

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 230428/HOU

Address: 15 Westdene Crescent, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HD

Proposals: Single storey side and rear extension

Case Officer: Ryan Allen

Applicant: Mr James Bush

Date received (valid from): 2 April 2023 **Target Decision date:** 2 June 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey, semi-detached dwellinghouse located on Westdene Crescent. The surrounding streetscene is a mix of detached bungalows and two-storey semi detached dwellings. The building is not listed, nor is it situated within a conservation area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a single storey wrap around, side and rear extension.

Plans considered:

Received 02/04/23

Drawing No: 3169-1 rev. A - Existing Elevations - dated 22/02/23

Drawing No: 3169-2 rev. C - Proposed Elevations - dated 16/03/23

Drawing No: 3169-3 rev. A - Existing Floor Plans - dated 22/03/23

Drawing No: 3169-4 rev. C - Proposed Floor Plans - dated 16/03/23

Drawing No: 3169-10 - Site Plan - dated 02/23

Drawing No: 3169-11 - Site Location Plan - dated 31/03/23

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

16 Westdene Crescent, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7HD

25 Wincroft Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HH

20 Woodcote Way, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HE

14 Westdene Crescent, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HD

Letters of representation have been received as follows:

None.

Internal

Berkshire Archaeology

There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record. The site lies close to the recorded remains of a Roman building, possibly a villa, found in the early 20th century. The site is also close to the location that three undated graves containing human remains. More recent excavations on Upper Woodcote road c.450m from the site revealed features of Roman date. This strongly suggests that the area was actively settled and utilized during the Roman period, perhaps as part of a large estate or dispersed agricultural settlement.

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 the following condition is applied, should permission be granted, in order to mitigate the impacts of development. This is in accordance with Paragraph 205 of the NPPF(2021) which states that local planning authorities should 'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'.

Condition:

A) No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation

Berkshire Archaeology

An Archaeological Service for: Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Reading Borough Council, Slough Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council & Bracknell Forest Council

5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation

6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

B) The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition (A).

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment

has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition

(A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason:

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

In view of the nature and scale of the development and the low likelihood of the potential archaeology, should it exist, meriting preservation in situ, an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise in the form of a Watching Brief, on a controlled strip of the area, to the required depth for the development, is likely to represent an appropriate programme of works. Berkshire Archaeology would be pleased to discuss the approach with the applicant, or their Archaeological consultant, should permission be granted. If the applicant can demonstrate previous widespread impact on below ground deposits which specifically affects the archaeological potential, then this advice can be reviewed.

Upon further discussion with the agent and Berkshire Archaeology officers, site photographs were requested and received to establish the necessity of the aforementioned condition considering the scale of the proposal. Archaeological officers stated: *I've taken the time to review the plans and the comments supplied by the agent/applicant. To address their concerns about other development in the area; Excavations in 2017 demonstrated that in this area of Caversham there is a substantial Roman building or settlement, small snippets of this had been indicated before but the 2017 excavation confirmed this. As such this area has been highlighted as one of archaeological potential. This will mean that all future developments/applications in the area will be scrutinised more closely and there is a strong likelihood that areas that may not have had conditions applied before will have them applied now as we try to refine our understanding of the area's archaeological potential. That said we are happy to assess all sites individually and to take into account any new information that the applicants are able to present that might suggest the potential for useful data might be limited or absent. As the photographs and plans for this particular site suggest that it will be built over the footprint of the existing structures and that the actual impact on undisturbed ground will be minimal I am satisfied that the condition can be removed in this case.*

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)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

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.

The scale of the proposal is considered minimal and therefore proportionate to the host dwelling and surrounding area. Whilst the flat roof design is not entirely respectful to the host dwelling, given the property's positioning, the proposal would be hidden from view from the public domain and is not considered to disrupt any prevailing pattern in the streetscene. Overall, the proposal is compliant with policies CC7 & H9 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

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 minimal scale of the proposed development and being situated off of the boundary with 14 Westdene Crescent is considered to mitigate the potential for detrimental impacts on neighbouring residential amenity. The flat roof design included in the proposal necessitates a condition to ensure the roof is not used as a balcony, etc, and therefore cause privacy issues. Also, substantial garden space is retained at the property when considering the proposal. Overall, the proposal is compliant with policies CC7, 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:

TL1
AP1
M1
PD5