

22.107 Moorings - Planning Application ref 221625

Response to comments received on 13.02.23

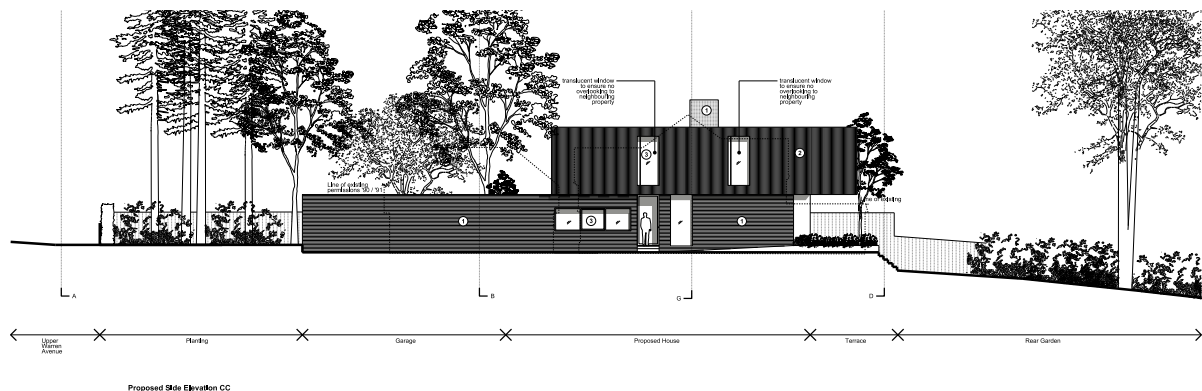
Design

- *The orientation of the neighbouring house no: 16 is close to the proposed end of the replacement property which will be more built up in form than the existing property. The windows at the first floor levels on the proposed east elevation are considered unneighbourly, this could cause a reason for refusal. It would be preferable to use the front/rear outlooks or roof to provide more light into the first floor areas.*

We appreciate that there are three first floor windows to the side elevation, but it is normally deemed acceptable within policy to allow first floor windows for bathrooms (as it is the case for two of the three windows) or indeed other rooms to be within a side elevation as long as these are obscure glazed and either fixed or openable only above the height of 1.7m.

In a recent approval on Upper Warren Avenue, at Norbrook House, first floor side windows to a hall were permitted and referenced in the Officer's report as 'One side facing first floor window is proposed to the side facing elevation serving a hallway, it is considered appropriate to condition this window to be obscure glazed, as it could create opportunities for harmful overlooking to the front garden of Cramond'. Further to this, at High Ridge first floor windows were permitted on the side elevation without objection.

At Heath Point (ref 140083) two full height windows on the west elevation to the Master Bedroom and one full height window on the east elevation to a bedroom were permitted by the Council on the basis that they were translucent glass to prevent overlooking. This is very similar in principle to the window proportions proposed within the application for Moorings, however, the use of bathrooms and a hallway will be substantially less than that of a bedroom and are not habitable spaces in which to dwell.



Ref: Proposed side elevation of Heath Point ref 140083

We would not want to incur a refusal on the basis of these windows but would ask if these could be considered to be allowed if these are conditioned to be obscure glazed and fixed, with only an openable fanlight above 1.7m, which would be compliant with policy. If you could please review the other precedents of these items above that would be appreciated. However, should this still not be deemed acceptable then we would appreciate a further discussion to mitigate any remaining concerns.

- *There would be approximately 30 metres of grey linear facing brickwork inset from the boundary with no 16. Although there is a separation away from the boundary, and the element between the house and the garage would be a height of 2.6m as opposed to 3m, the continued length and proposed height could also be considered un-neighbourly.*

The wall connecting the house and the garage is central to the architectural concept where the first floor timber clad volume delicately balances on the wraparound brick garden wall below.

For clarification, the wall is broken up in length with a set back of the garage volume from the main linear wall, which reduces the single continuous length of wall to circa. 24m, with a clear void within the garden section of the wall.

The wall in question is nearly 5 metres from the boundary, which is heavily populated with hedging circa. 6 metres high all along the length of the wall, resulting in the wall being screened from view from the neighbouring property.

In terms of existing precedent on the road for a similar length wall, across the road at Heath Point (ref: 140083), the distance from the single storey garage at the front to the rear of the house is circa. 28 metres, within a single line without any breaks within it. This wall was permitted at a height of over 3 metres for the full length of the wall. This wall is only slightly further from the boundary at around 7 metres. Please refer to the elevation of Heath Point included above which also includes the continuous wall at ground floor level.

At Norbrook House, the recently approved new dwelling (ref 211136) extends over 24 metres in length from the the garage to the gym along the side wall at a height of over 4 metres due to the pitched nature of the single storey volumes, with the main three storey house occupying 10 metres of that width. This wall is on average around 1.3 metres from the boundary to the neighbouring property, far closer than that proposed at Moorings.

The recently approved Crawfordjohn (ref 221245) the flank wall is 20 metres in length whilst only 1 metre from the boundary and generally above 4 metres in height.

It is also noted within the Reading Council Design Guide that in terms of 'Overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing' that extending to the rear of a north facing elevation 'would likely have less of an overshadowing impact to neighbouring residents' than if it was to a south facing elevation. At Moorings, the flank wall extends to the north, and will not have a detrimental impact on the light quality or overshadowing of the neighbouring property.

If you could please review the point above on the basis of multiple similar precedents that have been approved along Upper Warren Avenue within the last two years that would be greatly appreciated. Should this still not be deemed acceptable then we would appreciate a further discussion to mitigate any remaining concerns.

