

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250453
Site Address:	155 Barkham Road, Wokingham, RG41 2RS
Expiry Date:	25 April 2025
Site Visit Date:	4 April 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed part raising and modification of the roof to create additional first floor accommodation following removal of existing 4 no. dormers and modification of the remaining rear dormer; erection of a single storey front extension, a two storey front/side extension and a single storey rear extension following demolition of the existing single storey front extension, garage and conservatory, plus changes to fenestration and addition of cladding.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Green Routes

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand 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
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
002489	Proposed front and rear dormer extensions to dwelling.	Approved: June 2000
960889	Proposed Single Storey Rear Extension To Form Conservatory	Approved: September 1996

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection subject to conditions WBC CIL – Non liable development

External

None

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

Context: The application site is currently occupied by a chalet style bungalow, with ample driveway space to the front as well as ample rear garden.

The property sits along Barkham Road, an almost entirely residential lane, with mainly detached properties, but of varied design, including two storey properties and bungalows, sited on fairly generous plots.

This application seeks to make wholesale changes to the existing property, through a series of enlargements and alterations.

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 most prominent and fundamental aspect of the scheme is the intention to alter the property type from a modest, chalet style bungalow, to a full two storey building. As described previously, Barkham Road demonstrates a wide range of building types, however, due to recent development along the lane, modern, two storey properties dominate the street scene, with many of the original bungalows being extended or demolished and re-built. Consequently, the enlarged dwelling would not appear out of place in this context.

The alterations to the first-floor entail raising the ridge of the property. The Borough Design Guide states that *“The eaves and/or ridge heights of a property should not be*

raised in height unless buildings in the local context are significantly taller.” For the LPA to ensure that the increase in height would not have an overly imposing effect, a street scene elevational plan was requested and subsequently submitted by the Agent. This demonstrates how the proposed dwelling would sit in the context of the neighbouring properties. It is important to note that in this section of Barkham Road, there is a general increase in ridge heights from dwelling to dwelling when travelling south-westerly down the road, which is caused by the gradual increase in ground level. The proposal would continue this pattern, with the submitted street scene elevation showing the proposed property standing taller than No.153, and of a similar height to No.157. Accordingly, following a review of the requested plan, it is considered that in this site-specific circumstance, the increase in height of approximately 1.9 metres (from 6.6 metres to 8.5 metres) would not adversely impact the character of the area, due the variety of ridge lines evident on the street.

Whilst the modern design of the proposal marks a significant departure from the existing dwelling, this would not be harmful in itself due to the varied nature of built form in the area. Furthermore, it is considered that the existing dwelling has no particular architectural merit, and its external appearance only allows for a neutral contribution to the character of the area. The proposal therefore provides an opportunity to enhance the dwellings contribution in this respect.

Notwithstanding the above, it is also noted that despite the large scale of the development, there has been a clear intention from a design perspective to retain existing features of the property. The double gable protrusion along the principal elevation is reflective of the relationship between the existing dwelling and attached garage, while the single storey protrusion and porch entrance on the southwest elevation are also being retained, albeit with minor alterations.

The proposal also seeks to replace the existing conservatory with a single storey, pitched roof extension. The structures unimposing design and inconspicuous position to the rear of the property would limit its impact on both the dwelling itself and wider character.

Whilst the general form of the building does not appear out of sorts with the architectural diversity of the surrounding dwellings, the use of materials and finishes is certainly a departure from the prevailing material palette within the estate, which mostly displays traditional materials such as standard brickwork or render, with an incorporation of hanging tiles. Whilst the proposed materials are an exception to the norm, there still remains several dwellings in the vicinity that have been personalised through the use of alternative external finishes, such that a departure from the material palette as identified is not a reason to withhold planning permission in this instance.

Overall, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable visual impact, complying with policies CP1 & CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The impact of the proposal upon No.157 would be rather limited, as the first-floor components of the development would be sufficiently distant from the neighbouring site.

The greater impact would be to No.153, where along the shared boundary, the existing single storey garage would be replaced by a large two storey extension. However, the extension would be confined to the built limits of the existing dwelling, and the added impact caused by the two-storey extension would only impact a small area of the neighbouring site, which appears to serve a limited amenity purpose. Furthermore, a search of the council's planning records of the neighbouring property demonstrates that the extension would not directly impact upon any primary habitable rooms with regard to a loss of light.

Overlooking:

The rear facing first floor windows would provide oblique views of the neighbouring properties gardens, however, this would not result in direct overlooking. There are 2no. first floor windows proposed on the side elevation facing No.153, however, these windows serve non habitable rooms and therefore pose no invasive outlook. The other proposed elements of fenestration pose no added overlooking concerns.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposed driveway will have ample spaces for more than three parking spaces by utilising the existing dropped crossing, which is acceptable in accordance with the Councils parking standards.

Landscape and Trees: The site is on a verdant locally arterial green route. The property is set back within the plot behind a mature planted garden, similar to others along this stretch of the road. In the front garden, close to the pavement, a tree stump has been recorded on the Ancient Tree Register, number 65587, as being notable.

The application form states that no trees or hedges need to be removed or pruned to carry out the proposal. The trees and shrubs on the site are mature small trees, not in the vicinity of the proposed build, and there is sufficient space within the plot to allow for demolition/construction activities to be accommodated without harm to them. Accordingly, the application form is likely to be correct. As the site is on a Green Route and an important part of the character of the road comes from green infrastructure, the Landscape & Trees Officer has suggested a condition to protect it. This is deemed acceptable given the context of the site.

Ecology: A preliminary bat roost assessment was undertaken on the property to support the submission of this application. This found evidence of bats through droppings and also many external roosting features for crevice dwelling species. Accordingly, emergency and re-entry surveys were undertaken, which concluded that due to the number of roosts and species present, an EPSL application must be made to and approved by Natural England in order for the proposed works to legally take place. This has been imposed as a condition and agreed to by the applicant.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is 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, 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	
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Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	15 April 2025
Earliest date for decision:	21 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	16/04/25