

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Full Householder Planning Application

Site:	5 Matthews Close, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7EQ
Proposal:	Conversion of the existing integrated garage into a habitable room (Study) with associated fenestration alterations to the principal elevation.
Applicants:	Mr Shirish Tukaram Patil and Mrs Sharayu Shirish Patil
Title No.:	BK434845 (Freehold)
Pre-application Reference:	260699
Date:	May 2026

1. Introduction

This Statement supports a Full Householder Planning Application for the conversion of the integrated garage at 5 Matthews Close, Earley to a Study. The works are wholly internal save for replacement of the existing garage door with brickwork and the installation of a new ground-floor window to match the host dwelling.

The dwelling forms Plot 4 of a nine-dwelling estate approved under Reserved Matters consent RM/2008/0224 (decision dated 7 March 2008). Condition 4 of that consent removed permitted development rights for garage conversions, so a full planning application is the correct vehicle. This Statement expressly engages with Condition 4 and invites the Local Planning Authority to grant permission notwithstanding it, on the principle that a fresh grant of planning permission, properly framed, operates as the lawful consent for the converted footprint.

The applicant has engaged with the LPA proactively through pre-application enquiry 260699 (response dated 14 April 2026 and follow-up correspondence dated 10 May 2026). During those exchanges, the LPA confirmed that the design, character impact, neighbour amenity and principle of a garage-to-study conversion are acceptable, and twice acknowledged the site's highly sustainable location within 0.6 miles of Earley Railway Station and on multiple bus routes. The only residual matter raised was highways/parking, which this Statement addresses comprehensively.

A note on characterisation. During the pre-application enquiry, the applicant initially described the dwelling as a four-bedroom property. On subsequent review of the approved planning history, the correct characterisation is a **three-bedroom dwelling**, as approved under RM/2008/0224 (drawing 5144/02 Rev A, Plot 4, 110.29 m²) and consistent with the Council's own Council Tax assessment (**Band E**). The approved first-floor layout already includes a designated study (**which is currently being used as kids play room**), so the proposed ground-floor Study is consistent with the approved internal use mix. This Statement proceeds on the correct three-bedroom basis.

2. Site, Surroundings and Planning History

The application site is a three-bedroom integrally-garaged dwelling within Matthews Close, a small private cul-de-sac of nine houses developed in 2008 by Martin Grant Homes Ltd. The close is accessed from Wokingham Road via a shared private surface that incorporates the dwellings' parking arrangements and a shared turning area at its head.

The relevant planning history is:

Application	Description	Decision
O/2006/7341	Outline consent for residential redevelopment of 329–333 Wokingham Road	Approved
RM/2008/0224	Reserved Matters for 9 dwellings with associated car parking and landscaping	Approved 07/03/2008
260699	Pre-application enquiry — present proposal	Advice issued 14/04/2026

Condition 4 of RM/2008/0224 reads:

“Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the garage accommodation on the site shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential use of the site at all times. It shall not be used for any business nor as habitable space.”

The stated reason for Condition 4 (Reason 4 of the decision notice) is:

“To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking.”

Condition 5 reserves the shared turning head exclusively for vehicular manoeuvring, not parking. The applicant fully respects Condition 5 and places no reliance on the turning head for any aspect of the proposed parking arrangement.

3. Highways and Parking

This Section forms the core of the Statement. It opens with the decisive national policy threshold (NPPF paragraph 116) and then sets out, at §§3.1–3.8, the detailed parking and highways case demonstrating that the proposal complies with the Development Plan and the NPPF and that Condition 4 should be released.

The decisive legal threshold — NPPF paragraph 116. Before the detailed parking analysis below, the applicant respectfully draws the case officer's attention to the national policy threshold that governs any refusal on highway grounds. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 edition) provides:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

Neither limb of paragraph 116 is — or could on the evidence be — engaged by this proposal. Since Matthews Close is an enclosed development, there is no allegation of any unacceptable highway-safety impact, and no allegation (still less evidence) of any severe residual cumulative impact on the road network; the pre-application response raises neither. A shortfall against an adopted local parking standard is, on consistent Inspectorate authority, a material consideration to be weighed in the planning balance — it is not, in itself, a refusal reason. Even on the most adverse reading of the parking analysis that follows, therefore, refusal on highway grounds is not open to the Local Planning Authority on the facts of this application. Subsections 3.1 to 3.8 below set out, in full and on the evidence, why the proposal in fact comfortably satisfies the adopted parking guidance as well as the NPPF threshold.

3.1 The correct policy framework

This application falls to be determined under the development plan in force at the date of decision (s.38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The applicant accepts and applies the current adopted Wokingham parking guidance — the Parking Standards Study Report (WSP, October 2011), Appendix 2 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and the Borough Design Guide SPD (collectively referred to below as ‘the adopted parking guidance’) — which, taken together, are the policy framework against which the parking provision for the dwelling must be assessed today. The applicant notes for completeness that Wokingham Borough Council does not have a standalone Parking SPD; the dimensional minima relied on below sit in the Parking Standards Study Report which underpins MDD Appendix 2 and the Borough Design Guide SPD. No suggestion is made that the older parking standards in force when the estate was approved in 2008 (Berkshire Structure Plan T6 and Wokingham District Local Plan WT6 / Appendix 8) should govern this 2026 application.

