

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252103
Site Address:	32 Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7JN
Expiry Date:	4 December 2025
Site Visit Date:	24 November 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single, part two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension, conversion of loft to habitable space with rear dormer, addition of 6 no. rooflights following demolition of existing detached garage, single-storey side extensions and rear extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Habitat suitable for bat roosting
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location – Earley

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
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
243096	Pre-application advice for the proposed erection of a part single part two storey side extension and a single storey rear extension following demolition of the existing detached garage,	Replied 15 th January 2025

	single storey side extensions and rear extension, plus the addition of rooflights and a rear dormer to facilitate conversion of the loft to habitable space.	
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – Requested Further Information
WBC Ecology – No Objection Subject to Conditions

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	ETC raises no objection to this application. However, ETC request that a note be attached to any approval stating that an approval does not grant any rights to extend over the title boundary, such as with roof drainage. Also, highlighting the potential need for a Party Wall Notice. <i>Officer comment: The plans indicate that the development would be within the residential curtilage of no. 32 Sutcliffe Avenue. However, should the application be approved, an Informative will be added to the Decision notice advising of the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	<u>Comment 1</u> • The roof drainage at the boundary with No. 34 seems to overhang, but the neighbouring owner has not been notified. • The applicant may need to issue a Party Wall Notice for this boundary. • The scale bar on the Block Plan may be incorrect and does not match A3 print scaling. • On the “Proposed West Elevation,” the dormer note states a minimum 200mm setback from the eaves, but the drawing shows about 800mm. The applicant should either remove the 200mm note or adjust the drawing to match it to avoid confusion about the dormer’s final appearance. <i>Officer comment: The plans do not indicate an overhang encroachment with no. 34. However, should the application be approved, an Informative will be added to the Decision notice advising of the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. Updated plans were submitted by the applicant to include a scale bar. Furthermore, measurements indicate that the dormer would be set back approximately 0.6m from the eaves and the</i>

	<i>annotations states “at least” 200m. Therefore, the revised plans appear accurate.</i> <u>Comment 2</u> The chimney stack removal, building into the loft space, and altering the roof may affect the shared party wall between the two properties. Given the age of the properties (nearly 100 years), a Party Wall Agreement, as required by the Party Wall Act 1996, must be in place before work begins. Currently, no such agreement has been received. <i>Officer comment: Should the application be approved, an Informative will be added to the Decision notice advising of the need for compliance with the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.</i>
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APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The site is an older style semi-detached house on a residential road in Earley. The property is located directly opposite St Nicholas Church, and the street scene is a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings of a similar age and design. The property benefits from a large front garden and driveway enclosed by a low brick wall. It also has a large enclosed rear garden.

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 a part single, part two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension, conversion of loft to habitable space with rear dormer, addition of 6 no. rooflights following demolition of existing detached garage, single-storey side extensions and rear extension.

The overall depth of the part two storey, part single storey side extension would be approximately 13m from front to back. The two-storey side extension would measure approximately 6.7m from front to back. On the ground floor it would facilitate a WC, entrance hall and stairs. On the first floor it would facilitate a landing, staircase bathroom and ensuite. There would be no side windows facing no. 34 Sutcliffe Avenue.

The single storey rear extension would facilitate a kitchen/dining room. It would have a gable roof, the maximum height to the top of the ridge would be approximately 3.7m, the separation distance with no. 30 Sutcliffe would be approximately 0.2m and with no. 30 approximately 1m. It would measure approximately 7m in width, 6m in depth, and it would extend beyond the rear wall of no. 30 Sutcliffe Avenue by approximately 3m. There would be bifold doors to the rear garden, 4 no. rooflights and no side windows.

The loft conversion would facilitate a master bedroom and ensuite with 2 no. roof lights on the front facing roof slope. It would also have a rear dormer extension that would have a gable roof and 2 no. windows. It would measure approximately 6m in width, 3.5m in depth and 2.6m in height to the top of the pitch. It would be set back from the main roof by approximately 0.6m, set in by approximately 0.4m and the maximum height would be in line with the existing roof.

Procedural Matters:

A Revised Proposed Parking Plan and Proposed Floor and Elevations Plans were received by the Council on 3rd December 2025, and after the consultation date had ended. However, the revised proposed floor and elevations plans showed the addition of a scale bar and the proposed parking plan showed a minor amendment to illustrate vehicle manoeuvrability in and out of the site. Therefore, the amendment was not considered to have a significant impact on neighbour amenity to warrant extending the consultation period.

Character of the Area:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high-quality design. R1 and RD1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area and R11 requires a coherent street character, including in terms of scale, rhythm, proportion and height.

The street scene is a residential road with semidetached or detached dwellings set well back from the road and of varying designs. There are no other similar two storey side extensions in the immediate street scene.

The principal elevation of the application site is approximately 16m from the boundary with the highway. The separation distance of the two-storey side extension with the boundary would be at least 1m. The front porch would be in line with the principal elevation, and the first floor would be set back by approximately 0.7m which is slightly less than what is recommended in the Borough Design Guide (BDG). Also, the proposed roof height would be approximately 7.9m and in line with existing rather than set down. Nevertheless, although the proposal would not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide (BDG) it would not be overly prominent when viewed from the public realm, given that it would not be forward of the existing building line and the separation distance with the side boundary of no.34 Sutcliffe Avenue would be 1m. Furthermore, due to the width of the existing front elevation being approximately 4.3m, the proposal would not alter the frontage so that it appeared dominant compared to other semidetached properties in the street. Also, the rhythm of

frontages along the street is already varied due to the different building types and designs. Therefore, the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the impact of the development on the character of the local area would be acceptable in relation to policy 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.

