

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley

App Refs: 230891

Address: 10A Brunswick Hill, Reading, RG1 7YT

Proposals: Erection of replacement two-storey front addition, creation of roof level and associated works (amended description)

Case Officer: Mr Jonathan Markwell

Applicant: Mr Nathan Onions

Date received (valid from): 25/06/2023

Target Decision date: Originally 27 August 2023, but an extension of time for the determination of the application has been agreed until 9th November 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a 'L' shaped single dwellinghouse on the east side of Brunswick Hill, close to the junction with Argyle Road (to the south). The property is semi-detached and would appear to be a later addition to the more expansive No. 10 Brunswick Hill, with information submitted by the applicant suggesting the building dates from the 1970s, with the plot divided at that time. The property has a somewhat unusual appearance and composition, being 1 ½ storeys at the front (with a catslide roof coming down from the boundary with the existing No. 10, with a two-storey flat roof component set back from the frontage element. The property is more diminutive in scale and form to the neighbouring No. 10 which sits on a corner plot, and separate pairs of semi-detached properties to the south up to the junction with Argyle Road. A narrow strip of a rear garden extends a significant distance to the east, to the rear of No's 2, 4, 6 & 8 Brunswick Hill (to the north), bordering the rear of No. 32 Argyle Street to the east and bordering No's 8 & 10 Argyle Road and No. 12 Brunswick Hill to the south. To the front there is a small front garden and crossover with parking for two back-to-back spaces, with the footprint of the current building enabling this arrangement. There is a slope in the area, with land levels rising further to the south (meaning No. 12 is set higher than the application site building. The property is brick-built, although brickwork and windows appear to be from a series of different time periods, with more traditional brick patterning around the ground and first floor front windows (those which are set back from the frontage) and at the connection point between the catslide roof and neighbouring property. The building is not listed, nor located within a conservation area.

The surrounding area is a mix of differently sized properties, varying in styles, ages and size, from smaller properties and later additions to larger properties (such as the host building), to pairs of semi-detached dwellings and more expansive detached buildings. These all appear to be in residential use. The application site is within an air quality management area and a railway line close to Reading West Station runs behind properties on the west side of Brunswick Hill properties.

Site visit date: Accompanied, including the interior of the building 07/09/2023

A selection of site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a replacement two-storey front addition. More specifically, the existing front element of the current house is largely proposed to be demolished, with the replacement element extending the full width of the existing property (effectively a front infill extension). To clarify, the roof, front wall, front porch and chimney stack is to be removed, but the side wall closest to the neighbouring property at No. 10 would be retained to support the existing structure. In addition, it is also proposed to create a new roof level to the building as a

whole, involving the removal of the flat roof in the existing rear part of the existing building to facilitate the new roof form, which effectively seeks to mirror that which presently exists at No. 10. It is also proposed to replace the existing front boundary wall with metal railings (again following those which exist at No. 10). The proposals also include replacement/new windows on the rear (east) and side (south) elevations at both ground and first floor level

During the course of the application revised plans were submitted to address a number of inaccuracies / inconsistencies on the originally submitted plans. In addition, some changes were made to the proposals too. Collectively, this included:

- Extent of demolition clarified
- Accurate depiction of windows and lintel detailing on the existing front elevation and inclusion of a current rooflight within the catslide roof
- The originally intention to remodel the existing front boundary wall was altered for the existing to be replaced with metal railings.
- An additional window next to the back door was added during the application
- The amended rear elevation plan showed the proposed first floor window on the rear elevation (the original version had not shown this, but was marked as proposed on the floor plan)
- Clarification regarding the length of the proposed off-street parking space

None of these changes were considered to be of a nature to warrant formal public re-consultation on the application.

Plans considered

A100 Rev A – Existing Block Plan
A102 – Site Location Plan
A103 Rev A – Existing Ground Floor
A104 Rev A – Existing First Floor
A105 Rev A – Existing Roof Plan
A106 Rev A – Existing West Elevation
A107 Rev A – Existing South Elevation
A108 Rev A – Existing East Elevation
A109 Rev A – Street Scenes
A120 Rev A – Proposed Ground Floor
A121 Rev A – Proposed First Floor
A123 – Proposed Roof Plan
A131 Rev A – Proposed West Elevation
A132 Rev A – Proposed South Elevation
A133 Rev A – Proposed East Elevation
As submitted on 07/10/2023

A101 Rev B – Proposed Block Plan
As submitted on 26/10/2023

Design and Access Statement – 10a Brunswick Hill, dated June 2023, as received 25/06/2023

CIL

Based on the information submitted it is clear that the increase in floorspace will be below 100sqm and therefore will not be CIL liable.