That guidance recommends minimum internal garage dimensions of 6.0 m × 3.0 m, with a garage door opening of 2.4 m wide × 2.1 m high, for a garage to count as one parking space (Parking Standards Study Report §3.2.13). These dimensional minima exist precisely to provide an objective, measurable test — not a subjective judgement about which vehicles a household may own at any given time.

Condition 4 must be tested against today's policy framework, not preserved as a fossilised 2008 judgement. A condition imposed under a 2008 Reserved Matters consent does not displace the s.38(6) duty to determine this 2026 application against the development plan now in force. The question before the LPA is not whether Condition 4 was correctly imposed in 2008; it is whether, applied in 2026 and on the evidence now before the Council, its planning purpose is still served. That purpose — the protection of on-street and shared-surface parking conditions within Matthews Close — is engaged directly in §3.7 below, where the applicant offers a mitigation package designed to preserve it in full. The temporal point therefore cuts both ways: the Council is right that the estate was approved under earlier standards, but the correct response is to apply today's standards to today's application, consistently and on the evidence, rather than to treat the 2008 condition as conclusive of a 2026 decision.

3.2 The existing garage falls substantially below the adopted dimensional minimum

The existing integrated garage at 5 Matthews Close has internal dimensions of (as confirmed on the architect's final drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1, TS Designs, dated 28 May 2026):

- **Length:** 5.425 m {not consistent on both sides, 4.7m –smaller side} (versus 6.0 m minimum — a 575 mm shortfall)
- **Width:** 2.625 m (versus 3.0 m minimum — a 375 mm shortfall)

- **Garage door opening width — clear opening (frame-to-frame):** 2.10 m (versus the 2.4 m recommended door width — a 300 mm shortfall). This is the policy-relevant figure: Bracknell Forest Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD (March 2016), §3.2(2) and Table 7, expressly defines the standard as 'the garage door should be at least 2.4 m wide excluding the frame'.
- **Garage door opening width — structural opening (brick-to-brick):** 2.25 m (versus 2.4 m — a 150 mm shortfall even on the most generous reading that counts the structural opening rather than the clear opening).
- **Garage door opening height:** 2.14 m (exceeds the 2.1 m recommended door height, but well below the 2.3 m typically required for MPVs, SUVs with roof loads, and light commercial vehicles)

Three of the four dimensions — internal length, internal width and door opening width — fail the thresholds set out in the Parking Standards Study Report (§3.2.13). The garage does not, under WBC's own adopted dimensional standards, contribute to the policy-compliant parking provision for the dwelling.

3.3 The applicable test under the adopted parking guidance

The pre-application response observes that the garage *"remains capable of accommodating a range of vehicles"* and is *"therefore considered usable for parking purposes"*. The applicant respectfully invites the case officer to apply the adopted dimensional standards in the Parking Standards Study Report as the appropriate and objective test, rather than a subjective assessment of whether some vehicles could be made to fit.

(a) Consistency with the adopted dimensional standard. The 6 m × 3 m internal minimum, and the 2.4 m × 2.1 m door-opening minimum, exist in the adopted guidance precisely so that parking provision can be judged by an objective, measurable standard rather than by reference to whichever vehicle happens to be owned at the date of the decision. Applying those standards consistently to this garage produces a clear answer; treating the garage as a compliant parking space on the basis that some vehicle could be made to fit inside it would, with respect, leave the dimensional minima with little practical effect.

(b) Consistency with the principle that planning decisions run with the land. Planning permissions, and the standards by which they are assessed, run with the land rather than with the occupant. It would, the applicant respectfully submits, sit uneasily with that principle for a garage to count as a parking space on the basis of the make or model of car owned by the present occupant, since the same garage might cease to qualify on a change of vehicle or a change of ownership. The adopted dimensional standards avoid that difficulty by providing a stable, occupant-neutral test.

(c) Consistency with the measured evidence. The garage door has been physically tape-measured at two readings: 2,250 mm structural opening (brick-to-brick) and 2,100 mm clear opening (frame-to-frame, at the narrowest point), with a height of 2,140 mm. The policy-relevant figure is the clear opening, since that is the space through which any vehicle must pass; this interpretation is consistent with neighbouring Bracknell Forest Borough Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD (March 2016), §3.2(2) and Table 7, which expressly defines the 2.4 m garage-door standard as measured 'excluding the frame'. On that basis the clear opening is 280 mm below the 2.4 m standard adopted by WBC's own Parking Standards Study Report (October 2011, §3.2.13). Even on the most generous reading that takes the 2,250 mm structural opening instead, the door is still 150 mm short.

