

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260446
Site Address:	95 Butts Hill Road, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4NT
Expiry Date:	20 April 2026
Site Visit Date:	16 th April 2026
Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of a first floor side and part single part two storey rear extension.	

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
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk TB06 – Development of Private Residential Gardens
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	SS1 – Sustainable development principles H12 – Residential development of existing private gardens
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
N/A	N/A	N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Landscape and Trees- No objection
WBC CIL- No comments received
WBC Ecology- No objection subject to condition(s)

External

None consulted

REPRESENTATIONS

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

APPRAISAL

Site Description: This application site relates to a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with associated parking and landscaping in the residential area of Woodley, Wokingham. The site is surrounded by dwellings that have similar design characteristics in varying forms.

Proposal: This application seeks permission for the proposed erection of a first-floor side and part single part two storey rear extension. The proposed first-floor side extension would measure approximately 6.78 metres in depth, 3.1 metres in width and 3.9 metres in height to the ridgeline. The proposed single-storey rear extension would project approximately 3 metres from the rear of the host dwelling, span its full width (approximately 9 metres), and measure 2.6 metres in height. The proposed part two-storey rear extension would measure approximately 3.8 metres in depth, 5 metres in width and 4.4 metres in height.

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 principle of development is 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.

Character of the Area: Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development should be 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 other adjoining land users.*” Policy R1 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires development to “*contribute positively towards and be compatible with the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area.*”

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Design Code place significant emphasis on securing good design. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that “*the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.*” Paragraph 139 further confirms that “*development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account*

any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.”

Butts Hill Road is characterised by detached and semi-detached dwellings with visual gaps between buildings. While there are examples of two-storey side and rear extensions within the street, these have generally retained adequate separation between dwellings, preserving the established spatial rhythm and avoiding a terracing effect.

The proposed two-storey side extension would be constructed up to the site boundary and would sit almost flush with the neighbouring side wall at No. 97 Butts Hill Road. This would result in a cramped and contrived form of development and introduce a clear terracing effect that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

The Council's Borough Design Guide states that for side extensions *“a gap should be retained between the building and the site boundary and this should be a minimum of 1m in width.”* This guidance is particularly important for two-storey extensions as it avoids a terracing effect and maintains the visual gaps and spatial character of the area. The BDG further advises that *“for properties in formal suburbia, whether detached, semi-detached or short terraces, the rhythm of buildings and the gaps between them along the street frontage is often important to the character of the area.”* In this case, the proposal would erode this established characteristic by eliminating the gap between dwellings, to the detriment of the street scene.

The submitted drawings do not accurately show the neighbouring property's projecting side gutter. If correctly illustrated, it would demonstrate that the extension would virtually abut the neighbouring dwelling, meaning the visual impact would be more pronounced than shown on the plans.

There also appears to be a discrepancy in the drawings, which incorrectly suggest that the host dwelling has the same eaves and ridge height as the neighbouring property to the south. In reality, the host dwelling appears higher, meaning the proposed side extension would appear appreciably taller and more imposing when viewed in relation to No. 97, further reinforcing the harmful terracing effect.

This harm would be exacerbated by the gable end of the side extension, which would continue the cramped appearance above the eaves line of the host dwelling, increasing the perceived mass and dominance of the proposal. The gable would also fail to reflect the hipped roof design of the host dwelling, adjoining semidetached property and the property to the south the proposal would abut up to.

The proposed side extension incorporates a flat-roofed crown, which fails to relate positively to the pitched roof of the host dwelling, the adjoining semi-detached property, and the surrounding development. This large flat crown also creates an awkward shape to the gable end which does not tie into the existing hipped roofs forms. This results in an incongruous roof form that conflicts with the Borough Design Guide, which states that *“the roof form of the extension should take its form from the main building”* and that *“side extensions to formal pairs of semi-detached dwellings should be set back from the building line, with a similar roof form and a lower ridge height.”* The flat roof also

adds unnecessary bulk to the extension, exacerbating its cramped and contrived appearance.

In addition, the pitched roof of the rear two-storey element would project above the roof of the side extension, resulting in an awkward and visually discordant feature that would appear contrived and unbalanced.

