

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260544
Site Address:	11 Skelmerdale Way, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7YB
Expiry Date:	30 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	20 March 2026
Proposal: Householder application for proposed erection of first floor side extension, single storey rear extension and garage conversion.	

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
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
191768	Householder Application for the proposed part single, part two storey side/rear extension, proposed single storey portico to rear and internal alterations to existing dwelling.	Approved 17/10/19

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

None consulted

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Early Town Council raises no objection to this application subject to WBC imposing the following condition that the ground floor element of the extension, with the separate access, shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation for fee paying occupants without prior
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	approval of WBC, to ensure adequate parking is provided at all times, and to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties, as defined by Policies CP3 and CC07.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: A two-storey detached dwelling with attached pitched roof garage to the side fronting onto Skelmerdale Way, located on a street with similar designed dwellings.

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: The garage will be converted into a store, shower room and utility. The garage door will be retained, thus no change externally and thus no harm.

The single storey rear extension depth would be approx. 2.35m, which does not exceed the recommended 4m depth advocated within the Borough Design Guide. Furthermore, being located at the rear it wouldn't be visible from public locations. Hence, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

The BDG states "*side extensions should be set back from the building line by at least 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary*". The first-floor side extension would be set back from the building line by approx. 0.60, with a lower roof line and approx. 1.15m from the plot boundary, thus not fully compliant with the BDG. Although, it does not fully comply with the guidelines set out in the BDG, a number of dwellings along Skelmerdale Way have benefited from first floor side extensions with varying degrees of setback distances from the front elevation and set downs from the main ridge height (see examples below). Given that this style of dwelling is more suited to a minimal set back and in some cases a seamless ridge height, of which there are several examples along the street, on balance, the design is not considered to cause significant harm to the character of the street scene.

Even with the lesser set back, lower roof line and greater than 1m from the side

boundary, the extension would still be considered a subservient addition to the main dwelling and an unimposing feature which would not harm the character of the area. The proposed side extension would be a complimentary design to the host dwelling and would not be an incongruent or dominant feature to the host dwelling. Furthermore, as stated in the section 23 of BDG *“the roof form of the extension should take it’s form from the main building”*. The side extension would keep and mirror the same roof form of the main building, thus complying with the BDG. Given the approx. 2.42m flank to flank separation distance from no.15, the proposal would not result in terracing effect with a view between the dwellings still present. Such relationship is common along the street for example between no.7 & no.9.

As mentioned in paragraph 3, there are other similar examples within close proximity along the same side of the road including no.7 (left) and no.25 (right), thus taking design inspiration and such would not look out of place nor harm the street scene.



Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The ground floor sides window as part of the garage conversion would be screened by the existing fence, thus no overlooking concerns to no.15.

As part of the first-floor side extension, a window to the front and rear would be added. Given the site’s location, the first-floor window to the front would overlook onto cul-da-sac and driveways of Freshfield Close as well as serving as an en-suite (non-habitable room), thus no overlooking concerns.

The rear ground floor openings will be screened by the existing fencing, thus no overlooking concerns.

With regards to the first-floor rear bedroom 3 window, most rear gardens are overlooked at an oblique angle from the upper floor windows in the neighbouring property. This is no different with the new window as part of the first-floor rear extension and its oblique angle/view of neighbouring garden. Thus, the rear windows would not cause any significant harm with regards to neighbouring amenities and the relationship with the neighbouring house would be orthodox for dwellings in a suburban area.

