

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251568
Site Address:	23 Starmead Drive, Wokingham, Wokingham, RG40 2JA
Expiry Date:	1 September 2025
Site Visit Date:	8 July 2025
Proposal: Part retrospective application for part garage conversion and enlargement of existing side dormer.	

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 CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements CE1 – Design principles for efficient buildings CE3 – Environmental standards for residential development
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
31380	Single storey front extension to provide enlarged garage.	Approved 15/09/1988

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – No objection, subject to conditions.
WBC CIL – 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 detached two-storey property located on the eastern side of Starhead Drive, Wokingham. There are two side neighbours to the north and south of the site and St Crispins School playing fields to the rear.

Properties along the road are similar in age, style and appearance. Many of the properties have been altered and extended in a variety of forms and designs.

The application site is set back from the road behind soft landscaping and a paved driveway providing off-street parking.

Proposal:

This application seeks part retrospective approval for the enlargement of the existing dormer in the northern elevation and the conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation.

Note:

Condition 3 of permission 31380 (approved 15/09/1988) states:

The garage as extended by this permission shall be used as a domestic garage only and it shall not be used for business purposes nor for any other purpose without the prior written permission of the District Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of amenity and to ensure that the garage is retained for use in accordance with the District Planning Authority's parking standards.

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 in principle 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:

The proposed enlargement of the existing flat roof dormer in the northern elevation of the main roof would be a relatively minor addition to the property.

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 dormer extension would retain the height of the existing flat roof dormer and would extend the built form approximately 3.49m towards the front elevation. The extension would be a subservient addition to the host dwelling by being set down from the main ridge line by approximately 1.8m and set back from both the eaves line and sides of the roof. This accords with BDG guidance. There would be views of the dormer from the street scene, however, there are already views of the existing dormer from Starmead Drive. Therefore, views of the extended flat roof dormer would have a neutral impact to the character of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would be in-keeping with the already extended side dormers evidenced at both adjoining side neighbours.

Proposed materials include composite cladding which would extend across the entire dormer. The existing dormer is clad in timber. The changes to the material finish would be sympathetic to surrounding dormer windows that are finished with composite cladding. Examples include nos. 21 and 25 Starmead Drive and nos. 4, 5 and 7 Wallner Way. Therefore, the proposed materials are acceptable.

The conversion of the garage to create habitable accommodation would serve a utility room and storage area to the front. The existing garage door would be retained, as such, there would be no visible change to the property frontage. Therefore, the changes to the garage would not result in any detrimental impact to the character of the host dwelling or public realm.

Neighbouring Amenity:*Overlooking:*

The proposed extension of the existing dormer window would include two first-floor side facing windows to serve a dressing room and en-suite bathroom. Due to the position of the proposed windows, they would face directly onto the side elevation of no. 10 Wallner Way. There is one first-floor window in the side elevation of the neighbouring property that serves a bathroom. As existing, the host dwelling boasts two first-floor side windows that serve a toilet and the existing dressing room. Therefore, views from the additional window proposed would be similar to views from the existing side facing windows and would not result in detrimental loss of privacy over and beyond the existing degree shared within the setting and is acceptable.

Loss of Light & Overbearing:

The proposed extension of the existing dormer would have a flat roof form and would be well set down from the main ridge line and set in from the sides and eaves. As the dormer would be contained within the existing main roof and would not protrude beyond the existing principal of rear building line, any loss of light and overbearing would be

limited and would not generate any detrimental impact significantly beyond the existing degree shared within the setting which is acceptable.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would increase the number of habitable rooms from 6 to 7. The council's Highways officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions relating to parking to be provided and surfacing of access. They commented:

"Three driveway parking spaces are proposed within the red line, which are sufficient to meet the council's parking requirement.

However, the recommended maximum width for dropped crossing by the Traffic Management team is 3.6m. To serve the proposed parking layout, this will need to be provided in a centralised position. Part of the existing dropped crossing will need to be reinstated to full height kerbs. The access shall be surfaced with a hard bound material. The crossing works will subject to final approval from the councils TM team.

The proposed garage remains suitable for cycle storage, which is acceptable".

Ecology:

The application site is located in an area suitable for bat roosts. A preliminary bat survey was submitted (Urban Tree Experts, 30 June 2025) to support the application. The ecologist concluded that the property has a low potential to support roosting bats.

Conclusion:

For the reasons set out above, 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:	22 August 2025
Earliest date for decision:	28 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26/08/25

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Major Development Location.

Flood Zone 1.

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability.

Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone Amber.

Landscape Character Assessment 2019 Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland.