

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App Ref: 230662/FUL

Address: 2 Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RZ

Proposals: Erection of a free standing fitness studio

Case Officer: Tom Bradfield

Date received (valid from): 1 June 2023 Target Decision date: 27 July 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Site visit photos:



The site contains a two storey house on the corner of Priest Hill and Hemdean Road. The garden extends up Priest Hill and ends at the side boundary of number 4 Priest Hill. There is an existing shed at the end of the garden.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This application seeks to replace the existing shed with an outbuilding which would be used as a fitness studio. The outbuilding would be used by the occupant of the main house as a studio to run one to one personal fitness training sessions for clients. The sessions would be attended by no more than three people for an hour at a time, and the proposed hours are Monday – Friday 6am – 3pm and 5pm – 8pm, weekends 7am – 11am. No music is proposed to be used and appropriate measures to reduce noise from weights would be implemented.

Plans considered:

Planning Statement received 07/06/2023
Email with additional information received 30/06/2023
Proposed Site Plan received 07/06/2023
Plans and Elevations received 16/05/2023
Location Plan received 16/05/2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

3a Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RZ
9a Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7RZ
11 Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7RZ
11a Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7RZ
16 Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks
16C Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading
9 Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RZ
18 Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7SU
16a Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7SX
1 Priest Hill, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RZ

A site notice was posted by the applicant on 10/06/2023.

No letters of representation have been received.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT
H9: HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND

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APPRAISAL

Principle

Local Plan Policy H9 seeks to allow for extensions or additions to houses where they respect the character and appearance of the area, neighbouring properties and biodiversity in gardens.

The physical proposal would represent an addition to the house, and providing it does not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, neighbour's living conditions or biodiversity, would be acceptable in principle.

The use of the outbuilding would not be ancillary to the main house, as it would be run as a business, with customers unrelated to the household visiting during opening hours. Given the residential nature of the area, the proposed use must demonstrate that it would not result in any harm to the neighbour's living conditions or any transport impacts.

Character and Appearance of the Area

Local Plan Policy CC7 seeks to ensure high quality design that respects the public realm.

The proposal would replace an existing shed. It would be slightly taller and deeper than the existing, resulting in it being more prominent when viewed from the street scene, given the position of the property on the corner. Despite the increase in scale, the proposal would remain domestic in scale and appearance and would not be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.

Neighbour's Living Conditions

Local Plan Policy CC8 seeks to ensure that development does not have any unacceptable adverse impact on neighbour's living conditions, particularly through loss of light, privacy or outlook, or the creation of noise and disturbance.

The proposal would be of a size, scale and in a position that would not result in any harm to neighbour's living conditions through loss of light, privacy or outlook.

The proposed use would result in an increase in activity towards the end of the garden, however, given the nature and intensity of the proposed use, it is not considered that this would give rise to any significant increase in noise or disturbance for neighbours. The applicant has outlined several measures, including weight dampening, no use of music and appropriate hours of opening that would ensure that any increase in noise and disturbance for neighbours would be minimal.

Transport

Local Plan Policy TR3 requires development to have no unacceptable impact on the free movement of pedestrians and vehicles. Policy TR5 requires developments to have appropriate parking provision.

The property has three parking spaces on the driveway at the front of the property. The applicant has also indicated that the majority of clients would arrive by foot or cycle. The small-scale nature of the proposal, combined with the existing parking provision and likely local client base would ensure that there would be no unacceptable impact on the transport network.

Biodiversity & Trees

Local Plan Policies EN12 and EN14 seek to protect and enhance biodiversity and improve tree cover.

The proposal would not result in the loss of any significant trees, but would result in the loss of some vegetation. Given the small scale nature of the proposal, and the minimal loss, it is not considered that there would be any harm.

Conclusion

The proposal would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the area, neighbour's living conditions, the road network or have any impact on the biodiversity or the area. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

TL1 – Time Limit

AP1 – Approved Plans

M3 – Materials as Specified

N16 – Hours of Opening/Operation

PD8 - Use Restriction