

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242767
Site Address:	6 Pitts Lane, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 1BT
Expiry Date:	26 December 2024
Site Visit Date:	26/11/2024
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed demolition of existing conservatory and kitchen, preceding the erection of a single storey rear extension, and installation of 2 roof dormers to form second floor extension. Plus addition of dormer to detached garage to form first floor garage extension.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Scale and Location of Development Proposals
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Sites of Urban Landscape Value
- Landscape Character Assessment Area

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 CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC05 – Renewable Energy and Decentralised Energy Networks CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB05 – Housing Mix
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
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
241311	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed provision of a twin unit mobile home within the garden of the lawful dwelling house for use as additional accommodation by one household.	Approved, 18/07/2024
972013	Proposed Single Storey Front Two Storey Side & Single Storey Rear Extensions. Construction Of Side Extension to form garage. erection of detached double garage with studio over. dormer extension in roof space.	Approved, 06/06/1997

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Property Services – No comments received.

WBC Highways – No objections.

WBC Landscape and Trees – No objections, subject to a condition.

External

None consulted.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Earley Town Council raises no objection to the application, provided the following conditions are imposed by WBC: 1. The altered garage must remain ancillary to the main dwelling and not be sold, sub-let, or used as a separate dwelling to preserve the area's character, amenities, and highway safety (in line with Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP4, and MDD Local Plan Policies CC01, CC07, TB07, TB08). 2. Details preventing access to the flat roof of the ground floor extension must be submitted, approved, and implemented prior to first occupation of the specified bedrooms, ensuring the privacy and amenity of neighboring properties, as supported by Policy CP3.
Ward Member(s)	Councillor Stephen Newton: • Mobile Home: Recent approval for a mobile home in the rear garden (Ref. 241311) is not mentioned, and the applicant appears to be different. Questions arise about whether the property has been sold or the

	mobile home installed. <i>Officer comment: The recently granted Certificate of Lawfulness for the siting of a mobile home at the application site, or the sale of the property, is not considered relevant to the assessment of this planning application.</i> • Flat Roof Access: Master Bedroom and Bedroom 1 appear to have access to the flat roof of the ground floor extension. Concerns about potential use as a sun deck and its intrusion on neighbours' privacy are raised. If approved, clarify that access is solely for fire escape purposes. • Bedroom 3 Dormer: The dormer for Bedroom 3 appears disproportionately large, potentially intrusive to neighbouring properties. • Rear Dormers: Rear-facing dormers in general can cause visual intrusion and overlooking of neighbouring gardens. They should be discouraged unless mitigating circumstances justify their inclusion.
Neighbours	ACER - The Whitegates Residents Association: • Previous Application: Approval for a mobile home (Ref. 241311) is not mentioned in the current proposal. <i>Officer comment: The granted Certificate of Lawfulness for the siting of a mobile home at the application site is not deemed relevant to the assessment of this planning application.</i> • Flat Roof Access: Inward-opening doors could allow roof use, enabling intrusive views; ACER recommends a condition to prohibit recreational use. • Guest Bedroom 3 Dormer: Large dormer with minimal setback (250mm) could resemble a three-storey feature and cause significant overlooking. • Rear Dormers: ACER opposes rear-facing dormers due to their impact on privacy, preferring front-facing dormers. • Condition Request: If approved, prohibit recreational use of the rear extension roof to protect neighbours' privacy.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site relates to a two storey, semi-detached house located in an established residential area that is characterised by detached properties that vary in style and architecture.

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 proposed flat-roof dormer windows would be set down from the main ridge and positioned in from the eaves of the host property. Although the dormers are of mismatched scale, resulting in an unbalanced and asymmetrical appearance within the main rear roof slope, this would not appear obtrusive or out of place within the local context, which features a mix of styles, scales, roof forms, and profiles. Additionally, this aspect of the proposal would not be visible from the public realm, with only limited glimpsed views of the dormers from the street scene. Therefore, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

The proposed single story rear extension would have a flat roof and would protrude approximately 5.5 metres from the rear of the dwelling. As it would not be visible from the street scene, it would not adversely impact the character of the area.

The scheme also includes the replacement of the existing panelled-style windows with fully glazed windows. While the host property and neighbouring properties along Pitts Lane predominantly feature traditional window designs, the proposed replacement windows would slightly detract from the traditional character of the area by introducing a more contemporary style of fenestration. However, it is deemed that this element of the proposals could be constructed under permitted development though Class A, Part 1, Schedule 2 and therefore granted planning permission by Article 3 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (GPDO). This represents a valid fall-back position that could be implemented.

While the modern windows would represent a significant departure from the existing traditional window design, the proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character or appearance of the area. This assessment takes into account the varied architectural styles and diverse front façades present along the street, which contribute to a varied street scene where such changes would not appear incongruous. As such, the replacement windows would not adversely impact the character of the area in this instance.

