

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242726
Site Address:	15 Gorrick Square, Wokingham, Wokingham, RG41 2PB
Expiry Date:	10 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	14 March 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed single storey front extension and two storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory.	

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
Land Terrier
SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones
Historic Flooding Points Consultation Zone

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 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
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY- No relevant planning history

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection subject to conditions
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WBC Landscape and Trees: No objection subject to conditions

WBC Ecology: No objection

WBC Highways: No objection

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No comments received
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Ward Member(s)	No comments received
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Neighbours	1 objection: Loss of light to solar panels No 45-rule given to rear facing downstairs south facing windows but has been given to the front north facing window. Overbearing/over-sized compared to all mid-terraced houses in this road. Inconsistencies/errors on application form (regarding hedge removal and type of cladding) Out of character for the area. Officer response: No.16 does have solar panels on the rear roof, whilst the end panel may be affected. However, given the first-floor rear extension roof pitch would be over 3m from the boundary of.16 and the pitch would be set down lower than the main ridge height, the impact would be minimal. Loss of light addressed in report The proposed materials are to match the existing, thus in keeping with the current characteristics of the dwelling. 6m of beech hedging to the front would be lost and applicant has suggested planting an upright hornbeam tree with an
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	oval canopy in the south-east corner of the garden (a <i>Carpinus Betulus</i> 'Fastigiata') with a 10-12cm circumference. The Trees & Landscape officer has agreed to such planting and recommended a planting condition, ensuring longevity. Whilst the hedging to the front would be lost and alter the street scene, within Gorrick Square there are examples of where there is no hedging at the front of the property including no.4, 7, 10 & 13. Such examples have already set a precedence and the subsequent appearance would not look out of keeping nor drastically harm the street scene. Overbearing/over-sized and out of character for the area addressed in report.
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APPRAISAL

Site Description: Two storey terraced house.

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: The Borough Design Guide states *“front extension generally should be no more than 1 storey in height and should not project significantly forward of the building line”*. The lean-to roof front extension would only be single storey in height and project 2.45m forward of the building line. Given the front extension would not be visible given the hedging along the boundary and is considered to be a suitable addition it would not harm the street scene. Furthermore, no.4 & 13 has a similar sized front extension and same roof form so would not look out of place and such precedence has already been set (see below: no.4 on left and no.13 on right).



Whilst the hedging to the front would be lost and alter the street scene, within Gorrick Square there are examples of where there is no hedging at the front of the property including no.4, 7 (photo on right), 10 (photo on left) & 13. Such examples have already set a precedent, and the subsequent appearance would not look out of keeping nor drastically harm the street scene.



The BDG states *“rear extensions should not project more than 4m from the main rear wall where they are close to a side boundary”*. The ground floor flat roof element of the rear extension would project 6m, thus not complying with the BDG. However, given the existing conservatory depth is approx. 2.80 and the increased depth of the ground floor extension would be 3.20m, thus compliant with the BDG. Moreover, the host property has a very spacious garden to accommodate for such sized extension. The ground floor extension would have a very similar view as the existing conservatory, so it is not going to have a significant harmful impact. With it being located at the rear it wouldn't be visible from public locations. Hence, the proposal would unlikely have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

The first-floor pitched roof rear element would project 2.75m and would extend above the proposed ground floor projection. The eaves/ridge height would be set down from the main dwelling appearing as a subservient feature. Furthermore, the pitch of the roof of the rear extension would match that of the existing. Moreover, being located at the rear it wouldn't be visible from public locations. Hence, this aspect of the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

The proposed materials are to match the existing, thus in keeping with the current characteristics of the dwelling. Hence, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The front extension would not result in harmful overlooking given windows would overlook onto the street scene and be screened by the existing

established hedge along the front boundary.

The ground floor bi-folding windows would overlook onto the rear garden and would be a similar view to the existing conservatory as well as screened by the existing boundaries, thus no harmful overlooking.

The first-floor rear elevation of the property already contains three windows at first floor level and is not changing. Therefore, it is not considered that the rear extension would not result in a loss of privacy or overlooking for neighbouring properties. Most rear gardens are overlooked at an oblique angle from the upper floor windows in the neighbouring property. This is no different with the new window as part of the first-floor rear extension and its oblique angle/view of no.14 & no.16 rear garden. Thus, the rear window would not cause any significant harm with regards to neighbouring amenities and the relationship with the neighbouring house would be orthodox for dwellings in a suburban area.

