

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Tilehurst

App Ref: 230488/LBC

Address: 24 Lower Elmstone Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5EB

Proposals: Replacement of roof, dormer and porch tiles

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Date received (valid from): 1 May 2023 Target Decision date: 26 June 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a two-storey detached cottage on the west side of Lower Elmstone Drive in Tilehurst. The property has a garage extension on the south side of the plot and a two storey extension to the north, both of which are contemporary additions to the site. The host dwelling itself also has rear dormers which are non-original. The property is Grade II listed, and the listing reads as follows,

“WESTWOOD GLEN No 24 1. 5128 SU 67 SE 16/608 II 2. Pleasant mid C18 cottage. 2 storeys, 2 bays. Red brick with some darker headers and brick block cornice to eaves. Tiled roof, hipped to right. Central door with lattice porch.”

The property is on the boundary of Reading Borough and West Berkshire. A green link runs through the site and there are a number of mature trees at the front of the site.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Listed building consent is sought for replacement of roof, dormer and porch tiles which have deteriorated with like-for-like handmade clay roof tiles, and replacement of rear dormer windows with white timber casement windows to match those on the ground floor.

Plans considered:

Design and Access Statement, received 14 April 2023

Heritage Statement, received 26 April 2023

001-03 - Location Plan, dated 16 February 2015, received 14 April 2023

007-07 - Roof Plan and Sections, received 14 April 2023

011-09 - Proposed Block Plan, received 14 April 2023

008-07 - Proposed Rear and Side Elevations, received 14 April 2023

008-08 - Proposed Front and Side Elevations, received 14 April 2023

Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech), dated 11 August 2023, received 20 September 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

940562 - Change of use of open space to garden area and enclosure with 1 metre high post and rail fence. - Application permitted

940563 - Removal of two metre high close boarded fence to incorporate open space into garden area and enclosure with 1 metre high post and rail fence. - Listed building consent granted

980021 - First floor side extension for new bedroom and bathroom - Application permitted

980801 - First floor side extension for new bedroom and bathroom - Application permitted

030717 - Single detached dwelling and garage - Application withdrawn

040156 - 2 storey side extension and single detached garage - Listed building consent granted

040996 - Two storey side extension and single storey detached garage - Application permitted

150274 - Two storey side extension following demolition of garage. Proposed new garage to the south-west side of the cottage. Repositioning of the vehicle entrance and replacement of the existing windows to the rear of the existing cottage. - Application permitted

150275 - Construction of a two storey extension to the north-east side of the existing cottage. Demolition of a free standing garage and carport to the north-east of the existing cottage. Construction of a free standing garage to the south-west side of the cottage. Re-positioning of the vehicle entrance to the site from Lower Elmstone Drive (for which the public highway will need to be altered). Minor alterations to the existing Grade II listed cottage. - Listed building consent granted

151299 - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (Tree Protection) and 5 (Landscaping) of 150274/HOU. - Conditions discharged

151476 - Construction of a two storey extension to the north-east side of the existing cottage. Demolition of a free standing garage and carport to the north-east of the existing cottage. Construction of a free standing garage to the south-west side of the cottage. Repositioning of the vehicle entrance to the site from Lower Elmstone Drive (for which the public highway will need to be altered). Minor alterations to the existing Grade II listed cottage. Replacement of the existing windows to the rear of the existing cottage. Associated landscaping works. - Listed building consent granted

151481 - Application for a non-material amendment following a grant of planning permission (150274) comprising: 1. Addition of two roof-lights to the garage. 2. Addition of a single leaf door and window to the rear elevation of the garage. - Agreed

151690 - Discharge of conditions 2 (glazing bar cross sections), 3 (mullion details) & 6 (external materials) for application 150275. - Conditions discharged

4. CONSULTATIONS

Non-statutory:

West Berkshire Council - No objections subject to conditions.

RBC Ecology - The application site has potential to host roosting bats and further survey from May 2024 would need to be undertaken to determine the presence/absence roosting bats. The application should not be determined until the survey has been carried out and the results submitted to the council. If this information is not provided the application would need to be refused on the grounds that insufficient information has been provided for the council to determine the likely impact of the proposals upon bats, which are a protected species and material consideration in the planning process.

Public:

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

1 Ivy Bank, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5WB
3 Ivybank, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5WB
26 Lower Elmstone Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5EB
26a Lower Elmstone Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5EB
5 Ivybank, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5WB

No letters of representation received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

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
BS7913 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings
Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND

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.

APPRAISAL

Policy EN1 states “Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.”

The roof of the host property has a combination of original roof tiles and some modern replacements, both of which are spalled or cracked. The proposed works include replacement of roof tiles with like-for-like handmade clay tiles, addition of a roof membrane and cross-batten resulting in a marginal roof height increase. The works are considered necessary to extend the longevity of the property, and the submitted details are considered sympathetic and appropriate.

Replacement of contemporary dormer windows with white timber casement windows to match the existing windows on the ground floor is also considered a welcome improvement, although further materials details are required. This could have been secured via pre-commencement condition.

The preliminary bat roost survey concludes that one emergence survey is required to confirm lack of bats in the roof space. This has not been submitted, and due to this the application is recommended for refusal. The case officer contacted the applicant on 26/09/23 and 11/10/23 to inform the applicant that an emergence bat survey would be required but received no response. On 31/10/23 the case officer informed the applicant that if no response were received by 10/11/23 the application may be recommended for refusal on this basis. This date has now passed with no further information forthcoming.

Whilst appreciating that there is no express mention of protected species within Section 16 and 74(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it has been established in planning case law to consider that the granting of listed building consent should not circumnavigate the requirement of the protected species regulations.

Conclusion

While the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, due to insufficient information regarding bats being submitted, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Due to the following reason:

1. The applicant has failed to submit sufficient information for the Council to determine whether or not bats and other priority habitats would be adversely affected by the proposed development, contrary to Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).