The 2,100 mm clear door opening is therefore the primary constraint. Manufacturer body-widths do not include door mirrors, which form part of the vehicle and must pass through the opening on every entry and

exit. With mirrors deployed (the only condition in which a vehicle is roadworthy and being driven), representative current UK vehicles measure as follows:

Vehicle	Body width	With mirrors	Clearance vs 2,100 mm door	Per side	Class
Smart ForTwo	1,663 mm	1,893 mm	+207 mm	104 mm	City car
Fiat 500	1,627 mm	1,895 mm	+205 mm	103 mm	City car
Hyundai i10	1,680 mm	1,943 mm	+157 mm	79 mm	City car
Toyota Aygo X	1,740 mm	1,945 mm	+155 mm	78 mm	City car
Ford Fiesta	1,735 mm	1,941 mm	+159 mm	80 mm	Small hatchback
Volkswagen Polo	1,751 mm	1,964 mm	+136 mm	68 mm	Small hatchback
Ford Focus	1,825 mm	1,979 mm	+121 mm	61 mm	Family hatchback
Volkswagen Golf	1,789 mm	2,027 mm	+73 mm	37 mm	Family hatchback
Nissan Qashqai	1,838 mm	2,084 mm	+16 mm	8 mm	Family SUV
Ford Kuga	1,883 mm	2,178 mm	-78 mm	—	Family SUV (cannot pass without folding mirrors)

Read by vehicle class, the position is clear. The city cars and sub-compacts sit outside the class of vehicle for which a 6 m × 3 m garage with a 2.4 m door is provided. Within the family hatchback and SUV segment relevant to a three-bedroom dwelling, every vehicle is marginal or excluded: small hatchbacks leave 68–80 mm per side; family hatchbacks 37–61 mm; the Nissan Qashqai 8 mm; and the Ford Kuga's mirrors exceed the 2,100 mm clear opening by 78 mm and cannot pass at all without folding. These margins are not consistent with a garage functioning as a normal parking space for a family dwelling.

The headroom position is no better. The 2,140 mm clear height accommodates most saloons and hatchbacks, but is below the 2,300 mm typically required for MPVs, light commercial vehicles and any vehicle carrying roof bars, a roof box or a roof-mounted bicycle. Common family-use configurations are therefore excluded by the door height alone, irrespective of the width analysis above.

A secondary, conservative cross-check is available from WBC's own adopted parking-bay geometry. The 2,400 mm × 4,800 mm open-bay standard at Parking Standards Study Report §4.4 implicitly allows, for a representative 1,800 mm family-car body, 600 mm of total side clearance — i.e. 300 mm per side. Applying that same 300 mm per side to the measured 2,625 mm internal garage width gives a usable internal envelope of $2,625 - (2 \times 300) = 2,025$ mm. A Nissan Qashqai (1,838 mm body) parked centrally within that envelope would leave only 93 mm per side — below the side clearance WBC's own bay standard implies for an open, unwallled parking space, and obtained inside a fully enclosed brick-walled structure. The internal envelope therefore independently fails WBC's own dimensional logic, even on the most generous (300 mm/side) reading of it.

The applicant therefore respectfully submits that the appropriate test is the adopted dimensional minimum (6.0 m × 3.0 m internal with a 2.4 m × 2.1 m clear door opening), and that, applied on that basis, the garage does not count as a policy-compliant parking space.

(c)(i) Response to the 'a small car could fit' observation. The applicant accepts that certain sub-compact vehicles could in principle be parked within the internal envelope of the garage, and that the pre-application

response observation that the garage "remains capable of accommodating a range of vehicles" is, on that narrow reading, correct. It does not, however, render the garage policy-compliant, for three reasons:

- **1. The adopted test is dimensional, not vehicular.** Parking Standards Study Report §3.2.13 sets a fixed 6.0 m × 3.0 m internal / 2.4 m × 2.1 m door-opening minimum so that compliance is determined by the building, not the occupant's choice of car. The garage fails three of those four minima on measurement.
- **2. The door is the binding constraint.** Taking the pre-application response's vehicular question on its own terms, the 2,100 mm clear door opening cannot accept the with-mirrors width of normal family vehicles (Focus, Golf, Qashqai, Kuga) without repeated mirror-folding on every entry and exit or, in the Kuga's case, at all.
- **3. Planning standards must be occupant-neutral.** Planning conditions run with the land, not with the occupant. A test that turns on the make and model of car currently owned produces a parking space that exists on Monday and ceases to exist on Tuesday when the household changes vehicle. The adopted dimensional standard at §3.2.13 avoids that instability and is the test the applicant invites the case officer to apply.

(d) It does not set an unmanageable precedent. The applicant anticipates a concern that approval here might encourage other owners of sub-standard garages within the Borough to seek similar consents. That concern, while understandable, does not provide a lawful planning reason to refuse this application. Each application must be determined on its own merits under s.70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and refusing one application in order to deter others is not a sound planning ground (*Dunster Properties Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2007] EWHC 1061 (Admin), and consistent Inspectorate practice). The combination of factors relied upon in this Statement — a substandard garage, a Condition 4 restriction requiring a full application (rather than reliance on permitted development), a documented three-bedroom characterisation, a net-neutral parking effect, demonstrable trip-reduction through home-working, a highly sustainable location, and a substantial volunteered mitigation package — is bespoke to this property and does not bind the determination of any other application. Other applications would still need to demonstrate the same combined evidential picture on their own facts, and the great majority would not.

It is also relevant that most sub-standard garages elsewhere in the Borough are not subject to a Condition 4 equivalent and may be converted under the General Permitted Development Order without any application to the Council. The fact that this property is subject to a restrictive condition, and is therefore properly before the Council for determination, places fewer applications in front of the Council than would otherwise be the case — not more.

