

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242172
Site Address:	17 Wildcroft Drive, Wokingham, RG40 3HY
Expiry Date:	14 November 2024
Site Visit Date:	15 October 2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed part single storey, part two storey front extension, part garage conversion and changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
PRoW Within WB Consultation Zone
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone Minor

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 CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals CP11 – Proposals Outside Development Limits
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM4 - Protection of Designated Landscape DM5 - Protection of the Countryside DM10 - Flood Risk DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
	There is no relevant planning history for the site.	

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection (20/09/2024).
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection, subject to condition (29/10/2024).
WBC CIL – Not CIL liable (20/09/2024).
WBC Ecology Householder – No comments received.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One letter of support (28/09/2024).

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a two-storey, detached property located on Wildcroft Drive, Wokingham. The dwelling is located towards the end of the cul-de-sac and backs on to Sand Martins Golf Club. There is a public footpath that runs along the rear boundary of the site.

The application site benefits from a large front and rear garden and paved driveway with off-street parking for two vehicles.

Properties on the road vary in form and design but are united through the use of a repeated material palette. Typical materials include brick and render with timber and brick detailing. Many of the properties along the road have already benefited from alterations and extensions.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the erection of a part single-storey, part two-storey front extension that would measure approximately 12m in width and 2m in depth (maximum) at ground floor level. The front extension would incorporate a gable and extension of the existing mono-pitch entrance canopy with the insertion of a pitched roof porch. The proposal also includes other changes to fenestration.

Changes to the existing attached double garage include a partial conversion to create habitable living accommodation.

Proposed materials include brickwork, roof tiles and uPVC doors and windows.

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 outside the settlement boundary and in the countryside. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy does not permit development outside of development limits, however exceptions to this include: 'Residential extensions or replacement dwellings where it does not result in inappropriate increases in scale, form or footprint or would bring about environmental improvement'.

Character of the Area:

The application proposes a part single-storey and part two-storey front extension which would include a front gable. The front extension would include changes to the existing canopy above the garage and main entrance.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character. The Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) SPD gives advice on residential developments. The application site is located in designated countryside and for rural and settlement edge sites, RD2 of the BDG states that development must 'respond to the unique character and setting of each site, taking into consideration a thorough understanding of the local pattern of settlement and its setting in the landscape'. The host dwelling is part of a residential development built in the 1980s. Houses in the road are all large, detached properties set within large plots. Each dwelling is built in a traditional style, but each has a unique design and form.

The proposed front gable would have a pitched roof form and would match the main roof. BDG states that 'the roof form of the extension should take its form from the main building'. It would be a subservient addition to the host dwelling by being set down approximately 0.5m from the main ridge line.

The BDG states that front extensions are 'Generally only acceptable where the building is set well back from the street frontage in a large plot or where the building is set further back from the street than the prevailing building line'. The application site benefits from a large plot and is set back more than 31m from Wildcroft Drive. Furthermore, the

extension is relatively modest with a maximum forward protrusion of 2m. Due to the position of the property on a corner plot at the end of the cul-de-sac, there is no prevailing building line of properties along this section of the road. Therefore, the front extension would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the host dwelling or street scene.

In addition, the extension retains the existing building gaps with nos.15 and 19 and would maintain views through to the green backdrop of the rear garden and established trees along the public footpath within Sand Martins Golf Course. The BDG references the importance of how a 'green backdrop contributes significantly to local character, created by trees and planting along plot frontages, in gaps between buildings and in rear gardens, so that built development is almost always seen against vegetation'. The proposal would not restrict views to the rear and therefore maintains the semi-verdant local environment.

The proposed changes to the existing attached double garage includes a partial conversion of the rear sections of garage space. The two existing garage doors would be retained, and as such, there would be no visual change from the public realm which is acceptable.