It is however noted that during the course of the application the extent of demolition at the site was clarified. This confirmed that the proposals do not represent a demolition and re-build / replacement dwelling proposal. However, if they were to (e.g. during the build it transpires that in fact it is required for the whole dwelling to be replaced), then the proposals would be CIL liable (and require a separate planning permission). In the circumstances it is recommended to add the

standard CIL informative stating that the proposals, as currently proposed (as a householder application for alterations) is not CIL liable. However, a sentence will be added to the separate informative about the development being carried out in accordance with the approved plans, stating:

'The extent of demolition is marked on the plans; if the subsequent development involves further or complete demolition, this is likely to warrant a separate permission, which is likely to introduce a CIL liability too. This would therefore alter the CIL status as noted below from 'NOT APPLICABLE' to 'LIABLE'.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No. 10a.

None.

No. 10.

79/TP/0813 – Erection of a garage. Granted 30/08/1979.

It is confirmed that there is no recorded planning history with the exception of this application.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

16 neighbouring / nearby occupiers were consulted by letter. In addition, a site notice was erected by the applicant on 05/07/2023, expiring on 26/07/2023. The site notice was still in place at the time of the officer site visit on 07/09/2023.

No letters of representation have been received.

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

Transport

The proposed works will bring the frontage of the property forward, reducing the length of the driveway. It is important that enough parking is provided so that there is not a knock-on effect on the safety and function of the highway through on-street parking. In order to determine whether the property will retain an acceptable level of parking, the applicant is requested to submit a parking layout plan demonstrating that 2no. vehicles can be parked on the site frontage. Any changes to the existing dropped kerb and boundary wall should also be illustrated. This should be addressed before determining the application.

Further comments during the course of the application, once Planning Officers advised that the wider merits of the proposals would justify the provision of only a single off-street parking space, rather than two:

- queried whether the retained driveway is sufficient in size to accommodate a car parking space. The concern is that it appears that the length is 4.5 metres, whereas the minimum requirement is 4.8m. The resultant 0.3m shortfall would therefore result in a vehicle protruding out over the footway, creating an obstruction to the detriment of pedestrian and highway safety.

The applicant subsequently provided photographs showing that the driveway would actually be 4.85m (there was an error on the originally submitted plan – with the roof overhang being included which reduced the length). This was then supplemented with the submission of a revised proposed block plan, with annotation included on the plan to specify the 4.85m distance.

In addition, owing to the subsequently confirmed extent of demolition and construction works at the site, together with a consideration of the local area highway characteristics, it is considered that a Demolition and Construction Method Statement will be required as part of any permission and should be secured via pre-commencement condition.

Ecology

There are no objections on ecological grounds as it is considered unlikely that the proposals would affect protected species, given the location of the site and site photographs.

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 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

EN15 Air Quality

EN16 Pollution and Water Resources

TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-related matters

TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

6. APPRAISAL

The main considerations relevant to the determination of this application is considered to be:

- Land use matters
- Design
- Quality of accommodation
- Amenity for nearby occupiers
- Trees, landscaping, ecology and biodiversity
- Transport
- Other matters

Land use

During the course of the application the applicant was asked to confirm the extent of demolition to the existing property, in order to ascertain whether the proposals amounted to the demolition and re-build of the existing property, or alterations and extensions to an existing property (as a householder application) as submitted. It was clarified that the extent of demolition amounted to the front portion of the existing dwelling (barring the boundary wall with No. 10) and fenestration / roof level works to the existing rear portion of the property. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals do not amount to a complete demolition and re-build proposal, and can therefore proceed to be considered as a householder application as submitted.

Design

Assessing the demolition works first, whilst it is considered that the existing front component of the building is of a certain charm and is characterful within a fairly varied streetscene (e.g. the catslide roof and brickwork detailing at ridge level), it is not considered to be of such inherent quality in its own right to warrant retention, providing that the proposed works comply with Policy CC7 – most predominantly the requirement of being of high quality design that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

The proposed design is acknowledged to be significant in scale in comparison with the existing dwelling, essentially incorporating a two storey addition to the front of the building and introducing a roof form (gable end and side wing) which does not presently exist. However, the host dwelling is presently more diminutive in nature to its neighbours, with the proposal seemingly seeking to alter this form and make it into a pair with neighbouring No. 10. The proposed design is heavily influenced by the neighbouring property, with the intention to seek to follow the form (including the front boundary railings) and scale which exists, thereby making the property part of a pair, rather than presently appearing as a separated annex of the main building. There is a danger that the host dwelling would thereafter compete with No. 10, but it is considered that the corner plot location of No. 10 meaning it would retain its supremacy in the streetscene, with a greater spaciousness to the resultant application site building. It is considered that in this particular instance the design alterations to the front of the building are suitable and appropriate, reinforcing the local character. The proposals show that brickwork is proposed on the front facade, which is welcomed in principle. However, the success of the proposals is dependent to a greater than normal extent on the finished appearance and quality of the external materials. Accordingly, details of all facing materials will be secured via condition (including samples and manufacturer details) will be secured via condition. This will include the window details (including lintels), roof materials and porch details, as well as the brickwork and mortar/pointing. With these details secured, it is considered that the proposals would comply with Policy CR7 in full.

