

## DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

**Ward:** Caversham Heights

**App Ref:** 230683/HOU

**Address:** 14 Buxton Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BU

**Proposals:** Two storey side and front extensions, single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory, widening of front access.

**Case Officer:** Sian Hickey

**Applicant:** Mr and Mrs Smith

**Date received (valid from):** 18 May 2023

**Agreed decision date (ext):** 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

### 1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two storey detached property located on the western side of Buxton Avenue. The property is not a listed building, nor does it fall within a conservation area. The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

**Site visit date:** 08/06/2023

**Site visit photos:**



## 2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a two storey side extension, and a two storey front extension to enlarge the existing porch and the bathroom above. A single storey extension is proposed at the rear to replace the existing conservatory, and a slight increase in height of the existing single storey rear extension. The proposal also includes widening the existing access at the front of the property to facilitate the proposed parking layout.

*Existing plans:*



*Proposed Plans:*



*Existing Elevations:*



*Proposed Elevations:*



Plans considered:

- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-180 - Existing Elevations received 19/05/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-041 - Existing Roof Plan received 19/05/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-111 - Existing Ground and First Floor Plans received 19/05/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-280 rev B - Proposed Elevations received 21/07/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-241 rev B - Proposed Roof Plan received 21/07/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-211 rev B - Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans received 21/07/2023
- Drawing No. MAP-C4623-001 rev B - Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan received 25/07/2023

## 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

010803 - Proposed rear extension, conservatory and garage conversion. **PERMITTED**

010141 - Single storey side extension and garage conversion. **PERMITTED**

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

### Ecology

*The application site comprises a detached house where it is proposed to add a two storey side extension and front extension to the port. The site is surrounded by large, connected gardens with tree lines which provide habitat of good suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats. Moreover, there are bat roosts in a neighbouring property.*

*Considering the location and the extent of the works, there is a risk that works may affect roosting bats and a bat survey report would need to be submitted with any application*

Further to the above comments received from Ecology, a bat survey was requested and received.

*The bat survey (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, September 2023, ref: R3532/a) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the proposals is minimal. There are, therefore, no objections to this application on ecology grounds.*

### RBC Transport

*The proposed side extension will result in the reduction of space to park along the side of the property as the extension is to be brought further forward.*

*Submitted block plan illustrates 2 parking spaces on the front drive. To facilitate the proposed parking layout will require widening of the access, partial removal of the boundary fence and some landscaping. Widening the access will require a license form the Highways Department. Revised plans required addressing the points above.*

**Planning Officer Note:** Further to the above comments received from Transport, a revised parking layout plan was requested and received. The plan illustrates widening the access and 2 parking spaces. Transport confirmed the amendments are acceptable.

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

40 Matlock Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BS  
42 Matlock Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BS  
12 Buxton Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RU  
16 Buxton Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BU

Letters of representation have been received as follows:

Two letters of objection have been received with concerns regarding over shadowing, loss of light, loss of privacy, and the proximity to the boundary with No.16 Buxton Avenue, including being unable to access their side wall for maintenance.

*Officer note:* it is generally understood that the protection of purely private interests such as the impact of a development on the value of a neighbouring property, boundary disputes or loss of private rights to light are not considered material considerations. The LPA does not have the authority to intervene in private boundary issues. As such, these matters should be resolved directly between the parties involved.

### Discussions with agent

Officers had concerns with the original plans submitted and the agent was advised that alterations were required. Subsequently, the agent provided revised plans amending the design and scale of the side extension to create a less dominant feature which would be smaller in proportion and increase the gap between the extension and the side boundary.

#### **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)

#### **SPD**

Design Guide to House Extensions SP 2021  
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

### **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.

In terms of design, the amended scheme is considered a subservient addition to the dwelling. The proposed materials will match those of the existing dwelling. The proposed side extension is set back from the front elevation, and it has been stepped in from the side boundary with no.16 Buxton Avenue by 803mm. The proposed roof form over the extended side element would retain high level gapping between the host dwelling and the neighbouring property. High level gapping between properties is varied within the street scene. It is not considered that the proposed extensions would be harmful to the character of the surrounding area, there are a range of styles of properties, but predominance of semi-detached gable fronted projections. It is considered that the alterations at the front of the property would not distract from the

character of the existing dwelling to an unacceptable degree, and would enhance the appearance of the dwelling. The proposed rear extension replaces an existing rear conservatory and would not project as far as the existing, therefore it is considered acceptable in terms of scale. The slight increase in the height of the existing single storey rear extension would integrate well with the proposed rear extension. However, it is considered that the overall proposals would extend the dwelling to its maximum limit.

### **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.

The proposed development does not include any first floor side facing windows and therefore there are no identified risks of the proposed extension causing any overlooking or privacy issues. The proposed side extension has been stepped in to create an 803mm gap between the extension and no.16 Buxton Avenue, therefore, there are no identified risks of the proposed extension causing overbearing effects to this neighbouring. With regards to loss of light, the first floor aspects of this proposal comply with the 45 degree rule for sunlight and daylight impact assessment in relation to the nearest habitable rooms at the front and rear of the closest neighbouring property. The proposed single storey rear extension replaces an existing conservatory, and the height of the existing single storey rear extension would be increased by approximately 0.42m. It is considered that although there may be some additional impact from the proposals at the rear, it is not considered to be significantly different to the existing arrangement. The dwelling benefits from a relatively large rear garden and the development will not lead to a harmful reduction in external amenity space for the occupiers of the application dwelling.

## **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

Vehicle parking (as specified)

Vehicular access (as specified)