

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 221566/HOU

Address: 174 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JU

Proposals: Two storey and part single storey rear extension to replace existing extensions.

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Aspin

Date received (valid from): 19 October 2022 **Decision date (ext):** 14th November 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two storey detached dwelling located on Upper Woodcote Road. The dwelling is significantly set back from the road and has a large rear garden. The surrounding area is residential consisting of detached dwellings varying in style. The property is not a listed building, nor does it fall within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 01/11/2022

Site visit photos:



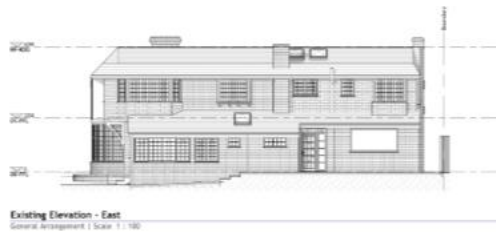
2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for part two storey and part single storey rear extensions and replacement of existing extensions. The maximum depth of the proposed single storey element would be 5.963m. The additional depth at first floor level would be approximately 4.65m. The materials proposed will match those of the existing house.

Google Earth Image:



Existing Elevations:



Proposed Elevations:



Plans considered:

- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-011 rev A - Existing and Proposed Block Plan
- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-141 rev A - Existing Elevations
- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-111 rev A - Existing Ground Floor Plan
- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-121 rev A - Existing First Floor Plan
- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-211 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- Drawing No. MAP-C4306-221 - Proposed First Floor Plan

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

981032 - Erection of detached dwelling with integral double garage - Permitted

960661 - RENEWAL of planning consent 91/0739/FD for erection of dwelling with integral garage; erection of garage. - Permitted

910895 - Erection of dwelling with integral garage; erection of garage - Permitted

880209 -Proposed rear dormer and ensuite shower/wc room. - Permitted

4. CONSULTATIONS

Ecology

The application site comprises a detached dwelling in Caversham where it is proposed to replace existing extensions.

An Ecological Survey Report (bats) (Urban Tree Experts, September 2023, ref: SPH/ESR-23/23.08) has been submitted with the application. The report details the results of two bat emergence/re-entry surveys carried out after a preliminary bat survey report (Urban Tree Experts, September 2022) which found bat droppings on hanging tiles.

The report concludes that the property supports a soprano pipistrelle bat (Pipistrellus spp.) day roost of low conservation status.

It is therefore very likely that the proposed works will disturb or harm roosting bats. As such, a licence for development works affecting bats will need to be obtained from Natural England - for derogation from the provisions of the Habitat Regulations - before works which could impact upon the roost can commence.

Therefore, a pre-commencement condition is attached to this application to ensure that the license is obtained.

Natural Environment

Original comments were received from the Natural Environment team as follows:

This site is located within the Air Quality Management Area and Upper Woodcote Road is a designated Treed Corridor in our Tree Strategy, as such tree retention and planting are important in assessing this application.

With reference to the Plans - Site - Existing & Proposed GA Drg. No. MAP-C4306-011 Rev A dated 1.11.22 and the Householder Design and Access Statement Ref. MAP/C4306/DAS/0 the following are noted:

The proposed extension does not directly affect any existing trees, except small shrub vegetation around the existing patio at the rear. If left unchecked, the construction site operations and logistics area may overlap the Root Protection Area of an existing Swedish Whitebeam (shown on the existing site plan).

On 13 March 2023 you forwarded a response from the agent confirming the hedge on the boundary with no. 176 'is to be retained but may require to be cut back'. However, the hedge is not shown on the proposed plans (or on the existing plans). As the retention of this hedge is pledged by the agent and as it provides screening from neighbouring properties and biodiversity value to the area, we

should secure amended Proposed Plans that indicate its retention and extent once the proposals are completed prior to a decision - I'll leave this to your consideration.

I note the Proposed Site Level Plan indicates a Construction Exclusion Zone that will mitigate any risk of damaging the existing tree and (its extent) is acceptable. However, we should secure the details of the measures necessary to mark this CEZ on site via a brief Tree Protection Plan. The TPP should show its location, but also the materials used to mark this area and should include clear notes stating these should be installed prior to commencement of any construction works on site and retained until the construction works are complete. If the Proposed Plans are amended to include the hedge discussed in the previous paragraph, the TPP should also include this vegetation.

