

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251613
Site Address:	77 Elm Road, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 5TB
Expiry Date:	21 October 2025
Site Visit Date:	29 September 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension to form a porch, alongside a part single, part two- storey, and part three-storey side/rear extension incorporating gables, rear dormers, and roof lights to the front within a redesigned roofs cape, following the demolition of the existing garage, office, and dining room.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Development Location – Earley

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 CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging NE1 – Biodiversity and geodiversity NE2 – Biodiversity net gain
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
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230580	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension to form porch, and part single part two storey side/rear extension, following demolition of existing garage, office and dining room.	Approve May 2023
102703	Proposed two storey side extension, single storey front extension and sloping roof to existing single storey rear extension.	Approve January 2011
101700	Proposed erection of single storey rear extension to dwelling	Approve May 2010
981571	Proposed Two Storey Side/Rear Extension to Dwelling Plus Erection of Boundary Wall	Refuse January 2009

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Highways – Requested Further Information
WBC Ecology – No Objection

External

N/A

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection raised.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	No comments received.

APPRAISAL

Site Description: The site is a two-storey detached dwelling with a driveway for off-street parking in the residential area of Earley. The front boundary treatment is a brick wall and open metal railings. Forward of the residential curtilage there is highway owned grass verge, path and small layby.

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.

Proposal: A single storey front extension to form a porch, alongside a part single, part two- storey, and part three-storey side/rear extension incorporating gables, rear dormers, and roof lights to the front within a redesigned roofs cape, following the demolition of the existing garage, office, and dining room.

The existing main roof would be raised; the maximum height to the top of the pitch would be approximately 8.9m and the height to the top of the eaves would be approximately 5.2m. It would have 2 no. rooflights on the front elevation and a gable architectural feature. The rear elevation of the main roof would have a dormer extension with 4 no. windows. The dormer would measure 7m in width, 3.7m in depth, 2.9m in height and be 30cm lower than the roof line.

The height to the top of the pitch of the two-storey front/side rear extension would be 8.54m. At the front, the roof would have 2 no. rooflights, it would be 4.9m in width. The front porch extension would protrude 1m forward of the principal elevation and the first floor would be set back from the principal elevation by approximately 30cm. The NE side elevation would measure approximately 12m from front to back and the gable end would be set down approximately 40cm from the main roof line. The ground floor of the rear extension would be 11.6m wide and would protrude beyond the existing rear wall by approximately 4.5m. The building line of the first floor would be set back and staggered, protruding from the original rear wall by approximately 3.4m and 2m respectively.

Planning permission was granted in 2023 for a single storey front extension to form porch, and part single part two storey side/rear extension, following demolition of existing garage, office and dining room. The current application differs from permission 230580 in that the maximum roof height would be increased by 2.2m from 6.7m to 8.9m, there would be 2 no. additional rear dormer roof extensions; and there would be 2 no. additional rooms in the loft, increasing the number of habitable rooms from 7 to 9.

Procedural Matters

A revised parking plan was received by the Council on 22nd October 2025, and a revised rear elevations pan was received on 23rd October 2025, after the consultation date had ended. However, the revised proposed plans showed a minor amendment to show the proposed parking arrangement with 3 no. parking spaces and removal of a section of the front boundary wall; and the rear elevations plan showed that windows on the 2-no. rear dormer extensions would be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m of the internal floor level. Therefore, the amendment was not considered to have a significant impact on neighbour amenity to warrant extending the consultation period.

Character of the Area: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The street scene is mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings of various designs and ages. The application site is located close to a roundabout and Elm Road is on a bus route. The maximum eaves height and ridge height would exceed that of the existing property and the immediate neighbouring properties. However, no. 1 Elm Road is located diagonally opposite the application site and has a roof height of approximately 8.3m.

