

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251501
Site Address:	30 Reading Road, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 3DB
Expiry Date:	19 September 2025
Site Visit Date:	8 August 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of first floor side extension, garage conversion and changes to fenestrations.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location – Woodley

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC07 – Parking
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging ER9 – Woodley town centre and Lower Earley district centre
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
233161	Householder application for proposed erection of a part single part two storey rear extension (Not implemented).	Approve 16 th February 2024
030463	Proposed single storey front and rear extensions	Approve

	to dwelling and new roof on existing garage. (Implemented)	23 rd April 2003
021887*	Proposed first floor side extension to dwelling and single storey front extension plus pitched roof on existing garage.	Refuse 15 th January 2003
174/61	Detached House	Approve 5 th October 1961

**The Officer's recommendation for approval of 021887 was overturned by Planning Committee and the application was refused on the following grounds:*

1. The proposed development by reason of its siting, design and scale would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene. As such it is contrary to policy EN1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan, policies LBE1 and LBE2 of the Loddon Area Local Plan and policies WBE1 and WOS3 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (as proposed to be modified).

2. The proposed development by reason of its siting, design and scale would form an un-neighbourly development and is considered overbearing when viewed from the adjacent property, no 32 Reading Road. As such is contrary to policies LBE1 and LBE2 of the Loddon Area Local Plan and policy WOS3 of the Wokingham District Local Plan (as proposed to be modified).

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No Objection Subject to Condition

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council

Members of the Planning & Community Committee have considered this application and were concerned about the potential to create a terracing effect. Whilst they acknowledge there would be a gap between the properties, and that the proposed side extension on was stepped back from the front elevation of the property, they noted the extension was in line with the front elevation of the neighbouring property, and ask the gap between would be minimal it was felt this could lead to a potential terracing effect.

Officer comment: Although the separation distance with the neighbouring property would be reduced, it would be at least 1m from the boundary as recommended in the Borough Design Guide.

Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One objection raised: <u>Character with the Street</u> The proposal would create a terraced housing appearance, which is inconsistent with the existing street layout. No similar properties have developments fully covering the garage roof. A previous, nearly identical application (Ref: 021887) was refused in 2003 for being "inconsiderate and un-neighbourly." The current proposal is even more overbearing than the one previously rejected. <i>Officer comment: The current proposal will be assessed on its own merits in relation to impact on the character of the area, and the separation distance with the neighbouring property. Both are discussed in the main body of the report.</i> <u>Loss of Privacy and Light</u> The rear garden at No. 32 relies on morning light which would be blocked by the new development. The rear-facing window would overlook a glass-roofed conservatory, impacting privacy. A side elevation window appears misleading, as it would be extremely close to No. 32 and is not shown on the planning drawings. <i>Officer comment: Impact of the proposal on neighbour amenity is discussed in the main body of the report.</i> <u>Previous Permission</u> The applicant received approval in December 2023 (Ref: 233161) for a similar footprint. It's unclear whether this new application supersedes the previous one. <i>Officer comment: Each planning application is assessed independently and without prejudice. Whether a new application overrides a previously approved one depends on the specific decision made and the nature of the earlier permission. In this case the proposed first floor side extension does not overlap with the approved single part two storey rear extension that has not been implemented. Nevertheless, if both schemes were to be implemented, the scale and bulk of the development in relation to visual impact on neighbours would be greater than if only the current application were to be implemented. Therefore, the impact of implementing both schemes is assessed in the main body of the report.</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The application site is a 1960s detached dwellinghouse in the residential area of Woodley.

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.

Proposal: Erection of first floor side extension, garage conversion and changes to fenestrations. The front elevation will have a double paned window above the garage conversion, a single paned obscured glazed window on the side elevation and double paned window on the rear elevation. It will measure approximately 7.5m in height to the top of the pitch to gable roof enlargement, 2.2m in width, 8.8m in length from front to back; and the separation distance with the neighbouring boundary would be approx. 1.1m. The proposal will enlarge bedroom no. 3, create a walk-in wardrobe, and a separate ensuite at the rear. The garage conversion will facilitate a family room and have a triple paned window on the front elevation. The rear roof elevation will have 2 no. roof lights to the first-floor landing and ensuite.

