

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250911
Site Address:	12 Walden Avenue, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9HR
Expiry Date:	18 July 2025
Site Visit Date:	13 June 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed partial garage conversion. A single storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing conservatory. As well as a first floor side extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
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 DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM4 - Protection of Designated Landscape DM5 - Protection of the Countryside DM10 - Flood Risk DM15 - Site History
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS5 – Development in the countryside CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE3 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan

PLANNING HISTORY

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

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – Request further information.
WBC CIL – No comments received.
WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a two-storey semi-detached property located on the western side of Walden Avenue, Arborfield. The application site is located outside settlement limits within designated countryside.

The property is set back from the road behind a paved driveway providing off-street parking with established shrubs and hedging along the front boundary. There are two adjoining neighbours and a private riding arena to the rear.

The road comprises a range of property types including bungalows, chalet-style bungalows, two-story detached and semi-detached properties. There is no uniform appearance to the design, style or age of properties along the road with many having undergone alterations and extensions in a variety of forms.

Typical materials include brick, hung tiles, timber cladding, render, and brick and timber detailing.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the removal of the existing conservatory and erection of a single-storey rear extension with two roof lanterns. Also proposed is a garage conversion to create a utility room, toilet and storage area and would include alterations to the existing walls, and a first-floor side extension above the existing garage.

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 of settlement limits where in order to protect the separate identity of the countryside and maintain the quality of the environment proposals must comply with Core Strategy Policy CP11.

The policy states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where:

4) In the case of residential extensions, does not result in inappropriate increases in the scale, form or footprint of the original building.

The other parts of CP11 are not relevant here.

Local Plan Update

The Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023-2040: Proposed Submission Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28 February 2025.

Character of the Area:

The proposed single-storey rear extension would measure approximately 3.48m in width, 3.18m in length and would have a flat roof that would tie into the existing flat roof above the kitchen.

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.

CP11 states that proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted except where 'It does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original buildings'.

The rear extension would be erected following the removal of the existing conservatory and would effectively infill space between the existing kitchen and dining room. The extension would not protrude beyond the existing rear building line of the kitchen and would be set in marginally from the southern shared boundary. There would be limited views of the rear extension from the road due to the built form of the host dwelling and adjoining neighbour (no. 14) which would obscure the development from the public realm. Therefore, there would be no adverse impact to the character of the host dwelling or local area from the erection of the proposed rear extension.

The proposed first-floor side extension would utilise the footprint of the existing garage and would serve two bedrooms. The extension would appear subservient to the host dwelling by being set down from the main ridge line by approximately 1.5m. Whilst it is acknowledged that the side extension would disrupt the existing gaps between buildings along the road, the extension would be similar to the already constructed first-floor extension at no. 14 Walden Avenue and would create symmetry between the pair of semi-detached properties which would balance the rhythm of built form.

In addition, along Walden Avenue there is no uniform pattern to the arrangement of buildings, and no consistency to the gaps between the buildings. There is also no prevailing form of the buildings along the road and significant variation in the scale and size of properties. Therefore, the proposed first-floor side extension would not be out-of-keeping or overly dominant within the street scene and would cause no detrimental impact to the character of the host dwelling or public realm.

As the modest design of the side extension would retain the footprint of the existing garage, and the single-storey rear extension would largely be retained within the footprint of the existing conservatory, the development would not result in inappropriate increases in scale, form or footprint away from the original building, in accordance with Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy.

The proposed materials include brick and slate tiles to match with the host dwelling, which are acceptable.

The proposed garage conversion would serve a utility room, toilet and storage area and would retain the existing garage door. There would be no visual change to the frontage of the property, therefore, the proposed garage conversion would cause no detrimental impact to the character of the host dwelling or street scene.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

There would be one additional first-floor window in the front elevation to serve a bedroom. The window would be road facing and would be located more than 27m from the front fenestration of no. 11 Walden Avenue. This would well exceed the recommended 10m minimum front-to-front separation distanced outlined in the BDG in order to maintain privacy.

There would be one additional first-floor window in the rear elevation to serve a bedroom. Views from the window would provide oblique views of the garden of no. 10 and would hold views similar to that of the existing first-floor rear bedroom window. Therefore, the additional window would not result in detrimental loss of privacy over and beyond the existing degree shared within the setting and is acceptable.

There are two roof lanterns proposed in the flat roof of the single-storey rear extension to serve a kitchen/living room. The roof lanterns would be between 0.8m and 2.5m from the shared side boundaries. As the built form of the neighbouring properties includes single-storey rear extensions that protrude beyond the proposed development, there would be limited opportunity for any detrimental overlooking impacts to be generated from the roof lanterns.

There are no windows proposed in the flank elevation of the first-floor side extension.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The BDG states that for rear extensions, the primary impact is impact upon neighbours and recommends that rear extensions should not project more than four metres from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary. The single-storey rear extension would protrude approximately 3.18m from the rear and would have a footprint similar to the existing conservatory. The BDG also recommends that 'The eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m within 2m of a side boundary'. The proposed eaves height of the rear extension would measure approximately 2.88m in height and would be set down from the existing rear extension of no. 14 Walden Avenue. In addition, the proposed extension would be set back from the existing rear building lines of both side neighbours. Therefore, the proposed development would generate no detrimental overshadowing or overbearing impact to the occupants of the adjoining properties.

The proposed first -floor side extension would extend the two-storey development within 1m of the northern shared boundary. It is noted that the adjoining property to the north comprises a detached chalet-bungalow and the proposed side extension would be significantly higher than the adjacent dwelling. However, the adjoining built form of the chalet-bungalow consists of a non-habitable room in the form of a garage which measures in excess of 14m in length. The submitted site plan shows that the rear section of the neighbouring garage would protrude approximately 6m further back than the proposed first-floor side extension. Therefore, any additional shadow cast by the proposed built form would mainly be to the roof of the neighbouring garage and not to habitable living spaces or windows.

In addition, the hipped roof form of the extension has been designed to step down towards the northern shared boundary, which is less intrusive and creates a softer, more gradual transition in height. This would reduce the amount of shadow cast onto the neighbouring property, as well as reducing the perceived and actual bulk of the built

form. This helps to maintain a more open feel and would allow more daylight to reach the adjacent property.

Therefore, the proposed side extension would not cause any adverse overbearing or overshadowing impact to neighbouring amenity.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposed development would increase the number of habitable rooms and the council's Highways officer was consulted. They requested a revised parking plan to show three on-site parking spaces. Whilst this is duly noted, no changes are proposed to the current parking arrangements.

The existing level of driveway parking will be retained which is considered acceptable to serve the development. To increase the number of vehicle on-site parking would result in the removal of soft landscaping from the front of the dwelling which would be to the detriment of the semi-verdant character of the local area and countryside. As such, a revised parking plan was not requested and the existing parking arrangements considered acceptable, especially as there are no parking restrictions that apply on the road. Therefore, any guests visiting the host property could utilise road parking for a temporary period.

Ecology:

The application site is located in an area suitable for bat roosts and a bat survey carried out by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy was submitted. The report concluded that:

"The potential roost features identified on the property will be retained unaffected by the proposals. Therefore, the survey findings demonstrate that these proposals are highly unlikely to result in the death, injury or disturbance of bats; the damage or destruction of a bat roost; or the obstruction of access to a bat roost".

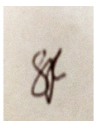
Conclusion:

For the reasons set out above, 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	14 July 2025
Earliest date for decision:	14 June 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	16.7.25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS
Insert where relevant