- *The character of Upper Warren Road is defined by hedging and trees to the front of properties with entry gates. It would be out of keeping to have a close boarded fence across the entire entrance to the site. The retention of hedging would be preferable with fencing set behind it if still required, with entry gates. The property is situated within a green link (policy EN12) and there is an expectation for new developments to incorporate hedge planting within landscape schemes. The link to the Reading Tree strategy can be found at <https://images.reading.gov.uk/2021/03/Tree-Strategy-March-2021.pdf> The proposed site plan shows a proposed new timber post and rail fence to the front boundary, no details have been provided of the elevation of the proposed fence, whilst the proposed entrance gate drawing shows timber clad gates with grey linear facing brickwork rather than a fence. Please could the front boundary treatment be confirmed and whether any hedging will be proposed/retained?*

F I N E L I N E

ARCHITECTS

The drawings submitted note for a timber post and rail fence to be installed to the entrance of the site. As per the submitted street elevation, a hedge has been shown to the boundary line. For clarification no close boarded fencing is proposed, but timber post and rail as per the image below:



This will allow hedging to be grown behind and planting in front of the proposed fence. Please find the revised street scene and site plan drawings attached with the updated post and rail fence following the existing hedge line.

- *The siting of the garage is to the front of the proposed replacement house which is out of keeping with the building line, however most of the site is covered in vegetation and screening to the front which would reduce any impact of the proposed garage location.*

Please can you confirm this is acceptable, as the principle has been confirmed at multiple other dwellings along Upper Warren Avenue, within the similar approvals listed above and more recently at Crawfordjohn (ref 221245).

- *I would recommend a restriction on the use of the sedum roof at first floor level, to the rear bedroom and ensuite, to avoid overlooking into the neighbour's rear garden.*

The sedum roof at first floor level is not intended to be a terrace or roof garden, and is only proposed to be covered in sedum to improve the biodiversity of the site. We would be happy to agree to a condition to restrict access to this first floor roof for maintenance only.

- *Please could the location of the proposed below ground tank for rainwater harvesting be illustrated on the plans.*

Please find this included on the attached site plan.

Trees

- *Feedback still to be received from RBC Natural Environment, this will be required before a recommendation can be made. Any further comments on the design, hardstanding and landscaping of the site will be dependant on the consultee feedback from the RBC Natural Environment team.*

Noted and we look forward to receiving the comments in due course.

Parking

Fineline Architects Limited
Registered in England & Wales: 10415374
VAT Registration Number: 303 5476 23
Registered Address: Woodlands, 4 Gaskells End, Tokers Green, Reading RG4 9EW
T. 07825 615 255 / 07882 635 731 E. info@finelinearchitects.co.uk

Thank you for confirming that this is deemed acceptable.

We note a CMS has been requested, but would like to raise that this was submitted with the application. Please can you confirm that this has been issued to the Transport department as part of the consultation.

Environmental Protection

- *Further information may be required regarding the proposed air source heat pump. Please could it be confirmed that noise limits for PD would be met? Further guidance and noise standards can be found at MCS-020.pdf (mcscertified.com), the self-assessment installation questions should be completed.*

Please could this be applied as a condition on the permission as this will be known further once an ASHP supplier is on board the project team.

Ecology

- *Please could you check with the ecologist whether the existing garage/store to the rear at the east of the property was included in the bat survey? Also please could it be confirmed whether any badgers or badger setts have been spotted on site.*

We have sent this over to the ecologist and are awaiting their response. We will send this over as soon as it has been received.

- *The plans show some rather powerful lighting both as uplighters and as spot lights which can be adjusted upwards which will increase light pollution from the new development. These should be changed as there will already be a significant increase in lighting because of the increased number of windows on the proposed larger dwelling. Furthermore, the site forms part of a green link which acts as a wildlife corridor so any external lighting strategy should not result in any increase in light pollution as this will adversely affect wildlife inc. bats.*

To avoid any concerns over the spike lights and uplighters, these have been removed from the proposed lighting plan. The spike lights have been replaced with low level wall lights directed downwards, with the garage uplighters replaced with similar wall lights directed downwards. Please find the revised drawings attached for your reference. We hope that these revisions address any concerns regarding the lighting plan.

Conditions

It is therefore recommended that:

- *The applicant is asked to submit plans showing ecological enhancements for wildlife (such as integral bird and bat boxes) within the development. These can either be supplied on plans (which should show locations, specifications and elevations) prior to determination or secured by condition – example wording given below:*
Condition: Prior to the occupation of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include integral bird and bat boxes, tiles or bricks on the new building and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 179 and 180 of the NPPF and to comply with policy EN12

Noted and this is acceptable.

- *A wildlife friendly lighting scheme is to be provided. To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 179 and 180 of the NPPF and to comply with EN12.*

Noted and we hope that the revised drawings submitted address this point.

- *Berkshire Archaeology – As the footprint is largely over the footprint of the existing house, new impacts are confined to relatively small areas and an archaeological conditions is not required.*

Noted and this is acceptable.

- *RBC Waste services - There are no objections to the application. Residents are expected to present the bins at the boundary of the property/ public highway on collection day and the bins returned to the property after collection.*

Noted and this is acceptable.

- *Thames Water – had no objections to the proposal.*

Noted and this is acceptable.

- *I have chased the natural environment team for their response and apologise for the delay. The Council hereby request an extension of time in accordance with Section 34 (2)(c) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 until 7 March 2023 in obtain further consultee feedback, for additional information to be provided and to try and find a way to address any issues of concern raised. I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing your agreement to this request.*

Noted and this is acceptable.