The separation distance of the current proposal with the side boundary (Figures 3 and 4), would be 1m compared to the refused application 021887 (Figures 1 and 2) where the proposed separation distance was 0.5m.



Figure 1 Refused application 021887 (proposed front elevation and separation distance shown in red)



Figure 2 Refused application 021887 (proposed rear elevation and separation distance shown in red)



Figure 3 Current proposed front elevation and separation distance shown in red)



Figure 4 Current proposed rear elevation and separation distance shown in red)

Furthermore, application 021887 was considered under the previous Berkshire Structure Plan, the Loddon Area Local Plan and the Wokingham District Local Plan (as proposed to be modified) and refused, against an officer recommendation to approve, by Planning Committee on 22nd January 2003.

Character of the Area: Core Strategy Policy CP3 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, 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. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Maximum eaves height and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.
- Side extensions should be set back by 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary.
- The rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages is often important to the character of the area.
- Front extensions should not project significantly forward of the building line.

The street layout of Reading Road is linear, and the application site is one of 4 no. linked detached dwellings of a similar age and design. Elsewhere in the street scene the properties are a mixture of semi-detached and detached dwellings of different designs and ages. Roof heights are uniform along both sides of the street. In this case, the roof height of the proposal would be subservient to the existing roof line by approximately 0.25m and the eaves height would be in line with existing. The front elevation would not project forward of the existing building line and would be in line with the original principal elevation. Although the proposal would reduce the separation distance with the immediate neighbour at no. 32, there would be a separation distance at first floor level of at least 1m as recommended in the BDG.

Furthermore, the immediate neighbour at no. 32 occupies a corner plot and has a two-storey side extension of a similar design. Hence, the proposal would blend with

the established street scene character which already includes extensions which have extended up to the side property boundaries. Therefore, the proposal would comply with the BDG guidance and would be acceptable in terms of its impact on the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would comply with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Application 021887 was refused on 15th January 2003 for a first-floor side extension due to impact on neighbour amenity. However, the previous refusal has limited weight given that applications are now assessed against the Wokingham Borough Development Plan adopted in April 2014, and the Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document June 2012. Furthermore, the current scheme complies in this respect.

Overlooking: There will be no. 1 window in the first-floor side elevation, that will be obscured glazed and non-opening below 1.7m internal floor level and serve the walk-in wardrobe. The rear bedroom window would be set back from the rear conservatory and not directly overlook the rear elevation of no. 32. However, it would have an oblique view of the conservatory glazed roof and would serve the ensuite. Therefore, if the window was conditioned to be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m it would not result in additional overlooking.

Loss of Light: The 45-degree angle test is advocated within the British Research Establishment's (BRE) publication *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice*, to assess impact on daylight and sunlight levels to neighbours potentially impacted upon by adjacent developments. Figure 5 shows the vertical 45-degree angle test is not complied with in relation to the rear conservatory at no. 32. However, Figure 6, shows the horizontal 45-degree test is fully complied with in relation to both the nearest first floor bedroom window and the conservatory. Therefore, the proposal would not cause significant harm to the neighbour amenity. Furthermore, the 45-degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. In this case the neighbouring property would still have access to adequate light.

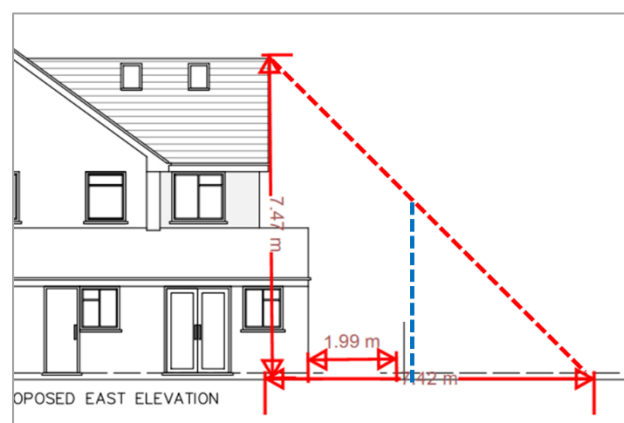


Figure 5 Vertical 45-degree angle test and approximate midpoint of conservatory glazing shown as blue dashed

