

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 221625/FUL

Address: Moorings, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7EJ

Proposals: Replacement dwelling and garage outbuilding, alterations to driveway, replacement entrance gate and boundary wall along with new outbuilding in rear garden.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Date received (valid from): 19 December 2022

Target Decision date: 24 April 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site consists of a detached house sited on a large plot with mature vegetation and set back from the Upper Warren Road. It is located on an existing green link (policy EN12) and protected species have been located in the area. The surrounding area is considered predominantly residential with a mix of large two storey detached dwellings with generously sized plots. The dwellings within the immediate surrounding area consist of a variety of designs with regards to appearance and scale.

The property is not a listed building or located within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 01/02/2023

Site visit photos:





2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for a larger replacement dwelling. The proposed development seeks the demolition of the existing detached bungalow and garage, and the erection of a new two storey replacement dwelling with integrated sustainability, outbuilding, detached garage and external seating areas. A sedum roof is proposed for the rear single storey flat roof and on the proposed flat garage roof. An outbuilding with a larger footprint has been previously approved under permitted development in the rear garden. No works are proposed for a secluded area the end of the garden, separated by tall trees, in which a disused pond is located.

Plans considered

PL 1311 Rev B Proposed first floor plan 19.04.23

As received 19 April 2023

PL 1212 Rev C Existing and proposed site plan 06.04.23

~~PL 1311 Rev A Proposed first floor plan 06.04.23~~

PL 1510 Rev A Proposed south and north elevations 06.04.23

PL 1511 Rev A Proposed east and west elevations 06.04.23

As received 11 April 2023

W4701_rep_Moorings, Caversham_03-03-23, Protected Species Survey Report,
Windrushecology.com, March 2023

As received 06 March 2023

PL 1313 Rev A Proposed ground floor plan external lighting layout

PL 1314 Rev A Proposed first floor plan external lighting layout

PL 1514 Streetscene Rev A

~~PL 1212 Rev B Existing and proposed site plan~~

As received 20 February 2023

LAS_492 Arboricultural statement, LandArb Solutions, 01.12.2022

CHIOS 80 Astro lighting specifications

~~PL 1514 Streetscene~~

~~PL 1313 Proposed ground floor plan external lighting layout~~

~~PL 1212 Rev A Existing and proposed site plan~~

As received 19 December 2022

~~PL 1212 Existing and proposed site plan~~
~~PL 1511 Proposed east and west elevations~~
~~PL 1510 Proposed south and north elevations~~
~~PL 1311 Proposed first floor plan~~
PL 1501 Existing east and west elevations
PL 1500 Existing south and north elevations
PL 1301 Existing roof plan
PL 1300 Existing ground floor plan
PL 1201 Existing block plan
PL 1310 Proposed ground floor plan
PL 1211 Proposed parking
PL 1210 Proposed block plan
PL 1312 Proposed roof plan
PL 1200 Location plan
Sedum Blanket system Q37 details
PL 1212 Rev C Existing and proposed site plan
PL 1513 Outbuilding
PL 1512 Entrance Gate
W4701_rep_The Moorings, Caversham_12-04-22, Initial Bat Survey & Preliminary
Roost Assessment, April 2022, Windrush ecology.com
Energy Statement v1, Archive green, 30 September 2022
FUL SAP Calculation, Elmhurst energy, 14.10.22
Building Regulations England Part L (BREL) Compliance Report, Fri 14 Oct 2022
09:52:54
Design & Access Statement, September 2022
Environmental protection statement, Fineline architects, August 2022
CIL
As received 31 October 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

221062 Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use for the erection of a detached outbuilding. Permitted 30 November 2022

4. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the site and the following addresses were consulted by letter.

16 Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7EJ
33 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS
31 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS
39 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS
29 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS
The Coppice, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7EJ

No letters of representation have been received.

RBC ecology had no objections, subject to conditions for biodiversity enhancements, restrictions of external lighting and the importance of the proposed green roofs, for the following reasons. The loss of a sedum roof on the garage would be a lost opportunity to increase the biodiversity of the site and is disappointing.

The site is within a Green Link as per policy EN12 of the local plan, and is surrounded by habitat of high suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats including large connected gardens with trees and a line of mature trees directly south on Upper Warren Avenue. The protected species report concludes that the risk of the development is minimal or that the risk can be maintained for further reduced and Sections 6.2 to 6.4 of the mitigation strategy should be subject to a condition.

Biodiversity Enhancements

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF reads "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment".

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF reads

"opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged by [...] minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

[...]

development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."