3.4 The net effect of the proposal on policy-compliant parking — net neutral

This Sub-section is central to the proposal and is set out in full because it goes directly to the substance of the Council's residual concern.

Position before the proposal. Applying the adopted parking guidance correctly, the existing parking provision at 5 Matthews Close consists of:

Element	Compliant with adopted standard?	Spaces counted
Existing driveway (5.20 m × 2.775 m — 1 vehicle, confirmed on architect's drawing	Yes (exceeds the adopted 4.8 m × 2.4 m bay standard at Parking Standards Study Report §4.4 — and also exceeds the more	1.0 space

5MC/20052026/PD-1)	recent 5.0 m × 2.5 m industry-preferred bay)	
Existing garage (5.425 m (not consistent on both sides , 4.7m –smaller side)× 2.625 m internal; 2.10 m clear / 2.25 m structural × 2.14 m door — substandard)	No (fails 6 m × 3 m internal minimum and 2.4 m × 2.1 m door standard; see §3.2–3.3)	0.0 spaces
Shared turning head (Condition 5 — manoeuvring only)	Not parking	0.0 spaces
TOTAL EXISTING COMPLIANT PROVISION		1.0 space

Position after the proposal.

Element	Compliant with adopted standard?	Spaces counted
Retained driveway (5.20 m × 2.775 m — 1 vehicle, confirmed on architect's drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1)	Yes (exceeds the adopted 4.8 m × 2.4 m bay standard at Parking Standards Study Report §4.4 — and also exceeds the more recent 5.0 m × 2.5 m industry-preferred bay)	1.0 space
Garage (converted to Study)	n/a	0.0 spaces
TOTAL POST-CONVERSION COMPLIANT PROVISION		1.0 space

The proposal produces no change in the dwelling's policy-compliant parking provision. It is net-neutral. Applying the current adopted parking guidance consistently to both the existing and proposed scenarios, the position before and after the conversion is identical: one policy-compliant parking space on the retained driveway. Whatever shortfall against the current adopted parking guidance may be said to exist for this three-bedroom dwelling is a pre-existing condition arising from the application of the 2026 standard to a 2008-built dwelling. It is not caused by, contributed to, or worsened by this proposal.

Loss of a notional parking space that never qualified as such under the adopted parking guidance's own measurable standard is not a planning harm. The conversion does not displace a vehicle that could lawfully be counted as parked there; it formalises an arrangement that has, in practical reality, existed since the estate was built.

For completeness, the adopted parking guidance typically requires two spaces for a three-bedroom dwelling. The site already provides one policy-compliant space on the retained driveway, with the garage failing the adopted dimensional minima at §3.2 above. The proposal therefore results in a notional shortfall of one space against the three-bed standard — a shortfall which exists today, in identical terms, whether or not this conversion proceeds.

Absence of real-world capacity loss. Nor is any meaningful informal, real-world parking capacity lost. As demonstrated in §3.3(c), the garage cannot accommodate a typical UK family vehicle while permitting safe driver egress, and the 2,100 mm clear door opening cannot accept the with-mirrors width of common family cars without repeated mirror contact or mirror-folding on every entry and exit. The garage has, in practical reality, served as storage rather than as a vehicle-housing space for the entire period of the applicants' ownership. The conversion does not displace a vehicle that is, or realistically could be, parked inside the existing garage in a manner consistent with normal family use. The proposal therefore causes no reduction in either policy-compliant parking provision or meaningful informal parking capacity.

Driveway is self-contained and on a private close. The retained driveway is wholly contained within the curtilage of the dwelling and fronts onto a private, non-adopted shared surface within Matthews Close. It comfortably and safely accommodates one vehicle without any overhang of, or interference with, any public highway. There is no risk of footway or carriageway obstruction arising from the manner in which the driveway is, or will continue to be, used. The driveway has served as the dwelling's primary parking space continuously since the estate was completed in 2008 without highway incident.

Household vehicle ownership. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicants are a one-vehicle household. The single household vehicle is, and will continue to be, parked on the retained driveway. There is no second vehicle currently parked at the dwelling, in the turning head, or on the shared surface of Matthews Close. The proposal therefore creates no displacement of any existing vehicle.

Hypothetical future second vehicle. Even on the hypothetical assumption that the household later acquired a second vehicle, the analysis would not change. The existing garage cannot, on the evidence at §3.3, safely accommodate a typical UK family vehicle; it could not therefore have housed a hypothetical second family vehicle either before or after this conversion. Any future second vehicle would, in either scenario, need to be parked off-site (and not, as the applicants accept and undertake by way of the offered condition at §3.7, in the shared turning head). The proposal therefore neither creates nor exacerbates any future-second-vehicle displacement risk.

3.5 Condition 4: its policy purpose is preserved, not breached

Condition 4 was imposed for Reason 4 of the RM/2008/0224 decision notice:

"To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking."

That reason concerns itself with two outcomes: (i) the availability of adequate parking on-plot, and (ii) the avoidance of roadside parking pressure. The applicant submits that both outcomes are better served by the present proposal than by the retention of the garage in its existing sub-standard form, for the following reasons.

(i) On-plot parking is preserved. The driveway — the only policy-compliant parking space at the dwelling, both before and after the proposal — is retained in full and is offered to be secured by planning condition (see §3.7) for its perpetual availability for parking.