line

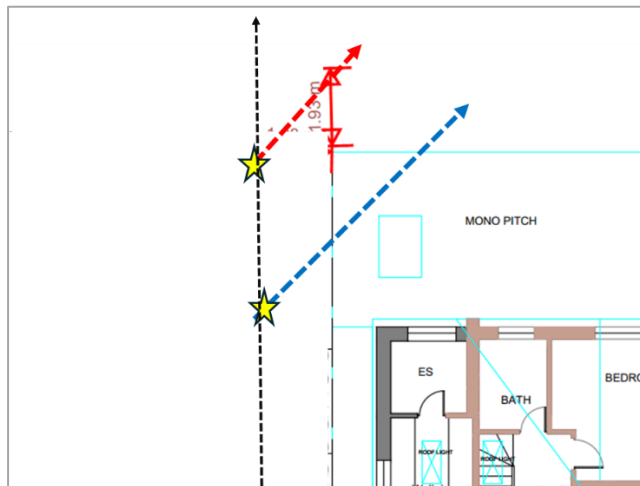


Figure 6 Horizontal 45-degree angle test from midpoint of first floor (blue dashed line) and ground floor (red dashed line window

Overbearing: The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to visual impact and states that the layout and design must have a balanced response to the local context in terms of provision of external space. In this case, the rear first floor extension would not extend beyond the rear wall of the existing dwelling, and the roof line will be subservient to the existing. Although, the hip to gable roof extension will increase the bulk and mass of the dwelling, especially when viewed from the rear, a separation distance from the boundary of 1m will be retained. Furthermore, there are no side windows on the south facing elevation of no. 32 Reading Road.

The increase in visual impact of implementing this proposal and approval 233161 (Figures 7 and 8) is also a consideration on overbearing. When viewed from neighbouring properties, the scale and bulk of the development would be greater than if only the current application were to be implemented. Nevertheless, the separation distance with No. 34 Farriers Close at the rear would be approximately 30m and the tall vegetation along the rear boundary would further restrict views. Also, the neighbours at no. 28 and 32 would not be significantly impacted because the current proposal will not increase the footprint of the dwelling and would be set back from the two-storey element of approval 233161.



Figure 7 Approval 233161 not implemented (Rear

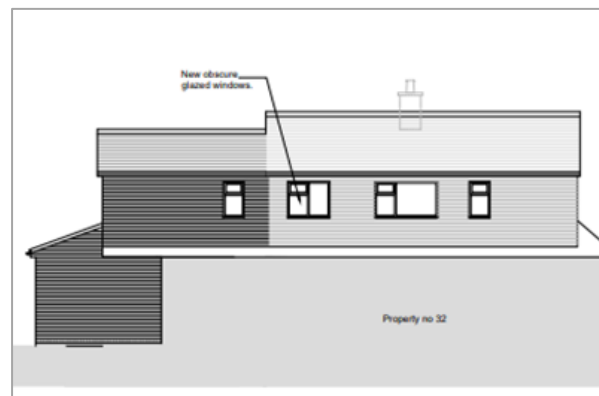


Figure 8 Approval 233161 not implemented (side

elevation)

elevation facing no. 32 Reading Road)

Therefore, the height and bulk of the current proposal will not dominate the neighbouring properties or significantly harm neighbouring occupiers, should both schemes be implemented.

Overall, the impact of the development on the residential amenity would be acceptable in relation to policy CP3 and CP9 of the Core Strategy.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer raises no objection subject to conditions and comments: *“The proposal involves increasing the numbers of habitable rooms from 6 to 7 and demolishing the existing garage. As the existing garage does not fully meet the council’s requirement for car parking, there will be no loss of parking space. Three existing driveway parking spaces will be retained. According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in urban location will require two to three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. The retainment of three driveway parking meets the parking requirements.*

The site has no direct access to the rear garage, and the garage has been removed from the proposal. Alternative cycle storage provision shall be identified when discharging the condition.

Recommended Condition

1. CF9 - CYCLE PARKING (TO BE APPROVED)”

Officer comment: There will be adequate amenity space in the rear garden to provide cycle storage and so it would not be reasonable to insist on the identification of alternative cycle storage as a condition of granting permission for this application.

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:	Yes
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Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	12 September 2025
Earliest date for decision:	17 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	12/09/25