the existing dropped crossover.

The B3350 Pitts Lane is subject to a speed restriction of 30mph. Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43.0m for the 30mph carriageway are required, in accordance with Manual for Streets. Pedestrian visibility splays of 2.0m x 2.0m are also required. Due to the site location, visibility does not appear to be an issue, however this should be provided by the applicant when discharging planning condition.

Highways officers advised that Traffic Management would be unlikely to accept a total dropped kerb width exceeding 3.6m; the revised block plan (03/03/2026) indicates a width of 4.2m.

The applicant was advised during the course of the application to reduce the proposed width to 3.6m from 4.2m. As a result, the applicant has now submitted revised plans (02/04/2026) showing a reduced kerb width of 3.6m, which is considered to be acceptable.

Separate consent will be required from the TM team for the proposed width and location of the new dropped crossing following the grant of planning permission.

The access shall be surfaced with a permeable and bonded condition across the entire width of the access for a distance of 10m measured from the carriageway design. WBC Highways would welcome indication of this on a plan. This will be secured by condition.

Amenity Space:

The proposals would not harm the usability of the site's private rear amenity space.

Flooding and Drainage:

There are no flood risk concerns. The site is located within flood zone 1 which is suitable for development and however does have some risk of surface water flooding at the front of the site.

Conclusion:

For all the above, the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions, and the application is recommended for approval, however, it should be noted that separate approval will be required from the Council's traffic management team prior to any works starting.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	10 December 2025
Earliest date for decision:	1 December 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	02.04.2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

#	FEATURE_TYPE	NAME
1	Major Development Locations	Earley

Risk of Flooding from Surface Water | Total count: 7

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME
1	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 30 year risk extent
2	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
3	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
4	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
5	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
6	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 100 year risk extent
7	Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Zones	1 in 1000 year risk extent

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
1	Bat survey required for planning applications that involve roof modification or demolition.	MA631	Ecology Officer, Green Infrastructure Team

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones | Total count: 1

#	FEATURE_TYPE	FEATURE_NAME	CONSULT
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1	<i>Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Consult NatureSpace for Major developments only</i>
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Landscape Character Assessment 2019 | Total count: 1

#	<i>FEATURE_TYPE</i>	<i>Name</i>
1	<i>Landscape Character Assessment 2019</i>	<i>Woodley-Earley Settled and Farmed Clay</i>