(ii) Roadside parking pressure is reduced, not increased. The express purpose of the conversion is to enable full-time home-working. By eliminating commuter trips, the proposal:

- Removes approximately 460 vehicle return-trips per year from the local highway network (assuming 220 working days at 2 trips per day);
- Reduces, not increases, peak-hour vehicle movements at the close's junction with Wokingham Road;
- Lessens, not increases, the household's dependence on multiple vehicles, which is the underlying driver of roadside parking pressure.

The applicant further submits that retaining a sub-standard garage that no current passenger vehicle can actually use does not, in reality, reduce roadside parking — it merely preserves an unused space. The policy purpose of Condition 4 is more effectively achieved by the proposal than by the condition's retention.

Legal mechanism. The applicant invites the LPA to determine this application on its own merits and to grant permission notwithstanding Condition 4. Authorities are clear (see *Pioneer Aggregates v Secretary of State* [1985] AC 132; *Pye v Secretary of State* [1998] 3 PLR 72) that a grant of planning permission for development incompatible with a condition on a previous permission operates as the lawful consent for the development authorised by the new permission. No separate application under s.73 TCPA 1990 is necessary, although the LPA has discretion to attach a condition to the new permission expressly disapplying Condition 4 for the converted footprint should it prefer that drafting approach.

3.6 The legal test for refusal on highway grounds is not met

Even on the most adverse reading of the adopted parking guidance, the proposal does not approach the threshold for refusal under paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 edition):

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

There is no evidence — and no contention by the LPA in the pre-application response — that this proposal would cause:

- Any unacceptable impact on highway safety;
- Any severe residual cumulative impact on the local road network;
- Any recorded safety incident along Wokingham Road or within Matthews Close attributable to parking arrangements at the dwelling.

A modest, baseline shortfall against the adopted parking guidance — which exists today and will continue to exist whether or not this application is approved — is not, on its own, a “severe” impact. The Planning Inspectorate has consistently held that non-compliance with adopted parking guidance is a material consideration to be weighed in the planning balance, not a self-executing refusal reason. The correct test is set by the NPPF, and it is not met.

3.7 Offered planning conditions — mitigation package

To provide the LPA with full and enforceable comfort, the applicant volunteers the following planning conditions in addition to those usually imposed on a householder consent:

1. **Driveway retention.** The existing driveway shall be retained as a hard-surfaced parking area for at least one vehicle in perpetuity, and shall not be converted to any other use.
2. **Turning head protection.** No vehicle owned or controlled by the occupants of the dwelling shall be habitually parked within the shared turning head of Matthews Close.
3. **Cycle storage.** Cycles will be stored securely within the rear garden, which benefits from existing gated side access. No external cycle store is required.
4. **Use restriction — Study.** The room hereby permitted shall be used as a study ancillary to the dwellinghouse only, and shall not at any time be used as bedroom accommodation, as a workplace receiving customers, employees or business visitors, or for any other non-ancillary use that would intensify parking demand or fall within Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

5. **Use restriction — Existing rooms.** No room within the existing dwelling shall be used as additional bedroom accommodation beyond the three bedrooms approved under RM/2008/0224, ensuring that the dwelling remains a three-bedroom property for parking-policy purposes in perpetuity.
6. **Refuse and recycling storage.** Bin and recycling containers shall be stored within the curtilage of the dwelling. For the avoidance of doubt, refuse collection at Matthews Close is operated from the kerbside of Wokingham Road; the refuse vehicle does not enter the private close or its shared turning head. Bins are presented at the Wokingham Road collection point on collection day and returned to the curtilage thereafter, such that no bin storage or presentation occurs within the shared turning head or on the shared surface of Matthews Close at any time.
7. **Reinstatement reservation.** In the event that the Local Planning Authority subsequently determines, on evidence, that demonstrable highway harm arising from the loss of the garage has materialised, the applicant accepts in principle that a future application or s.215 / s.102 process may consider the reinstatement of vehicular use of the converted footprint. The internal works proposed are non-structural in nature and do not preclude such reinstatement.

These conditions, taken together, provide the LPA with more enforceable protection of the highway-related interests underpinning Condition 4 than Condition 4 itself currently delivers, and additionally address contemporary policy expectations on refuse management and reversibility.

3.8 Further anticipated objections, answered

For completeness, the applicant addresses below the further objections that the case officer might reasonably consider, in order that the determination can proceed on a complete evidential record.

(a) Estate-wide precedent within Matthews Close. Condition 4 of RM/2008/0224 was imposed across the consent and applies, in principle, to all nine plots in Matthews Close. The applicant acknowledges that the LPA may legitimately consider the cumulative implications for the close as a whole, and addresses that concern in detail below.

(a)(i) The pool of comparable plots is materially smaller than nine. As is apparent from the approved RM/2008/0224 floor plans (drawing 5144/02 Rev A), only some of the nine plots in Matthews Close were built with integral garages capable of being the subject of a like-for-like conversion application. The two-bedroom plots (Plots 5–7) were not built with integral garages at all, and plots without garages are outside the practical scope of any cumulative precedent argument. The pool of plots that could realistically bring forward a comparable application is therefore materially smaller than the nine-plot figure would suggest.

