

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250621
Site Address:	30 Wiltshire Avenue, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6NQ
Expiry Date:	16 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	10 April 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a 4 bedroom detached dwelling following demolition of existing dwelling.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals

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 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 CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
002586	Proposed single storey side and front extensions to dwelling	Approved: June 2000

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No comments
WBC Drainage – No objection subject to a condition
WBC Highways – No objection subject to conditions
WBC Landscape and Trees – Request further information
WBC CIL – CIL liable development
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments

WBC Ecology – No comments
External
South East Water – No comments

REPRESENTATIONS

Wokingham Without Parish Council	No objection subject to the Planning Officer giving considering to the scale and height.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

APPRAISAL

Site Description: Wiltshire Avenue is a residential road in Crowthorne characterised by its architectural diversity. Its linear axis, bordered by grass verges, mature deciduous trees and boundary planting frame a great variety of house types. The properties are set back from the highway to create a sense of openness.

Proposal: This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a new dwelling, replacing that of the existing 30 Wiltshire Avenue. The replacement dwelling would be of a greater scale compared to the existing, with a footprint of approximately 169sqm, a ridge height of approximately 8.52 metres, a width of approximately 14.4 metres, and an overall depth of approximately 17 metres.

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 within settlement limits, where a replacement dwelling is acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the impact on the character and appearance of the area, amenity of neighbours, and all other material considerations.

Character of the Area: Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that ‘maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment’. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states planning permission will be granted if development is ‘of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area, 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’.

R1 of the Borough Design Guide (BDG) requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

R2 of the BDG requires development to respond to context, including incorporating existing features, taking advantage of landform and orientation, relating to neighbours

and minimising amenity, iconological and drainage impacts. R3 and R4 require housing to relate to the existing network of streets and spaces.

R7 of the BDG requires a consistent building line relative to existing buildings.

R9 and NR5 of the BDG note that height, bulk and massing should respond to the local context and the prevailing heights in the area.

General

The most prominent and fundamental aspect of the scheme is the intention to alter the property type from a modest dwelling to a larger, two storey building, with a large loft space. As described previously, Wiltshire Avenue demonstrates a wide range of building types, however, due to recent development along the lane, modern, two storey properties dominate the street scene, with many of the original dwellings/bungalows being extended or demolished and re-built. Consequently, the replacement dwelling would not appear out of place in this context.

Siting & Scale

The replacement dwelling would be located in a similar position to the existing property, thus complying with the guidance contained within the BDG, which states that replacement dwellings are expected to be sited in the same location as the original building. The new dwelling would have a larger footprint, however, the areas of additional built form would not significantly encroach outside the existing coalesce of development. Accordingly, the dwelling would be appropriately placed within the existing building line, which is characterised by its lineal development.

In terms of height, the replacement dwelling would have a maximum ridge of approximately 8.52m. This is considered acceptable as it would be commensurate with prevailing building heights along Wiltshire Avenue, where, as stated, large two storey properties are a commonality. For specific context, the immediate neighbouring dwellings demonstrate heights of approximately 7.6 metres (No.32) & 8.9 metres (No.28). It is important to note that in this section of Wiltshire Avenue, there is a gradual increase in ridge heights from dwelling to dwelling when travelling south down the road, which is caused by the gradual increase in ground level. The replacement dwelling would continue this pattern by being taller than No.32, but shorter than No.28.

In general, the replacement dwelling would clearly be of a notably greater scale compared to its existing counterpart and thus would result in a more confined form of development within the site. Notwithstanding, the size of the property would not significantly differ from the size of proximate dwellings that have been recently constructed and/or extended on the street and thus would not be out of character in this respect. Furthermore, the replacement dwelling would retain generous separation from the adjacent boundaries, with the property being set in by over 2 metres on both sides, which would be in accordance with the BDG recommendations and subsequently retain an adequate spacious relationship with the neighbouring houses.

