

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260089
Site Address:	10 South Close, Wokingham, RG40 2DJ
Expiry Date:	16 March 2026
Site Visit Date:	29 January 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey front extension, front porch, part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation with changes to fenestration, two storey side extension and loft conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation including installation of roof lights and rear dormers.	

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 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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250761	Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey front extension with works to the existing roof, along with a front porch. Followed by a part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation and changes to fenestration.	Approve 18 June 2025
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC CIL- The proposed development will be liable for CIL based on the measurements of the floorplans.

WBC Ecology- No objection.

External- N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	1 letter received raising the following objections: Overlooking: • Rear of 10 South Close faces directly towards Rowans across Gipsy Lane. Front garden at Rowans is only about 4 metres deep. • Distance between the properties is estimated to be just over 20 metres. • Existing rear bedroom windows at 10 South Close already overlook Rowans. Occupants can likely see into upper rooms and part of the side garden at Rowans. • There is mutual overlooking between the two properties. • Proposed rear dormer windows would add more windows facing Rowans. This would worsen the overlooking and privacy concerns. <i>(Officer Note: Addressed in Neighbouring Amenities section within the report.</i> Overbearing: • Proposal would create an overbearing impact from 10 South Close onto Gipsy Lane. • Existing property is already significantly taller than Nos. 2, 4, 6 and 8 South Close (originally bungalows, some with roof extensions). Adjacent properties on Gipsy Lane are relatively low in height (effectively single storey).

	• Replacement of the current hip roof with gable ends would increase the building's bulk and massing. • Rear of the property is partially screened by conifer trees, providing limited mitigation. Conifers are in poor condition and may be removed in future. Removal of trees would increase visual prominence and overlooking towards Rowans. Loss of screening would intensify the overbearing impact on Gipsy Lane. • New trees should be planted before any removal of existing conifers. Additional planting would improve the southern boundary's appearance and overall outlook. <i>(Officer Note: Addressed in Neighbouring Amenities section within the report.</i> Conservation and Heritage Issues: • Gipsy Lane has historic significance, formerly used by drovers to avoid tolls in Wokingham town centre. It retains the character of a country lane despite being close (10-minute walk) to the town centre. • The lane is narrow and single track. It is bordered by banks and hedges along much of its length (between Langborough Recreation Ground and Southlands Road). • It is a well-used route for walkers and valued as a local amenity. • An overbearing development would harm the unique character and amenity value of Gipsy Lane.
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APPRAISAL

Site Description:

A 1970's detached dwelling with a double garage located in the residential area of Wokingham. The property has an open plan front garden and driveway for off street parking and sits within a spacious plot.

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:

CP1 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed erection of a two storey front extension, front porch, part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation with changes to fenestration, two storey side extension and loft conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation including installation of roof lights and rear dormers. to maintain or enhance the quality of the environment.

CP3 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed erection of a two storey front extension, front porch, part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation with changes to fenestration, two storey side extension and loft conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation including installation of roof lights and rear dormers. to be of an appropriate scale, mass, built form, height, materials and character to enhance the area together with a high quality of design.

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Maximum eaves height and ridge height should be no more than those of the existing property.
- Side extensions should be set back by 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary.
- The rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street frontages is often important to the character of the area.
- The eaves and/or ridge height should not be raised in height unless buildings in the local context are significantly taller.
- Front extensions should not project significantly forward of the building line.

The street scene is a residential cul-de-sac comprising detached houses and bungalows of a similar age and varying designs. Front gardens have lawns and shrubs. Driveways for off street parking are accessed via the unadopted road. The neighbouring property at no. 11 South Close also benefits from a part two-storey extension and a single garage.

The proposed front porch extension would be approximately c.1m in depth and would not project forward of the existing front ground floor roof canopy. The single storey side extension would reduce the separation distance with no. 11 South Close to

approximately c.3.4m and it would be approximately c.1.3m from the site boundary. The first-floor extension would reduce the separation distance with the adjacent building at no. 11 by approximately c.5.5m, leaving an approximate gap between the buildings of c.7.8m to allow a view through, thereby still retaining significant separation distances between neighbouring properties. The existing roof line would be increased by c.5.5m and the roof of the gable extension would be at right angles and approximately c.0.85m lower. The eaves height would be the same as existing. Therefore, while a substantial extension to the host dwelling, the proposal would not cause significant harm the character of the area.

The proposed dormer windows will be located on the rear elevation of the dwelling and will extend the existing loft. The dormer window will measure c.2.13 metres in width, c.1.63 metres in depth and c.1.39 metres in height.

The Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on Dormer windows which relate to design and scale. It states the following:

- Loft conversions and dormer windows should not project above the existing ridge line.
- Dormer windows should generally be positioned within the main roof, by being set back from both eaves line and the sides of the roof.
- Dormers should relate to the design of the existing building in terms of roof form, materials, positioning and window proportions.

