

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250150
Site Address:	3 Fawcett Crescent, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 3HX
Expiry Date:	8 July 2025
Site Visit Date:	03/02/2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed two storey front, side and rear extension, plus changes to fenestration and the conversion of the roof into habitable living accommodation.	

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 CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
122300	Erection of a wooden shed measuring 7.34 metres by 5.427 metres with a maximum height of 2.94 metres in rear garden (retrospective).	Approved, 14/04/2012

131141	Proposed erection of a single storey front/side & rear extensions to dwelling.	Approved, 11/09/2013
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objections.
WBC Landscape and Trees – Objects to the proposed development.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Woodley Town Council – Note a concern that a two-storey extension projecting forward of the front elevation is out of character with the street scene.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, semi-detached property located in an established residential area. The surrounding area is characterised by detached and semi-detached properties that are similar in design and appearance.

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:

Wokingham Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that maintain and enhance the high quality of the environment.

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy emphasises 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.

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states 'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.'

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that development, which is not well-designed should be refused, particularly where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design. This includes consideration of any relevant local design guidance and supplementary planning documents, such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to development that aligns with local design policies and government guidance, including any applicable local design guidance and supplementary planning documents.

Footnote 54 of the NPPF specifically references the National Design Guide as an important resource in assessing the quality of design

National Design Guide

Section 11, paragraph 68 of the National Design Guide states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Paragraph 69 expands on this, highlighting that houses and streets should establish an appropriate relationship with the pattern, sizes and proportions of existing houses in the local area.

Borough Design Guide SPD

Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (BDG SPD) states that any alteration and extension to an existing building should be well-designed, respond positively to the original building, contribute positively to the local character and street scene, and relate well to the neighbouring properties.

Appraisal:

Fawcett Crescent is an established residential street predominantly composed of two-storey, semi-detached dwellings set in discernible groupings which are distinguished

by repeated house type. Although two small groups of bungalows are interspersed along the road, they do not disrupt the overall architectural cohesion, as they generally respect the prevailing scale, form and spacing. Each pair of semi-detached dwellings is characterised by large side gaps that create a regular rhythm and pattern along the street, which positively contributes to the area's local distinctiveness.

While extensions and alterations are present, they have typically been modest and subordinate in scale, designed to complement the existing buildings, thereby preserving the visual integrity of both individual properties and the wider streetscape. For example, side extensions further along the western edge this road are generally set back from the front elevation and down from the main ridgeline resulting in subservient features that do not alter the form or proportions of the main section of the building.

Regarding two-storey side extensions, section 4 of the BDG SPD advises that a minimum gap of 1 metre should be maintained between the building and the site boundary. For front extensions, the guidance states that these should generally be limited to a single storey in height and should not project beyond the established building line. This proposal conflicts with both these requirements.

The proposed part first-floor, part two-storey front/side extension does not comply with the Borough Design Guide, as the side section would be constructed hard up against the western site boundary, contrary to the recommended 1 metre separation distance. This along with the front projecting gable would make the development appear overly large, dominant and cramped within the plot, unbalancing the pair of semidetached properties as a whole.

The two-storey front extension would project beyond the building line and introduce a front-facing gable approximately 4.7 metres wide—more than double the width of the original front façade of the host dwelling. This excessive width, combined with its forward projection, prevents the extension from appearing as a subordinate addition. Instead, it would read as an unduly dominant and visually assertive feature, inconsistent with the character and appearance of both the host property and the pair of semi-detached dwellings.

The Borough Design Guide explicitly states at page 57 that *'side extensions to formal pairs of semi-detached dwellings should be set back from the building line, with a similar roof form and a lower ridge height.'* The proposal fails to meet this guidance and instead creates a visually dominant extension that will unbalance the pair of semidetached dwellings as a whole.

There are several other design features that exacerbate and contribute to the development failing to relate sympathetically to the pair of semi-detached properties as a whole. The gable roof design of the side extension and front extension would not match the hipped roof form of the adjoining property. This is contrary to page 55 of the Borough Design Guide which states *'the roof form of the extension should take its form from the main building.'*

The gable feature would also appear very close to the existing bay window, contributing to the cramped appearance of the extension and creating an awkward

and inaccessibly space between these features. The gable feature would significantly disrupt the architectural rhythm established by the symmetrical bay windows on the front elevation. These bay windows currently offer a modest and well-proportioned focal point, contributing to a balanced and coherent façade. In contrast, the front gable—due to its considerable massing and height—would draw undue visual attention and overshadow the more refined scale of the bay features.