It is acknowledged that the neighbouring property has previously been extended with a two-storey side extension. However, each application must be considered on its own merits at that time. At the time of that approval, a degree of separation at first-floor level was retained between the houses. The current proposal would result in the complete loss of this gap, causing materially greater harm to the character of the street scene.

The Design and Access Statement indicates that the proposed side extension would utilise fibre-cement cladding as a contemporary material finish. However, this material is not present on the host semi-detached property or the adjoining dwelling and is uncharacteristic of the established material palette of the pair as a whole. As such, the introduction of fibre-cement cladding would appear visually discordant and would fail to integrate successfully with the existing building or its semi-detached properties.

The applicant was given the opportunity to amend the proposal to reduce its scale and address the identified design concerns; however, no amendments were forthcoming.

Overall, the proposal would result in a cramped, contrived and visually intrusive form of development that would remove the established spatial separation between dwellings, introduce an uncharacteristic terracing effect, and appear overly dominant and incongruous within the street scene. As such, the proposal fails to achieve a high standard of design and is contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD, and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbouring Amenity: Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development to secure a “*high standard of amenity for existing and future users*”. This is reinforced by Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which requires development to be of an appropriate scale, mass, layout and height, and to achieve a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities or quality of life of adjoining occupiers.

The proposed development includes a two-storey rear element positioned marginally off the side boundary with the neighbouring property to the south at No. 97 Butts Hill Road. Notwithstanding this small offset, the height, depth and proximity of the two-storey flank wall would result in a significantly overbearing and visually oppressive form of development when viewed from the neighbouring property.

In particular, the neighbouring dwelling’s rear patio area, which represents an important and frequently used private amenity space, would experience a strong sense of enclosure and overbearing impact as a result of the scale and siting of the two-storey rear element. The flank wall would appear as a dominant and intrusive feature when viewed from this area, materially harming the outlook and enjoyment of the neighbouring occupiers.

The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupants at 97 Butts Hill Road by reason of an over-dominant and overbearing impact; contrary to policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 12 of the NPPF.

Highway Access and Parking Provision: The proposed block plan shows parking spaces for three vehicles. There is no change in level of driveway parking available, and no off-street parking is proposed. As a result, the proposal does not impact parking or access provisions, therefore, no objection from Highways has been raised.

Flooding and Drainage: This application site is situated within Flood Zone 1. However no known surface or groundwater flooding has been found at the location of the proposed extension. Therefore, this scheme is satisfactory regarding flooding and drainage.

Landscape and Trees: The Council's Tree and Landscape Officer have reviewed this application, as there are no TPO trees that would be impacted by this proposal the Officer has raised no objection.

Ecology: The property has been assessed as having high potential for roosting bats, primarily due to its location and the presence of multiple features suitable for roosting. A low number of bat droppings were recorded beneath hanging tiles on the front elevation, confirming some bat activity.

The proposed side and rear extensions would not affect any of the features identified as potentially suitable for roosting bats. As such, it is considered unlikely that bats would be adversely affected by the proposed works, and no further bat surveys are required. There are therefore no bat-related constraints to the determination of the application. Nevertheless, given the likelihood that bats may roost elsewhere within the building, it is recommended that precautionary working measures set out in the submitted ecological report are implemented during construction.

The Council's Ecologist has raised no objections to the proposal and has recommended that, if permission were to be granted, an appropriate informative or condition be attached to secure the precautionary measures.

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.

Conclusion: The proposed development is unacceptable, will result in material harm and is contrary to National and Development Plan policies for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development will result in a cramped, incongruous and contrived form of development that would fail to respect the character, appearance and spatial characteristics of the property and the neighbouring houses, by reason of its size, scale, massing, proximity to the boundaries and design. The proposed development is contrary to policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 12 of the NPPF.
2. The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupants of No. 97 Butts Hill Road reason of an over-dominant and overbearing impact; contrary to policy CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, the Borough Design Guide SPD and section 12 of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Refused
Date:	13 April 2026
Earliest date for decision:	18 March 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	11.05.2026