(a)(ii) Each future application would stand or fall on its own measured evidence. The case advanced at §3.3 turns on the specific measured dimensions of the garage at 5 Matthews Close (5.425 m × 2.625 m internal; 2.10 m clear / 2.25 m structural × 2.14 m high door opening). Other plots within the close, even where they have integral garages, will not share identical dimensions; each future applicant would need to satisfy the LPA on the comparable evidence for their plot. Each application must in any event be determined on its own merits under s.70 TCPA 1990, and the LPA retains full discretion to refuse, on merits, any application where the evidence does not support it (*Dunster Properties Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2007] EWHC 1061 (Admin)).

(a)(iii) The mitigation package offered here functions as a transparent template. The conditions volunteered at §3.7 — driveway retention; turning-head protection; cycle storage in the rear garden; ancillary-only use restriction; bedroom cap; refuse-storage location; and reinstatement reservation — are

enforceable by planning condition on this plot and would provide a coherent, transparent template against which any future application in the close could be assessed. The Council would, on each future application, retain the ability to impose equivalent (or more restrictive) conditions, or to refuse where the plot-specific evidence does not justify approval.

(a)(iv) Cumulative quantitative impact is small even on a worst-case projection. Even on a hypothetical worst-case projection in which every garaged plot in the close (an estimated five plots) were to convert its garage, the realistic increment in vehicles requiring on-plot or shared-surface parking would be small — because, on the analysis at §3.3, none of those garages can in any event accommodate a typical UK family vehicle while permitting safe driver egress. What would be “lost” in policy terms is therefore in large part already lost in practical terms. The driveways at the affected plots would, as here, remain in place and continue to provide the close's policy-compliant on-plot parking provision. The cumulative real-world impact on the shared surface and turning head is, on this analysis, materially smaller than the headline “nine plots” figure tends to imply.

(a)(v) Refusing this application in order to deter others is not a sound planning ground. The applicant respectfully reminds the LPA that the courts and the Inspectorate have consistently held that an application may not be refused for the purpose of deterring future applications. The fear of an estate-wide precedent, however understandable in administrative terms, is not in itself a material consideration capable of supporting refusal where the application would otherwise be granted. The proper response to a hypothetical future application is to determine that future application on its own merits, on its own plot-specific evidence, and with the benefit of the conditions template established here. Cumulative harm at close level is not, on the evidence available, made out by this application.

(a)(vi) An estate-wide control mechanism is already in place. Condition 4 of RM/2008/0224 was imposed across the consent and applies in principle to all nine plots in Matthews Close. The effect is that any future garage conversion within the close — like this one — must come before the Council as a full planning application; permitted development rights are not available as an alternative route. The Council therefore retains, for every plot in the close, the same plot-specific control it is exercising on this application. Should the Council nonetheless wish to formalise that position estate-wide (for example, by an informative recording the continuing application of Condition 4 to the remainder of the close, or by a confirmatory Article 4 Direction in the unlikely event that Condition 4 were ever to be argued to have lapsed), the applicant would have no objection.

(b) Driveway dimensions and bay-standard compliance. The retained driveway measures 5.20 m × 2.775 m (length × width), as confirmed on the architect's final drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1 (TS Designs, dated 28 May 2026). The driveway exceeds the adopted bay standard of 4.8 m × 2.4 m (Parking Standards Study Report §4.4) on both dimensions — by 400 mm in length and 375 mm in width. It also exceeds the more recent industry-preferred 5.0 m × 2.5 m bay, by 200 mm in length and 275 mm in width. The driveway therefore satisfies both the adopted standard and the more demanding contemporary standard. In addition, the driveway has functioned as the dwelling's primary parking space continuously and safely since the estate was completed in 2008 — a period of some 18 years — without any recorded highway incident, footway obstruction or complaint. It accommodates one vehicle wholly within the curtilage of the dwelling, with no overhang of any adopted highway.

(c) Provenance of the measured garage dimensions. The internal dimensions of 5.425 m × 2.625 m, the door width readings of 2,250 mm structural opening (brick-to-brick) and 2,100 mm clear opening (frame-to-

frame), and the door height of 2,140 mm, are taken from the architect's final drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1 (TS Designs, dated 28 May 2026) and were cross-checked on site by the applicant. The 2,100 mm clear opening is the policy-relevant figure per Bracknell Forest Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD (March 2016), §3.2(2) and Table 7. All measurements are reflected on the architect's final drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1 submitted with this application. Should the LPA require independent verification, the applicant is content for the case officer to arrange a site visit; the dimensions are, however, capable of direct measurement against the approved RM/2008/0224 drawing 5144/02 Rev A (Plot 4), which is available in the Council's own records.

(d) Precision of the policy citation. The Council's adopted parking guidance is based on the Parking Standards Study Report (WSP, October 2011), which forms the substantive evidence base supporting Appendix 2 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and the Borough Design Guide SPD. The 6.0 m × 3.0 m garage-internal minimum and the 2.4 m × 2.1 m garage door opening standard are set out at §3.2.13 of that Report; the 2.4 m × 4.8 m bay standard is set out at §4.4. The garage at 5 Matthews Close fails the first two of those standards on its measured dimensions; the retained driveway exceeds the third.