The erection of a two-storey front extension, a front porch, part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation and changes to fenestration. The existing main roof will be modified and have a cross-gable design to incorporate the two-storey front extension that will have a gable roof.

The front porch extension will have a gable roof and door with glazed panels on both sides of the front elevation. It will be c.2.6m wide and be approximately c.1m in depth.

The part two storey extension will measure c.5.5m in width and c.7.4m in height to the top of the pitch. The proposal will include the conversion of the double garage to facilitate an open plan kitchen/dining/sitting room on the ground floor. The first-floor extension above the garage conversion will facilitate a bedroom and 2 no. ensuites. The ground floor will occupy the existing footprint, and the first floor will extend 1.64m forward of the principal elevation.

The single storey side extension will have a part sloping/part flat roof to facilitate a single garage with a utility room and WC at the rear. It will measure c.8.83m in length, c.4.4m in width and c.2.5m in height to the top of the eaves.

Overall the extensions will relate satisfactory to the character and appearance of the existing property.

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 ground floor window on the side elevation would serve a WC and replace a door and window. The side elevation window on the first floor would face onto the side wall of no. 11 where there are no windows. Therefore, there would be no detrimental increase in overlooking.

R16 of the Borough Design Guide does not set out recommended back to front separation distances but it does set out a minimum back-to-flank/front separation distance of 15 metres for houses over two storeys to mitigate overlooking and limit a sense of enclosure. The guidance therefore sets out that 15m between dwellings facing each other is sufficient to retain privacy. The proposed rear dormer windows would be sited over c.21.06 metres from the front elevation of the neighbouring property 'Rowans'. The neighbouring property 'Rowans' is heavily buffered by existing landscape features from both sides of the properties. The application site is on higher ground but the separation is considered sufficient not to detrimental impact privacy of the neighbouring occupants.

Given this separation, and front to back relation as there is no stated standards with this relation within the BDG, any potential overlooking or loss of privacy is considered minimal and would not be detrimental to the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers. The front of the property to the south is partially visible from the street scene and it is not a private amenity area such as a patio or rear garden.

Loss of Light:

The proposed extensions would be suitably located and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of overbearing or loss of light impacts.

The proposed erection of rear dormers does not increase the roof height or massing. As such, there is no detrimental material loss of light.

Overbearing:

The first-floor extension would be approximately 7.8m away from the neighbouring property at no. 11. allowing views through. The BDG recommends that the eaves of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m when within 2m of the boundary and that a gap of 1m should remain with the site boundary. The eaves height of the single storey side extension would be approximately 2.5m, it would be located approximately 1.3m away from the boundary and set back by approximately 0.7m from the front wall of the first-floor extension. The rear wall would not extend beyond the existing rear wall. Therefore, the development would not be overbearing in terms of neighbour amenity.

As the works regarding the dormers are entirely within the existing roof, the proposed would not create any additional sense of enclosure or overbearing impact.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in

urban location will require three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m. The proposed driveway will have sufficient spaces for three parking of suitable dimensions, which is acceptable. Despite garage is not essential for complying with the council's parking standards, the Highways welcome the provision of a garage of dimension 6.1m x 4.3m, contributing to 0.5 additional parking space. The proposed direct access to the rear garden is suitable for cycle storage, which is acceptable.

Amenity Space:

Section 4.7 of the Borough Design Guide states "The council's minimum garden length of 11m is a generally accepted guideline for private garden space, provide the space is usable". The proposed single storey rear extension will result in a minor loss of rear garden space. However, there will be sufficient space remaining with c.14.55m in depth and c.24.44m in width.

Ecology:

WBC Ecology officer states "I am satisfied the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the ecologist to conclude that the house currently has negligible bat roost potential. I note that the Ecologist has not undertaken a desktop or local planning history search and has not taken into account the records for reptiles protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If the application is approved, I request that a protected species informative is included in the decision notice."

Heritage Assets:

The nearest Heritage Asset is a Conservation Area that surrounds East Close but the site is not within this designation. Having regard to the scale and design of the proposed extensions, the dwelling would continue to read as a large detached property set within a generous plot. The additions are considered to relate appropriately to the form and appearance of the existing dwelling and would not result in harm to the setting or significance of the Conservation Area.

Whilst Gipsy Lane may have historic associations, it is not identified as a designated heritage asset. The proposed development would not materially alter the established character of the lane. The dwelling would continue to appear as a large property within a spacious plot and the extensions would be well related to the existing design of the building. As such, the proposal would preserve the overall prevailing character of the street scene and would not give rise to harm to any Heritage Assets.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the proposed two storey front extension, front porch, part garage conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation with changes to fenestration, two storey side extension and loft conversion to facilitate habitable accommodation including installation of roof lights and rear dormers. would not detrimentally harm the character and appearance of the area, would not significantly harm neighbouring amenity nor highway safety. It is compliant with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy as well as the provisions of the Borough Design Guide. Accordingly, it is recommended for approval.

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	
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Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	12 th March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	9 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
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Date:	12.03.2026
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PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Insert where relevant