

PLANNING STATEMENT

3 GRANGE AVENUE, Crowthorne, Berks, RG45 6QG



The development comprises:

- Front planting and low-level rendered wall with timber fencing
- Porch extension to the front elevation
- Two-storey side extension above the existing kitchen
- Single-storey rear extension with internal courtyard
- Replacement sedum roof to the existing garage and new sedum roof to the rear extension
- Removal of the existing rear shed
- External wall insulation with associated render onto existing external walls
- Installation of solar panels on the new two-storey extension and relocation of existing solar panels to the proposed single-storey flat roof, flue, new windows (including obscured glazing), metal-framed sliding doors, and a glass balustrade to the master bedroom terrace

1. Proposal and Site Context

This application seeks planning permission for alterations and extensions to an existing detached dwelling at 3 Grange Avenue, Crowthorne. The proposals include front boundary treatments and planting, a porch extension, a two-storey side extension, a single-storey rear extension with an internal courtyard, sustainability upgrades, including sedum roofs and solar panels, and external wall insulation with associated render to existing external walls and associated alterations.

The site is located within an established residential area characterised by detached dwellings of varying architectural styles, scales, and materials. The site is not subject to heritage, landscape, or ecological designations.

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of a householder planning application for alterations and extensions to 3 Grange Avenue, Crowthorne. The proposals seek to sensitively extend and upgrade the existing dwelling to better meet modern living standards, improve sustainability performance, and enhance the property's appearance and functionality, whilst safeguarding the area's character and the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

The application has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023), the Wokingham Borough Council Development Plan, and relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The proposals are considered to represent a high-quality and policy-compliant form of development appropriate for this established residential location.

2. Site Description and Surroundings

The application site comprises a detached dwelling located on the western side of Grange Avenue, a residential street characterised by detached family houses of varying architectural styles, scales, and materials. There is no uniform design approach along the street; instead, properties feature a mix of pitched and flat roofs, varying plot widths, extensions, and material palettes.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area, is not subject to any statutory heritage designations, and is not affected by ecological or landscape designations. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character.

3. Planning History

The site has a history of incremental development, indicating the plot's capacity for extension and ancillary buildings. Notably:

- **1970s–1980s:** The original dwelling was approved and subsequently extended – records show permissions for two-storey rear extensions in 1974 and 1987, and a conservatory in 1988 (demonstrating the principle of extending the house was established).

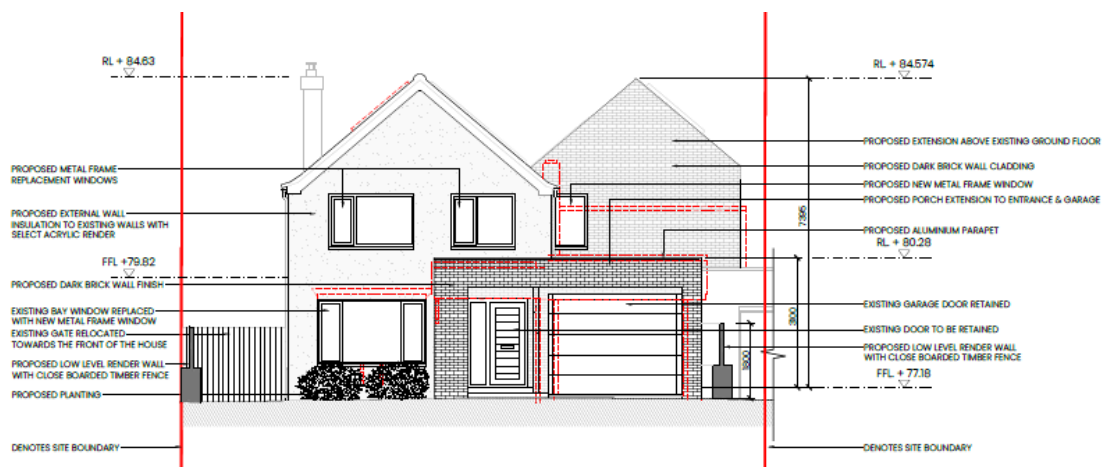
- **2008:** Planning permission (ref. 082211) was granted on 03/04/2008 for a single-storey side extension and front extension to No.3. (This was implemented, adding a small sunroom and enlarging the porch/garage area.)
- **2023:** A Certificate of Lawfulness for an Existing Use/Development (CLEUD) (ref. 231343) was granted on 31/07/2023 for an outbuilding in the rear garden of No.3, to be used as a home office and storage. This certified that a substantial outbuilding could be lawfully erected under permitted development rights. **Fallback:** This CLEUD constitutes an important fallback position, underscoring that additional built form on the site is, in principle, permissible without planning permission.

There are no other known constraints or planning designations affecting the site. In summary, the context and history support the sensitive evolution of No.3 through further alteration.