The front/side/rear extension would have a lower roof line than the main roof. The porch extension would be 1.3m forward of the principal elevation and the first floor would be set back by approximately 1.3m. The separation distance with the side boundary of 2 Rowland Way would be 1m and with the rear wall of the dwelling it would be approximately 5m. The separation distance with the side boundary of 79a Elm Road would be 2m. Therefore, the rhythm of buildings and gaps between them along the street would not be significantly impacted.

Therefore, although the proposal would significantly increase the form and scale of the existing building, this would not cause significant harm to the character of the area.

Overall, the proposal would comply with CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy in relation to the character of the area.

Neighbouring Amenity: Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

Overlooking: The rear garden of the application site is angular, and the BDG separation distances cannot be easily applied to this arrangement. The separation distance with the nearest habitable room at no. 4 Rowland Way would be reduced from approximately 11.5m to 7.5m. This 4m reduction is the same as the extant planning permission and represents a robust fallback position for the applicant. Also, there would only be oblique views of habitable windows.

However, the first-floor windows of the rear extension and second-floor rear windows serving the proposed dormer extensions would create an elevated outlook in closer proximity to No. 4 Rowland Way than currently exists. Also, views from the dormer extensions over the rear garden at 4 Rowland Way will be closer and elevated. Therefore, were the application to be approved, it is recommended that the windows to the rear dormer extensions should be conditioned to be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7m of the internal floor level to avoid any direct overlooking or excessive perception of overlooking that might impact on this neighbour's residential amenity.

The proposal also includes a front balcony at first floor level and a second-floor window in the new front gable detail. However, the front-to-front separation distance is approximately 40m and more than adequate according to BDG guidance.

Loss of Light: The 45-degree angle test is advocated within the British Research Establishment's (BRE) publication *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a*

guide to good practice, to assess impact on daylight and sunlight levels to neighbours potentially impacted upon by adjacent developments. In this case, Figure 1 shows that the proposal would breach the vertical 45-degree angle test for 2 Rowland Way and 79a Elm Road.



Figure 1 Vertical 45-degree angle test

Figure 2 show that the horizontal 45-degree angle test is complied with in relation to 79 Elm Road and is breached in relation to 2 Rowland Way.