Loss of Light: Part of the single storey front extension has been set back to comply with the 45-degree rule for habitable windows on the front elevations of no.16 as shown on plan SPR/02 Rev B. Given the distance from the closest habitable room window of no.14, the single storey front extension would not result in harmful loss of light.

As a result of the proposed rear ground floor extension, there is potential for loss of light to the rear living room window of no.16. Whilst a line of 45° degrees would be breached as a result of the extension, the 45° degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, the rear facing window of no. 16 would be of a south orientation and thus would benefit from full daylight throughout the course of the day due to the sun path. Also, more than 50% of available daylight would still reach the affected window, with the purpose of the guideline is to prevent significant loss of daylight rather than to prohibit any reduction at all. Therefore, it is not considered to be a reasonable reason to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the neighbouring property would still have adequate access to natural light.

The rear extension at first floor level will only extend approximately 2.75 metres to the rear of the property and would not increase beyond the highest point of the roof. As shown on plan SPR/02 Rev B, the first-floor rear extension would comply with the 45-degree rule would be complied with for habitable windows on the rear elevations of adjoining properties.

No.16 does have solar panels on the rear roof, however given the first-floor rear extension roof pitch would be over 3m from the boundary of no.16 and the pitch would be set down lower than the main ridge height it would not result in significant overshadowing of no.16 solar panels.

Overbearing: Given the front and ground floor rear extension is only single storey it would not be considered to be overbearing.

The first-floor rear extension would be set off from the boundary by 1.07m from no.16 and 1.68m from no.14, which provides sufficient breathing space between the

neighbouring dwellings and would not be considered overbearing.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposal will result in an additional habitable room, however, this would not have a significant impact in respect of the councils parking standards. There is existing driveway parking to the rear of the dwelling via and access onto Tanglely Drive, and this is to be retained. The level of parking is considered acceptable.

Flooding and Drainage: The application site is within flood zone 1 and therefore would be no significant flooding issues. The comments from drainage have been taken into consideration, however due to the scale of the scheme the provision of drainage strategy drawing is not required.

Landscape and Trees: Following the submission of the 'proposed plans and elevations SPR/02 B Oct 24'. Given the removal of the front 6m beech hedge, an upright hornbeam tree with an oval canopy in the south-east corner of the garden (a *Carpinus Betulus* 'Fastigiata') with a 10-12cm circumference has been suggested. Such is an acceptable compromise as the tree will be visible from both Tanglely Drive and Gorrick Square, in time. The officer has requested a planting condition (CL4) to be included on the decision notice to ensure longevity.

Ecology: All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

The officer is satisfied that the methodology and survey effort of the Preliminary Roost Assessment is adequate. The PRA external inspection revealed that occasional crumbling mortar below the roof ridge tiles on the rear elevation, which could offer a low suitability feature for opportunistic use by individual bats. A section of lifted lead flashing on the western end of the conservatory provides a low suitability potential roost site for these crevice-dwelling species, a close inspection found the gap to be of limited extent.

The officer agrees with the Ecologist's conclusion that the potential bat roosting feature of missing mortar may lead to a potential roost site (under the ridge tile) suitable for use by crevice-dwelling bats, such as the locally recorded common pipistrelle. The presence of a maternity colony is considered highly unlikely. The officer supports the conclusion that taking into account the scale of the potential roost site and the good quality habitats nearby, that the property is assigned low potential suitability for crevice-dwelling bats.

According to the development plans and section 7.1 of the PRA the proposed development works will only be undertaken significant distance away from the only current potential roost site will not be impacted during the construction works and missing mortar below the ridge will be retained and unchanged in the long-term. Provided no works are undertaken to the roof which are not included in the submitted

development proposal the officer is satisfied that the proposed construction is highly unlikely to result in the damage/destruction of a bat roost or lead to the disturbance, injury and/or death of bats (if present at the time of the works). Provided that informative I17 is included in the decision notice, there are no ecological objections to the development as proposed.

Amenity Space: The proposal reduces the amount of amenity space available to the property, but it would still be roughly rectangular in shape, receive sunlight for part of the day and be able to accommodate typical garden activities as set out in the Borough Design Guide. Therefore, the reduction in amenity space is not considered to have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	15 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	6 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	15 April 2025