(e) Enforceability of the home-working trip-reduction benefit. The applicant accepts that the magnitude of any future home-working trip reduction cannot be enforced by planning condition and is, properly, a material consideration of modest positive weight rather than a determinative factor. The case at §3.4 does not depend on the trip-reduction benefit; the planning balance is satisfied even if no weight at all is given to it. The trip-reduction point is offered as additional support, consistent with NPPF Chapter 9 and WBC Core Strategy Policies CP1/CP3.

(f) Status of pre-application advice. The applicant acknowledges that pre-application advice does not bind the LPA at the decision stage. The Statement's references to acceptances reached during pre-application enquiry 260699 are made to record the position then taken by the LPA and to confirm that no fresh evidence has emerged that would alter those conclusions on design, character, neighbour amenity, principle or sustainability. Should the case officer wish to revisit any of those matters, the applicant invites the officer to identify the specific concern so that it can be addressed prior to determination.

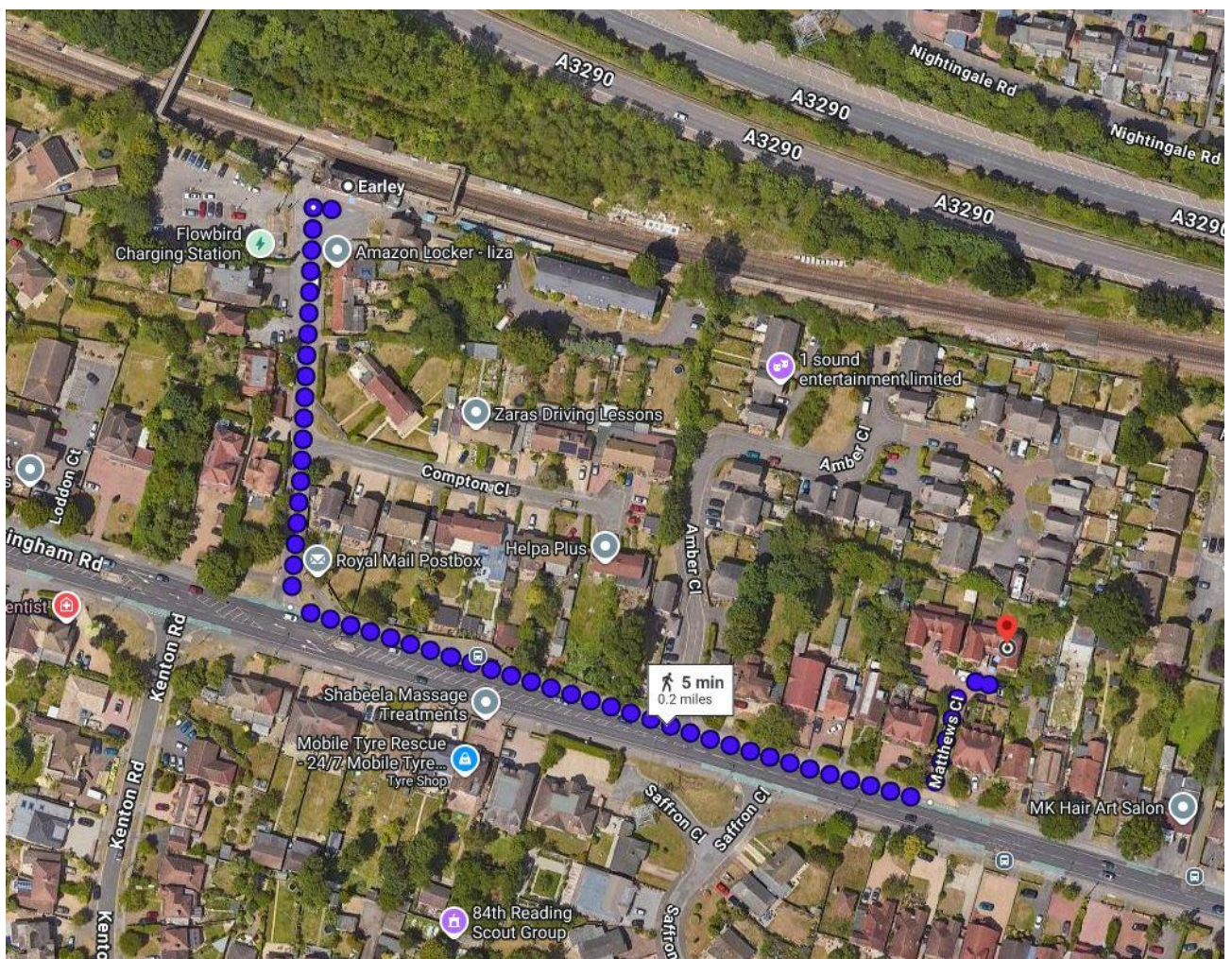
(g) Highway Authority technical matters. The proposal makes no alteration to the vehicular access, the dropped kerb, the driveway gradient, visibility splays at the close's junction with Wokingham Road, or the geometry of the shared turning head. No physical works to the highway, the shared surface or the dwelling's vehicular access are proposed or required. The applicant therefore submits that there are no technical highways matters engaged by the proposal that would warrant Highway Authority objection.

