

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	241930
Site Address:	20 Rotherfield Avenue, Wokingham, RG41 2EX
Expiry Date:	25 September 2024
Site Visit Date:	20 August 2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and two storey side extension. The enlargement of front and rear dormers following the demolition of the existing rear extension and side lean-to, plus conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation, removal of a chimney, changes to fenestration and external materials.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Local Authorities
Heathrow Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Local Wildlife Site
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Public Open Space
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
Land Terrier
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
Historic Flooding Points Consultation Zone
Local Wildlife Sites Consultation Zone
Flood Zones 2 and 3
Flood Zone 3

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

Plan (MDD)	CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB22 – Sites of Urban Landscape Value TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM4 - Protection of Designated Landscape DM10 - Flood Risk DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
	There is no planning history for the site.	

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage – No objection, subject to condition (02/08/2024).
WBC Highways – No objection (01/08/2024).
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection, subject to conditions (13/08/2024).
WBC CIL – Not CIL liable (01/08/2024).
WBC Ecology Householder – No objection, subject to conditions (10/09/2024).

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The site is located within a major development location in Wokingham. Rotherfield Avenue is a no through road that runs parallel to Reading Road. The north-western end of the avenue consists of mainly detached properties, all similar in style and appearance. The site is located at the end of the road and has one adjoining neighbour to the east and public open space to the west with the Emm Brook stream approximately 33m away. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and 3.

Rotherfield Avenue is on a gradual slope, so properties further east sit at a slightly higher elevation than those to the west. The western side of the site sits approximately 0.7m lower than the eastern side of the site.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval from the erection of a two-storey, side extension that would include extending the existing front and rear flat roof dormers. The existing side lean-to would be demolished. The front door would be repositioned and a pitched roof porch canopy erected above. Also proposed is a single-storey rear extension that would have a flat roof form, following demolition of the existing conservatory. The existing garage would be converted to create habitable living accommodation, and the garage door replaced with one window. All materials would match existing.

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 principle of a residential extension in this location is acceptable in principle providing that it complies with the wider policy objectives contained within the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery (MDD).

Character of the Area:

Properties along the northern end of Rotherfield Avenue are all similar in design and flat roof dormers are a common feature and an identifiable characteristic of these properties. This application would erect a two-storey side extension and would increase the width of the existing flat roof dormers in the front and rear elevations to approximately 10.64m. The side extension would measure approximately 2.45m in width and 10.8m in length and materials would match existing.

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high-quality design. R1 and RD1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD (BDG) requires development to contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area and R11 requires a coherent street character, including in terms of scale, rhythm, proportion and height.

The dormers would be subservient additions to the main house and comply with the Borough Design Guide (BDG) in that they would be set in from the sides of the roof and set down from the ridge line by approximately 1m. Extending the dormers would be in-keeping with the design of surrounding residential properties including the already existing front, flat roof dormers of nos.11 to 19.

The proposed two-storey side extension would extend the existing pitched roof form and would maintain the existing eaves height. As the proposed maximum eaves and ridge height would be no higher than that of the existing property, this would be in line with guidance set out in the BDG.

The side extension would be built on the western elevation of the host dwelling, following demolition of the existing single-storey entrance lean-to. There would be a separation distance of more than 4m to the western side boundary which would retain views of the public green space that runs alongside the Emm Brook stream. The BDG states that local character may derive from the spaces between buildings, as much as the buildings themselves; 'A green backdrop contributes significantly to local character, created by trees and planting along plot frontages, in gaps between buildings and in rear gardens, so that development is almost always seen against vegetation'. Therefore, the side extension would not appear obtrusive or adversely impact the character of the host dwelling or semi-verdant local area.

The proposal also includes a pitched roof porch canopy above the repositioned front entrance. This would be a relatively minor addition to the front elevation that would protrude approximately 0.78m from the principal building line. The BDG recommends that 'Porches should generally project less than 2m forward of the building line'. This is acceptable.

The proposed single-storey rear extension would have a flat roof form and would extend approximately 2m from the rear building line, following demolition of the existing conservatory. There would be limited views of the single-storey extension from the public realm as it would be located to the rear and largely screened by the main house and mature trees and hedging along the western boundary. Therefore, this element of the scheme would not adversely impact the character of the host dwelling or local area.

