

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242247
Site Address:	53 Skelmerdale Way, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7YB
Expiry Date:	14 January 2025
Site Visit Date:	26 November 2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed single storey front extension with a two-storey side and rear extension in addition to a part garage conversion following the demolition of the conservatory.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Local Authorities
Affordable Housing Thresholds
Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Borough Parishes
Scale and Location of Development Proposals
Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
Nuclear Consultation Zone
Public Open Space
Borough Wards
Landscape Character Assessment Area
Land Terrier
SSSI Impact Risk Zones

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
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
072119	Proposed erection of rear conservatory to dwelling.	Approved 22/06/07

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways: No objection

WBC Ecology Householder: No objection

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council: No objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Two storey detached dwelling.

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 part garage conversion would not have a harmful impact upon the street scene as there are no external changes as the garage door is remaining as part of the front extension and the changes would be internally, and from the front elevation the appearance of the garage would be similar although project further forward than the existing.

The Borough Design Guide *“front extensions should generally be no more than 1 storey in height and should not project forward of the building line”*. The single front extension would be single storey but project 2m forward of the building line, thus not being fully compliant with the BDG. However, this aspect of the proposal would still be considered a subservient addition which is suitable in scale and form which would not harm the character of the area.

The R23 design principle within the Borough Design Guide states *“alterations or extensions should be clearly subservient to the form and scale of the original building in most situations, although there may be exceptions where it is more appropriate to*

design a seamless continuation". The first-floor element of the extension both to the rear and to the side is not entirely subservient to the existing dwelling as the proposal includes the creation of additional first floor habitable accommodation and the roof height of the side extension is not set down from the main dwelling's ridge nor is the extension set back from the principal elevation. However, development over the garage of this nature is very common with the immediate area and the proposal is not overly excessive in size or built form and as the neighbouring properties in the surrounding area differ in size and appearance, there will be no unacceptable harmful impact on street scene and character.

The BDG states *"for properties in formal suburbia whether detached, semi-detached or short terraces, the rhythm of buildings and the gaps between them along the street frontage is often important to the character of the area. Side extensions should be set back from the building line by at least 1m, preferably with a lower roof line and should be at least 1m from the plot boundary"*. The proposed side extension would match the existing front building line, with a matching roof line and approx. 1.10m from the plot boundary, thus complying with the BDG. Therefore, it is considered to be a subservient addition which is suitable in scale and form which would not harm the character of the area.

The proposed side extension will result in the continuation of the ridge line of the dwelling, which is discouraged. However, the set back from the boundary and separation distance from the site boundary (no.51) sufficiently mitigates any terracing effect concerns. The eaves/ridge height would not be raised and would match that of the existing. The extension is acceptable in the context of the host dwelling and would not adversely impact the character of the area. The proposed side extension would be a complimentary design to the host dwelling and would not be an incongruent or dominant feature to the host dwelling.

R23 of the Borough Design Guide requires rear extensions to be limited to 4m in depth and extensions to be stepped down from the main ridge. It also seeks to achieve a coherent and well-designed approach that influences and responds to the original building. The two storey rear extension would be less than 4m in depth and would be stepped down from the main ridge, thus complying with the BDG. The rear extension is considered to be sympathetic and relates well to the main dwelling. Moreover, being located at the rear it wouldn't be prominent from the public realm. Hence, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character of the host property or surrounding area.

The proposal would differ to the current street scene and slightly alter the characteristics of the street. However, the new window first floor window would be similar to the existing in size and proportions of current ground floor window along Skelmerdale Way, meaning that the proposal would not negatively harm the street scene. The proposal meets the recommendations of the Borough Design Guide and is line with policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

The proposed materials would be similar to the existing, therefore in keeping with the current characteristics of the dwelling and would not harm the street scene. Furthermore, within the street scene there is no set material palette.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The scheme would add additional window at the front of the property as part of the two storey side extension. Whilst the proposed window would face another property opposite, it is noted that Skelmerdale Way, a public road, is located adjacent to the site. As such, the proposal would not result in a greater overlooking impact into residential properties than is currently present as the window at the front of the extension would overlook the street scene and therefore no harmful impact would occur.

Along the ground floor, 4 side windows would be added to the side facing no.51. The windows would face a blank brick wall resulting in no harmful overlooking. Whilst no.51 does have a first-floor side window, the proposal includes adding a high-level window only at first floor level facing no.51. Such addition would not result in harmful overlooking.

The two first floor windows on the east elevation, both will be obscured glazed to prevent overlooking.

The double doors and bi-folding doors to the rear would be screened by the existing boundary treatment, thus preventing overlooking.

The proposed first floor window to the rear would not result in harmful overlooking, as there are no properties directly to the rear of the host dwelling (the property backs onto Skelmerdale Way Playground).

Loss of Light: As a result of the side extension, there is a potential loss of light to the front window of no.51 (see plan 2427-P102 Rev B). Whilst a line of 45* degrees would marginally be breached as a result of the extension, the 45* degree rule of thumb is guidance rather than policy, and so is applied on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, the breach is considered minimal and only a limited amount of light would be lost to first floor front window which is a large triple window likely serving a bedroom. Therefore, is not considered to be a reasonable reason to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects and given the neighbouring property would still have adequate access to natural light.

Overbearing: The separation distance from the flank wall to side boundary would be approx. 1.10m, which complies with such separation distance set out in the BDG. Furthermore, within the immediate area there are examples of dwellings of a similar separation distance apart with dwellings staggered so the impact is reduced to a certain degree, thus not considered to be detrimentally overbearing.

The plot size is considered appropriate in the context of development in the area and the size of the dwelling would be proportionate to its plot with the height of the dwelling not increasing; therefore, it will not be considered overbearing.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The parking plan (2427-P106 Rev: C) demonstrates that parking for up to three vehicles is possible, therefore no objection.

Ecology: The Ecologist concluded that the property has no potential bat access

points to the roof void or for crevice-dwelling bat species. There are no ecological objections to development proposed.

Amenity Space: The proposal reduces the amount of amenity space available to the property, but it would still be roughly rectangular in shape, receive sunlight for part of the day and be able to accommodate typical garden activities for the size of property as set out in the Borough Design Guide. Therefore, the reduction in amenity space is not considered to have a harmful impact on the amenity of the occupier.

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:	10 January 2025
Earliest date for decision:	10 December 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	13 January 2025