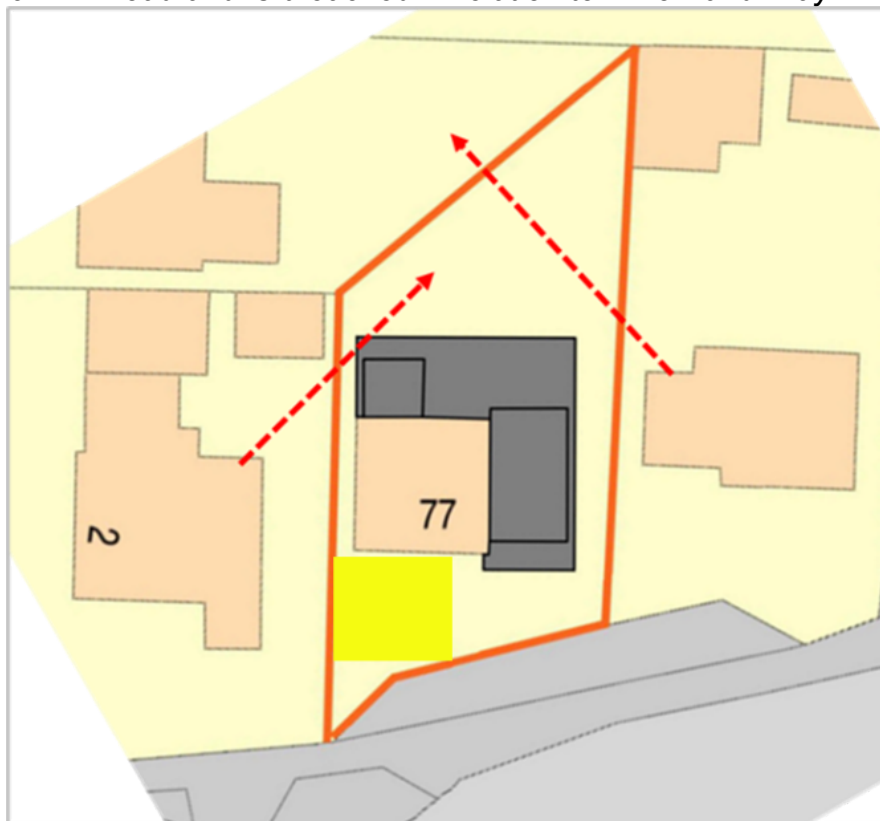


Figure 2 Horizontal 45-degree angle test

Therefore, the development would not result in significant overshadowing to 79a Elm Road but there would be some additional overshadowing to the nearest ground floor habitable room at 2 Rowland Way. Nevertheless, the west facing orientation would mean that the room would continue to receive sunlight for much of the day. Also, whilst a line of 45 degrees would marginally be breached because 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 not considered a robust basis 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 Wokingham Borough Council Design Guide (BDG) provides some guidance on extensions which relate to visual impact and states that the layout and design must have a balanced response to the local context in terms of provision of external space. In this case, the existing main roof would be raised, the maximum height to the top of the pitch would be approximately 8.9m and the height to the top of the eaves would be approximately 5.2m. The ground floor of the rear extension would project approximately 4.5m beyond the existing rear wall. The building line of the first-floor rear extensions would be set back from the ground floor and staggered, protruding from the original rear wall by approximately 3.4m and 2m respectively. The separation distance with the side boundary of 2 Rowland Way would be 1m and with the side boundary of 79a Elm Road would be 2m.

Therefore, the proposal would not fully comply with the recommendations in the Borough Design Guide in terms of overbearing impact on neighbour amenity. However, although the proposal would significantly increase the bulk and height of the existing dwelling, it would not be overly dominant in the street scene due to the variety of dwelling types, roof heights and architectural designs. For example, no. 1 Elm Road has a similar roof height of approximately 8.3m. Furthermore, neighbouring properties would have adequate access to open space, and the development would provide adequate private amenity space in the rear garden.

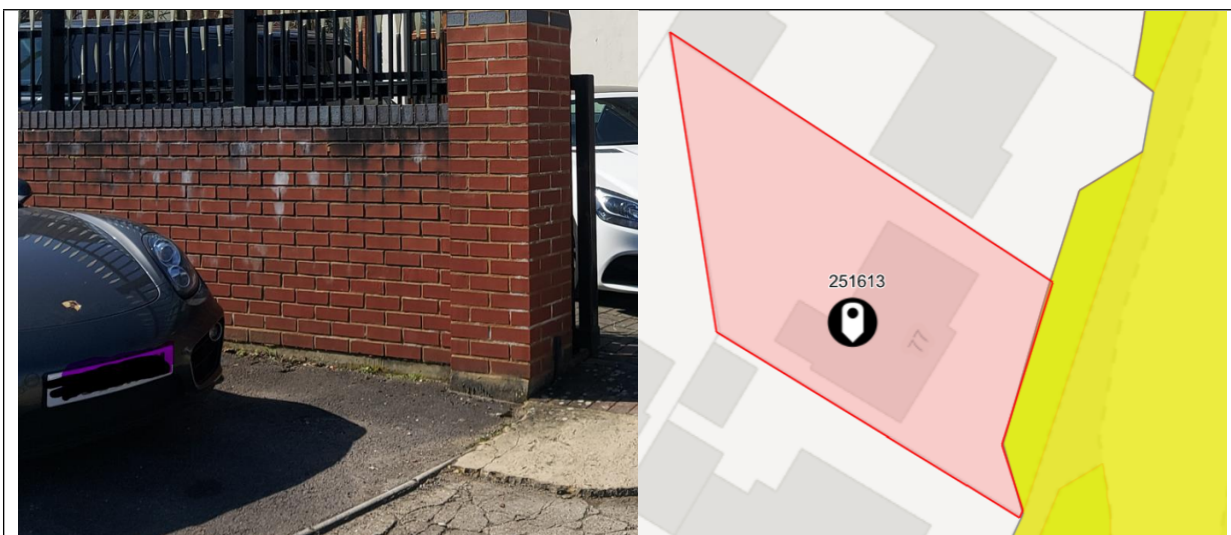
Therefore, although the proposal would not fully comply with Policy CP3, it would not cause significant harm to neighbour amenity to warrant refusal of the application.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The Highways Officer has requested further information and commented: *"The site is in relation to a previous planning ref. 230580, approved with site-specific considerations. The applicant proposes to increase the numbers of habitable rooms from 7 to 8. As the existing garage does not fully meet the council's requirement for car parking, there will be no loss of garage parking space."*

