

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251419
Site Address:	60 Victoria Road, Wargrave, Wokingham, RG10 8AE
Expiry Date:	16 October 2025
Site Visit Date:	20 June 2025
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of retaining walls and installation of a dropped kerb, following demolition of existing retaining walls and excavation to pavement level, to facilitate the creation of a vehicular access and off-road parking area.	

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP3 – General Principles for Development 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 CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles SS2 – Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy SS3 – Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging DH1 – Place making and quality design
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Wargrave Parish Design Statement

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
202356	Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear dormer to create habitable accommodation plus the insertion of 7no. roof lights.	Approved – 03/11/2020

R/29/70	Addition of double garage and cloakroom	Approved 22/01/1970	–
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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Drainage: No objection subject to condition
WBC Highways: No objection subject to conditions

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is an early 20th century detached two storey dwellinghouse on Victoria Road, Wargrave. The dwelling is set well back from the highway on higher ground on a fairly consistent principal (front) building line. To the rear the site backs onto Woodclyffe Allotments Gardens and the open countryside. The site sits on a sloping gradient from west to east.

The site's frontage comprised raised flowerbeds on each side of a set of steps which provides pedestrian access from the highway, and the raised parking area surfaced primarily with gravel. A shared driveway serves both the site and No.58 Victoria Road adjacent and provides vehicular access to garages at the rear of both properties as well as the existing parking area. It appears that the existing parking area was created fairly recently, with the site's frontage formerly comprising a front garden area similar to No.58 adjacent.

Proposal:

This application proposes the demolition of the existing front boundary walls and the excavation of the land fronting the dwelling to pavement level, plus the erection of a new retaining wall, to create a new vehicular access and off-road front drive level with the highway. The new drive would be accessed via a proposed dropped kerb, as Victoria Road is unclassified planning permission is not required for this element of the scheme.

The front drive would be surfaced with block paving with a channel drain incorporated into its design to improve the site's drainage. The new retaining wall would be a total of 1m in height from the proposed ground level around the perimeter of the drive, with the section fronting the dwelling set back from the highway by circa. 5.5m and incorporating black railings. Flower beds as well as planting at the base of the walls

are proposed to retain soft landscaping features at the front.

Following discussions with the applicant, revised plans were submitted which include the following amendments to the original scheme:

- Additional information regarding the existing & proposed ground levels.
- More detailed elevations plans showing the proposed retaining walls.
- Amendments to the position of the proposed dropped kerb and number of parking spaces reduced from four to three.
- Proposed central steps removed from the scheme.
- The height of the retaining walls reduced on both side boundaries.
- Additional soft landscaping features proposed.

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.

Alterations and additions to an existing residential dwelling within settlement limits is acceptable in principle, subject to impact on other material considerations including the character of the area, neighbouring amenity and highway safety,

Design and Character of the Area:

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high quality design. R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that development contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.

Victoria Road is characterised by a remarkably varied street scene comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings of differing architectural form, style and ages. Properties on the southern side, including the application site, have varied frontages which address the sloping gradient from west to east with a mix of hard surfaced front drives, that are level with the highway, and raised front gardens with steps visible. Boundary hedges and other soft landscaping features strong contribute to the visual amenity of the street scene and soften the examples of predominantly hard surfaced frontages.

While the proposal would be a significant alteration to the site's frontage, it would be in keeping with other properties along this row to the east which benefit from vehicular access and front drives at their frontage, and the development would not be out of character in this respect. Block paving is also a common hard surface serving neighbouring front drives, while the proposed 1m high retaining walls would be set down towards the front boundary in keeping with other examples.

Following discussions with the applicant, revised plans were submitted which incorporates flower beds to the eastern side of the front drive as well as additional planting at the base of all walls and on the retained higher ground to the front of the

dwelling. The reduction of hardstanding across the site's whole frontage is a significant improvement to the scheme, and alongside the incorporation of planting into its design would prevent the new front drive from dominating the site's frontage. This is in keeping with other frontages where soft landscaped edges soften the hard surfaced front drives. The revised scheme also ensures no net loss of planting following the development in accordance with MDD Local Plan policy CC03.

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

Neighbouring Amenity:

Given the nature of the proposal and its siting at the front of the dwelling, there are no concerns in respect of overlooking or loss of light impact. The retaining walls on the side boundary would be 'stepped', i.e., lower towards the front boundary adjoining the highway, which minimises any potential overbearing impact on both immediate adjacent neighbours as well as highway users.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

Core Strategy policy CP6 concerns issues relating to highway safety and access. MDD Local Plan policy CC07 requires developments to deliver an appropriate level of off-street parking.

The Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the principle of the scheme, welcoming the enhanced provision of off-street parking, with no concerns relating to the proposed gradient and materials. However, concerns were initially raised regarding the submitted plans and whether all proposed spaces could be safely accessed from the highway, as well as potential obstructed visibility when exiting the drive.

Following discussions with the applicant, the scheme has been amended to reduce the number of spaces to three and remove the central steps to improve the functionality of the proposed front drive. Following the submission of revised plans, the Highways Officer is satisfied that all proposed spaces will be safe and convenient, with initial concerns regarding potential conflict with pedestrians adequately resolved. The revised layout ensures parked vehicles will not overhang the footway and conflict with pedestrians, while sufficient visibility splays have been demonstrated to minimise potential conflict with other highway users when exiting the drive.

Subject to conditions, the Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection to the proposal.

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 is located within Flood Zone 1 and the proposal represents no additional flood risk or vulnerability from rivers. The Council's Flood Risk & Drainage Officer has therefore raised no objection in principle to the proposal. The submission makes reference to a proposed channel drain along the perimeter of the property to capture surface water run-off. The Officer has raised no objection to this arrangement, but as full details have not been provided at this stage has recommended the submission of a sustainable drainage strategy prior to the commencement of the development.

While this request is duly noted, given the relatively minor scale of the proposed development the submission of a drainage strategy would not be necessary or reasonable in conflict with paragraph 57 of the NPPF. A condition which requires the hard surfacing to be constructed from porous materials, or for provision to be made to direct run-off to a permeable or porous area and maintained thereafter is recommended to ensure that any surface water run-off resulting from the hardstanding is contained within the site's boundaries.

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 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:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	16 October 2025
Earliest date for decision:	7 July 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
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Date:	17 October 2025
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PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- *Modest Development Location – Wargrave*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Area – Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands*
- *Bat Roost Habitat Suitability Area*