

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251904
Site Address:	3 Garde Road, Sonning, Reading, RG4 6XJ
Expiry Date:	5 November 2025
Site Visit Date:	25 September 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed raising of the roof to create additional first floor accommodation, garage conversion and changes to fenestration.	

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 CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Sonning Parish Design Statement Sonning Design Appraisal

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

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Internal

WBC Drainage – No objection, subject to condition.
WBC Highways – No objection.
WBC Ecology – No comments.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Letter of objection relating to: - Overall bulk. - First floor side facing bedroom window. - Two first floor side facing bathroom windows.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	One letter of objection. Concerns relate to: - Loss of light to no. 2 Garde Road from front extension. - Loss of privacy to no. 2 from front extension. - The works would lead to an increase of value and push it outside an 'affordable' property price.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located on Garde Road which links Glebe Lane and Hawthorne Way. The site is positioned at the end of a block of properties which results in the northern side boundary backing onto the rear gardens of no. 4 Garde Road and nos. 54 and 56 Little Glebe. To the rear of the site is the rear garden of no.39 Glebe Lane and the garage and flank wall of no. 2 Garden Road are to the south. The site is opposite open fields which are outside of settlement limits in countryside.

The application property consists of a chalet style bungalow with a lawned area and soft landscaping to the front plus driveway providing on-site parking.

Typical materials include brick, render and hung tiles.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the erection of first floor extension with new roof to create additional first-floor accommodation. The existing rear chimney would be extended upwards, and the existing garage would be converted to a home office/gym. Also proposed are changes to fenestration which include bifold doors to the rear, two ground floor side windows to serve the kitchen/dining/living room and the two existing ground floor windows in the northern elevation repositioned.

Proposed materials include retaining red bricks at ground floor level with the addition of render at first floor level.

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).

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:

There is no prevailing character to the properties along Garde Road. Dwellings range in size, style and form.

CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character of the area. Section 4 of the Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) sets out advice for residential developments.

Whilst the proposed changes cannot be classed as a subservient addition to the property, the proposed changes would be contained within the footprint of the existing dwelling, as such, would not alter the extent of the dwelling as seen across the width.

The Local Parish raised concern over the 'bulk' of the proposed built form. However, it is noted that the host dwelling is surrounded by other two-storey dwellings along the road and adjoining roads. The proposal would increase the roof height approximately 1.65m to create additional first-floor living accommodation. The BDG states that roof lines should not be raised unless nearby buildings are significantly taller. The adjoining property to the north comprises a full two-storey height dwelling and to the south, a full two-storey property with side extension that contains living accommodation within the roof. Furthermore, R9 of the BDG states that the heights of residential buildings should 'respond to the prevailing heights and degree of variation in height in the local context'. It is considered that the proposed roof form would respond sympathetically to the variation in height of properties within the local context and would not encroach the established roofline of houses along the street. Therefore, the proposed increase in ridge height would not inherently cause significant harm to the overall character and appearance of the local area.

The proposal also includes a garage conversion to create living accommodation which would require the existing garage door being replaced with a casement window. As there is no uniform appearance to the building form along the road, this change would have a neutral impact on the character of the host dwelling and public realm.

The new hipped roof form would include two front pitched gables. These would be sympathetic to front gables evident on other properties within the vicinity. These include on the adjoining property; no.4 Garde Road, as well as on properties along Little Glebe. Therefore, the addition of the gables would be sufficiently in-keeping with the local character and street scene.

Proposed materials include retaining the existing red brick at ground floor level and introducing render to the first-floor. The proposed materials would integrate well within the local area and already established material palette.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity and R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that extensions relate to neighbouring properties.

One third party and the Local Parish raised concern relating to the potential for loss of privacy to no. 2 Garde Road from the proposed first-floor side facing window in 'bedroom 1'. Whilst this is noted, the proposed window would be approximately 5m from the shared boundary and would allow views along Garde Road and onto the driveway and front lawn of no. 2. As the front area of no.2 is open to the road, overlooking of this area would not constitute a loss of privacy to an enclosed private area. In addition, the existing side facing window in the lounge already holds views across the neighbouring driveway and front garden.

It is noted however, that due to the orientation of the adjoining property, no. 2 does not benefit from a rear garden (aerial imagery). The more usable space appears to be located along the southern side of the property with the area fenced off providing private outdoor amenity. The proposed side facing window would not have views of this area. In conclusion, the proposed first-floor side facing window would not result in detrimental loss of privacy over and beyond the existing degree shared within the setting and is acceptable.

There are also two first-floor, side facing windows proposed in the northern elevation to serve one bathroom and one en-suite bathroom. These face directly onto the rear garden of no. 4 Garde Road and no.56 Little Glebe. As these rear gardens are screened from public view, they are considered private amenity space. To mitigate any potential harmful overlooking impacts, it will be conditioned that the two side facing windows are obscurely glazed and limited in opening height to protect the amenity of the adjoining occupants, as per the proposed plans.