4. Description of Development

The application seeks householder planning permission for a comprehensive improvement to No. 3 Grange Avenue, including extensions, energy-efficiency upgrades, and landscaping enhancements. The proposed development is as follows:

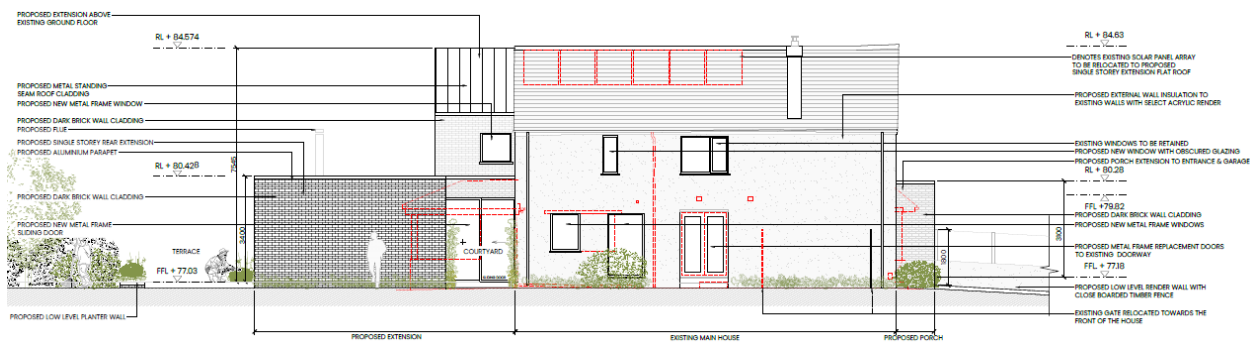
- **Front Porch Extension:** A small single-storey extension to the front of the house, forming an enhanced entrance porch. This will improve street elevation and provide a more usable lobby.



(P)300 Rev. 01 - North-facing (front) elevation

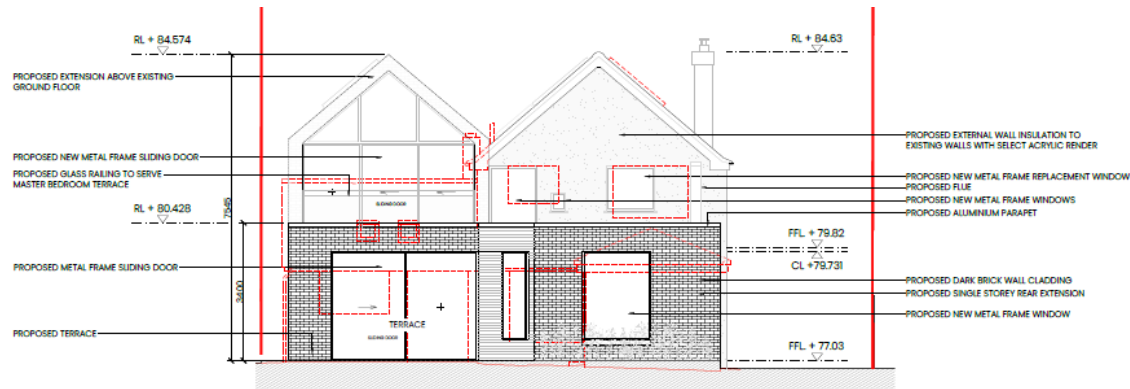
- **Two-Storey Side Extension:** Construction of a first-floor extension above the footprint of the existing single-storey kitchen/utility wing on the south-western side of the house (adjacent to No.5). This creates an enlarged bedroom and a family bathroom above, while leaving the ground floor layout largely as existing. The side

extension is set back 0.59m from the boundary with No. 5, maintaining a gap and a subordinate appearance.



