

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242396
Site Address:	15 The Crescent, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7NW
Expiry Date:	14 November 2024
Site Visit Date:	16 August 2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed raising of the roof of the existing detached outbuilding to form loft accommodation, plus insertion of rooflights to front and rear elevations.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Earley (Major Development Location)
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone – Amber Risk Zone
Landscape Character Assessment Area
SSSI Impact Risk Zones

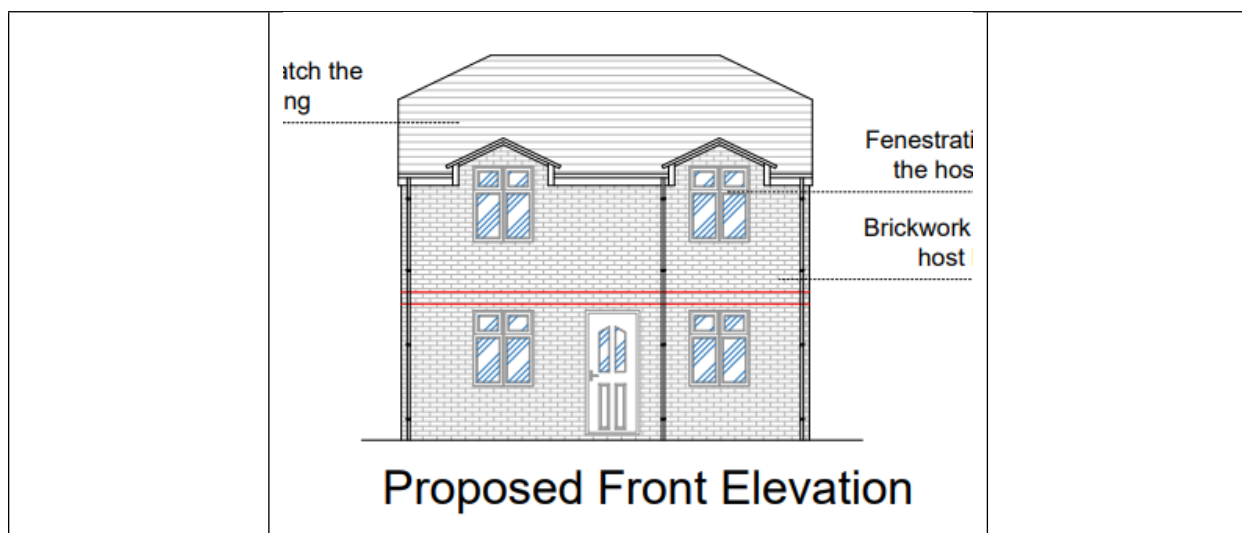
PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) National Design Guide
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity 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 CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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101482	Proposed erection of two storey rear extension to dwelling, plus raising of existing roof to create first floor.	Refused 13/05/2010
100643	Proposed erection of two storey rear extension, plus raising of roof to create a first floor and habitable accommodation in additional loft space.	Approved 25/11/2010
111414	Proposed erection of two storey rear extension, plus raising of roof to create a first floor and habitable accommodation in additional loft space with rear dormer extension.	Approved 03/08/2011
122364	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a single storey pitched roof detached games and store room in rear garden.	Approved 13/03/2012
171383	Householder application for the proposed two storey rear plus raising of roof to provide additional first and second floor accommodation with flat roof rear dormer and insertion of 1 no rooflight in front and side elevations. Demolition of existing garage.	Withdrawn 17/07/2017
212043	Householder application for the proposed raising of the outbuilding roof for additional ancillary use with 6 no. roof lights.	Approved 08/09/2021
220864	Householder application for the proposed replacement roof of the existing outbuilding, with raised ridge and eaves height, to also include 6no. rooflights. SCALE 1:100 Velux windows, min. 1700mm from FFL Plain tiles in rustic red 1010 1280 3310 4950 PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION SCALE 1:100	Approved 21/04/2022
241352	Householder application for the proposed raising and modification of the roof of the existing detached outbuilding to form first floor accommodation, plus insertion of rear rooflights.	Refused 13/09/2024



CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection subject to condition(s)
WBC Landscape and Trees – Objections to scale of building but arboricultural information satisfactory
WBC Ecology – No comments received