According to the WBC Car Parking Standards, the development of such scale in Urban location will require three parking within the red line boundary. Each parking space shall have minimum dimensions of 5.0m x 2.5m.

While the parking statement suggests that three existing parking spaces will be retained, only two driveway parking spaces are indicated within the red line. The site unlikely can provide the third spaces to manoeuvre with the current access arrangement. Part of the existing driveway in front of the garage will be converted to form the porch, resulting in reduced driveway area. Clarification on parking arrangement is required. The planning officer may wish to consider if the previous site-specific considerations are still applicable for this site to accept only two driveway parking provisions.

It is relevant to note that parking activity has been indicated in front of the site boundary, encroaching the highway verge, which does not consider as appropriate parking behaviour.



As the direct access to the rear garden is retained, no negative impacts on abilities for cycle storage are expected, which is acceptable.”

Officer comment: The applicant has submitted an amended parking plan to show 3 no. parking spaces for off road parking which has been achieved without reducing the front extension, and by removing part of the existing front boundary wall to the property. Separate highways consent and landowner agreement would be required from the Highways Authority and Traffic Management Team respectively to increase the width of the existing dropped crossing. However, the three spaces proposed are considered adequately served by the existing dropped kerb in this instance given the proposed partial removal of the existing boundary wall which currently hinders vehicle manoeuvring on site.

Hence, a condition is recommended to ensure that the partial removal of the front wall is implemented prior to first occupation of the proposed development. An informative is also recommended to advise the applicant that any widening of the adjacent dropped kerb would need separate authorisation by the Borough’s Traffic Management Team and landowner agreement from the Highways Authority.

In addition, informal parking does exist on the surrounding streets although it is noted that a relatively high level of on-street parking exists. The application site is within an urban area with good sustainable transport links that reduce the reliance on private car ownership and thus parking demand.

Ecology: The Ecology Officer has commented and raised no objection subject to:

“Condition: *Any external lighting must be designed in strict accordance with the advice in paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 of the Bat Assessment Report. There are no ecological objections if the application is implemented in strict accordance with the Summary and Sections 5 and 6 of the Bat Assessment Report. I recommend a precautionary method statement should be agreed between the Owner, their Contractor and Ecologist prior to site set-up and commencement of development.*

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Condition: *Unless otherwise agreed in writing all works affecting the porch or roof shall be undertaken following a method statement agreed between the ecologist and the contractor detailing techniques, including the careful removal of tiles by hand, and the procedure to follow should bats or signs of bats be found. Should bats or recent evidence of bats be found then no development is to commence until any relevant licence has been obtained from Natural England and a copy submitted to and approved in writing by the council.*

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Despite ecological surveys being undertaken which suggest that protected species are not using the application site, bats are mobile creatures, and it is possible that protected species may be encountered once works commence. The following informative should be appended to any such consent:

Informative: *Bats are a protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant."*

Planning Balance/Conclusion:

In this case the proposal does not fully comply with the Borough Design Guide in terms of neighbouring amenity and character of the area because the roof height is slightly higher than recommended. However, this is not considered a robust basis to refuse the scheme given its compliance with local policy in other respects given the mixture of architectural designs in the street and that neighbouring properties would still have adequate access to open space and adequate sunlight.

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.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	24 October 2025
Earliest date for decision:	30 August 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	24/10/25