Design

It would be incorrect to state that the existing property has no particular architectural merit, as its unique external appearance adds an element of intrigue to the street scene, while also reflecting its important status as a post-war dwelling. That said, it does not

stand out as a building of exceptional design quality. Furthermore, as explained in the applicants Planning Statement, the existing house was one of four cedar wood clad dwellings built in a row, with the other three all being replaced for larger, modern builds in recent time. Accordingly, it would be inconsistent for the LPA to prevent its demolition.

In consideration of the above, whilst the modern design of the proposal marks a significant departure from the existing property, it is not considered that this would be harmful, but in fact would be a positive reflection of the changes in architectural attitudes within the context of Wiltshire Avenue. Incidentally, the replacement dwelling would be more in keeping with its neighbouring properties which have undergone similar changes, as described previously.

In assessing the individual features, the large projecting gable which comprises an extensive expanse of fenestration on the principal elevation is an architecturally interesting feature, synonymous with the wider modern design principles that would be in keeping with other built attributes along Wiltshire Avenue. The rear elevation would have a slightly bulkier appearance, however, this would have no street presence, thus limiting its contribution to wider character.

Summary

In accordance with all the above, it is considered that the proposed replacement dwelling would have an acceptable visual impact and would accord with policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and the BDG recommendations.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking: There are 4no. first floor side windows proposed. Two of these would serve non-habitable rooms and therefore pose no overlooking concerns. The other two windows, being located towards the front elevation, serve bedrooms, and would have unobstructed outlooks into the side facing windows of the adjacent dwellings. Nonetheless, both the windows in question are secondary to the rooms they serve and therefore can be conditioned to incorporate obscure glazing, which would avoid any infringement upon the privacy of the adjacent residents.

The rear facing windows, particularly at first floor level, would provide oblique views of neighbouring rear gardens, however, this would not result in direct overlooking.

The 6no. rooflights would serve a large loft space. This is not a habitable room and therefore would not result in overlooking. In any case, the primary function of these features is to provide daylight for a space as opposed to an outlook, which appears to be the case in this instance.

Loss of Light & Overbearing: Despite the clear increase in mass proposed, the first-floor component of the dwelling would not significantly extend beyond the rear elevations of the neighbouring properties, thus preventing an adverse loss of light or overbearing impact.

Representations: It should be acknowledged that no objections have been received by neighbouring residents.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The existing access onto Wiltshire Avenue would be retained and this is considered acceptable to serve the replacement dwelling.

The proposed level of parking meets WBC parking standards and is therefore considered acceptable.

An EVC point location has been indicated and this is welcome. The provision of this is to be secured through Building Regs Approved Doc S.

The development will be expected to provide secure and covered cycle storage for a minimum of three cycles. This shall be in an accessible location with footpath access identified. These details can be secured via condition.

Flooding and Drainage: The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 and the development is at low risk from surface water flooding according to the EA mapping. As there is going to be an increase in impermeable area and no drainage details have been provided within this application, a condition requiring further details in this regard has been suggested by the Drainage Officer. However, the LPA consider this condition to be too onerous when compared with the scale of the development, plus the fact the site would retain a more than sufficient amount of permeable land to the east. As such, the condition is not necessary.

Landscape and Trees: The site consists of several trees that are of high amenity value to the area. An Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS), Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) have been submitted to inform of the measures taken to protect these features during the development.

The Landscape & Trees Officer for this application has raised a concern with the scheme on the basis that the arboricultural submission lacks the required level of detail for optimal protection measures to be concluded.

Notwithstanding the above, whilst the trees in question are of amenity value to the street scene, they are not formally protected by preservation orders and thus not afforded the same level of protection. In any case, the AIA and AMS provide extensive measures that would protect the trees during the construction phase.

In light of all the above, it is considered that the information provided is sufficient in the context of the scale of the development and therefore a condition has been included to ensure compliance with the measures contained within the arboricultural submission.

Ecology: An internal and external daytime inspection for evidence of bats and bat roosting potential was conducted by ecologist Lisha Price of Plan Ecology on the 17th of January 2025. The building was deemed to have negligible bat roosting potential, and no further surveys are recommended. An informative has been included to advise what measures should be taken if bats were encountered during the development.

Conclusion: For all the above, the proposal is acceptable, and the application is 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	20 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	14 April 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	21 May 2025