

## **DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT**



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

|                                                                                                                                                            |                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Application Number:</b>                                                                                                                                 | 260264                                 |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                                                                                                                                       | 26 Lockhart Drive, Wokingham, RG40 5BG |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>                                                                                                                                        | 31 March 2026                          |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>                                                                                                                                    | 02/03/2026                             |
| <b>Proposal:</b> Householder application for proposed installation of two front roof lights and erection of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion. |                                        |

| <b>PLANNING POLICY</b>                           |                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>National Policy</b>                           | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<br>National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)                                          |
| <b>Core Strategy (CS)</b>                        | CP1 – Sustainable Development<br>CP3 – General Principles for Development<br>CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals |
| <b>MDD Local Plan (MDD)</b>                      | CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development                                                                        |
| <b>Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)</b>      | DM1 - Sustainable Development                                                                                                  |
| <b>Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)</b> | SS1 – Sustainable development principles                                                                                       |
| <b>Other</b>                                     | Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document<br>CIL Guidance + 123 List                                                |

**PLANNING HISTORY-** N/A

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

**Internal**

N/A

**External**

|     |
|-----|
| N/A |
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## REPRESENTATIONS

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Parish/Town Council | No comments received |
| Ward Member(s)      | No comments received |
| Neighbours          | No comments received |

## APPRAISAL

### Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, link detached house located on Lockhart Drive in the major development location of Wokingham that is primarily characterised semi-detached and linked detached properties set in discernible groupings which are distinguished by repeated house type.

The application site is within a new extension to Wokingham and there is a strong continuity between the built form of the houses and spatial characteristics.

### 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 in the major development of Wokingham 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:

CP1 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed installation of two front roof lights and erection of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

CP3 of the Core Strategy requires the proposed installation of two front roof lights and erection of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion to be of an appropriate scale, mass, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design.

The proposed dormer window will be located on the rear elevation of the dwelling and will extend the existing loft. The dormer window will measure c.5.26 metres in width, c.3.91 metres in depth and c.2.73 metres in height.

The proposed dormer would represent a substantial addition, extending across the majority of the rear roof slope. Its flat-roofed form would appear bulky and box-like, resulting in a design that contrasts with the pitched roof of the host dwelling and the prevailing character of surrounding properties. However, the dormer would be positioned on the rear roof slope and, although visible from some parts of the public realm, it would not appear highly prominent within the street scene. This form of development is not characteristic of the immediate context but box dormers to rear roof slopes are not uncommon within the wider Wokingham area.

Notwithstanding this, the departure from the established pattern of development is indicative of a fundamental concern in respect of neighbouring amenity. The scale and massing of the proposal, when considered alongside the limited spatial separation, would result in insufficient distance to adequately safeguard the privacy and outlook of neighbouring dwellings. This matter is explored in further detail within the “Neighbour Amenity” section below. In essence, there is good reason why the neighbouring properties do not have similar box dormer window to the rear.

The proposed 3.no roof lights on the front elevation are of appropriate design and scale and would not appear as incongruous features in their residential setting. As a result, the new roof lights would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

### **Neighbouring Amenity:**

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

The NPPF para 135 states that planning decision should ensure development creates places with “*with a high standard of amenity*”.

#### *Overlooking:*

The proposed rear dormer windows would be sited approximately 22.13 metres from the rear elevation of the neighbouring dwelling at No. 32 Readwin Crescent. This would fail to meet Section R16 of the Borough Design Guide, which states that the minimum back-to-back separation distance required to maintain privacy and limit the sense of enclosure for windows above two storeys is 26 metres. In the context of this application, the dormer would only retain a back-to-back separation distance of approximately 22.5 metres from the rear elevations of Nos. 30 and 32 Readwin Crescent, 3.5 metres short of the minimum standard.

As stated, the dormer window would be a large, dominating feature on the roof slope. The gardens of the neighbouring properties are relatively modest, and the proposed

dormer window would be prominent from all parts of the neighbouring rear gardens and from the outlook of rear windows. The land between the properties is flat and there are no large intervening features. The shortfall in minimum separation distance is therefore significant in the context of the application site. The development would result in a detrimental loss of privacy and an overbearing and dominating feature for those residents.

The dormer windows are proposed to serve a habitable bedroom, and it would not be reasonable or practical to rely on obscure glazing to mitigate overlooking. In any event, even if such a measure were imposed, the scale, massing, and proximity of the dormer window would still give rise to a strong perception of overlooking and an unacceptable overbearing feature.

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.”* The development fails to meet the minimum back-to-back separation distances set out in the adopted Borough Design Guide SPD and, for the reasons outlined above, results in poor design. The application should therefore be refused in accordance with the NPPF.

The new rooflight windows on the front elevation would overlook the front driveway and public realm. There are no detrimental privacy concerns from these features.

Overall, the proposed flat-roof rear dormer window would unacceptably overlook the rear elevations and gardens of Nos. 30 and 32 Readwin Crescent and would appear as a dominating and overbearing feature to the detriment of the occupiers' privacy and amenity. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Section R16 of the Borough Design Guide SPD, and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Loss of Light:**

*The proposed erection of rear dormers and rooflights does not increase the roof height or massing. As such, there is no detrimental material loss of light.*

**Amenity Space:**

The proposed dormer and rooflights would not adversely harm the usability of the site's rear amenity space for the current and future occupiers.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the proposed dormer and rooflights and loft conversion by reason of the lack of separation distances, the proposed rear dormer would unacceptably overlook the rear elevations and gardens of nos.30 and 32 Readwin Crescent, to the detriment of the occupiers' privacy and amenities. The proposals are therefore contrary to policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, R16 of the Borough Design Guide SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, it is not 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 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.

|                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>              |                             |
| <b>Conditions agreed:</b>          | Not required                |
| <b>Recommendation:</b>             | Refuse                      |
| <b>Date:</b>                       | 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 |
| <b>Earliest date for decision:</b> | 24 February 2026            |

|                                                           |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Recommendation agreed by:<br/>(Authorised Officer)</b> | <i>MC</i>         |
| <b>Date:</b>                                              | <b>31.03.2026</b> |

**PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS**  
*Insert where relevant*