There is one additional first-floor window in the rear elevation to serve a bedroom. Views from this window would be similar to views as existing. In addition, there are no neighbouring properties to the rear of the site, only the end sections of rear gardens of properties along Little Glebe and Garde Road. Therefore, the additional first-floor window in the rear elevation would cause no adverse loss of privacy harm to neighbouring amenity.

Overbearing and Loss of Light:

R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD states that two storey rear extensions must be carefully positioned and designed to minimise any potential impact upon neighbours.

R18 of the BDG states that dwellings must be designed to provide appropriate levels of daylight and sunlight to new and existing properties. The proposal includes the raising of the roof to create a hipped roof form with two front gables. The objection raised by no. 2 Garde Road in respect of loss of light to their side facing kitchen window

has been considered. However, the proposed changes to the roof would comply with the 45-degree test (when taken from the nearest habitable room window in the front elevation of that property) as advocated within the BDG and British Research Establish (BRF) publication Sunlight and Daylight Assessment. The side facing window of the neighbouring kitchen window is a secondary window and is not the principal window or light source, as shown in Figure 1.

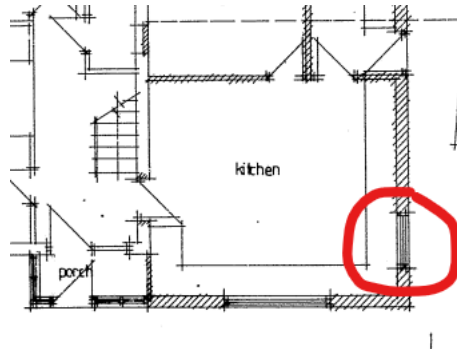


Figure 1: Taken from plan 'Proposed Extension' permission 41303.

The principal east facing kitchen window would not be impacted by the proposed development. The side facing window effectively borrows outlook and daylight from across the application site, so minimal protection can be afforded to this window in terms of outlook and daylight.

Furthermore, a Daylight plan was submitted to support the application which shows that by virtue of the set back position of the southern side of the development, and separation distance from the northern side of the proposed development, a line of 25-degrees would also not be breached by the proposed changes. It can therefore be concluded that no significant loss of light impact would be generated by the proposed development.

The changes proposed to the roof would increase the ridge height by approximately 1.65m. The proposed hipped roof form would include two pitched gables in the front elevation. The gables would be set down between 2.02m and 2.43m from the maximum ridge height. The development would be set in approximately 1m from the southern shared boundary and 2m from the northern shared boundary. R16 of the BDG requires separation distances of 1.0m to the side boundaries to be retained. The hipped roof form is less intrusive than a pitched roof and creates a softer, more gradual transition in height, with lower edges along the roofline. This would reduce the amount of shadow cast onto the neighbouring properties, 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 windows. In addition, the adjoining built form to either side of the development consists of garages, which are not habitable spaces. The flank wall of no. 2 Garde Road would be more than 5m away and the flank wall of no. 4, more than 16m away. Therefore, the proposed development would not generate any detrimental overshadowing or overbearing impact to neighbouring properties.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would increase the number of habitable rooms and convert the existing garage to habitable accommodation. The council's Highways officer was consulted and

raised no objection to the proposal. They conclude that the existing access and level of parking will be retained which is acceptable to serve the development.

Amenity Space:

The size of the rear garden would not be impacted by the proposal.

Flooding and Drainage:

WBC Drainage raised no objection to the principle of development; however they have requested additional drainage details prior to the commencement of the development. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk from surface water flooding according to the EA mapping. Therefore, it is considered unreasonable to request further details when compared with the development proposed being contained largely within the existing footprint of the existing dwelling, plus the site would retain sufficient permeable ground. Accordingly, the condition is not attached.

Ecology:

The application site is adjacent to open countryside and within a bat roost area. A preliminary bat report was submitted to support the application which specified that one dusk emergence survey was required. An emergence survey was undertaken and the ecologist concluded in Section 5:

“3 Garde Road was assessed by Urban Tree Experts as having “low” potential to host a bat roost. However, no bats emerged from, or went to roost, in the house during the dusk emergence survey carried out in September 2025. 5.2 It is therefore concluded that the building does not currently host a bat roost and there should be no bat related constraints to the proposed works. 5.3 Nevertheless, as a precaution, given that the survey was undertaken at a sub-optimal time of year, it is recommended that the features identified as having suitability for roosting bats (such as the hanging tiles on the front gable and dormer) are removed carefully by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist and checked for bats. In the unlikely event that bats are found, works will stop, an assessment will be made by the licensed bat ecologist, and any requisite licence will be obtained”.

In light of the ecologist comments, it will be necessary to include a bat informative with any grant of approval.

Conclusion:

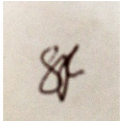
For the reasons set out above, and subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable as it accords with local policy and guidance.

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 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:	13 October 2025
Earliest date for decision:	7 October 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	29.10.25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Limited Development Location

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability

Woodley-Earley Settled and Farmed Clay

Thames Ward

Sonning Parish