It is acknowledged that the existing plot boundary is unusually shaped, which means in this instance what is effectively a front extension is unusually considered acceptable from a design perspective. Related to this, it is considered that the proposed works would significantly increase the size of the dwelling in comparison with existing, in particular in relation to the size of the plot, which it is considered has effectively been maximised through the proposed scheme. Given the existing context, from both a design and amenity perspective it is considered necessary, relevant and proportionate to limit any automatic future alterations / extensions which could be possible under Class A (enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse), Class B (additions etc to the roof of a dwellinghouse) and Class C (Any other alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse) of Schedule 2 Part 1 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. The nature of the site is constrained and unrestricted development could harm the amenities of neighbouring properties through and harm the appearance of the main house and the area in general and should therefore be managed through future applications, rather than potentially being allowed through permitted development. Hence, a condition will stipulate this in relation to Class A, B and C only. This does not necessarily rule out such additions being added in due course, but would facilitate an application which would enable the merits of the case to be considered in full by the LPA.

Therefore in overall terms the proposals are considered appropriate from a design perspective, with samples/manufacturer details of new materials and the removal of some permitted development rights being secured via condition.

Quality of accommodation

The proposals would alter the existing two-bedroom dwelling into a four-bedroom dwelling, thereby improving the quality of accommodation for current and any future occupiers. All bedrooms and habitable rooms will include suitably sized windows, providing outlook and access to natural light and ventilation for occupiers. By providing additional space within the property a knock on implication will be a reduced ability for off-street parking, with provision reducing from two to one space. This is not considered to unduly compromise the overall quality of accommodation, which it is considered would be improved as a result of the proposals.

Amenity for nearby occupiers

The increases in the footprint of the building would be to the front side of the property, closest to the boundary with No. 12 (to the south). The proposed front building line would not extend beyond the front building line at either neighbouring property (No. 10 and No. 12), with there being a blank wall at No. 12 at this point. Accordingly, no significant adverse amenity impacts are envisaged for neighbouring occupiers in association with this element of the proposals. To the rear of the site, there is no change in the footprint of the built form, but an additional window is proposed on the rear elevation, which provides opportunities for overlooking into No's 8, 10 and 12 Brunswick Hill. There is already scope for overlooking through an existing window at the host property, with the addition of a single further window not considered to significantly worsen the existing scenario. As such, this is considered appropriate in this instance. On the (south) side elevation a single ground floor clear glazed window is proposed at ground level (smaller in width to the corresponding existing window), with two obscure glazed windows proposed to serve bathrooms (one at each floor). As this is specified on the floor plan, there is not a requirement to specifically secure these windows as obscure glazed via condition (as this is effectively ensured by the 'carry out the development in accordance with the approved plans' condition). It is however necessary to include a condition stating no further windows are permitted on the south side elevation without the grant of a separate planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. This is to protect the amenity of No. 12.



Owing to the extent of demolition and construction works at the site (as confirmed during the course of the application), together with a consideration of the local area highway characteristics, it is considered that a Demolition and Construction Method Statement will be required as part of any permission. This will in part help protect amenity during these stages of the development. With this being a pre-commencement condition, it has been agreed in writing with the applicant prior to a decision being issued in line with Section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (raised with the applicant on 16/10/23 and agreed by the applicant on 17/10/23 via email).

As such, with the recommended conditions secured, no significant adverse amenity impacts are envisaged, in line with Policy CC8.

Trees, landscaping, ecology and biodiversity

The officer site visit confirmed that the proposals would have no impact on any on-site or nearby tree. No landscaping details are considered to be necessary. From an ecology perspective, the Council's Ecology consultant has confirmed (as per observations above) that the proposals are acceptable.

Transport

It is acknowledged that the Transport observations are seeking for it to shown that two off-site parking spaces are provided at the site. However, the nature of the proposals means that to achieve this would inevitably facilitate the removal of the front garden, front boundary treatment and require the existing crossover to be extended to allow parking for two vehicles. Planning officers consider that the loss of the garden and provision of a parking area would not maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area and therefore these design grounds outweigh the Highway Authority's request for two spaces to be provided. In this instance, planning officers are content that the provision of only a single off-street space is appropriate in this specific instance and would not cause a significantly harmful knock-on effect on the safety and function of the highway in itself. Accordingly, whilst acknowledging the Transport observations, planning officers have chosen to take a different approach owing to the specific circumstances of this individual case. Subsequent to this, the applicant then clarified a further transport based query in relation to the length of the proposed driveway, with this later confirmed as being 4.85m (above the minimum 4.8m required and more than the originally shown 4.5m).