(h) Cycle storage is additional to, not in substitution for, car parking. In-curtilage cycle storage in the rear garden (accessible via the existing gated side passage) is referenced as an active-travel enhancement consistent with NPPF Chapter 9, not as a substitute for vehicular parking provision. The retained driveway continues to provide the dwelling's one policy-compliant parking space. Cycle storage does not, and is not relied upon to, make up any shortfall against the adopted parking guidance.

4. Sustainability and Active Travel

The site's sustainability was twice acknowledged by the LPA during pre-application discussions. The proposal positively reinforces that sustainability profile:

- **Home-working.** The dedicated study facilitates full-time remote working, eliminating commuter trips and supporting the climate-related objectives of NPPF Chapter 9 and WBC Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3.
- **Secure cycle storage.** The rear garden benefits from gated side access and provides secure storage for household cycles without the need for an external cycle store. This supports WBC's Active Travel initiatives and reduces reliance on second vehicles for short local trips.
- **Earley Railway Station.** Approximately 0.6 miles from the dwelling, providing direct frequent services to Reading and London Waterloo. A short walk or cycle journey.



Earley Railway Station is 5 minutes walk from 5 Matthews close

- **Bus services.** Multiple routes serve Wokingham Road within a few minutes' walk of the close.



Bus stops in both directions are 2 minutes walk from 5 Matthews close

5. Design and Visual Impact

The design of the proposal was accepted in the pre-application response. For completeness:

- The existing garage door will be replaced with brickwork matching the host dwelling in colour, texture and bond, finished with a brick soldier course or matching cill to the new window opening.
- A new ground-floor window will be installed in the infilled elevation, matching the proportions, head height, cill height, frame material, glazing pattern and detailing of the existing ground-floor windows of the dwelling.
- All works are contained within the existing built footprint. There is no change to height, depth, ridge level, eaves level, roof pitch, or overall massing.
- The principal elevation will read as a more active, residential frontage, subtly enhancing the street scene without disrupting the consistency between houses in the close.

6. Neighbour Amenity

The pre-application response accepts that there is no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. For completeness, the proposal:

- Causes no loss of light, outlook or privacy to any adjoining property;
- Generates no noise or disturbance beyond that ordinarily associated with a dwellinghouse;
- Does not introduce any commercial visitor activity — the study is for the personal occupational use of the applicants only and is ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling;
- Is set within the existing built footprint and is invisible from neighbouring private amenity space.

7. Flood Risk (CC09)

The site is identified as being within a 1-in-30-year surface water flood risk area. The pre-application response correctly concluded that the proposal does not engage flood risk concerns because:

- The works involve no extension to the building footprint;
- There is no increase in impermeable surface area;
- The existing drainage regime is unaffected.

No detailed drainage strategy is therefore required.

8. Planning Balance and Conclusion

This proposal is a high-quality, sustainable adaptation of an existing family dwelling to meet modern working-from-home requirements. It complies with the Development Plan as a whole when properly applied:

- **Principle (CC01, CP9, CP11, CP12):** Acceptable, as confirmed in pre-application advice.
- **Character and Design (CP1, CP3):** Acceptable, as confirmed in pre-application advice.
- **Neighbour Amenity (CP3):** Acceptable, as confirmed in pre-application advice.
- **Highways and Parking (CP6 / Parking Standards Study Report 2011 / MDD Appendix 2 / Borough Design Guide SPD):** Net-neutral impact when the adopted parking guidance is applied to its own dimensional standard; offered conditions provide enhanced protection of the highway interests Condition 4 was originally designed to protect.
- **Sustainable Transport (NPPF Chapter 9):** Positively supported through trip reduction and active travel provision.
- **Flood Risk (CC09):** No engagement; no harm.
- **NPPF 116(c) threshold for highway refusal:** Not approached, let alone met.

Weighed in the planning balance:

- The factual and evidential corrections set out in §1 and §3 of this Statement;
- The net-neutral parking impact established in §3.4 — the proposal causes no reduction in policy-compliant parking provision when assessed against the Council's own dimensional standards, and benefits from a comprehensive package of volunteered conditions;
- The preservation of Condition 4's policy purpose through the offered mitigation package in §3.7;

- The trip-generation benefits in §4;
- The acceptable design and absence of any other harm,

...together demonstrate that planning permission should be granted, notwithstanding Condition 4 of RM/2008/0224.

The applicants respectfully request that Wokingham Borough Council grants **Full Householder Planning Permission**, subject to the conditions offered in §3.7.

Schedule of Submission Documents

- Application form (Householder)
- CIL Form (Additional Information) — nil liability (<100 m²)
- Biodiversity Net Gain exemption statement (householder exemption)
- Fire- Reasonable exception statement
- Architect's drawing 5MC/20052026/PD-1 & 5MC/20052026/PD-2 , comprising: existing site / block plan; existing ground floor plan; existing roof plan; existing elevations (front, side, rear, side-2); proposed site / block plan; proposed ground floor plan (with converted room labelled “STUDY”); proposed roof plan; proposed elevations (front, side, rear, side-2) showing brick infill and new ground-floor window ; Location Plan (Ordnance Survey, 1:1250)
- This Planning, Design and Access Statement

— End of Statement —