Garage

The proposals also include the installation of a flat roof dormer window and two front-facing rooflights to facilitate habitable accommodation within the roof space of the existing detached garage. These additions are considered modest and subservient in scale, ensuring they would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking:

Figure 4.25 in the councils Borough Design Guide provides a summary of the Council's minimum privacy and amenity distances guidelines. A minimum back-to-back separation distance of 26 metres for development over two storeys to mitigate overlooking and limit a sense of enclosure.

In this instance, there are no properties to the rear of the application site that could be directly overlooked. The proposed fenestration on the rear elevation would provide views comparable to those from the existing arrangement, primarily directed towards the far rear garden of the application site and the adjacent properties.

In residential areas, particularly those with a linear layout, a degree of mutual oblique overlooking between gardens is typical and not considered unreasonable. The proposed viewing angles towards the rear patio areas of the adjacent properties would remain oblique and limited in scope. Consequently, the proposals would not result in an unacceptable level of overlooking or a significant loss of privacy for either neighbouring property.

Concerns have been raised regarding the inward-opening doors proposed for the first-floor master bedroom and Guest Bedroom 1, as they could potentially enable use of the roof of the proposed single-storey rear extension as a balcony, resulting in overlooking and a loss of privacy for adjacent neighbouring properties. However, the proposed elevational drawings indicate that a Juliet balcony would be installed across each door to prevent access. Amended plans, submitted on 27/11/2024, have clarified this arrangement.

A suitable condition will be attached to any approval ensuring that the roof of the single-storey rear extension is not used as an amenity or recreational space under any circumstances.

Loss of Light:

The proposed development would be suitably located away from the adjacent neighbouring properties and of modest proportions not to pose any unreasonable concerns of overbearing or loss of light.

Overbearing:

In the context of the size of the rear roof slope of the host dwelling, the proposed dormers are of modest size and scale. They are adequately set down from the main ridge, set in from the eaves of the host property, and have a limited projection from the rear roof slope. Furthermore, due to the staggered positioning of the host dwelling relative to the neighbouring properties, the dormers would be suitably distanced from the amenity area of both adjacent properties. As such, any overbearing or sense of enclosure concerns would be minimal.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The proposal will not have a significant impact in respect of the overall number of habitable rooms and the councils parking standards. The existing level of driveway and garage parking will be retained, and this is considered acceptable to serve the

development.

The detached garage will be provided with annexe accommodation on the first floor. Highways has no objection to this subject to this remaining ancillary to the main dwelling.

Landscape and Trees:

The rear half of the site is within Bulmershe Site of Urban Landscape Value (SULV). The rear boundary joins with Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 3/1951, A1, on all trees living in 1951. The site is subject to TPO 1152/2006, T1, a hornbeam towards the front boundary, T2, a neighbouring lime and T3, a sycamore on the north boundary. The road features set back houses, many of which have been altered over time, on individual plots with verdant front gardens.

The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has reviewed this application and notes that the changes to the rear of the building are situated far from the SULV boundary, which is bordered by protected screening trees, and therefore considers there will be minimal impact on the SULV. Additionally, TPO tree T3 is deemed to be sufficiently distant from the proposed garage works to avoid any direct impact.

However, the Trees and Landscape Officer has raised concern regarding the TPO hornbeam, T1, located at the front of the site. This tree is positioned adjacent to the driveway access, where the gravel surface may be compressed by construction traffic, potentially damaging the roots. The low-hanging canopy could also be brushed and harmed by construction vehicles. While the Officer agrees with the agent that the tree will not be affected by the built form, no information has been provided on measures to protect the tree from construction activities. Consequently, a condition which secures an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works prior to any development has been suggested to address this concern. A suitable condition will be attached to any approval.

Other:

The roof level of the existing detached garage has been identified as being used for guest accommodation, as outlined in the Design and Access Statement. Notably, the roof level of the garage already benefits from planning permission for use as a studio, granted under PA: 97/65517/F. The proposed layout includes a sofa bed, toilet, shower, and kitchenette, raising concerns about the potential for the outbuilding to function as a self-contained unit separate from the main dwellinghouse.

However, amended plans received on 20/12/2024 now show that the kitchenette has been removed from the proposal. The inclusion of the remaining facilities does not, in itself, imply that the structure could or would be used as a separate dwelling. The outbuilding is not excessive in size for guest accommodation, maintains a close relationship with the main dwellinghouse, and does not benefit from any direct access to garden space of the main dwelling following the proposed removal of the rear swing doors.

Nevertheless, the creation of a self-contained unit of accommodation would not be acceptable. Therefore, should this application be recommended for approval, a condition would be imposed to ensure that the outbuilding remains ancillary to the

main dwellinghouse and is not used, sold, or sub-let as a separate dwelling.

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:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approval
Date:	22 November 2024
Earliest date for decision:	25 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	09.1.2025