

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250450
Site Address:	Warren Lodge, Squirrel Walk, Wokingham, Wokingham, RG41 3AS
Expiry Date:	30 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	18 March 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a front canopy roof following demolition of the existing porch, erection of a single storey side/rear extension, a bin store, plus changes to fenestration and associated landscaping.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Water Utility Consultation Zones
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
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 CC06 – Noise 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 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
001724	Proposed demolition of existing dwellings and redevelopment of site with 22 flats and 2 dwellings car parking, bin stores and new access.	Approved 22/02/2002

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection.
WBC Highways – Requested revised parking plan.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection, subject to conditions.
WBC CIL – Not CIL liable.
WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site consists of a two-storey detached property located on Squirrel Walk, Wokingham. The dwelling is part of a small development constructed in 2002 and consists of a cul-de-sac comprising one other detached dwelling and 22 flats. Properties in the road are similar in design and appearance through the use of design features and similar materials.

Bordering the northern and eastern site boundaries is carparking for ARC Gym and a fuel filling station. The southern boundary fronts Squirrel Walk and the western boundary borders the rear garden of no.175 Old Woosehill Lane. The host dwelling has an unconventional position within the plot as the property frontage faces eastwards and

is not road facing.

The western side of the site sits at a slightly higher level than the eastern side resulting in the properties on adjoining Old Woosehill Lane being positioned at a higher level than the host dwelling.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the erection of single-storey rear/side extension with a chimney. The extension would be finished in light render and would have a flat roof form with four rooflights. The proposal also includes an extension of the front driveway to provide additional on-site parking and changes to fenestration.

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 principle of a residential extension in this location is acceptable providing that it complies with the wider policy objectives contained within the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery (MDD).

Character of the Area:

The host dwelling is part of the small 'Squirrel Walk' residential development which consists of two dwellinghouses and 22 flats. Buildings within the development are similar in design and appearance and unified through the use of a repeated material palette and design style.

The application proposes an L-shape single-storey side/rear extension which would be located on the northern side of the site. It would protrude approximately 4.8m from the rear building line and approximately 3.45m from the existing flank wall.

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 side/rear extension would have a flat roof form and would have a height of approximately 2.96m. The extension would be subordinate to the main dwelling by the side element being set back from the principal building line by more than 2m and positioned behind the host property which would be obscured from view from the road.

Section 4 of the BDG recommends that 'Rear extensions should not project more than four metres from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary'. It is acknowledged that the rear/side extension would not comply with this guidance. However, the northern site boundary would be between 3.4m and 6.5m from the flank wall of the extension, with parking areas for the filling station and gymnasium located directly to the rear. In addition, the position of the extension towards the rear of the site would result in there being limited views of the development from the street scene as it

would be well set back from the road behind the existing high level brick wall. Furthermore, any views of the extension would be largely screened from Old Woollah Lane by the existing mature shrubs and trees along the northern entrance to Squirrel Walk.

The proposed extension would be rendered in a light finish. Although this would introduce a new material to the Squirrel Walk development, the render would be sympathetic to other properties within close proximity to the host dwelling which boast rendered facades. Examples include nos.196 and 20 Old Woollah Lane. Therefore, this element of the scheme would not cause any detrimental impact to the character of the host dwelling or public realm.

The proposed changes to the fenestration include blocking up of the existing ground floor window on the southern elevation. Bricks to match the existing dwelling would be used to infill the area. This would be a relatively minor change to the flank elevation of the property that would have no discernible impact to the character of the street scene.

Also proposed is a replacement porch canopy. The proposed canopy would extend further to each side and would measure approximately 7.5m in width. The existing flat roof porch canopy and faux Roman pillars would be replaced with a dual pitch roof with low-level brick wall and six columns. The porch would remain open sided and would retain views through towards the rear of the site. The proposed roof tiles would match those of the main roof. It is noted that the existing porch design is replicated on the one other detached dwelling within Squirrel Walk. However, the position of the host dwelling within the plot results in the frontage of the property not being visible when entering the road and is afforded limited visual merit within the street scene. In addition, the porch to the flats towards the end of Squirrel Walk comprise a different design style in the form of an inset brick arch. In summary, the changes to the principal elevation of the dwelling would not disrupt the prevailing rhythm of built form along the street scene and would not be detrimental to the existing character of the host dwelling or local area.

