

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	242643
Site Address:	2 Victor Way, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4UZ
Expiry Date:	16 December 2024
Site Visit Date:	5 November 2024
Proposal: Full application for the change of use from amenity land to residential, following a two storey side extension and a single storey rear extension, a garage conversion and changes to fenestration. Followed by the demolition of the existing conservatory.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Major Development Location – Woodley
Landscape Character Assessment Area – Woodley-Earley Settled and Farmed Clay

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 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 CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage CC07 – Parking TB21 – Landscape Character
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Woodley Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
240774	Householder application for proposed erection of a close-board fence on the boundary of the dwelling following the demolition of the existing brick wall on the boundary of the dwelling.	Withdrawn – 23/05/2024
19124	Detached house & garage	C/A – 31/03/1983

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection subject to condition
WBC Highways: No objection subject to condition
WBC Landscape and Trees: Object on the following grounds – the proposed two storey side extension is not subservient in design. No objection raised to the proposed change of use of amenity land and boundary treatment.

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	Woodley Town Council raised no objections.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is a detached two storey dwellinghouse located within the 1980s Woodley Airfield Development. The site sits on a prominent corner plot adjacent to the junction of Victor Way and Comet Way and the rear garden space runs in parallel to a green verge fronting Comet Way. This verge is within the Applicant's ownership but does not form part of the residential curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

The wider estate comprises a mix of housing types which are broadly uniform in architectural form and age but have a varied appearance due to differing examples of later additions and alterations.

Proposal:

This application proposes the erection of a boundary fence forward of the previous boundary treatment and the subsequent change of use of the enclosed amenity land to residential garden. The proposal also comprises the erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension, the conversion of the existing integral garage to create additional habitable accommodation plus fenestration changes following the demolition of the existing conservatory.

The proposed boundary treatment would sit forward of the existing boundary wall by a total of approximately 3.1m at a total height of 1.8m. The proposed fence facing Comet Way would be set back from the adjacent footpath at a minimum of approximately 1.75 and comprise brick piers and timber panels, while the fence facing Victor Way would be set back from the principal elevation of the host dwelling by approximately 10m and comprise timber piers and panels.

The proposed two storey side extension would have a total width of approximately 4m and would extend the full depth of the existing dwelling at ground floor level. Its ridge height of approximately 7.65m would match the existing main ridgeline and would

complement the existing gable roof form. The proposed single storey rear/side extension would project beyond the existing rear building line by approximately 3m with a pitched roof form of a total height of approximately 4m. To facilitate the proposed development, an existing outbuilding to the rear would be relocated into the enlarged garden space.

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.

Design and Character of the Area:

Proposed Boundary Treatment and Change of Use of Amenity Land:

Victor Way and the wider estate is characterised by open plan front gardens and strips of amenity land fronting the highway, although this has been slightly altered by examples of extended front drives. Traditionally, amenity strips are planned into development in order to maintain an open feel when traversing the street scene. The Borough Design Guide SPD states that boundary walls and fences in these areas would normally be inappropriate.

Where the proposal fronts Victor Way, the proposed fence would be well set back from the principal elevation of the host dwelling and retain the existing grass verge adjacent to the front drive. The proposal would therefore still contribute to the open plan character of Victor Way and as such would not appear unduly prominent within the immediate street scene.

Although the proposal would reduce the green buffer between the existing boundary wall and the footpath adjacent on Comet Way by a maximum of 3.1m, the repositioned boundary treatment would not represent a significant change to the existing arrangement or appear out of character within the wider area where the width of amenity strips vary. Moreover, due to the shape of the plot the fence would be angled away from the host dwelling, preventing the introduction of a blank façade and further mitigating the visual impact of the scheme.

The proposal would retain a sufficient portion of amenity space with the boundary fence set back from the edge of the adjacent footpath by a minimum of 1.75m. This would limit the spatial impact of the partial loss of the amenity strip and therefore there would be minimal impact on the open feel pedestrians experience when traversing the street scene. The proposed timber boards with brick piers would be in keeping with several examples within the immediate street scene, including No.7 Tiger Close adjacent to the east, and would therefore have an acceptable impact on

local character.

Proposed Extensions and Alterations to the Host Dwelling:

Section 4.11 of the Borough Design Guide states that extensions to dwellings 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 Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has objected to the design of the proposed two storey extension on the grounds that it would not be subservient to the form and scale of the original dwelling. Although the proposed extension would not be set down from the existing ridgeline or set back from the front elevation at first floor level and would not appear as a clearly subservient addition to the host dwelling in this respect, in this instance a seamless continuation of the roofline would be more appropriate and would respond positively to the original building.