(P)301 Rev.01 - East Facing Elevation

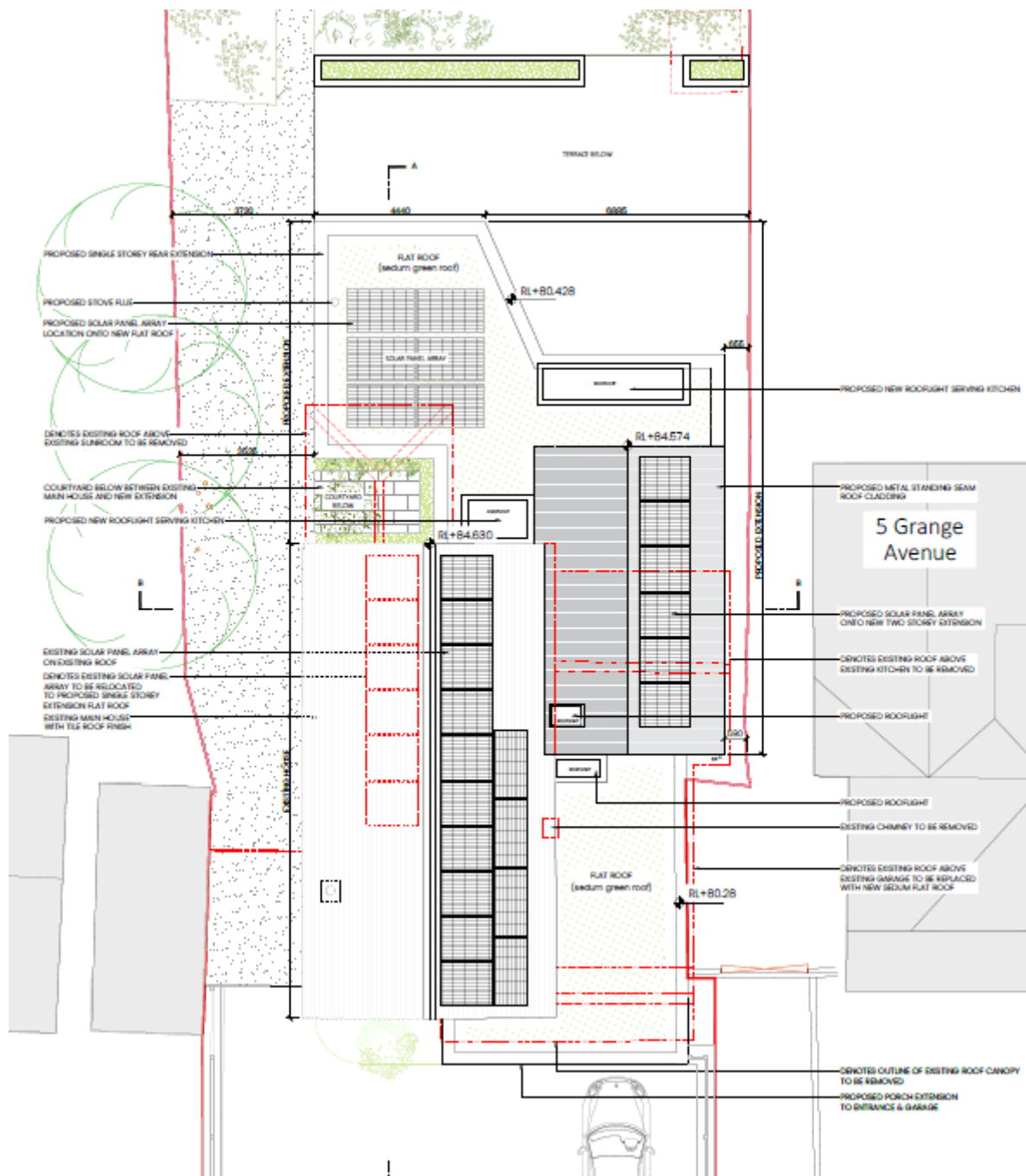
- Single-Storey Rear Extension:** Addition of a single-storey extension projecting into the rear garden (behind the house) by up to 5.935m beyond the original rear wall fronting No. 5. The extension spans part of the house's width, primarily behind the existing dining/kitchen area, and creates an open-plan kitchen/family living space. A small open-air courtyard (lightwell) is proposed between the new extension and the rear of the original house, providing light to internal rooms and breaking up the mass adjacent to No. 1. The side elevation of the proposed development fronting No. 1 would measure 6.2m.



(P)303 Rev. 01 - South-facing (rear) elevation

- Removal of Outbuilding:** An existing rear shed is to be removed to accommodate the new rear extension and courtyard layout.
- Front Garden Landscaping:** Installation of new planting in the front garden to soften the appearance of the hardstanding/driveway and complement the design. In addition, a low-rendered wall with timber infill fencing is proposed along the front boundary and side return. This low wall (with timber panels above) will define the front curtilage attractively while matching typical boundary treatments in the area.

- Roof Alterations:** Replacement of the existing flat garage roof with a new lightweight sedum (green) roof system. The new rear extension roof will also be a flat sedum green roof. These green roofs will be planted with hardy sedum vegetation. The main house's existing tiled pitched roof form remains unchanged. A glass balustrade is proposed around a section of flat roof to create a terrace for the master bedroom (over the new single-storey rear extension), with access via patio doors.



(P)202 Rev. 01 - Roofplan

- **Doors & Windows:** Modernisation of openings, including installation of large metal-framed sliding glass doors at ground floor (opening onto the rear patio/terrace and into the new courtyard) to increase natural light and indoor-outdoor connectivity. New high-level windows with obscure glazing are proposed in the side elevation (facing the boundary) to serve the bathroom and dressing area, preventing any overlooking. An existing bow window at the front will be replaced with a contemporary flat window. All new/replacement windows will have slimline dark-coloured metal frames.
- **External Materials:** The palette of external materials will update and unify the dwelling's appearance:
 - The proposed brickwork on the front elevation porch will be finished in a dark brick, giving a refreshed look.
 - The two-storey side extension and the new rear extension will be clad in a matching dark brick to tie in with the front. This provides a contemporary contrast to nearby properties while remaining of high quality.
 - The retained portions of the original house will be thermally insulated and rendered with a high-quality breathable render (in a neutral tone) to complement the new brick and give a coherent appearance.
 - **Roofing:** The two-storey side extension pitched roof will be finished in standing seam metal clad. The existing clay tiled roof cladding to main house to remain as existing. The flat roofs (garage and rear extension) will be covered in a sedum green roof system (as noted) with perimeter aluminium parapet detailing.
 - **Windows/Doors:** All new windows and glazed doors will have a dark grey aluminium frame system (replacing older uPVC units), improving energy performance and aesthetics.
 - **Boundary Treatment:** The low wall with timber fence panels at the front will be finished in a smooth render (for the wall base) and stained timber (for the fence panels), kept to modest height (1.1m wall + 0.7m fence) so as not to obscure the frontage. Side and rear boundaries remain standard timber fencing as existing.