The integral garage within the two-storey extension would also create another feature that contributes to the overall asymmetrical appearance of the extension, contrary to the design and character of the existing pair of dwellings.

In this regard, the proposed extension fails to respect the scale, form, and composition of the original dwelling and appears incongruous within a streetscape where similar front and side extensions have generally remained proportionate and sensitive to the prevailing character. While it is acknowledged that a front-facing gable exists at No. 21 Roslyn Road, that example is clearly more modest in both width and projection, and as such, integrates acceptably with the host dwelling and does not set a precedent for the scale of development now proposed.

In conclusion, by virtue of its excessive width, forward projection, and unsympathetic design, the proposed two storey front, side and rear extension would fails to respect the existing character and appearance of the dwelling and would unacceptably unbalance the symmetrical appearance of the semi-detached pair, which forms part of the established rhythm and coherence of the street. As a result, the extension would appear as a discordant and overly dominant addition, at odds with the prevailing character of Fawcett Crescent, and is therefore contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide, Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Section B1 of the National Design Guide.

The scheme also includes that addition of 4.no roof lights to the front and rear roof slope of the property to facilitate habitable accommodation. These roof lights would be of appropriate design and scale and would not appear as incongruous features in their residential setting. As a result, the new roof lights would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The new windows on the front elevation would overlook the front driveway and public realm. As these windows would maintain over 15 metres separation from properties across the street any overlooking concerns are minimal.

The views offered from the fenestration proposed on the rear elevation would be similar to that shared from the existing arrangement and would be positioned over 26 metres away from the primary function rooms of neighbouring dwellings to the rear of the host property. As such, any overlooking or loss of privacy concerns are minimal.

The new first-floor side window would be positioned adjacent to an existing first-floor side window at No. 5. However, as this neighbouring window serves a non-habitable

room, it is recommended that the proposed window be obscure glazed to mitigate any overlooking or privacy concerns. A suitable condition will be attached to any approval to ensure this mitigation is implemented.

Loss of Light:

It is acknowledged that the proposed extension would result in reduced sunlight and daylight to the neighbouring first-floor side window at No. 5. However, as the extension would be set approximately 3 metres away, the window would still receive appropriate levels of natural light, comparable to the existing situation during certain times of the day. Furthermore, as this neighbouring window serves a non-habitable area (a landing), any loss of light would not substantiate a reason for refusal.

With respect to the neighbour at no.1, the proposed development would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of loss of light.

Overbearing and Sense of enclosure:

The rear patio area at the neighbouring property, No. 5, extends around the rear and east side boundary in an L-shape. Given this layout, the proposed two-storey extension, positioned hard up against the boundary of No. 5, would introduce a slight sense of enclosure, creating a tunnelling effect that would impact a portion of the patio area. However, the majority of the rear patio, which extends along the rear elevation of No. 5, would remain sufficiently set away from the proposed extension, ensuring it is not significantly affected by any overbearing or overshadowing impacts. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers in terms of overbearing or overshadowing concerns.

With respect to the adjoining neighbouring property at No. 1, the proposed development would be sufficiently set away from its amenity areas, ensuring that it does not result in any adverse impacts.

Highways:

The Council's Highways Officer has reviewed this application and considers that the two off-street parking spaces would be sufficient for a dwelling of this size, and in accordance with the council's Parking Standards. As such, there are no highways issues.

Trees and Landscape:

The site lies within the area covered by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 3/1951, W3, which applies to woodland trees regardless of age. The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed the application and confirms that, according to the submitted application form, no trees or hedgerows are proposed to be removed or pruned to facilitate the development. On this basis, no arboricultural or landscape objections are raised. Nonetheless, the Trees and Landscape Officer raises an objection to the proposed extension on the basis that it would have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

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:	Refusal
Date:	7 July 2025
Earliest date for decision:	29 May 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	MC
Date:	08.07.2025