

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 221808/HOU

Address: 22 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

Proposals: Demolition of existing garage, construction of ground and first floor Extensions

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Applicant: Mr G Williams

Date received (valid from): 2 December 2022 **Agreed Decision date:** 13 March 2023

Site Visit date: 27 February 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Gurney Close is a located within a predominantly residential area comprising of two storey chalet style and single storey dwelling houses of different sizes and styles. Many houses on Gurney close are built of brick with gable end pitched roofs and small to medium sized rear gardens. The area is characterised by different types of extensions.

The application site is a two storey chalet style dwelling house located at the end Gurney Close. The house is built of brick with a gable end pitched roof. Due to its location at the end of the street, the property has a relatively larger back garden than most of the properties on Gurney Close. The property, like other properties within the immediate surrounding, has made some alterations to the original house which include a flat roofed single storey rear extension. The building is not listed and does not fall within a conservation area however the western half of the plot falls within an air Quality Management Area.

Site Photos:



Figure 1: 22 and 24 Gurney Close frontage



Figure 2: Existing Rear Elevation with single storey rear extension (site visit 27 February 2023)



Figure 3: Eastern side elevation (site visit 27 February 2023)

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application is for a two storey side extension, first floor rear extension with a Juliet balcony and single storey side extension to replace the existing detached garage. The new storey side extension in the western elevation would be 11.3m long by approximately 3.4m deep and set back from the front by 4m. The new two storey side extension in the eastern elevation would be 3m deep by 6.3m long and would be set back from the front by 9.1m. The first floor rear extension would be full width and depth of the existing single storey rear extension.

Plans considered:

Drawing No. 21/18/01 - Existing Floor Plans dated October 2021, received 2 December 2022

Drawing No. 21/18/02 - Existing Elevations dated October 2021, received 2 December 2022

Drawing No. 21/18/03 Rev A - Proposed Plans and Elevations dated February 2022, received 2 December 2022

Drawing No. 21/18/04 Rev A - Site, Block and Location Plans dated February 2022, received 2 December 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Planning ref: 160470/HOU - Erection of front porch and single storey side & rear extension - Application Permitted - 26/ 7/2016

Application ref: 181224 - Demolition of existing garage and construction of new single storey side extension - Application Permitted - 7/ 9/2018

Application ref: 220230/HOU - Ground and first floor extensions following demolition of existing garage - application refused due to harm to visual and residential amenity - 11 October 2023

4. CONSULTATIONS

Evidence that a site notice was displayed on was received on 12 December 2023 and the following addresses were consulted by letter.

192A Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7JU

20 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

24 Gurney Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LE

Two objection letters from adjoining properties have been received and the summary of objections is as follows:

- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Adverse impact on natural light
- Would create a sense of being confined and overlooked
- Continued integrity of the hedge between the two houses
- Extensive and substantial alteration and out of keeping with the character of the street
- Inaccuracy in terms of presence of trees
- The existing trees on the northern boundary would not provide adequate screening

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)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

TR3 (Access Traffic and Highway-related Matters)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 Gurney Close and the surrounding area is characterised by bungalows and chalet style two storey dwelling houses. Extensions to original houses are a common feature of the area. There are different types and sizes of extensions within the area.
- 6.3 22 Gurney Close is a two storey chalet styled dwelling house located at the end of the street. The building is built of brick with a gable end pitched roof. There is an existing detached side garage located on the western boundary and within the property's rear garden. There is an existing flat roof single storey rear extension measuring approximately 6m deep by 7.5m wide.
- 6.4 The proposed development would include a two storey side extension, an upper floor rear extension and a single storey side extension in the western side elevation, an additional floor on top of the existing rear extension and a single storey side extension to the eastern side of the property. The roof design and exterior finishes would match the existing.
- 6.5 The proposed development both singularly and cumulatively would result in a substantial increase in the overall size of the house and would alter the appearance of the original building. However, given the design, choice of materials and the size of the plot particularly the existing sizeable rear garden space, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the existing house. In addition, a significant part of the extension would be located to the rear of the property and the new side extensions would be set back from the front, the impact on the street scene would barely be noticeable. Furthermore, the property is located at the end of a close and therefore any likely impact on the street scene would be marginal.

- 6.6 Overall the proposed development is not considered to result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the existing house, adjoining properties and the street scene and as such would comply with the requirements of policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation).

Residential Amenity

- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 The new two storey side extension in the eastern elevation would be set from the property boundary with 20 Gurney close by at least 1m and set from the front by 9.1m. No new upper floor side facing openings have been proposed as part of the application. However, two new upper floor openings would be introduced in the rear elevation of property. The new rear elevation would include a double door with a Juliet balcony and a rear roof dormer within the rear roof slope of the new side extension. The dormer window would be obscured glazed.
- 6.8 Concerns have been raised by the neighbours at no 192A Upper Woodcote Road and 20 Gurney close regarding overlooking and loss of privacy. No new upper floor side facing openings have been proposed as part of the application therefore adjoining properties to the east and south of the site would not suffer any loss of privacy. The two new upper floor openings however are not considered likely to give rise to harmful views or overlooking effects or impact negatively on the privacy of neighbouring properties particularly no 192A. Whilst there would be a new rear facing upper floor double door with a Juliet balcony, given the back to back separation distance of at least 21m between the site and no 192A, it is considered unlikely that occupiers of neighbouring property would suffer from loss of privacy. The Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021 requires a minimum of 20m back to back distance between dwellings for a two storey development. The proposal therefore is considered to comply with this requirement.
- 6.8 With regard to overshadowing and loss of natural light, given the orientation and relationship with adjoining properties and given that the new two storey side extension would be set at least 9m from the building frontage, it is considered unlikely that the proposal would result in loss of natural light to the neighbouring properties. Similarly, the proposal would not likely create a sense of confinement in the western elevation of no. 20 nor create an oppressive and intrusive feeling on the neighbouring occupiers as the existing separation distance would largely be retained.
- 6.9 Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. The property has a sizeable rear garden and a small front garden. The proposed development would not extend beyond the existing building line to the rear and forward of the existing frontage as such the amount of garden space would not be reduced to an unacceptable degree. The present and future occupants of the property would continue to enjoy the outdoor amenity space. Figure 4 below shows part of the existing rear garden.



- 6.10 In view of this, the proposed extension in its current form has been found to comply with Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity), H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) and H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Transport Matters

- 6.11 The proposal would result in the loss of an existing detached garage however due to the size, the garage is currently not used for car parking. In addition, the property has an existing driveway which is currently used for car parking instead and therefore the loss of existing garage is not considered to have an adverse impact on parking. The proposal therefore would comply with policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough 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 (Standard)

Approved Plans

Materials (As Specified)

No New openings