These materials have been chosen for their durability, modernity, and appropriateness to the context, given the variety on Grange Avenue.

- **Sustainability Features:** In addition to the sedum roofs, a solar PV panel array is proposed: discreet photovoltaic panels will be installed on the flat roof of the new rear extension (relocating the existing solar panels installed on the east-facing slope of the existing house roof) and the south-west facing roof slope of the proposed two-storey extension, harnessing renewable energy. A new stove flue

(metal chimney) will project from the rear roof slope or extension roof to serve a woodburning or pellet stove in the living area – this flue will be powder-coated to blend with the roof. Furthermore, the scheme includes upgrading the existing house's thermal envelope (e.g., external insulation as mentioned and likely improved glazing and heating systems), significantly enhancing energy efficiency.

In summary, the proposal will transform No. 3 into a more spacious, sustainable family dwelling, with a high-quality contemporary design that remains in keeping with the neighbourhood's scale. All works are contained within the site's curtilage and primarily at the rear/side, with a minor sympathetic change to the front appearance.

Key Measurements: For clarity, the notable dimensions are that the two-storey side extension is set back 0.59m from the boundary with No.5, and No.5 itself is set back from that boundary – therefore, a clear gap remains between the houses. The single-storey rear extension projects 5.935m beyond the original rear wall (along the side adjacent to No.5). On the opposite side, the rear extension is set between 3.535m and 3.730m from the boundary with No.1 (it does not span the full width towards that side). The side elevation projecting along the boundary with No.1 measures 6.2m. The extensions match the height of the existing house (the side extension ties into the existing eaves and ridge line), and the single-storey rear extension is flat-roofed with a parapet, kept to a single-storey height of 3.4m. These quantitative aspects have informed the assessments of daylight and amenity.

5. Policy Considerations

The application has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023), the Wokingham Borough Council Development Plan, and relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents. These require development to achieve a high standard of design, respect local character, safeguard residential amenity, and incorporate sustainable design measures.

The relevant policy framework includes:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024):** The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Pertinent sections include **Chapter 2: Achieving Sustainable Development**, which emphasises the presumption in favour of sustainable development; **Chapter 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places**, which requires high-quality design that is sympathetic to local character and maintains a good standard of amenity; and **Chapter 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change**, which supports renewable energy and sustainable construction. This proposal aligns with those objectives by improving the dwelling's design quality, respecting local character, protecting neighbours, and incorporating climate-friendly features.

- **Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (Adopted 2010):** Key strategic policies from the Core Strategy include:
 - **CP1 – Sustainable Development:** Requires new development to contribute to sustainable communities, including making efficient use of land within settlements and mitigating impacts on climate change. The proposed extensions make better use of an existing residential plot (no sprawl) and embed energy efficiency measures, in line with CP1.
 - **CP3 – General Principles for Development:** This policy sets out that new development should be of high-quality design, without causing detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users or occupiers, and with a scale and character appropriate to the area. The proposal's compliance with CP3 is demonstrated by its careful design (subservient massing and scale that match the area) and its lack of adverse impact on neighbours.
 - **CP7 – Biodiversity:** Protects and enhances biodiversity. The incorporation of green roofs and new planting will enhance the site's ecological value (biodiversity gain), consistent with CP7.
 - Other relevant strategic policies include **CP6 – Managing Travel Demand** (not directly applicable, as the development does not intensify use or alter access/parking materially) and **CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals** (the site lies within a defined settlement; minor householder development is appropriate in this location under CP9).
- **Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan (Adopted Feb 2014):** The MDD contains more detailed development management policies. Relevant policies likely include:
 - **CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development:** (Reflects the NPPF presumption; the proposal contributes to sustainable development by upgrading an existing home and poses no conflict with the development plan.)
 - **CC02 – Development Limits:** (The site is within settlement limits; the proposal is clearly consistent with development within Crowthorne's built-up area.)
 - **CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping:** (Seeks to protect green assets; the proposal retains existing landscaping where possible and adds new planting/green roofs, thus contributing to green infrastructure on-site.)
 - **TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens:** (Requires that proposals in residential gardens respect the local character, form and layout. The modest extensions proposed do not overdevelop the garden –

over 90% of the original garden area is retained – and the form is in keeping with surrounding built forms. The design and landscaping respect the suburban garden character.)

- **TB07 – Internal Space Standards:** (Ensures adequate internal space – not directly a planning permission issue for extensions, but the proposal will provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants.)
- **TB21 – Landscape Character:** (Although aimed at larger developments, it reinforces that new development should integrate with its surroundings – which this proposal achieves by echoing features of other houses on the street, like the extension at No.15.)
- **TB23 – Biodiversity:** (Echoing CP7, supportive of enhancements like green roofs.)

Additionally, any **saved policies** from the predecessor Local Plan relating to house extensions, if still in force, have been considered; however, Wokingham's current adopted policies above address the main design and amenity considerations.

- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance:** Wokingham Borough Council has several adopted SPDs that provide guidance on implementing the above policies:
 - **Borough Design Guide SPD (2012):** This comprehensive guide includes design guidelines for residential extensions, stressing the importance of subordination (extensions should not overwhelm the original house), use of sympathetic materials, and maintaining the character of the area. The proposal adheres to this guidance by setting back the side extension, using complementary materials, and ensuring the overall form is well-proportioned. The varied character of Grange Avenue is acknowledged in the SPD's principles, which allow for innovation where appropriate; the contemporary elements (dark brick cladding, flat green roofs) are high-quality and well-contextualised.
 - **Residential Extensions Guidelines:** (Contained within the Design Guide and/or a separate guidance note) – The Council's guidance on house extensions typically includes the 45-degree rule for light, the need to avoid terracing effect (hence side extensions often set back from boundaries), and design details like roof form and window alignment. All these factors have been taken into account: the side extension is set off the boundary to avoid a cramped "terracing" appearance; the rear extension has been designed within the 45° lines from adjacent windows; and the roof styles complement the existing building (hipped roofs retained, new roofs flat but unobtrusive).

- **Wokingham Borough Council Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2022):** This SPD encourages incorporation of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate resilience in development. The proposal's solar panels, enhanced insulation, and green roofs directly respond to this guidance, exceeding what would normally be expected of a small extension project and delivering climate change mitigation at the householder level.
- **Crowthorne Village Design Statement (VDS, 2013):** Crowthorne has a VDS which, while not a formal SPD, is a material consideration highlighting local character. The VDS notes the eclectic mix of housing styles in Crowthorne and encourages that extensions be well-designed and use materials that are in keeping with, or of high quality, contemporary design. No.3's design choices (brick finish, modestly scaled additions) are in line with maintaining the pleasant suburban character described in the VDS.
- **WBC Daylight and Sunlight Guidance (45°/25° Code):** The Council provides technical guidance on applying the 45-degree test for overshadowing. The proposal has been designed to comply with these guidelines for both neighbouring properties.
- **Parking Standards SPD (2014):** The property will remain a 4-bedroom dwelling (currently 3-4 beds) and retains a garage and driveway. Sufficient off-street parking (2+ spaces) is available, meeting Wokingham's standards for a house of this size, so no conflict arises.

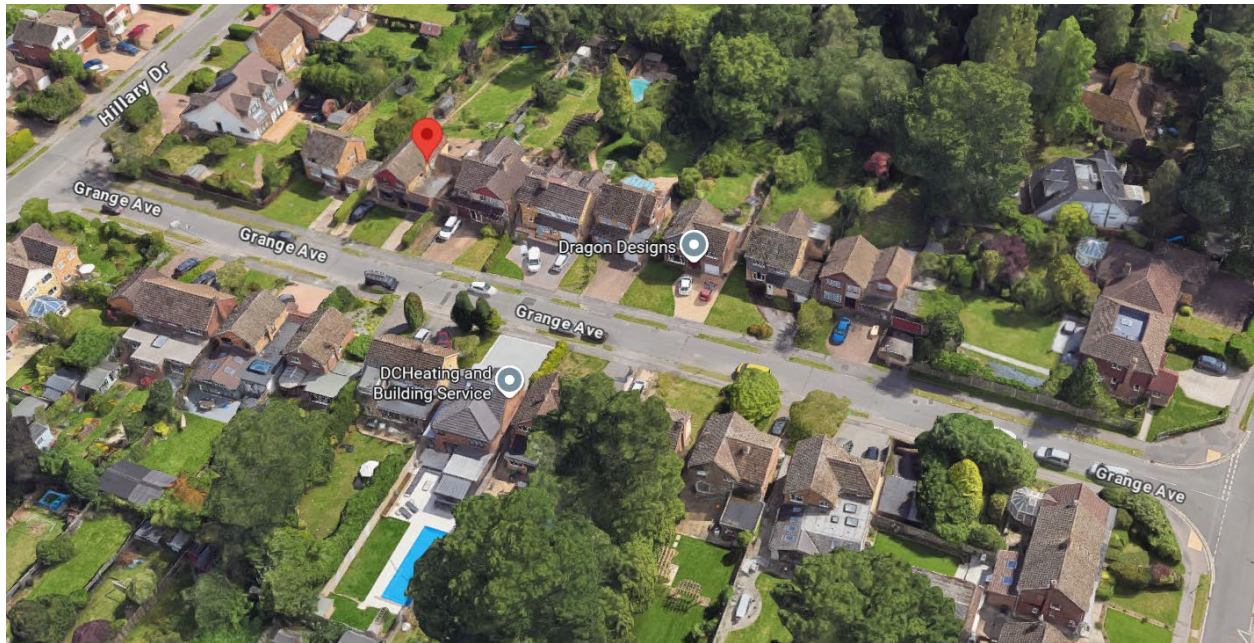
In summary, the proposal is fully in line with national policy and the local development plan. There is strong policy support for extending and improving homes in sustainable locations like this, provided design and amenity considerations are satisfactorily addressed. The subsequent sections demonstrate compliance with these key considerations.

6. Assessment of Key Planning Considerations

6.1 Design, Character and Appearance

Scale and Massing: The scale of the proposed extensions is proportionate to the host dwelling and surrounding development. The two-storey side extension is tucked above an existing single-storey element, with a modest width that does not exceed the house's side projection. By **referencing No.15 Grange Avenue** as a precedent – a nearby property on the same street that has a comparable two-storey side extension and enlarged footprint – the design demonstrates it will fit comfortably into the established pattern of the street. The ridge and eaves heights of the side extension match those of the existing house, maintaining a harmonious roofline; yet, because it is set back slightly from the front façade, it appears subservient when viewed from the street. The single-storey rear extension, which extends 5.9m beyond the rear wall, features a flat roof and

is divided into distinct elements (with an open courtyard gap and a stepped entry from one side) to avoid a bulky, continuous mass. Overall, the massing echoes that of No.15 and other extended homes in the area, ensuring the dwelling will not look overextended – importantly, ample rear garden space remains (over 90% of the original unbuilt garden area is retained, well above policy expectations).



Street Scene and Materials: From Grange Avenue, the principal visible changes are the porch addition and the updated façade materials (dark brick and render) on No.3. These changes are considered positive and in keeping with the mixed street scene. Grange Avenue's homes were originally of similar age, but many have been individualised over time through extensions, different brick colours, cladding, porch designs, and window styles. Notably, there is no strict uniformity of materials or architectural style along the street. Some houses feature red brick; others, buff/yellow brick. Some have tile-hung or timber detailing; roof forms vary (several houses have front gable features, porch canopies, etc.). In this context, the introduction of a high-quality dark brick finish on No.3's extensions and front elevation will not be discordant – rather, it will provide a complementary contrast (for example, adjacent No.5 has lighter brickwork, so the darker tone on No.3 will create a pleasing variation. The use of matching dark brick on the side and rear facades of the new extensions ensures a consistent language wrapping the new parts of the building. The retained upper walls of the original house, rendered in neutral light grey/white, will recede visually, allowing the brick elements to stand out. This tactic breaks up the massing and avoids any single material dominating – an approach endorsed by the Borough Design Guide SPD for large extensions.



Architectural Design Quality: The proposal has been architect-designed (as evidenced by the coordinated plans) to update the 1970s house with some contemporary features while remaining sensitive to the house's form. For instance, the new front porch has a pitched tiled roof to tie in with the existing roof, maintaining a traditional element at the street frontage. In contrast, at the rear, a more modern aesthetic is used (flat green roofs, large, glazed doors), which is appropriate in a private garden setting and allows the design to maximise sustainability. The inclusion of green roofs is both functional and aesthetic: instead of looking onto an expanse of flat roofing, upper windows of neighbouring properties will instead look onto an attractive vegetated surface. The fenestration changes (new window configurations) are executed thoughtfully: windows on the extended elevations align with existing ones where possible, and new feature glazing (such as the tall slot window on the side or the sliding patio doors) is proportionate to the wall areas. Overall, the improved dwelling retains its single-family detached character; the alterations add a modern touch but do not significantly depart from the area's residential character. The street-facing changes (porch, front materials, boundary wall planting) will, if anything, enhance the curb appeal of No. 3, thereby contributing positively to the Grange Avenue streetscape.

Comparison with No. 15 Grange Avenue: A specific design reference has been made to No. 15, which underwent an extension/alteration. No.15 features a two-storey side extension and has similar overall proportions to what is proposed at No.3. By drawing on this example, the proposal at No.3 demonstrates consistency with an existing development on the road that has been successfully integrated. Just as No.15's extension did not harm the street scene, the proposed side extension at No.3 will appear as a natural evolution of the building line. Additionally, the mix of materials at No. 15 (which includes areas of contrasting brick/render) is mirrored in our proposal, reinforcing that material diversity is an established characteristic of Grange Avenue. In essence, the design of No.3 "takes cues" from No.15 and other extended neighbours to ensure it sits comfortably in context. There will be no adverse visual dominance: the house will still read as a single dwelling and not terraced or bulky – gaps to neighbours are retained, and the extensions are proportionate in size relative to the existing house.



In conclusion, the proposal represents a high-quality, context-responsive design. It satisfies Core Strategy Policy CP3 and the Borough Design Guide by respecting local character (through appropriate scale and materials) and by improving the property's appearance. The streetscape will maintain its varied yet harmonious character, and the development will not appear incongruous or overdeveloped.