The site lies within a green link as per policy EN12 which states

[...] On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should

Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and

Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable.[...]

RBC Natural Environment - Trees Due to a lack of details, conditions would be required to secure a hard and soft landscaping design and 5 year maintenance plan for the site. Hedging, grass and vegetation will be removed to accommodate the replacement dwelling, annex, garage and associated landscaping, whilst a number of trees will be removed.

The loss of a sedum roof on the garage results in a reduction of biodiversity on site. The inclusion of a Green Roof on all flat roof areas should be considered to improve biodiversity.

It would be a positive approach to restore the disused pond to the rear of the site and/or a commitment to retain and improve landscaping provision.

An AMS is required to outline how the developments works will be undertaken and to secure details of any necessary tree protection measures required and to evidence the feasibility of the installation of gate posts and any hand dug excavation that would be required, without any resultant harm to adjacent trees.

RBC Transport – There are no objections subject to conditions, informative and works to ensure there is no water run off from the property onto the public highway. Further feedback is provided below:

The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.

Parking and Access

In accordance with the Councils current adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, parking provision of 2.0 on-site parking spaces is required.

Site Plan PL.1212, illustrates a double garage. It is recommended that the internal dimensions for a double garage are 7000mm long x 5500mm wide to allow easy access to/from each vehicle and sufficient storage to the rear to accommodate a bicycle. Additional parking is also provided on the front driveway as well as provision for onsite turning. Water run-off from private property onto the public highway is not permitted, an appropriate method of drainage needs to be provided within the property curtilage including the use of suitable permeable surfacing materials. The proposed parking provision is deemed acceptable.

Images show a telegraph pole located on the property boundary near the access, should this require relocation the full cost of this would be met by the applicant and would require a license from the Highways Team.

The existing entrance point from the Upper Warren Road is to be retained, with replacement electric gates that are set back into the site and open away from the highway. This provision is deemed acceptable.

The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 – 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. The Councils Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and this includes a requirement at Policy TR5 for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. Proposed Ground Floor Plan PL.1310 illustrates an EV charging point, this conforms to local policy and is deemed acceptable.

In accordance with the Councils current standards a minimum of 2 cycle spaces would be required, in a development of this nature this can be in the form of a garden shed or within a garage. The submitted Design and Access Statement and plan PL.1310 states that cycle storage will be provided within the garage which is deemed acceptable.

A bin storage area has been illustrated outside of the utility room, it is assumed that the bins will be moved to the property boundary for collection. I note that the waste

services team have reviewed the application and there were no objections. 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.

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.

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.

Thames Water – had no comments to make at this time, on this planning application.

Communication with the agent

Revised plans were submitted to reduce the amount of side windows at the first floor side elevation in close proximity to 16 Upper Warren Avenue. The agent agreed for a green roof on the garage roof as well as on the ground floor rear flat roof to enhance biodiversity improvements. Hard and soft landscaping schemes are also required, but the agent requested pre-commencement conditions. Pre-commencement conditions have been approved by the agent prior to the recommendation for approval being determined.

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 and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT
H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING
H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPG/SPD

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

APPRAISAL

Land use and design

The replacement dwelling will alter the external appearance, size and scale of the existing dwelling, although it will remain largely on the existing building footprint.

The existing detached dwelling is not considered to be of any particular architectural merit. The dwelling house is not listed, nor is the proposal site within a Conservation Area. Therefore, the principle of replacing the property, altering its external appearance and the modern replacement set back from the public realm is accepted, subject to the following considerations.

Impact on Green Links character of the area

The site is located within a Green link with priority species in the area. The proposed replacement dwelling is set in a large garden, mainly centred on the original footprint. It will however result in a loss of biodiversity on site due to the loss of hedging, grass and vegetation to the front of the site to accommodate the driveway and outside seating area, to the rear of the replacement building with a patio area and for seating to the front of the outbuilding at the end of the garden.

A sedum roof on both the rear single storey extension and garage have been proposed, which would contribute towards increased biodiversity at the site. Pre-commencement conditions are required to protect biodiversity on site including tree protection measures and habitat protection measures. Additional information is required in respect of the proposed works including an AMS and TPP, hard and soft landscaping for the site, biodiversity improvements and a requirement for works to be completed in line with the protected species report and arboricultural information submitted.