Due to the width of the existing dwelling, and the site benefiting from a wider plot in comparison to neighbouring dwellings, the proposed extension would appear as a proportionate addition in terms of its size. On this basis, the continuation of the roofline would not be overly visually dominant, with its visual impact sufficiently mitigated by the significant separation distance from both street frontages retained.

Moreover, the proposal's first floor gable feature would complement the building's existing frontage whereas a more traditionally subservient feature would likely not complement this existing feature successfully. Therefore, the proposal would not result in any detrimental harm to the visual amenity of the street scene or local character in this instance.

The proposed single storey rear/side extension would respect the shared rear building line of the row of dwellings and is well designed in respect of its complementary pitched roof form. While this element would be partly visible from Comet Way, it would not appear overly dominant from public vantage points to the south due to the separation from the site's rear and side (southern) boundaries fronting Comet Way.

The proposed fenestration changes would be proportional in size and form to the existing while the proposed external materials would match the existing, further mitigating the visual impact of the scheme.

Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area and the visual amenity of the street scene in accordance with Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: The proposed two storey side extension would benefit from 2no. windows on the side (flank) elevation, however these would face onto the street scene rather than directly onto any private amenity space. Due to the proposal respecting the existing rear building line at first floor level, the proposed rear facing window would have the same outlook as the existing fenestration. As such, there are

no concerns in respect of overlooking impact.

Loss of Light and Overbearing: Due to the sufficient separation distances from the proposed side extension and boundary treatment to the site's boundaries, there are no concerns in respect of potential loss of light or overbearing impact on users of the adjacent footpaths.

The proposed single storey rear/side extension would retain the existing separation distance of more than 1m from the shared side boundary with No.4 Victor Way adjacent and would only marginally encroach the shared rear building line. As such, the proposal would not introduce any adverse loss of light or overbearing impact on the amenity of the adjacent neighbour.

Overall, any potential harm on neighbouring amenities has been sufficiently mitigated, prohibiting the introduction of adverse harm over and above the existing level of amenity. The proposal is therefore compliant with Core Strategy policy CP3.

Landscape, Trees and Biodiversity:

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan states that development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable. Furthermore, policy TB12 requires proposals to retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to landscape character. The site is within a major development location with low landscape sensitivity, as described in the Landscape Character Assessment.

The proposal would retain most existing soft landscape features except for 1no. tree and a small section of shrubs. The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has raised no objection to the proposed boundary treatment and change of use of amenity land subject to conditions which would require the approval of full landscaping details. To compensate for the partial loss of these features, the applicant has agreed to submit a landscaping scheme for approval prior to the commencement of the development in compliance with MDD Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21. This is secured via the recommended condition.

The Officer has also requested a condition requiring the submission of full details for the proposed boundary fence. However, the proposal is clearly shown within the submitted drawings to be acceptable and full details of additional soft landscaping, in accordance with the aforementioned policies, is secured via the recommended landscaping scheme condition.

Therefore, subject to the submission of an acceptable soft landscaping scheme, no additional information is required to confirm that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on green infrastructure and landscape character. There are also no biodiversity issues given the relatively minor nature of the proposal and its siting of land with no significant ecological merit.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The extended front drive would accommodate parking provision for 3no. vehicles, in accordance with the Council's parking standards. As such, the Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the loss of the existing garage space. As the

proposal would extend the existing drive, which is constructed of a permeable bonded material, the recommended condition relating to the surfacing of the access is not necessary.

Flooding and Drainage:

Policy CC09 of the MDD Local Plan requires consideration of flood risk from historic flooding and policy CC10 requires sustainable drainage methods and the minimisation of surface water flow. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 however Environment Agency data indicates that the site is not prone to surface water flooding and the proposal represents no additional flood risk or vulnerability from rivers.

The Council's Drainage Officer has subsequently raised no objection subject to the submission of drainage details. While this request is duly noted, due to the low risk of surface water flooding within and adjacent to the site and the relatively minor nature of the proposal it is considered onerous and not relevant to the proposed development to require the submission of a drainage strategy.

Overall, subject to conditions the application is acceptable and is therefore 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, 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:	Approve
Date:	10 December 2024
Earliest date for decision:	12 November 2024

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	10/12/24