The changes to the existing canopy above the main entrance and garage includes extending the canopy up to the proposed front gable, with the insertion of a pitched roof porch. There is no prevailing design to the style or form of porches along Wildcroft Drive. Therefore, the changes to the front porch and canopy would not detrimentally impact the character of the host dwelling or local area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The proposal includes changes to fenestration. There would be one additional front facing window at first floor level to serve the staircase. The front gable would move the existing window of 'bedroom 4' forwards by approximately 2m. This would be road facing and more than 47m from the first-floor rear fenestration of no.11 Wildcroft Drive. Therefore, there would be limited overlooking concerns generated by these changes.

The changes proposed to the rear elevation include the addition of two windows at ground floor level to serve the kitchen and utility room and replacing two existing windows with sliding doors to serve the kitchen. As these changes are at ground floor level and there are no neighbours to the rear, there would be no detrimental loss of privacy impacts that would be generated by these changes.

Properties on Wildcroft Drive benefit from relatively large plots that include large front, rear and side garden space. Due to the position of properties within the plots, many of the houses were designed to take advantage of the generous site widths by incorporating first-floor side facing windows. The proposal includes the addition of one first-floor window in the western elevation. The dwelling already has one first-floor side facing window in this elevation to serve a bedroom. The proposed window would be more than 9m from the flank wall of no.19 with any outlook restricted to oblique views of the neighbouring property, rather than a direct view onto private amenity space.

Therefore, there would be limited harmful overlooking impacts that would be generated by this element of the proposal

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

The western flank wall of the proposed front extension would be over 4m from the shared boundary with no.19 Wildcroft Drive, the eastern flank wall more than 12m from the shared boundary with no.15 and the front gable more than 30m from the road. These separation distances will exceed the recommended minimum separation distances set out on page 47 of the BDG. Therefore, due to the significant separation distances, there would be no overbearing or loss of light impacts that would be generated by the proposal.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The application proposes a partial conversion of the existing double garage to create habitable living accommodation. The Council's Highway officer raised no objection to the proposal due to the number of habitable rooms remaining unchanged and the existing garage parking not meeting the council's current requirement for garage parking. Therefore, the current parking arrangements would remain unchanged and are acceptable.

Landscape and Trees:

The application site is located in countryside and borders a public footpath to the rear. The council's Trees and Landscape officer was consulted and raised no objection and commented:

"The rear edge of the site bounds Countryside and the public right of way FINC41. Along the footpath and so impacting the site are 4 oaks, two notable, and two Veterans. The Veterans are numbers 44525 and 44523 of the Ancient Tree Inventory. The property is located at the end of a drive, off a cul-de-sac.

The extensions are designed such that they will appear as subservient and in keeping with the character of the cul-de-sac and adjacent Countryside.

As the rear footprint of the house will not change, there will be no more impact from the built form upon the veteran trees than existing. However, given the wholesale changes and the amount of construction materials required for this, it seems likely that the back garden will be used for storage/construction activities. The government veteran trees guidance requires that there be at least a 15m exclusion zone (or 5m beyond the tree canopy line, whichever is the greater) around every Veteran tree. This means much of the back garden will not be available for storage/construction. I have suggested a condition to define and enable the exclusion zone required for the veteran, and other, trees".

Therefore, a tree protection condition will be applied to any granted approval.

Ecology:

The application site is located in an area suitable for bat roosts and a red zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN). Red zones are classified as areas which contain the most suitable GCN habitat.

A preliminary bat roost assessment was submitted with the application. The ecologist concluded “*The proposals are considered highly unlikely to lead to the damage or loss of a bat roost or to the disturbance of bats and therefore, a European Protected Species mitigation licence would not be required to allow the works to go ahead lawfully*”. A bat protection informative will be applied to any granted approval. A GCN Statement was also submitted which outlines reasonable avoidance measures. The GNC report will be conditioned as part of any granted permission.

Conclusion:

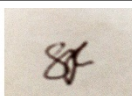
For the reasons set out above and subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

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:	N/A
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	7 November 2024
Earliest date for decision:	1 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26.11.24