

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242503
Site Address:	1 Cutbush Close, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 4XA
Expiry Date:	26 November 2024
Site Visit Date:	08/11/2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed garage conversion to form porch, single storey rear extension and an outbuilding following demolition of previous extension and conservatory.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Major Development Location - Earley
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Tree Preservation Orders - TPO-0279-1985 (not in place anymore)
Thames Basin Heaths SPA Mitigation Zones – 7Km

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 CP6 – Managing Travel Demand 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 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
070486	Proposed erection of single storey side extension plus conservatory.	Approved 05/03/2007

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees – Requested additional clarification (further details below)

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection but requests a condition for the extension to be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling. <i>(Officer's comments: refer to "Character of the Area" section below.)</i>
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	A letter of objection from the occupant of no. 24 Red House Close on the following grounds: - Significant safety and accessibility concerns, as location of proposed development is on a blind corner, the additional presence of work vehicles and machinery during the construction period is likely to exacerbate this issue, and may prevent essential services (emergency vehicles) from accessing Red House Close. <i>(Officer's comments: the site visit confirmed that the subject property has an extensive front driveway so any construction/machinery could utilise this space without obstructing the highway.)</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The subject property is a semi-detached two storey dwelling, with ample front driveway, located within a mainly residential area in Earley. The original property has been previously extended with single storey extensions to the side and rear. The site is enclosed by a variety of trees and shrubs including many conifers and bamboo trees towards the eastern side boundary, the most significant tree being a mature cherry adjacent to the front entrance which contributes to the street scene.

Proposal:

Planning permission is sought for the proposed erection of a single storey side/rear extension, the conversion of the integrated double garage into a family lounge, an infill front extension to create an extended front porch/lobby, and the erection of a detached single storey outbuilding (gym) to the eastern side of the house.

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:

The existing property is considerably set back from the main Cutbush Close (over 10m) and with mature landscaping/fencing as front boundary treatment, so that the proposed extensions would be fairly screened from public views, particularly noting its single storey nature. The proposed garage conversion and front infill extension would result in an altered front elevation of the house; however, the result would be additional fenestration of similar design to those already existing in the property, so that overall, the proposed development would not result in any significant detriment to visual amenity and local character.

It is noted the concerns raised by the Earley Town Council, that the proposed additional accommodation has the potential to form a separate unit of accommodation. However, the proposed floor plans show the extension to the rear would have a new bedroom and ensuite with living/kitchen and office space, all of which would be directly linked to the existing dwelling with no separate access. Furthermore, the proposed gym outbuilding would be located right next to the side of the main house, as a typical detached garage would. So that in this case, imposing an ancillary condition would not be reasonable nor necessary for the purpose of development hereby proposed.

The WBC Trees and Landscape Officer has queried the materials proposed for the outbuilding. This has been clarified by the applicant/agent stating it would be timber insulated panels. This is considered acceptable in this case.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The proposed extensions would be single storey and with no windows proposed on its side elevations, so that no overlooking impact upon neighbouring dwellings would be anticipated.

The site visit confirmed that the subject dwelling has an existing single storey extension to the rear which is right up to the side boundary with the adjoining semi no. 3 Cutbush Close, and this property also benefits from a rear extension. The proposed rear extension would not extend beyond the rear wall of the existing extension, and would be single storey with maximum eaves height at 2.5m (total roof height 3.3m), so that it would not be considered to result in any significant overbearing or overshadowing impacts upon habitable rooms/spaces of this neighbouring dwelling. Likewise, whilst the proposed detached gym outbuilding would be close to the eastern side boundary, this is the rearmost area of the rear garden of no. 29 Red House Close, and the outbuilding would be single storey with maximum roof height 3.5m, so that unduly harm would be anticipated upon this neighbouring private amenities.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal would result in the conversion of the double garage into additional habitable accommodation, thus reducing the parking spaces on site. However, the submitted parking plan shows ample provision for at least 3 car spaces within the front driveway/garden which is entirely covered in gravel, and this was confirmed during the site visit. Therefore, the remaining parking provision on site is considered acceptable in accordance with the Council's parking standards, so that no concerns are raised on this ground.

It is acknowledged that the proposed side outbuilding will remove the side access to the rear of the property; however, there is ample space within the frontage of the site to accommodate cycle parking, so that in this instance it is considered acceptable.

Amenity Space:

The proposed side/rear extension would occupy the existing patio area/conservatory, so that the remaining rear garden would still be of an adequate size and capable of accommodating typical garden activities.

Landscape and Trees:

The WBC Trees and Landscape Officer has been consulted on the proposals, who has indicated that on the rear east boundary of the site is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 279/1985, T8, a blue Atlantic cedar, aerial photos show the tree has not been in place for some decades.

The submitted proposed Block Plan shows the proposed outbuilding will be very close to the eastern side boundary, which the site visit confirmed is covered in bamboo trees. Further clarification has been sought from the agent who has confirmed that these trees will be removed as they are in the same location of the proposed outbuilding. It is noted that none of these bamboo trees are protected, so that in this instance, there would be no unacceptable loss of landscape features/trees as part of the proposals.

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:	12 November 2024
Earliest date for decision:	24 October 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	12 November 2024