

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252616
Site Address:	5 Woodlands Avenue, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 3HN
Expiry Date:	26 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	21 August 2025 (251880) & 11 December 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of part ground floor, part first floor rear extension, single-storey outbuilding, and loft conversion creating habitable accommodation including 2no. roof dormers, changes to fenestration, rooflights and sun-pipe.	

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 CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU) (N.B. the LPU is deemed to hold overall limited weight at this time).	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development C2 – Mitigation of transport impacts and highway safety and design C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE4 – Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows NE5 – Landscape and design DH1 – Place making and quality design DH2 – Safeguarding amenity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
1351/73	Single storey rear extension and loft conversion.	C/A – 30/08/1973

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection subject to condition
WBC CIL: Advice regarding CIL matters

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Woodley Town Council raised no objections.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Two comments received objecting the proposal on the following ground: the siting of the proposed outbuilding could have an adverse impact on the health of the TPO protected oak tree and a subsequent effect on biodiversity. <i>Officer's Comment: This was addressed through the submission of revised plans and Arboricultural information, this is discussed in the 'Landscaping and Trees' section of the report.</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is a detached 1930s bungalow on Woodlands Avenue, Woodley. While several neighbouring properties have been altered overtime, this section of the street scene comprises detached bungalows and chalet style bungalows which sit on a fixed building line with a generous setback from the highway. The site benefits from existing alterations and additions as well a deep rear garden space. An Oak tree towards the rear of the site is protected by a recent Tree Preservation Order (no. 1999/2025).

Proposal:

This application proposes the erection of a part ground floor, part first floor rear extension, 2no. side dormer extensions and the conversion of the existing loft space to create additional habitable accommodation, fenestration changes plus the erection of a detached outbuilding to the rear for incidental use to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

The proposed rear extensions would project beyond the existing rear elevation by approximately 7.7m at ground floor level and 5m at first floor level, with the ridge height of the first floor addition matching the existing main ridgeline. Both proposed side dormers would have a width of approximately 12.8m and set down from the main ridgeline by 0.5m. The ground floor element would have a crown pitched roof form with a total ridge height of approximately 3.85m and eaves height of 2.5m.

The proposed outbuilding would be approximately 8.2m in width and 4.1m in depth

with a pitched roof form at a total ridge height of approximately 3.35m and eaves height of 2.6m. It would comprise an incidental office, gym and shower room. Following discussions with the applicant, revised plans were submitted which re-sited the outbuilding closer to the host dwelling to avoid impact on the TPO protected Oak tree.

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.

Alterations and additions to an existing residential dwelling within settlement limits is acceptable in principle, subject to impact on other material considerations including the character of the area, neighbouring amenity and trees & landscape.

Design and Character of the Area:

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. R1 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.

R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD states that alterations or extensions should be clearly subservient to the form and scale of the original building in most situations, with a complementary design which either adopts the existing style or by a carefully considered contrast. The key considerations for all proposed additions to residential dwellings are they should be well designed, respond positively to the original dwelling, contribute positively to the local character and relate well to neighbouring properties.

While predominantly consisting of detached bungalows, several neighbouring properties benefit from later alterations and additions which have created first floor habitable accommodation. Dormer extensions at the front and side of dwellings which vary in size, form and materials are prevalent on the street scene and therefore the proposed development would not be out of character in this respect.

While the width of the proposed dormers would add bulk to the existing roof planes, they would still appear as subservient additions to the host dwelling due to their form being set down from the ridgeline and set back from both the eaves line and the sides of the main roof. While they would 'square off' the roof to a degree, they would be appropriately set back from the principal (front) elevation to minimise this visual effect on the street scene. Moreover, their design and size would be in keeping with neighbouring examples, including the very similar development carried out at No.7 Woodlands Avenue adjacent, while the visual impact would be further mitigated by the proposed use of complementary external materials.

The proposed rear extensions would significantly enlarge the footprint of the host dwelling. However, its size would be in keeping with several neighbouring examples including No.7 adjacent and would not be out of character in this respect. The proposal would also retain the existing gaps between both immediate neighbours at ground floor level, and the depth of the plot can accommodate its size with sufficient rear amenity space retained.

The proposed gable end roof form at first floor level, while a significant change from the existing hipped roof form, would be in keeping with similar neighbouring examples including No.7 adjacent and therefore have an acceptable impact on local character. The size of the ground floor element would be sufficiently mitigated by its fairly modest eaves height and low profile roof form. Moreover, it would not be visible from the street scene.

Outbuildings for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of a dwellinghouse are a common form of development within the surrounding area. Neighbouring examples vary significantly in terms of design, position and scale and tend to provide additional space for vehicle parking, storage and habitable accommodation. Many outbuildings are constructed under Permitted Development (PD) rights, this proposal would not benefit from PD as its height would exceed 2.5m within 2m of the boundary.