Impact on neighbours

This proposal has been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to:

- Privacy and overlooking

- Access to sunlight and daylight
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development
- Harm to outlook

The siting on 16 Upper Warren Avenue is angled towards the existing Moorings building. Although the proposed building will have a lower ridge height, at approximately 6.3m there will be a greater volume at first floor level. The proposed replacement house will be larger but remains set in from the boundaries from neighbouring houses. The amount of fenestration in the first floor side elevation has been reduced in quantity and size and is proposed to be opaque, with a bathroom window moved to the rear elevation. The first floor side elevation windows would break up the first floor flank wall and should not result in a significant overlooking or unneighbourly outlook. The replacement building will be inset from the neighbouring boundaries, there is also established vegetation along each boundary.

It is considered appropriate to restrict the insertion of any new windows or openings to the proposed first floor side elevations unless otherwise granted within a separate planning permission. This is to safeguard the amenity of 16 Upper Warren Road from any potential resultant overlooking, requiring this to be specifically considered should it subsequently be proposed.

The rear master bedroom balcony is inset and not considered to result in overlooking of neighbouring properties or external amenity. A condition to limit use of the flat roof rear single storey extension is recommended to protect neighbour's external amenity as external noise/disturbance/overlooking from an external terrace would potentially be harmful to nearby amenity at 16 Upper Warren Avenue.

The rear garden outbuilding will be smaller in size than the outbuilding approved as permitted development and is considered acceptable.

No other nearby occupier is considered to be significantly impinged by the proposed development in relation to any amenity consideration.

Parking and access

Proposed parking and access are considered acceptable in accordance with the approved plans. All new development should provide an electric vehicle charging point and a condition is recommended.

Private and Communal Outdoor Space

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space, which states that:

- Usable outdoor space for houses should be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling. To which it relates.

It is considered that the proposed development will not represent an unacceptable loss in private outdoor space. The proposed development will continue to allow for a generous amount of private outdoor space in the rear and front garden.

Standards for New Housing

As this application seeks a replacement dwelling, policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan is applicable. As per policy H5 (Standards for New Housing):

- *New build housing should be built to the following standards, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable:*
- *(d). All other new build housing will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.*

A SAP calculation, part L compliance (BREL) report and energy assessment were submitted. It is considered that there is ample scope for this being secured, given the contemporary design, and for this being secured via condition for an as built assessment is recommended, to demonstrate that the provisions within the sustainability statements have been achieved to satisfy the aims of policy H5.

The proposed replacement dwelling also exceeds the minimum gross internal floor areas and storage requirements as set out in policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The gross internal floor space of the proposed replacement dwelling is 457.8m² (CIL form), which is significantly above the minimum space requirement of 132m² for a six bed, eight-person, two storey dwelling. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

The development as built should demonstrate that the replacement building would achieve a minimum of a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate as defined in The Building Regulations for England Approved Document L1a: Conservation of Fuel and Power in New Dwellings (2013 edition), and built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations.

Environmental Protection

Due to the demolition works proposed, it is considered appropriate to apply the standing advice on such developments from Environmental Protection. This is regarding potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). In order to protect occupiers and neighbours from unreasonable disturbance from works during construction and ensure the air quality; conditions have been recommended regarding hours of construction and demolition, as well as restricting the use of bonfires. This is considered reasonable and necessary in accordance with policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Accessibility

The proposed house is designed to be accessible and to cater for the owners as a forever home. The dwelling should be accessible and adaptable in line with Approved Document M4(2). Further details may be required for a Building Regulations submission. The proposed house is considered to provide an improvement from the existing house in terms of accessibility.

Other issues

Building Control

The proposal will require separate Building Regulations approval.

CIL

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 CHARGEABLE. 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. Any exemptions would need to be applied for in line with CIL requirements.

For more information go to:

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/2791/Community-Infrastructure-Levy-Advice-to-Applicants/pdf/CIL_Advice_to_Applicants.pdf

The above would be added as an informative.

Pre-commencement Conditions

All pre-commencement conditions were agreed with the agent in accordance with Section 100ZA (5) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Conclusion

The proposed ecology and natural environment conditions are considered to mitigate against the biodiversity and tree impacts of the proposals and would ensure existing trees are protected, there is a net gain in tree planting and biodiversity on site. The replacement dwelling will be set back from the public realm and the first floor side fenestration has been reduced in volume on the boundary with 16 Upper Warren Avenue. The footprint of the proposed dwelling would be similar to existing, albeit with a higher roofline incorporated.

The proposed development is considered to integrate satisfactorily with the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings and would provide for a good standard of amenity for future occupiers whilst not resulting in a detrimental impact on the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties. Conditions are recommended to secure details of landscaping and ecological enhancements. As such the proposal is found to be in accordance with Policies CC3, CC7, CC8, H10, EN12, TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant