

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261815
Site Address:	109 Reading Road, Finchampstead, RG40 4RD
Expiry Date:	30 September 2026
Site Visit Date:	3 September 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension with porch canopy roof and a two storey side extension following demolition of the existing garage, plus changes to fenestration.	

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 CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
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 CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS5 – Development in the countryside C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources)
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan

PLANNING HISTORY		
Application No.	Description	Decision & Date

	There is no relevant planning history.	
--	--	--

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC CIL – No comments received.

WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One letter of objection received. Concerns relate to overlooking and loss of privacy from the proposed 2x first-floor windows in the southern elevation.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling located on the western side of Reading Road, Finchampstead. The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary within the countryside.

Reading Road is a principal route (A327) connecting Arborfield to the north with Eversley to the south. The surrounding area is characterised by a varied pattern of development, including bungalows, chalet bungalows, semi-detached dwellings and detached houses. The properties display a wide range of architectural styles, scales, forms and ages, resulting in a streetscene with no strong or consistent architectural character.

External materials within the locality vary considerably and commonly include brick, render, tile hanging, timber cladding and pebble-dash finishes.

Proposal:

The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing garage and the erection of a two-storey side extension to the dwelling. The proposal also includes a front entrance hall extension incorporating a porch canopy, internal alterations and associated changes to fenestration.

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 outside of settlement limits where in order to protect the separate identity of the countryside and maintain the quality of the environment proposals must comply with Core Strategy Policy CP11.

The policy states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building. This is followed through in the NPPF (Policy S5(1)(c)).

The other parts of CP11 are not relevant here.

In this instance, the proposed development would not protrude beyond the front and rear building lines of the existing dwelling with much of the two-storey side extension being contained within the footprint of the existing detached garage. Therefore, the proposal would not constitute an excessive expansion of development away from the original building and is acceptable in principle. It is also not disproportionate in size.

Character of the Area:

The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing detached garage and the erection of a two-storey side extension, together with a front entrance hall extension incorporating an open-sided porch canopy. In assessing the proposal, regard has been had to Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which requires development to be of an appropriate scale, mass, built form and character. Further design guidance is provided within the Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) Supplementary Planning Document.

The proposed development would remain proportionate in scale to the host dwelling and would align with the existing ridge line, thereby maintaining the established roof profile of the building. Whilst the two-storey side extension would increase the built form along the northern side elevation at first-floor level, the proposal accords with the guidance contained within the BDG, which states that eaves and/or ridge heights should not be raised unless buildings within the local context are significantly taller. By retaining the existing ridge height, the extension would not appear overly dominant or visually intrusive within the street scene.

The scale and form of the side extension would reflect the existing southern side of the dwelling, which incorporates a pitched crown roof and front and rear dormer windows. The proposed extension would similarly incorporate front and rear pitched dormers, resulting in a more balanced and symmetrical appearance when viewed from the public realm. The proposed porch canopy would comprise an open-sided structure with timber posts and a pitched tiled roof. Its design is considered sympathetic to the architectural features of the dwelling and would sit comfortably alongside the varied architectural styles and porch designs that characterise Reading Road.

The proposed materials, comprising facing brickwork, clay roof tiles and white uPVC fenestration to match the existing dwelling, would ensure that the extension integrates satisfactorily with the host property. In addition, the submitted countryside volume calculations demonstrate that the proposal would increase the overall volume of the

dwelling by approximately 21.7%. This is well within the guidance contained within the BDG, which advises that a volume increase of up to 50% may be acceptable for extensions to dwellings in rural areas when compared with the original building.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would be of an appropriate scale, design and appearance, and would preserve the character of the host dwelling and the wider street scene. The development would therefore comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the design objectives of the Borough Design Guide including Policy S5 of the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

An objection has been raised in respect of two first-floor windows proposed within the south eastern elevation of the dwelling. These windows would serve two en-suite bathrooms created through internal alterations to the existing first-floor accommodation. It is acknowledged that, without mitigation, these openings could give rise to concerns regarding overlooking towards the neighbouring property at no. 107 Reading Road due to the proximity of the adjoining side facing windows. However, a planning condition will be attached requiring both windows to be permanently obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m when measured from the internal floor level. Subject to this condition, the windows would not result in harmful overlooking or any material loss of privacy to the occupants of no. 107 Reading Road.