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council

ETC raises objection to this application and recommends that WBC refuses the application for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development will have a negative and detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area by reason of the proposed outbuilding's height and massing which would take on the proportions of a two storey detached dwelling house and would be tantamount to a new dwelling, not a domestic outbuilding. The overall scale and design of the building would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of the area and would result in contrived and incongruous feature. The development is contrary to paragraph 139 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Policy TB06 of the MDD Local Plan, the National Design Guide and the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.
2. By reason of the outbuilding's height, scale, massing, first floor windows and immediate proximity to the rear gardens of the adjacent neighbouring properties, the proposals would have unacceptable overbearing impacts on the private rear

	amenity space and rear elevations of Nos.13 and 17 The Crescent and No.18 Radnor Close, to the detriment of the occupiers' privacy and amenities. The proposals are therefore contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, R22 of the Borough Design Guide SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework. If WBC are minded to approve this application, the following conditions are requested: 1: The outbuilding hereby approved shall only be used incidental to the host dwelling, and no part shall used, sold or sub-let as separate dwellings. Reason: A separate unit of accommodation of this nature may not be acceptable in this location in the interests of the amenities, character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP4, and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC01, CC07, TB07, TB08. 2: The rooflights hereby approved shall be installed with no part below 1.7m above floor level, and shall be permanently obscured glazing, unless otherwise approved by WBC, to protect the privacy and amenity of the neighbouring properties, as supported by Policy CP3.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	Three objections received on the following grounds: - All the reasons for refusing the previous application (241352) still apply to this new application. - Negative and detrimental effect on the character and its ambience. - Building looks like a dwelling - Overlooking/overbearing onto neighbours - Impact on TPO Oak Tree - Increase in noise - Impact on local infrastructure - Impact on parking provision

APPRAISAL

Site History:

There are several previous applications related to the outbuilding subject of this application. Firstly, application 220864 was approved in April 2022 for the raising of the existing outbuilding's roof to provide first floor habitable accommodation. The roof form was a gable/flat roof with a maximum height of 5 metres with high level first floor rooflights.

Following this, application 241352 was submitted to revise the design of the alterations approved by application 220864, namely:

- The building's ridge height was increased from 4.95 metres to 6.5 metres
- The roof form was altered to a traditional hipped roof
- The first floor rooflights on the building's front elevation were replaced with full-size half dormer windows.
- The first floor accommodation provided two partitioned rooms compared to the previously approved one.

Application 241352 was subsequently refused on the following grounds:

1. The proposed development will have a negative and detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area by reason of the proposed outbuilding's height and massing which would take on the proportions of a two storey detached dwellinghouse and would be tantamount to a new dwelling, not a domestic outbuilding. The overall scale and design of the building would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of the area and would result in contrived and incongruous feature. The development is contrary to paragraph 139 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Policy TB06 of the MDD Local Plan, the National Design Guide and the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.
2. By reason of the outbuilding's height, scale, massing, first floor windows and immediate proximity to the rear gardens of the adjacent neighbouring properties, the proposals would have unacceptable overbearing and overlooking impacts on the private rear amenity space and rear elevations of nos. 13 and 17 The Crescent and no.18 Radnor Close, to the detriment of the occupiers' privacy and amenities. The proposals are therefore contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, R22 of the Borough Design Guide SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The proposed raising of the outbuilding's roof would conflict with the adjacent protected Oak Tree in perpetuity, to the detriment of the tree's health. There is insufficient justification to outweigh this harm. The proposals are therefore do not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework, BS5837:2012, policies CC01, CC02, CC03 and TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and policies CP3, CP6 and CP9 of the Core Strategy 2010.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks approval for the raising of the roof of the existing detached outbuilding to form loft accommodation, plus insertion of 3no. rooflights to front and rear elevations. Comparisons/differences between this scheme and 220864 and 241352 are provided below:

- Maximum height – 5.5 metres (220864 – 4.95 metres, 241352 – 6.95 metres)
- Hipped roof form, the same as that proposed under application 241352.
- High level rooflights on both the front and rear roof slopes, similar to those approved under application 220864.

Internally, the building would retain the existing store and bathroom on the ground floor. The first floor would consist of a study and playroom.

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:

Policy Context:

The Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan sets out the requirements for sustainable development at policy CP1 of the Core Strategy. Criterion 1 of Policy CP1 states that proposal should maintain or enhance the high-quality of the environment.

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high quality design. It also states that proposals should *“Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping”*.

R1 of the WBC Design Guide states that residential development should be designed to contribute positively towards the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area. This may be achieved through blending in with a strongly positive existing character, responding where relevant to the positive elements of its historic context or, where the site is large enough to allow for a distinctive identity to be created, by establishing a new character that relates well to the existing.