Overlooking: The BDG requires the retention of reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms and notes that the side walls must not contain windows, especially at first floor level. The proposed west facing elevation of the side extension, and the side walls of the rear single storey extension would not have windows. The second-floor rear dormer windows would create an elevated oblique outlook of the rear gardens at no 30 and 34 Sutcliffe Avenue but would not overlook habitable rooms. Furthermore, the back to flank separation distance with 3 Roman Way Earley is approximately 40m. Therefore, were the application to be approved, the proposal would not cause significant loss of privacy to neighbour amenity.

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. In relation to the nearest habitable room at no. 30 Sutcliffe Avenue, the single storey rear extension would be located approximately 5m from the nearest habitable room; the dormer extension would be set back from the rear wall; and windows on the side elevation can only be afforded limited protection given that they effectively 'borrow' their outlook and daylight from across the application site. Therefore, there would be no significant loss of light to no. 30 Sutcliffe Avenue.

In relation to no. 30 Sutcliffe Avenue, the dormer extension would be set back from the rear south facing wall, and the nearest bedroom window would continue to receive sunlight. Figure 1 shows that the vertical 45-degree angle test is complied with in relation to the kitchen window.

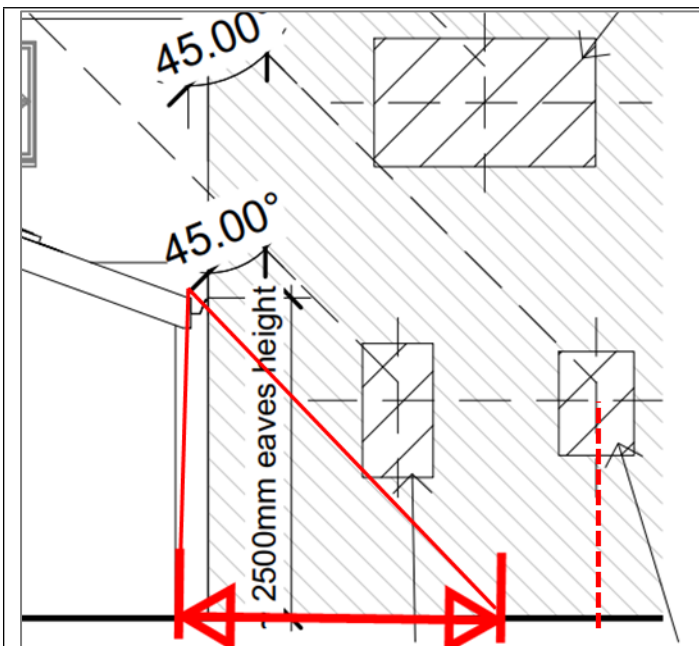


Figure 1 Vertical 45-degree angle test in relation to the kitchen window at no. 30 Sutcliffe Avenue

Therefore, there would be no significant loss of light because of the proposal.

Overbearing: The 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, although the two-storey side extension will have more visual impact when compared to the scale and bulk of the existing dwelling, it will blend with other wider street frontages. The rear single storey extension would extend 3m beyond the existing rear wall and the eaves height would be approximately 2.5m a that is set within a large rear garden and so maybe acceptable. The proposed rear dormer extension would have a pitch roof; it would not project above the existing ridge line and would be set back from the existing eaves. Therefore, the proposal would not cause significant harm to visual amenity given that neighbouring properties have spacious front and rear gardens.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Highways Officer raises no objection subject to an acceptable parking plan being submitted and has commented: *"It was acknowledged by the applicant that the proposed works will not affect the existing access to the dwelling. However, the car parking provision outlined in the 'Proposed Parking Plan LV_016' shows a vehicle reversing through an existing wall (as shown on Google Maps). Although the front garden area is sufficient in size to facilitate two parking spaces, the drawing is unclear on both access route and the hardstanding provision for two parking spaces. An updated plan that clearly demonstrates the access proposals and vehicle routeing within the existing drop kerbs and boundary wall is welcomed by the LHA. The WBC parking standards state the requirement for an additional unallocated parking space. It is acknowledged that there is sufficient on street parking facilities adjacent to the dwelling. The proposed car parking provision is acceptable. The removal of the existing garage requires the retention of cycle storage space. The proposed works provides direct access to the rear garden and storage shed located at the southern end of the rear garden. The cycle storage provision is acceptable."*

Officer comment: The applicant has submitted an updated plan that demonstrates the access proposals and vehicle routeing within the existing drop kerbs and boundary wall.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer raises no objection subject to conditions. The property and surrounding area provide high-quality bat foraging habitat. Evidence of historic bat use has been found, and potential access points include gaps behind the uPVC fascia and at the gable apex, with lifted roof tiles and ridge tiles offering further roosting potential. The property is assessed as having moderate suitability for bats. Two emergence surveys (10 June and 1 July 2025) recorded no bats emerging from the property. However, noctule bats were observed foraging shortly after sunset, and soprano and common pipistrelle were active around the house. Linked gardens and tree lines provide continuous flight paths and high-quality foraging habitat. The proposed development will impact features associated with the historic roost. Survey effort and methodology are considered adequate. Subject to conditions securing the precautionary method statement, additional roosting provision, and bat-sensitive lighting, there are no ecological objections to the development.

Recommended Conditions:

1. Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the Precautionary Working Method Statement given in Section 6.3 of the submitted Bat Emergence Survey (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2833_BES_a).

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

2. Prior to the commencement of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include bird boxes, bat boxes/bricks and/or access tiles integrated into the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved. Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be issued to the council.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments and ensure that protected and priority species are maintained and not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: The NPPF paragraph 187, Local Plan Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery policy TB23.

3. At no time shall external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	03 December 2025
Earliest date for decision:	31 October 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	03/12/25