The proposed two-storey side extension on the northern side of the dwelling would introduce a single additional front-facing dormer window at first-floor level serving a bedroom. The BDG advises that a minimum separation distance of 10m should generally be maintained between front-facing elevations to protect privacy. In this case, the dwellings opposite the site, nos. 106 and 108 Reading Road, are located in excess of 52m from the proposed dormer window. As such, the window would not result in any detrimental overlooking or loss of privacy to the occupants of properties opposite the site.

The extension would also introduce a rear-facing dormer window at first-floor level serving a bedroom. The outlook from this window would be comparable to that already available from the existing rear-facing bedroom windows and would not materially increase opportunities for overlooking. Whilst oblique views of neighbouring gardens already exist from the current first-floor accommodation, the proposal would not result in any significant additional loss of privacy. Furthermore, the rear of the site adjoins open land and commercial premises rather than neighbouring residential properties, and therefore no adverse impact on the amenity of residential occupiers to the rear would arise.

In addition, a first-floor side-facing window is proposed within the northern elevation to serve a dressing room. As this would serve a non-habitable room, where occupants would typically spend only limited periods of time, it is not considered that the window would generate any harmful overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Overall, subject to a condition requiring the two southern en-suite windows to be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m, the proposal would not result in any

unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy or other adverse impact upon neighbouring residential amenity. The development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the guidance contained within the Borough Design Guide.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The principal built form proposed as part of the application is a two-storey side extension following the demolition of the existing garage. In assessing the impact of the proposal on neighbouring residential amenity, regard has been had to the guidance within the BDG, which advises that 'a gap should be retained between the building and the site boundary and this should be a minimum of 1m in width'. Following the removal of the existing garage, which extends to within approximately 0.7m of the northern boundary, the proposed extension would retain a separation distance of approximately 1.3m from the common boundary. The development would also not extend beyond the existing front or rear building lines of the dwelling and would maintain the existing ridge height of approximately 6.5m.

The adjoining property to the north, no. 111 Reading Road, benefits from a south-west facing rear garden, as does the application property. The closest built form on this neighbouring plot is a double garage positioned adjacent to the shared boundary. Whilst the proposed two-storey side extension would inevitably result in some additional overshadowing when compared to the existing single-storey garage structure, any increase would be limited and would primarily affect the neighbouring garage rather than the main residential accommodation. Furthermore, the flank wall of the neighbouring dwellinghouse is situated approximately 8.4m from the proposed northern elevation of the extension. Given this substantial separation distance, together with the orientation of the respective properties, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any materially harmful loss of light or unacceptable overbearing impact to the occupants of no. 111 Reading Road.

It is also noted that the proposed extension would maintain the existing ridge height of the host dwelling, which remains lower than the ridge height of no. 111 Reading Road. Retaining the established roofline helps to ensure that the extension remains subordinate to the host dwelling and mitigates any perceived sense of enclosure for the neighbouring occupiers. The scale, siting and design of the extension are therefore such that it would not appear unduly dominant when viewed from the neighbouring property.

Regarding the southern neighbouring property, no. 107 Reading Road, the proposal does not involve any extensions to that side of the dwelling, with works in this area limited to internal alterations and changes to fenestration. Consequently, there would be no additional built form that could give rise to any loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing impact upon the occupants of no. 107 Reading Road.

Overall, the proposal is not considered to result in any unacceptable loss of light, nor would it create an undue sense of enclosure for neighbouring occupiers. The porch extension is acceptable. The development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the residential amenity objectives of the Borough Design Guide and the NPPF.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would increase the total number of habitable rooms and would remove a garage from the site. However, the host dwelling benefits from a substantial front driveway that would remain largely unaltered by the proposed development. There is existing onsite parking for four vehicles would be maintained and is considered acceptable to serve the proposed development.

Ecology:

The application site is in an area suitable for bat roosts. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried out by Urban Tree Experts (April 2026) which concluded that no bats or evidence of bats were recorded during the survey. However, the ecologist noted that there are raised/slipped roof tiles which provide crevice like features suitable for bats to roost, and the presence or absence of bats could not be determined without further survey effort. Subsequently, a further dusk emergence survey was submitted by Urban Tree Experts (June 2026). The survey concluded that bats are not roosting at the property and the property has negligible potential to support roosting bats, therefore, a European Protected Species Licence is not required.

Conclusion:

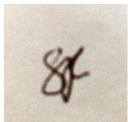
For the reasons set out above and subject to conditions, the proposed development is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

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 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	24 September 2026
Earliest date for decision:	27 August 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	28.9.26

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Outside Settlement Limits – Countryside

Grenn Route

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

Barkham and Arborfield Ward

Finchampstead Parish