Changes to the existing fenestration are also proposed that would replace the existing full-length windows in the main house with more standard height windows. Although full length windows are a common feature on properties along Squirrel Walk, standard height windows are also an established design feature. Therefore, the changes to fenestration would not detrimentally impact the prevailing character of the host dwelling or street scene.

Following a request from Highways, a revised parking plan was submitted which includes changes to the existing parking arrangements. The changes include widening the existing driveway by removing the existing vegetation from the southeastern corner of the plot and replacing with hardstanding to provide one additional parking space. Although an area of soft landscaping would be removed to facilitate the change, the proposal also includes additional planting along the central section of the eastern site boundary. In addition, adjacent to the proposed parking space is the communal parking area for the flats within the development. Therefore, the proposed changes to the drive would be in-keeping with the surrounding land and would not cause any adverse impact to the public realm.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

Due to the single-storey nature of the proposed rear/side extension and significant separation distances of neighbouring properties from the development, there would be no detrimental loss of privacy impacts that would be generated.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

Section 4 of the BDG states that 'The eaves height of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m within 2m of a side boundary'. The rear/side single-storey extension would accord with this guidance. The rear wall of the proposed extension would be approximately 16m from the rear wall of no.175 Old Woollahill Lane. This distance falls below the recommended 22m minimum outlined on page 47 of the BDG to limit a sense of enclosure and maintain privacy. However, it was noted during the site visit that the properties on Old Woollahill Lane are positioned at a higher level than the host dwelling with established shrubs and hedging along the shared boundary with no.175 Old Woollahill Lane. These existing features would provide natural screening of the extension and minimise any detrimental overlooking impacts to the occupants of no.175.

Due to the significant separation distance from the neighbour to the west and no neighbours to the north or east, there would be no overbearing or loss of light impacts generated by the proposed rear/side extension.

Chimney:

The proposal includes the erection of a chimney within the northern flank wall of the rear/side extension. The chimney would be a working fireplace and would include the installation of a flue. The fireplace has been positioned towards the rear of the site where there are no neighbouring properties. The Council's Environmental Health officer was consulted and confirmed that the property is not located within a smoke control area, so there is no prohibition on installing an open fire or multi fuel stove. They summarised that the property is detached with enough space between adjoining properties to support the proposed chimney and flue. They also commented that how it is used is fundamental, proper installation and use with smokeless fuel is recommended.

For installation guidance, Building Regulations document 'J' may apply, along with British Standard BS 6461:

[Building Regulations Guidance for wood burning stoves untitled](#)

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The application proposal would increase the number of habitable rooms and the Council's Highways officer was consulted. A revised parking plan was requested to show an additional on-site parking space to meet the Council's parking standards. A revised plan was submitted and considered acceptable by the officer.

Landscape and Trees:

The application site includes trees which offer public visual amenity as a green backdrop to the Green Route Reading Road. Trees are to be removed to facilitate the development, these have been assessed as category 'C' and not suitable for retention.

The Landscape and Trees officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal and submitted Arboricultural Assessment, subject to conditions relating to landscaping, and the retention and protection of trees.

Whilst the condition relating to landscaping details is noted, due to the relatively small scale of the proposal, the requirement for landscaping details would not be necessary in order to make the development acceptable. In addition, the submitted Arboricultural report will be conditioned to ensure the protection of the existing on-site trees.

Conclusion:

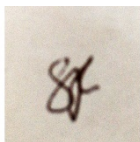
For the reasons set out above, and subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	16 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	26 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	30.4.25