

Development Management Ref No:	No weeks on day of committee:	Parish:	Ward:	Listed by:
170217	9	Arborfield and Newland	Arborfield	Councillor Cowan

Applicant	Mr David George		
Location	3 Barker Close, Arborfield	Postcode	RG2 9NQ
Proposal	Householder application for the proposed two storey side extension to existing dwelling, raising of garage roof to provide first floor habitable accommodation and part conversion of garage to habitable accommodation.		
Type	Householder Application		
PS Category	21		
Officer	Stefan Fludger		

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 29 th March 2017
REPORT PREPARED BY	Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The application site is a two storey dwelling located on Barker Close. The dwelling is semi-detached with No. 1 adjoining. The application site is within the settlement boundary. The proposal is a two storey side extension, including raising the roof of the existing garage and part conversion of the garage to habitable accommodation.

The report concludes that the proposed extension would result in an unacceptable overbearing impact and sense of enclosure to a neighbouring dwelling. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Policies CP1 or CP3 or the Borough Design Guide. The application is before the committee as it has been listed by Councillor Gary Cowan in the event that it is recommended for refusal.

PLANNING STATUS

- Modest Development Location
- Strategic Development Location
- SPA Zone: 5KM
- Landfill Gas Consultation Zone
- Contaminated Land Consultation Zone
- Minerals Consultation Zone
- Farnborough Aerodrome Consultation Zone

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be refused for the below reason:

By virtue of the lack of appropriate separation distance to the boundary with the number 5 Barker Close and by protruding to the rear of that property, adjacent to and beyond the existing conservatory, the proposal would result in an unacceptable overbearing impact and sense of enclosure to the occupants of number 5 Barker Close, contrary to CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy and section 4 of the Borough Design Guide.

PLANNING HISTORY	
F/1996/64429	Proposed demolition of existing buildings and erection of 63 houses, construction of access road, provision of open space and associated works. – Approved on appeal – 08/01/1998
C/64429/14	Discharge of conditions application for archaeological report. – Approved – 12/12/1999

SUMMARY INFORMATION
<p>For Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Area: 0.021 ha • Existing Bedrooms: 3 • Proposed Bedrooms: 4 • Existing parking spaces: Driveway • Proposed parking spaces: No change

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
<p>Parish/Town Council: No objection</p> <p>Local Members: This application was listed by Cllr Cowan in the event of a recommendation for refusal. The reason given for this is that there are several identical properties in the area and there would be no overlooking impact. One further comment received from Cllr Cowan confirming that the extension is proposed to provide living accommodation for an elderly relative.</p> <p>WBC Highways: No objection as existing level of parking is considered acceptable to serve the extended dwelling.</p> <p>WBC Environmental Health: Have raised no objection to the application, subject to conditions to mitigate any environmental health impacts.</p> <p>Neighbours: No objections received.</p>

REPRESENTATIONS
No representations received.

APPLICANTS POINTS
The applicant has pointed out that the Borough Design Guide is a guide only and the fact that the applicant's property is stepped back from the neighbouring property would be sufficient to mitigate any terracing impact.

PLANNING POLICY		
National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development

	CP3	General Principles for Development
Managing Development Delivery Local Plan	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure Trees & Landscape
	CC04	Sustainable Design and Construction
	CC07	Parking
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	BDG	Borough Design Guide SPD

PLANNING ISSUES	
<u>Principle of Development</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. The site is located within the Modest Development Location of Arborfield and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Local Development Plan. 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. 3. The application is before the committee as it has been listed by Councillor Gary Cowan in the event that the application is recommended for refusal. The planning reasons given are that Cllr Cowan considers that there are several similar properties on site and that there would be no impact on any overlooking of other properties so the application is compliant with existing planning policy. 	
<u>Description of Development</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The proposal is for the erection of a two storey side extension, which would involve both the raising of the roof of the existing side attached garage and its extension at two storey level to the rear of the existing garage. The garage would be part converted to provide additional habitable accommodation. The total height of the extension would be 8.5 metres, with an eaves height of 5 metres. Internally, there would be a new bedroom and an en-suite bathroom on the first floor and an extended dining room and access from the retained part of the garage to the rear garden on the ground floor. A new window would be inserted into the first floor front elevation, serving the bedroom and a further window would be inserted into the rear, serving the en-suite. An additional rooflight would be inserted in the rear 	

roofslope.

Impact on the Character of the Area

5. The application site is close to the Arborfield Garrison and development in the wider area is mixed in nature, style and form. Barker Close itself is a more modern estate road, with buildings laid out in an informal suburban style. The road is winding and houses take different forms, with some being detached and some semi-detached. The application property is semi-detached, with number 1 Barker Close adjoining. The property has a pitched roof with gable to the front. It is modest in scale, with an attached single garage (also with a pitched roof).
6. The Borough Design Guide recommends that extensions should be subservient by being stepped in from the front wall of the host dwelling and should set the roof ridge down. This can be clearly seen in the design of this extension and it is considered that given the variety of house styles on this street that this subservient addition would appear appropriate.
7. The Borough Design Guide states that a gap of one metre should be maintained between development and side boundaries. This is both to maintain privacy and limit a sense of enclosure (discussed in more detail in the neighbouring amenity section of this report) and to prevent terracing of properties. This being said, there are other examples on this road of properties running to the boundary at a two storey level. Examples of these include the properties on the opposite side of the road, which are detached and each is set against the side boundary. The presence of such a significant number of dwellings up to the boundary means that a character reason for refusal by virtue of a lack of a 1m set in from the boundary would not be justified. The property is also set back from the neighbour (number 5) and this would partially mitigate any terracing effect. In light of this, it is not considered that a reason for refusal based on the proximity to the boundary could be substantiated.
8. For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Core Policy CP3 and the advice contained within the Borough Design Guide in terms of its impact on the character of the area.