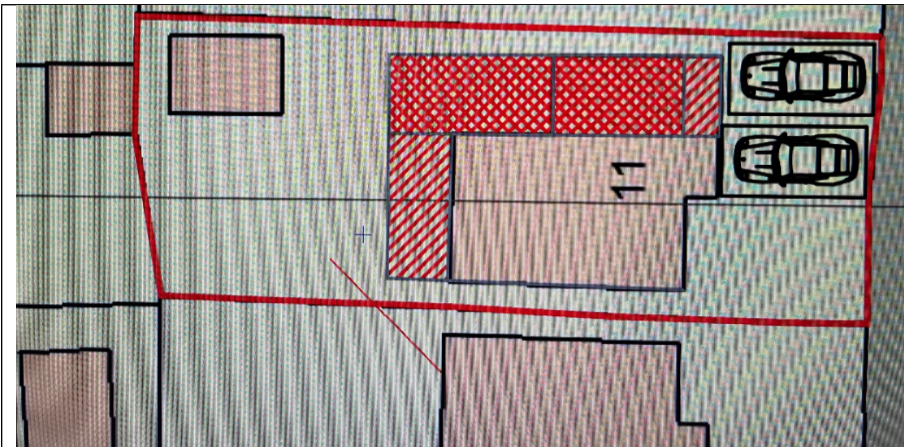
The minimum back-to-back separation distance is 26m as set out in the BDG. The back-to-back separation distance between 11 Skelmerdale Way and 20 Wheelton

Close is approx. 20.90m, thus not compliant with the BDG. Whilst short, such is considered minimal and would not result in harmful overlooking given the main dwelling also does not comply with the 26m separation distance as this urban setting of Earley allows for a tighter, more compact layout with character and context relevant to the approach in any specific case. Furthermore, such type of overlooking is common within urban residential plots. Along the rear boundary, there is mature/established vegetation of significant height which would act as natural screening limiting its impact. Also, it's important to note no neighbour objections have been raised.



The separation distance from the rear extension to 19 Wheelton Close would be approx. 9m, however given it would overlook onto the front driveway which would be screened by the vegetation shown above, thus no overlooking concerns. The angled relationship between the two properties, the oblique angle from the upper floor windows and approx. 13m separation distance from window to window would not result in harmful overlooking to the first floor windows of 19 Wheelton Close.

Loss of Light: As shown on plan SW-04 and figure below, at both ground floor and first floor level, the proposal when assessed against BRE Guidelines will not infringe the 45-degree line when taken from the mid-point of the nearest windows of no.15 and no.9 and as such there is not a technical loss of light to these habitable room windows.



The side openings for no.15 are obscured glazed door at ground floor level and non-habitable window at first floor level, thus no loss of light concern.

Overbearing: The Borough Design Guide has a recommendation that a minimum 1 metre separation gap should be retained between the flank of a property and the site boundary, in order to limit a sense of enclosure. The separation distance between the flank wall and boundary of no.15 is approx. 1.15m, thus complying with the BDG and not considered to be overbearing.

The separation distance between no.11 and no.9 is less than 1m. However, it is noted the existing dwelling would be the same separation distance as the rear extension. As such, an extension that does the same would not result in harm despite not being completely in accordance with the Borough Design Guide.

The overall scale and massing of the extension is proportionate to the host property and consistent with typical residential extensions in the surrounding area. It does not introduce an excessive height, depth, or bulk that would dominate neighbouring outlooks. The proposal would not appear physically overbearing or oppressive to neighbours such that it would be significantly detrimental to their amenities.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal includes converting the garage, losing a parking space. The dwelling would have 3 bedrooms. WBC's adopted parking standards after development states for a 3 or less bedroom dwelling, 2 parking spaces are needed. Plan SW-01 shows, 2 parking spaces on the front driveway. Therefore, the proposal would comply with parking standards.

Amenity Space: The proposal reduces the amount of amenity space available to the property, but it would still be roughly rectangular in shape, receive sunlight for part of the day and be able to accommodate typical garden activities for the size of property as set out in the Borough Design Guide. Therefore, the reduction in amenity space is not considered to have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

Other Matters:

The Town Council has suggested a condition to prevent the ground floor element of the proposal from being used as a separate unit of accommodation; however, officers consider that this would not meet the tests for planning conditions set out at

paragraph 58 of the NPPF. The application is for domestic extensions, including an external door serving a utility room, and does not propose or facilitate the creation of a separate planning unit. Any future use of part of the dwelling as independent or fee-paying accommodation would, if it constituted a material change of use, require planning permission in its own right. The suggested condition is therefore unnecessary, seeks to control a hypothetical use not arising from the development proposed, is imprecise and unenforceable, and would place an unreasonable restriction on the lawful use of the dwellinghouse.

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:	29 April 2026
Earliest date for decision:	26 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	29 April 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Insert where relevant