6.2 Residential Amenity (Impact on Neighbours)

The proposal has been carefully designed to avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring properties:

- The two-storey side extension and rear extension comply with the BRE 45-degree guideline, ensuring no unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring windows.
- The single-storey rear extension is set back between approximately 3.5 and 3.7 metres from the boundary with No. 1 Grange Avenue, further mitigating any sense of enclosure.
- Windows within the side elevation are proposed with obscured glazing to prevent overlooking and protect privacy.
- Given the generous boundary setbacks, the depth of neighbouring properties, and the orientation of the site, the proposal will not result in an overbearing impact.

Overall, the development preserves a high standard of amenity for adjoining occupiers.

Outlook and Sense of Enclosure: The extensions have been designed not to significantly intrude on the outlook from neighbouring properties. For No.5, the two-storey addition sits alongside the blank side of No.5 and does not directly face their main windows; its presence will be perceptible, but given the existing separation between the houses and the relatively short length of the extension, it will not appear overbearing. The roof of the side extension will tie into No.3's roof with a hipped end, further softening its profile from No.5's perspective. Additionally, because both No.3 and No.5 have decent spacing around them (detached properties), the situation remains one of two separate houses with a gap, rather than a continuous built wall – hence No.5 will not experience a “boxed-in” feeling. On the other side, No.1 is largely unaffected in terms of outlook: the

single-storey rear extension is far enough away and mostly hidden behind No.3's bulk when viewed from No.1. The retained gap of 3.5m+ and the one-storey height ensure No.1's occupants will continue to enjoy an open aspect along the boundary and down their garden. The overall separation distances and setbacks exceed those typically seen in suburban settings (indeed, many extensions are closer), so the proposal should not result in unreasonable enclosure or dominance. Both adjacent dwellings will remain in their current open suburban environment.

Privacy and Overlooking: The proposal is designed to protect the privacy of adjoining homes and gardens. No new side-facing windows are introduced at the first-floor level unless they are obscure-glazed. In fact, the plans indicate a new high-level obscured window on the side elevation facing No.5 (serving a bathroom) – this will be fitted with opaque glass and fixed/non-opening below 1.7m, so it cannot afford views towards No.5's property. A new first-floor window is proposed on the elevation facing No. 1. The window will serve a dressing room and will be fitted with obscure glazing to safeguard neighbouring privacy. There is a new window on the first-floor level in the east elevation that will serve the main bedroom; however, the window is 9.2m from the boundary shared with No. 1 and will only have views of No.1's garden. On the ground floor, additional windows/doors face into the applicant's own garden (rear or the internal courtyard) and are screened by boundary fences and planting; thus, there is no change in ground-floor overlooking (fences will block any direct view to the neighbour's side). The rear-facing windows/doors (e.g., the sliding doors in the new extension, and new Juliet balcony doors for the master bedroom onto the terrace) will face down No.3's own garden. While they could potentially provide some angled views toward adjacent gardens (as is typical from any rear first-floor window), this is no different from the existing situation – currently, No.3's rear windows already allow some overlooking of the very ends of neighbours' gardens, which is considered normal and acceptable in residential areas. The new first-floor terrace for the master bedroom is bounded by a glass balustrade and is set within the footprint of the rear extension; to prevent any loss of privacy, frosted or opaque side screens can be installed on the edges of this terrace (this can be secured by condition) so that occupants cannot look directly over into No.5 or No.1's garden from the terrace. The primary view from the terrace will be towards No. 3's own rear garden and beyond (which actually improves surveillance of the applicant's garden). With such measures in place, no direct overlooking of neighbours' private amenity areas will result. In summary, the development is not expected to compromise the privacy of No. 1 or No. 5.

It is also worth noting that No.5 and No.1 also have features mitigating privacy concerns: No.5's closer windows facing No.3 is obscure-glazed (serving bathroom/stairs), and its main rooms are oriented differently, and No.1's house is angled such that direct facing toward the extension is minimal. Combined with our proposal's careful window placement, the mutual privacy of all residents is maintained.

Noise and Disturbance: The proposed use remains a single-family dwelling. The extensions will create a modern living space without intensifying residential use in a harmful way; there is no subdivision or additional dwelling. Any noise, for example, from use of the rear terrace or patio, will be typical of normal domestic activity and not materially different from the existing use of the garden. The dwellinghouse benefits from an existing wood-burning stove in the front room, which has not created any issues regarding residential amenity. A flue for a wood-burning stove is proposed in the new rear extension. It will comply with building regulations, be modest, and vent smoke at roof level, well away from neighbours. Its emissions and any minor sound (e.g., during use) are not planning issues of significant concern at this scale. During construction, standard hours and methods will be observed to minimise temporary disturbance. Overall, neighbours' noise amenity will not be adversely affected on a permanent basis.