Impact on Neighbours

Overlooking

9. The proposed extension would have new windows to the front and rear. The ground floor rear door would serve corridor leading to the garage. For this reason it is unlikely to overlook any neighbours. In any case, views would be restricted by existing boundary treatments. The front facing upstairs window would have a similar relationship to neighbouring properties as the existing front windows and therefore it would not be detrimentally overlooking. The new rear window would serve an en-suite and could therefore reasonably be conditioned to be obscure glazed and non-opening below 1.7 metres above ground level. This being said, it would not be considered necessary on this occasion due to the fact that the window would not be any further to the rear than the existing windows and therefore any views from it would be substantially similar to those from the existing upstairs rear windows. The rooflight would serve the en-suite bathroom, meaning it would be some distance from floor level and therefore it would not cause detrimental overlooking.

Overbearing

10. The proposed extension would run to the boundary at two storeys and therefore any overbearing impact must be considered carefully. This is further exacerbated by the fact that the application property is set back in its plot when compared to number 5 Barker Close. The existing garage protrudes beyond the rear wall of number 5 Barker Close by approximately 2.1 metres. This does not include an existing conservatory at number 5 which is not demonstrated on the received plans. As has been discussed, the Borough Design Guide recommends that a one metre gap is retained to the boundary to prevent a sense of enclosure. The two storey extension would extend approximately 2.1 metres beyond the rear wall of the existing garage to be flush with the existing rear wall of the host dwelling. This would result in the extension running to the boundary with number 5 to a distance of approximately 4.2 metres beyond the rear wall of that property. As has been mentioned, there is a conservatory present at number 5 which is not demonstrated on the plans. The proposed extension would protrude approximately one metre beyond the rear wall of the conservatory.
11. The resulting extension at two storey's (reaching a height of approximately 8.5 metres) and to the boundary would be detrimentally overbearing to the occupants of number 5 Barker Close by virtue of the increase in proximity, height, bulk, scale and mass of the application property. The combination of these factors would lead to a sense of enclosure to the users of the conservatory, as the extension would be clearly visible through the side wall. Also, the extension would lead to a sense of enclosure to the rear amenity space of number 5 through the increase in bulk, scale and mass.
12. The Planning Officer has recommended a reduction in the depth of the first floor of the extension in order to reduce the amount of wall against the boundary with the neighbour and therefore make the neighbour impact acceptable; however the applicant has declined to do so.
13. Overall, it is considered that the extension would be significantly and detrimentally overbearing to the occupants at number 5. Therefore the proposal is contrary to CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Loss of Light

14. Reference to BRE Loss of Light Guidelines using the 45 degree rule suggests that there may be a small loss of light to the closest upstairs window at number 5 Barker Close, as well as the closest downstairs window (inside the conservatory) as well as the conservatory its self. The loss of light to the bathroom appears to be borderline. In any case, as a bathroom window, any loss of light to it would not substantiate a reason for refusal of this application due to the fact that it is not habitable. The closest downstairs window serves the living room, which is a habitable room. However, the living room stretches across the full width of the rear of the house and has another window on the opposite side of the rear wall of the house. This is also within the conservatory. However, the other window would remain unaffected by the proposed extension and therefore a reason for refusal could not be substantiated. The above points are further supported by the fact that the application site lies to the north of number 5 Barker Close and therefore any light loss would be very minimal and there would not be any loss of direct sunlight. The guidelines demonstrate that there may be a marginal loss of light to parts of the conservatory, however again due to the aspect there would not be a loss of direct sunlight. The

opaque roof and other walls of the conservatory would remain a significant source of light and therefore a reason for refusal could not be substantiated.

Highways and Parking

15. The proposal would result in an additional habitable room and the reduction in size of the existing garage. The entire front garden is currently paved and provides parking for at least three vehicles which comply with the councils parking standard. The Council's Highways department have no objection to the application. For these reasons it is considered that the existing level of parking is acceptable.

Environmental Health

16. This application falls into the contaminated land consultation zone and the landfill gas consultation zone. The environmental health team have raised no objections but have recommended conditions to mitigate any environmental health impacts in the event of an approval.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the design of the dwelling is acceptable and that there would not be any significant highways impacts. Environmental health issues could be overcome by conditions. However, the lack of appropriate separation would result in an unacceptable overbearing impact and sense of enclosure to a neighbouring dwelling. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3 or the advice contained within the Borough Design Guide.

CONTACT DETAILS

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