The proposed garage conversion would replace the existing garage door with a casement window. Garage style doors with storage behind are proposed on the opposite side of the dwelling within the proposed two-storey side extension. In effect, the garage/storage space is being switched sides and is a relatively minor change to the front elevation and is acceptable.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The existing garage is positioned on the eastern boundary of the site. The conversion of the garage would see the existing garage door replaced with a casement window that would be more than 4m from the flank wall of the neighbouring property. This would be at ground level and road facing, therefore limited opportunity for any significant overlooking would be generated.

The proposed scheme would see the fenestration on the eastern elevation in-filled, therefore, overlooking concerns from this elevation would be reduced.

The proposed two-storey side extension would include 1.no front facing first-floor window and 1.no rear facing first-floor window. The extension would be on the western side of the host dwelling. As there are no neighbours to this side of the site, there would be no overlooking impacts to neighbouring amenity generated by these windows.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

Due to the significant separation distance between the proposed two-storey extension and extended dormers from no.19 Rotherfield Avenue, there are no loss of light or overbearing impacts that would be generated by this element of the scheme.

The single-storey rear extension would have a flat roof form and would be approximately 5m from the flank wall of no.19. In addition, no.19 sits at a higher level than the host dwelling. Therefore, due to the large separation distance and lower level of the rear extension, there would be limited over shadowing or overbearing impacts generated.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would convert the existing garage to habitable living accommodation. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD stipulates minimum off street parking standards. The Highways Officer raised no objection to the proposal and commented *"The numbers of habitable rooms will remain unchanged and the existing garage of dimensions 5.2m x 2.8m does not fully comply with the council's standards for car parking. It is therefore expected that there will be no additional demand for car parking and no reduction in parking provisions."*

The proposal will have no impacts on the existing driveway parking, which is acceptable.

Despite the garage will be removed, direct access to the rear garden and the proposed storage room will remain suitable for cycle storage, which is acceptable".

Flooding and Drainage:

The western side of the application site is located in flood zone 3, but the host dwelling is located in flood zone 1. WBC Drainage raised no objection to the principle of development, however they have requested additional drainage details prior to the commencement of the development. As the main dwelling is located within flood zone 1, it is considered too onerous and unreasonable to request further details when compared with the modest householder development proposed, plus the site would retain sufficient permeable ground. Accordingly, the condition is not attached.

Landscape and Trees:

The application site is located close to Reading Road Green Route and proposed Riverside Footpath along the Emm Brook. WBC Landscape and Trees were consulted and raised no objection to the proposal and commented *"The site is located on a spur road and offers only fleeting winter views to the parallel Green Route road. This end of the Avenue features similarly styled houses, some of which have been altered over time. Neighbouring third-party trees on the west boundary offer public amenity and trees are a feature of the back garden."*

Trees impacted by the scheme are suitably considered by the submitted BS5837:2012, I have suggested a condition, should consent be given".

Ecology:

The application site is located in an area suitable for bat roosts and WBC Ecology were consulted. The Ecology Officer requested a copy of the Preliminary Roost Assessment which was later submitted. They raised no objection to the proposal, subject to

conditions. They commented *"Further to my previous comments I have read the Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R3542/a) submitted on 9 August 2023.*

I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate. I support the Ecologist's recommendation that a precautionary working method statement should be secured to ensure that the development proposals would not deliberately or intentionally/recklessly disturb, injure or kill any bats occupying the historic roost at the time the development is implemented. Provided that a planning condition is imposed securing implementation of the development in full accordance with the Precautionary Working Method Statement and provision of a closing out report, there are no ecological objections. The Bat Emergence Survey (R2550_BES_b) is only valid for 12 months. If development has not commenced the bat emergence survey should be updated and mitigation and the need for a derogation licence reviewed".

The Officer requested for the submission of details of a 'closing-out report' demonstrating that the bat mitigation measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the ecology report. While this is duly noted, due to the relatively small scale of the proposal, it is not considered necessary. Furthermore, the mitigation measures will already be conditioned with any recommended approval.

A condition restricting external lighting without permission is also recommended. The dwelling already exists with no restrictions that currently limit the installation of external lighting. Furthermore, the application does not propose any additional external lighting. Therefore, for a relatively small-scale householder application, this condition would not be reasonable or relevant to the development to be permitted.

In addition, a tree protection condition was also recommended, however this is not required as it is covered within the condition recommended by the Trees and Landscape Officer.

Conclusion:

For the reasons set out above and subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

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:	9 September 2024
Earliest date for decision:	22 August 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	13.9.2024