

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260894
Site Address:	14 Howell Close, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9QN
Expiry Date:	11 June 2026
Site Visit Date:	4 June 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed garage conversion into habitable accommodation and changes to fenestration.	

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 CP7 – Biodiversity CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS4 – Development within or adjacent to minor settlements FD1 – Development and flood risk (from all sources) FD2 – Sustainable drainage
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
260137	Pre-application advice for proposed conversion of existing garage to create habitable accommodation following internal amendments plus changes to fenestration.	Replied 18/06/26

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal
WBC Digital Solutions Scanning- No comments received

WBC CIL- No comments received
External
None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Arborfield and Newland Parish Council raises no objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL
Site Description: The application site relates to a semi-detached two storey dwelling with associated parking and landscaping, located in the residential area of Arborfield, Wokingham. Planning History: A pre-application was received under 260137 for the proposed garage conversion. Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed garage conversion to accommodate a new family area along with changes to fenestration. 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 CP3 of the Core Strategy states that developments are of appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to other adjoining and users. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area. Howell Close and the surrounding area comprise of dwellings with consistent and prevailing architectural style in varying forms. The proposed development consists of the reconfiguration of the ground floor by converting the existing garage into a family room along with fenestration changes and removal of the existing garage door.

The Borough Design Guide (BDG) R15 states that buildings must be designed to provide reasonable levels of visual privacy to habitable rooms. The proposed windows to the front and side elevations raise no concerns. The development is contained within the site boundary and maintains a minimum 1-metre separation from neighbouring properties. The front-facing windows project outward but primarily overlook vegetation, and are not considered to result in harmful overlooking.

Therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable and will have an acceptable impact on the character of the street scene. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and the advice and guidance contained in the Borough Design Guide.

Neighbouring Amenity: The original garage door is being removed and replaced with one window to the front of the dwelling. As the existing plans show, the existing development was for a garage. As aforementioned, the new proposal doesn't cause any concern for loss of light, overbearing, or overlooking on adjacent neighbours. Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the street scene and local character in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The submitted block plan demonstrates parking for three vehicles within the application site. Whilst the access drive is a private, unadopted road and parking is shown along it, the road is not a through route and, on the basis of the information submitted, the level of parking associated with this proposal is not considered likely to result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the free flow of vehicles. This conclusion is reached having regard to the limited scale of the proposal and the circumstances of this particular site. It does not establish a precedent for other similar garage conversion proposals along the road, which would need to be assessed on their own individual merits, including the cumulative effect of any additional parking pressure on the private access drive.

Flooding and Drainage: The application site is situated in an area suitable for low level fluvial flooding. The proposed development is minor in scale and is not expected to result in any significant increase in impermeable area or surface water runoff. As such the development is unlikely to have a material impact on flood risk either on site or elsewhere. Therefore, there have been no objections raised

Ecology: This application site is located in an area suited for bat roosts. As the proposal is for a garage conversion, and the proposed works do not encroach the main roof, no objection from Ecology have been raised.

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.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	5 June 2026
Earliest date for decision:	13 May 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	09.06.2026