In conclusion, the proposal has no unacceptable impact on residential amenity for adjacent occupiers. It passes key tests (daylight, 45°) and, through design measures (setbacks, obscure glazing), it avoids overlooking or overbearing effects. Neighbours will retain their outlook, privacy, and daylight virtually unchanged. This compliance with amenity standards means the development accords with Core Strategy CP3's requirement to not harm neighbouring living conditions, as well as the Council's supplementary guidance on extensions (which emphasise careful treatment of height and proximity to boundaries). Essentially, the extensions are designed to be neighbourly and can coexist comfortably with the surrounding homes.

6.3 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency

A standout attribute of the proposal is its commitment to sustainability, which goes beyond the minimum requirements for a household project. The design incorporates several measures that collectively align with Wokingham's Climate Emergency agenda, the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, and NPPF (Chapter 14).

Energy Efficiency Enhancements: The scheme will significantly improve the dwelling's thermal performance. By proposing external wall insulation with a render finish on the existing external walls, the applicant will upgrade the older cavity wall to modern insulation standards, reducing heat loss. New build elements (extensions) will be constructed to the current Building Regulations, or better, with high levels of insulation in walls, roofs, and floors. High-performance double- or triple-glazing in the new windows will replace older windows, reducing heat loss and drafts. In addition, the design rationalises the internal layout (for example, the new porch will act as a draft lobby; the removal of an old conservatory and replacement with properly insulated construction will eliminate a thermal weak point). These measures reduce energy demand for heating and cooling, directly supporting Core Strategy CP1 (sustainable development) and the SPD guidance.

Renewable Energy – Solar Panels: The inclusion of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof will enable on-site renewable electricity generation. The likely installation (as indicated on the plans) is a set of solar panels on the flat roof of the rear extension (relocating the existing solar panels installed on the east-facing slope of the existing house roof), and additional panels on the south-west-facing slope of the proposed two-storey extension roof. These will be sited to maximise sun exposure but shielded from view as much as possible (flat roof panels can be laid flush or on brackets with minimal visibility behind the parapet). The PV array will reduce the household's reliance on the grid and reduce carbon emissions, in line with NPPF 164(b), which encourages renewable energy in new development. This also responds to the Council's Sustainable Design SPD, which strongly supports domestic-scale renewables.

Green Roofs and Biodiversity: The proposed sedum green roofs on both the new rear extension and the replaced garage roof deliver multiple sustainability benefits. Environmentally, they will (a) provide urban greening and biodiversity habitat (attracting insects and birds, contributing to local ecological networks), (b) help with rainwater attenuation (absorbing rainwater and reducing surface runoff, which aligns with sustainable drainage principles), and (c) improve the building's insulation (sedum roofs have a cooling effect in summer and additional insulation value year-round). The green roofs demonstrate a proactive approach to biodiversity net gain, even on a small site, satisfying Core Strategy CP7 (which seeks biodiversity enhancement in development where possible). Visually, as noted, they also soften the appearance of the extensions for both the occupants and neighbours, which is a qualitative environmental benefit.

Water and Resources: While not explicitly specified in the planning documents, the extensions are expected to include modern, water-efficient fittings (e.g., dual-flush toilets, low-flow taps) in accordance with building regulations. The large roof area (with a green roof) could also support rainwater harvesting for garden use, and the landscaping plan includes new planting that will contribute to cooling and air quality. Reusing the existing structure as much as possible (the scheme largely stays within the current footprint and extends it moderately) is inherently more sustainable than demolishing and rebuilding, preserving embodied energy.

Climate Resilience: The design improves ventilation and shading – for example, the courtyard and multiple aspect windows allow cross-ventilation, and the green roofs and insulation mitigate overheating. The new trees or planting in front will also offer shade. Thus, the home will be more resilient to heatwaves and cold spells.

In summary, the proposal exemplifies sustainable development at householder level. It not only meets policy requirements but also exceeds them by voluntarily integrating renewable energy and biodiversity features that are typically not found in every extension. This will help future-proof the dwelling and contribute to Wokingham Borough's borough-

wide carbon-reduction goals. The planning merits of these measures weigh positively in favour of the application, showing the applicant's commitment to environmental responsibility. The development therefore complies with the NPPF's sustainability objectives, Core Strategy CP1 and CP7, and the guidance of the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (which encourages retrofitting existing homes to reduce emissions).

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

In reaching a planning judgement, the proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole and has been assessed against all other material considerations.

The development is acceptable in principle, responds positively to the character of Grange Avenue, and reflects established patterns of development, including the comparable scale and proportions evident at **No. 15 Grange Avenue**. Adequate boundary setbacks are maintained, the scheme complies with the BRE 45-degree guideline, and privacy is protected through obscured glazing. Accordingly, the proposal would not cause material harm to neighbouring occupiers.



The scheme delivers clear benefits, including improved living accommodation, enhanced sustainability performance through sedum roofs and solar panels, and visual improvements to the dwelling and its setting. When the realistic Permitted Development fallback is considered, the proposal delivers a coordinated, higher-quality outcome than would otherwise be possible.

There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the proposal's benefits when assessed against the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

In conclusion, the proposal accords with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), would not result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or character, and represents sustainable development for which planning permission should be granted.