The National Design Guide section B1, paragraph 67 also states that the built form of well-designed places should relate well to:

- the site, its context and the opportunities they present;
- the proposed identity and character for the development in the wider place;

Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and

supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Significant weight should be given to:

- development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes;

220864 approval:

The character of properties along 'The Crescent' are very much varied including smaller bungalows/chalet bungalows as well as larger detached two storey family homes. Modest single storey outbuildings to the rear of properties are common in the area and due to the well vegetated surroundings and deep gardens, their visual impact on both the prevailing character of the area and the amenities of adjoining occupiers is negligible.

The above description was the base of the justification surrounding the approval of application 220864; the modest 4.95 metre ridge height was not considered to be visible from obvious public vantage points along surrounding roads. Overall, views from the street were considered to be unchanged and the visual amenities of the surrounding occupiers would not be adversely affected.

Assessment of current proposals:

The proposed ridge height is 1.45 metres shorter than the roof height refused under application 241352, and only 0.55 metres taller than the height approved under application 220864.

The outbuilding's external form would largely replicate that of the outbuilding approved under application 220864. The main difference, which is also the primary factor in the roof height increase, is that the flat roof form at the apex of the roof approved by 220864 has been replaced with a traditional hip.

The choice of hipped roof form is considered a much more subservient addition than the gable/flat roof form previously permitted. Furthermore, the main increase in height comes from the hipped roof tapering upwards, meaning its additional massing would not be visually overbearing from either the adjacent neighbouring gardens, or via fleeting views from the roadside to the south.

Application 241352 was partly refused on the grounds that the building height and choice of dormer fenestration on the frontage appeared too domesticated and adopted the form of an independent residential dwelling. These elements have either been substantially reduced in height or removed altogether, with the dormers replaced with modest high level rooflights that would provide no outlook onto the neighbouring properties. The outbuilding reasonably adopts the form of a domestic residential outbuilding sited in the host dwelling's rear garden.

No access to the building is available other than through the host dwelling or via the car port on the dwelling's western elevation. The use of the first floor as an office/playroom is an acceptable and reasonable incidental use for this residential

site.

Overall, subject to a condition ensuring the outbuilding cannot be sold/sub-let as a separate unit of accommodation, the proposed alterations would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

The additional fenestration consists of 3no. high level rooflights, all with openings in excess of 1.7 metres in height. The rooflights therefore pose no overlooking concerns as their sole purpose, due to their location in the roof slope, would be the provision of natural light.

Loss of Light and Overbearing:

The revised height of the building is modest in scale and retains over 2 metres from the western and eastern site boundaries, as well as 2.35 metres from the northern boundary. Minor impacts would occur to the far rear ends of nos.13 and 17 The Crescent but would not be adverse.

Overall, there are no adverse loss of light or overbearing concerns.

Noise:

The site would remain residential in use and it is not considered the provision of first floor accommodation for use as an office/playroom would warrant any adverse noise impacts above the existing situation.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

WBC Highways has no objection subject to the outbuilding remaining ancillary to the main dwelling. The existing access and level of parking is considered acceptable on this basis.

Amenity Space:

The proposals would not harm the usability of the dwelling's rear amenity space.

Flooding and Drainage:

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and at low risk of surface water flooding. As the proposals involve no increases in impermeable area, there are no flood risk concerns.

Landscape and Trees:

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan requires development to provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to

mitigate potential impacts of new development.

A large TPO Oak Tree (1897/2022) is sited in the adjacent no.13 The Crescent's rear garden, the canopy of which largely overhangs the roof form of the existing outbuilding.

Application 241352 was partly refused on the grounds that the 6.95 metre height of the roof proposed would conflict with the canopy of the adjacent Oak tree. Due to the substantial 1.45 metre reduction in the height of the building's roof, it is not anticipated that there would be any conflict with the Oak Tree's canopy and therefore no adverse harm on the welfare of the tree; WBC Landscape and Trees have concluded that the arboricultural information is satisfactory in this instance.

The canopy would overhang the building's roof form but this is the case currently, therefore no objections are raised in this regard.

Other areas of vegetation proposed to be removed from the rear garden is unprotected and would not require permission otherwise. No objections are raised in this regard.

Ecology:

A preliminary bat roost assessment (Crossman Associates, 20 June 2024) has been submitted in support of this application. In summary, the report concludes that the building has negligible suitability for roosting bats and no further survey action is required. No objections are therefore raised on these grounds.

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:	Approval

Date:	5 November 2024
Earliest date for decision:	28 October 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	05.11.2024