The D&CMS condition referenced in the amenity section is also considered to be required from a highway safety perspective too.

7. CONCLUSION

In terms of the planning balance in this instance, the benefits of the proposals are considered to outweigh any shortfalls of the scheme. In particular, the suitable design of the works and improvements to the quality of the accommodation, which simultaneously does not have a significant amenity impact on any neighbouring or nearby occupier, are considered to outweigh shortcomings such as the resultant provision of only a single off-street parking space rather than two.

Therefore, in conclusion, the proposed development has been assessed and the proposed works are considered in overall terms to broadly be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted, subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions

Recommended Conditions:

Planning permission 220486:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

A100 Rev A – Existing Block Plan
A103 Rev A – Existing Ground Floor
A104 Rev A – Existing First Floor
A105 Rev A – Existing Roof Plan
A106 Rev A – Existing West Elevation
A107 Rev A – Existing South Elevation
A108 Rev A – Existing East Elevation
A109 Rev A – Street Scenes
A120 Rev A – Proposed Ground Floor
A121 Rev A – Proposed First Floor
A123 – Proposed Roof Plan
A131 Rev A – Proposed West Elevation
A132 Rev A – Proposed South Elevation
A133 Rev A – Proposed East Elevation
As submitted on 07/10/2023

A101 Rev B – Proposed Block Plan
As submitted on 26/10/2023

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. Prior to the commencement of the relevant works a schedule of all new materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include samples of the newly proposed materials (to be provided on site - approved details to then be retained on site throughout the duration of the construction of the development) and manufacturer's specification details of newly proposed external materials (to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority). The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details approved.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character, in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 1, Schedule 2, Article 3, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Class A (enlargement, improvement or other alteration), Class B (enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof) or Class C (Any other alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse) shall be carried out within the curtilage of the dwelling without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Due to the constrained nature of the site and as unrestricted development could harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and/or harm the appearance of the main house and the area in general and should therefore be managed, in accordance with Policies CC7 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that Order) no windows/openings, other than those shown on the approved plans shall at any time be

placed in the south side elevation of the remodelled building hereby permitted without the grant of a separate planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises from overlooking and loss of privacy in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

6. No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Demolition and Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for where required:
 - a) Space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided;
 - b) Location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
 - c) The erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of security hoarding around the site;
 - d) Identification of any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction;
 - e) Required wheel washing facilities on site;
 - f) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works.
 - g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;
 - h) Required measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants during demolition and construction;
 - i) Provisions to be made for the control of noise coming from the site during demolition and construction;
 - j) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements.

The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policies CC8, EN15, EN16 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. Most specifically, the extent of demolition is marked on the plans; if the subsequent development involves further or complete demolition, this is likely to warrant a separate permission, which is likely to introduce a CIL liability too. This would therefore alter the CIL status as noted below from 'NOT APPLICABLE' to 'LIABLE'. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

Your attention is drawn to the requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for the proposed development. Please contact RBC Building Control on Building.control@reading.gov.uk OR telephone 0118 9372449 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday

During the course of construction, the developer should take care to ensure that no part of this development (foundations, eaves, guttering, etc.) would encroach on, under or across the boundary line with the adjoining property, as the requisite Notice has not been served on the owner of that property. This permission does not confer any right of access onto land that is not under the developer's control. The developer should also be mindful of the obligations and requirements of the Party Wall Act (1996) details of which can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partywall

Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.

The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015. CIL is a way of securing financial contributions towards infrastructure from new development, and partially replaces the Section 106 planning obligation regime. It is a set charge per sq m of floorspace for different uses, and, unlike Section 106, it is non-negotiable. It applies to developments which result in at least one dwelling; where the space has not been in lawful use for 6 months within the last 3 years or 100 sq m of new floorspace. For this approved development the CIL status is NOT APPLICABLE. If chargeable you will be sent a CIL Liability Notice with the calculated amount soon. CIL becomes payable on commencement of the development or by instalments. For more information go to:

https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/CIL_Advice_to_Applicants.pdf

The extent of demolition is marked on the plans; if the subsequent development involves further or complete demolition, this is likely to warrant a separate permission, which is likely to introduce a CIL liability too. This would therefore alter the CIL status as noted below from 'NOT APPLICABLE' to 'LIABLE'.