From reviewing aerial imagery and neighbouring planning applications, its size appears to be in keeping with the average scale of outbuildings within the surrounding neighbourhood. While it would add additional footprint to the existing dwelling, the significant depth of the rear garden space can accommodate it while its bulk would be mitigated by its pitched roof form. Moreover, it would not be visible from the street scene due to its position at the rear and its external materials, comprising timber cladding and dark grey coloured roof, would complement the appearance of the host dwelling following the development.

Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on visual amenity and local character in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Extensions to the host dwelling

Overlooking: The proposal would introduce 3no. side facing windows at first floor level, 2no. on the east elevation serving bathrooms and 1no. on the west elevation serving the landing. While these would serve non-habitable rooms, both immediate neighbouring properties benefit from rooflights or dormer windows which could directly face the proposed windows. To protect the amenity of both neighbouring properties and the residential amenity of the site, a condition is recommended which requires these windows to be obscure glazed and top opening only and retained as such. An additional condition is recommended to restrict the insertion of any additional windows on both dormers without additional consent to prevent any further overlooking opportunities.

Due to the dormers being contained within the main roof planes, the proposal would not result in direct overlooking of the rear amenity space serving Nos. 3 & 7

Woodlands Avenue. The proposed rooflights serving the ground floor would not result in any direct overlooking into either adjacent property. The proposal would retain a circa. 45m back to back separation distance from No. 10 Silver Fox Crescent to the south, significantly exceeding the recommended minimum of 22m in the Borough Design Guide SPD. Nonetheless, the proposed fenestration at the rear would have an oblique outlook of the neighbourhood and would not create any direct overlooking opportunities into the adjacent rear gardens.

Loss of Light: While the proposed dormers and first floor rear extension would not encroach above the existing roofline, the development is likely to result in a loss of light received by the side facing ground floor fenestration serving Nos. 3 & 7 Woodlands Avenue adjacent, albeit to a small degree. The separation distance between the proposed development and the existing fenestration, circa. 1.7m to No.3 & 2.4m to No.7, would allow a sufficient level of daylight to be retained and would not completely block off all daylight received.

Moreover, due to the existing relationship with both adjacent neighbours, the existing fenestration facing the proposed dormers effectively borrows its outlook from the application site. BRE Guidance indicates that in these relationships, any existing side-facing fenestration cannot be afforded a great degree of protection from any proposed development.

The proposed rear extensions would not encroach beyond the rear building line of No.7 adjacent at both ground and first floor level, preventing any conflict with its rear facing fenestration. While the rear building line of No.3 adjacent would be encroached, measurements taken on the submitted plans from the closest fenestration serving No.3 at ground and first floor levels indicate that the proposal would pass the 45 degree test (horizontal), meaning that the proposal would not directly conflict with the level of light received by this fenestration.

Overbearing: Due to the existing separation distances from the site's side boundaries being retained, and no part of the development being higher than the existing ridgeline, any potential overbearing impact would be sufficiently mitigated.

Outbuilding

While the proposed outbuilding would be sited within 1m of the side boundary shared with No.3 adjacent, due to its pitched roof form and fairly modest eaves height any potential impact on the neighbouring garden space in terms of loss of light or overbearing impact would be sufficiently mitigated. Due to the appropriate size of the fenestration, the relatively modest nature of the use of the building and the significant depths of gardens along this section of Woodlands Avenue there are no direct overlooking opportunities arising from the proposed outbuilding.

Overall, any potential harm on neighbouring amenities has been sufficiently mitigated prohibiting any adverse harm over and above the existing level of amenity in accordance with Core Strategy policy CP3.

Trees and Landscape:

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping. MDD Local Plan Policy TB21 requires consideration of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Proposals must retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

A TPO protected Oak tree is located within the site's boundaries towards the rear. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan has been submitted in support of the application. The Council's Senior Landscape Officer initially objected to the proposal due to the close proximity of the proposed outbuilding to this tree and the resulting potential harm to its health during and following the development.

Following discussions with the applicant, revised plans and amended Arboricultural information was submitted confirm that the relocated outbuilding would sit fully outside of the root protection area of the tree to avoid impact. Additional information has been submitted to demonstrate that the tree can be sufficiently protected during and following the development. The Landscape Officer has reviewed the revised scheme and raised no objection, subject to the protection measures being secured via condition. The proposal therefore complies with MDD Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would not impact the site's existing parking provision for 3no. off-road parking spaces which meets the Council's parking standards.

Subject to conditions, the application is acceptable and is therefore 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

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	23 January 2026
Earliest date for decision:	25 November 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26 January 2026

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Major Development Location – Woodley*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Area – Woodley-Earley Settled and Farmed Clay*
- *Tree Preservation Order No. 1999-2025*