

PLANNING REF : 252691
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Stowe House
: Fleet Hill, Finchampstead
: RG404LJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Robin Hay
DATE SUBMITTED : 14/12/2025

COMMENTS:

To: Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
Subject: Objection to Planning Application 252691 - Proposed
Redevelopment of Moyle House, Fleet Hill, Finchampstead RG40 4LJ

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to formally object to the proposed planning application 252691 for the redevelopment of Moyle House, Fleet Hill, Finchampstead RG40 4LJ. We reside at Stowe House, located adjacent to the proposed development, and we have several concerns regarding the impact this proposal will have on our property, specifically in terms of its size, proximity to our boundary, and the loss of natural light.

Loss of Light and Overshadowing

The proposed two-storey side extension extends 2.75 metres beyond the existing building line, pushing closer to the boundary with Stowe House. Additionally, instead of the current sloping design of the first-floor element, the new extension introduces a fully vertical structure. This combined effect represents a considerable encroachment that would fundamentally alter the spatial relationship between the two properties. The existing structure on this elevation features a roof profile set back from the building line, which currently maintains an adequate separation distance and minimises any impact on our property. The proposed development would replace this modest arrangement with a full two-storey extension positioned significantly closer to our boundary, effectively advancing the building line approximately 6 metres towards Stowe House when the combined effect of the projection and roof redesign is considered. This advancement would have a particularly severe impact on the principal bedroom window at Stowe House, which is located on the western elevation facing Moyle House. The bedroom currently benefits from unobstructed daylight throughout the afternoon hours, which is essential to maintaining acceptable living conditions within the property. When we purchased Stowe House, they were obliged to reduce the height of several mature trees along this eastern boundary precisely because the previous vegetation had created excessive shade that resulted in poor natural lighting and consequent damp problems within the dwelling. The proposed two-storey extension, with its increased height and mass positioned substantially closer to our boundary, would recreate these conditions by intercepting daylight that currently reaches the bedroom window. The harm would be compounded by the orientation and timing of the sun's path. Given that daylight enters this west-facing window primarily during afternoon hours, the proposed extension would cast shadows across the window opening during the critical period when natural light is available. This would materially reduce the quantum of daylight received and would significantly affect the quality of

the residential environment within this principal room. The reduction in natural light would not only diminish the amenity value of the bedroom but would also raise concerns about the return of damp conditions that were previously remediated through careful management of the property's immediate surroundings. It is relevant to note that the existing structure causes minimal overshadowing impact due to its modest height profile. The proposed development would wholly alter this relationship through both the increased height of the extension and its substantial advancement towards the shared boundary, creating a form of development that would be materially more harmful to the amenity of the neighbouring property. The development is therefore contrary to Policy CP3 - General Principles for Development (Core Strategy 2010) which provides guidance on how developments should be designed to avoid significant adverse effects on neighbouring properties, including the protection of residential amenity such as light and privacy. Specifically, developments should not create overbearing or intrusive impacts on the surrounding properties, including the loss of light or overshadowing.

Loss of Privacy and Overlooking

The submitted plans indicate the introduction of first-floor windows in the side elevation of the proposed two-storey extension, positioned directly facing Stowe House. These windows would be located at a significantly closer proximity to our property boundary than the existing fenestration. The introduction of two habitable room windows at first-floor level positioned in effect 6 metres closer to our boundary would create direct and intrusive views into the private amenity areas and principal rooms of Stowe House. The proposed fenestration arrangement fails to respect the established pattern of development in this location, where existing properties have been designed to maintain privacy between neighbouring dwellings through careful window placement and appropriate separation distances. The first-floor windows would afford direct views towards the elevation and private garden areas of Stowe House, fundamentally altering the degree of privacy we currently enjoy. This represents an unacceptable erosion of residential amenity that would affect both the internal living spaces and the external amenity areas of the property.

It is further noted that the application proposes the conversion of the existing garage to habitable accommodation. The submitted drawings appear to show fenestration in the side elevation of this converted structure, which would similarly create overlooking opportunities towards Stowe House. The cumulative effect of windows at both

ground-floor level (from the garage conversion) and first-floor level (from the two-storey extension) would intensify the loss of privacy and create an oppressive sense of being overlooked from multiple aspects of the proposed development.

The development is therefore contrary to Policy CP1 - Sustainable Development (Core Strategy 2010). This overarching policy encourages development that is sustainable and does not harm the quality of life for existing residents. It includes provisions for developments that respect the privacy, light, and amenity of neighbouring properties. Scale, Massing and Visual Impact

The proposed development represents an approximate 60% increase in the built footprint of Moyle House, which has already been subject to previous extensions. The cumulative impact of successive enlargements, culminating in this substantial proposal, would result in a dwelling of excessive scale that is disproportionate to its plot and out of character with the established pattern of development in the surrounding area. The two-storey side extension, two-storey rear extension, raised roof height, and first-floor front extension, when considered cumulatively, would create a bulky and imposing form of development that would adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed development fails to maintain an appropriate subservience to the original dwelling and does not respect the established building line, thereby undermining the coherence of the area and the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

The proposed two-storey extension at Moyle House is contrary to several key policies related to scale, massing, and visual impact. Policy CP3 and Policy CP1 require that new developments respect the form, scale, and massing of surrounding buildings, ensuring they do not harm the character or amenity of the area. The extension's substantial increase in size and its proximity to the boundary would visually dominate neighbouring properties and disrupt the existing character of the area. Policy CC02 and Policy TB21 further emphasize the importance of maintaining a sensitive relationship between built development and the surrounding landscape, and the Borough Design Guide SPD stresses that developments should be in keeping with the local context. Therefore, the proposed extension fails to meet these design principles, resulting in an overbearing and visually intrusive structure that negatively impacts the character of the neighbourhood.

Suggested Amendment

In the event that the Council is minded to grant planning permission for a two-storey extension in this location, we would request that any consent be subject to a modification requiring the extension to be constructed on the original building line, rather than projecting

2.75 metres towards Stowe House, and that no windows be inserted in the side elevation facing our property. This amendment would address the most harmful elements of the proposal by maintaining the existing spatial relationship between the properties and eliminating direct overlooking opportunities, whilst still allowing the applicant to

achieve a meaningful increase in the internal floor area of the dwelling.

Constructing the extension on the original building line would preserve the current separation distance and would significantly reduce the overshadowing impact on the east-facing bedroom window at Stowe House. The omission of side-facing windows would ensure that privacy is maintained and would prevent the creation of direct views into our property. These modifications would result in a more sympathetic form of development that balances the applicant's aspirations with the legitimate expectation of neighbouring occupiers to enjoy their property without undue interference.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that planning permission be refused for this application in its current form. The proposed development would cause demonstrable and material harm to the residential amenity of Stowe House through loss of light, increased overshadowing, direct overlooking from first-floor

windows, and an overbearing visual impact arising from the excessive scale and proximity of the two-storey side extension. The development represents an overdevelopment of the site that is out of keeping with the established character of the area and fails to respect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Should the Council nonetheless be minded to approve the application, I would ask that serious consideration be given to the suggested amendments outlined above, which would substantially mitigate the harm to neighbouring amenity whilst still permitting development at the site.