If the agent wishes to avoid a pre-commencement condition, the TPP should be provided prior to a decision but if you do not expect any future submissions, please attach condition L7 to secure the tree protection details. As the required TPP is brief, the former is preferable.

Landscaping

The DAS notes some small vegetation to the rear will be removed. This may be too little to warrant any new trees as replacement, but if you do consider it appropriate, a Landscaping condition (L1) can be attached to secure some replacements such as shrubs, hedges, or wildflower beds - which will also help with biodiversity net gain. I'll leave this to your consideration.

There is a large conifer tree on the frontage which increases the amenity for all those passing by on Upper Woodcote Road - this is on a significant green verge that might be used as parking by the contractors if the driveway gets busy. Parking on this verge must be avoided as it will directly affect this tree via soil compaction or trunk damage from vehicles. As such, please include an informative to make the agent aware of this.

Planning Officer Note: Following the above comments, the agent provided a Tree Protection Plan (TTP). Natural Environment then provided the updated comments below:

I can confirm that tree protection provisions on this plan are agreeable and a pre-commencement condition is no longer necessary. As such, please attach condition L7a to secure implementation.

Berkshire Archaeology

Original comments were received from Berkshire Archaeology as follows:

There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record. The site lies on gravel terraces above the River Thames that have been a focus for settlement activity since Prehistory. Evidence for this comes from 177, where features of Roman date have been found. Evidence from the immediate surrounding area suggest the presence of Late Prehistoric and Roman activity with a suggestion of a sizable settlement in the vicinity.

Although this is not a largescale development, the close proximity to known archaeology warrants some form of mitigation.

As shown, the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that a condition is applied.

Planning Officer Note: Following the above comments, evidence was supplied by the applicant regarding the archaeological condition for their proposed development.

Berkshire Archaeology responded as follows:

Based on the evidence provided by the applicant it appears that the majority of the extension will be constructed over what appears to be made ground with only a minimal portion that has any potential to cause any archaeological disturbance.

As such, I am satisfied that the archaeological condition can be removed for the site in this instance.

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

172A Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7JU

176 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7JU

172 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JU

11 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

15 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

13 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

One letter of representation has been received with regards to concerns that the work vehicles could potentially restrict views of warning signs for the school crossings and restrict visibility for cars exiting the neighbouring property.

Planning Officer note: not a planning matter, there are no waiting restrictions in place so the council would not be able to enforce against this. This would be a civil matter and the applicant should advise contractors to park with due care and attention. Furthermore, an informative is attached to this permission advising the applicant to avoid the use of the grass verges for development related activity.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

It is considered that the plot is capable of taking extensions of the proposed size and scale, and the proposal is considered a subservient addition to the host dwelling. The application site and surrounding properties have relatively large rear gardens and many of the neighbouring properties have rear extensions, therefore, the proposal is not considered out of character for its location. The proposed extension is contained at the rear of the property and will not be visible from the street, therefore posing minimal risk of harm to the streetscape. The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of design, and the proposed materials are to match those of the existing dwelling. It is considered that the proposals overall would not be harmful to the character of the house or neighbouring properties and would improve the appearance of the building by replacing the existing extensions.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

Although large, there is no identified risk to the neighbouring properties of the proposed rear extensions appearing overbearing. The extension has been designed to ensure that it complies with the 45 degree rule for sunlight and daylight impact assessment in relation to habitable rooms at number 176 Upper Woodcote Road. There is a significant distance between the proposed works and number 172a Upper Woodcote Road and the development will, therefore, have no harmful impact to the amenity of this neighbour. The proposal does not include any first floor side facing windows and therefore there are no identified risks in relation to privacy and overlooking. The proposal will not result in a loss of biodiversity within the garden, and the amount of remaining amenity space is considered acceptable. As such, the proposal is in-line with policies CC8, H9 & H10 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION - GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit

Materials

Approved plans

Bat licence

Arboricultural method statement (as specified)