

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Park

App Ref: 221185/HOU

Address: 11 Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Proposals: Proposed alterations to property including raising the height to introduce a second floor, front extension to lounge, side extensions to both side elevations and alteration to front facing materials and detailing

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Applicant: Mr Hongtao He

Date received (valid from): 10 August 2022

Agreed Decision date: 11 November 2022

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey detached house located north of Whiteknights Road a predominantly residential area. The southern side of this part of the street has verdant character lined with tall mature trees. The immediate surrounding area comprises of mainly two storey detached and semi-detached dwelling houses of similar style. Many houses in the area are built of brick with pitched roofs. House extensions of different types form part of the character of the area. The property, like many others within the area, is built of brick with a pitched roof and has existing single storey side extensions.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the proposed development which involves various alterations to the existing house which would include raising the height of the building to introduce a new second floor, front extension to lounge, side extensions to both side elevations and alteration to front facing materials and detailing.

Plans considered:

Existing Block Plan - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Existing Elevations Page 1 - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Existing Floor Layouts Page 2- 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Existing Roof Plan Page 3 - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Location Map - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Proposed Block Plan - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Proposed Elevations page 4 -11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Proposed Floor Layouts Page 5 - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Proposed Roof Plan Page 6 - 11, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 10 August 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

210328/HOU - Single storey rear extension refused on 20 April 2021 -
Appeal allowed on 31 October 2022

201166/HOU - Proposed boundary with 925mm high brick wall with railings on top and matching 2000mm high railings for gates with brick piers 2100mm high fronting on to Whiteknights Road. Approved

In addition to the above, the house has existing single storey side extensions to both sides.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

13 Whiteknights Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 7BY
6 Waybrook Crescent, Reading, RG1 5RG
9 Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY
9 Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY
5 Waybrook Crescent, Reading, RG1 5RG

Three letters of representations have been received and a summary of objections is as follows:

- Application 221185 represents a substantial enlargement of the original dwelling
- It would dominate neighbouring properties by virtue of its over-large appearance
- Significant adverse impact on visual amenity
- Out of character with the immediate surrounding
- It would be disproportionate to the original dwelling.
- Loss of privacy to neighbouring properties
- Adverse impact on natural light reaching neighbouring properties
- Extended roof would likely overhang
- Proposed development would likely cause boundary disputes
- Insufficient car parking space within the property boundary
- Ownership certificate questionable
- Shared boundary - not sure if the foundation is strong enough to support the proposed three storey building.

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)
TR3 (Access Traffic and Highway-related Matters)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

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.

The immediate surrounding area is characterised by two storey dwelling houses. The site is a two storey detached dwelling house with existing single storey side extensions on both sides.

The application proposes various alterations to the existing house which would include an additional upper floor, extensions to the front and both sides, changes to fenestration and alterations to front facing materials and detailing. The proposed development would have brick exterior walls and tiled pitched roof to match the existing house.

As a result of the proposed works the overall height of the existing house would increase by 3.2m, windows in the front elevation would be twice as big as the existing with a different form of detailing than the existing. Within the rear elevation, two new full length windows with Juliet balconies would be introduced. The house would have two parallel horizontal decorative concrete strips on all the elevations and the front elevation would include four vertically arranged decorative brickwork.

The proposed development, due to the size, scale, design and detailing, would significantly alter the character and appearance of the existing house. The proposal would have an adverse impact on the appearance of the house and the neighbouring properties. The character of the immediate surrounding area is such that it comprises mainly of two storey dwelling houses with similar style and thus creating some degree of uniformity. The proposed development however would be a three storey dwelling house different from the rest of the properties in the street as such the building would appear alien and uncharacteristic feature in the context of neighbouring buildings. Due to the height of the proposed development, it would dominate the skyline in this part of the area. Given the excessive scale and prominent siting of the proposed development, it would appear as an overly prominent, obtrusive feature of the street which would contrast unsympathetically with the existing character of the area. As such the proposed development would detract from the visual amenity and appearance of the surrounding area, contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough 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.

Overlooking and loss of privacy - The proposal would introduce an additional upper floor and three additional rear facing windows on the second floor. Two of these windows would be full length with Juliet balconies. Given the height of the proposed building and the size of the new rear facing windows, the proposal would overlook the neighbouring properties located to the north of the site. The proposed windows would result in new views which would likely result in loss of privacy to the neighbours and would cause harm to the living environment of neighbouring occupants, contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Overshadowing and loss of sunlight and daylight - The existing house is adjoined by detached dwelling houses to the north-west and south-east, No 9 and 13 Whiteknights Road respectively. The host property is on a slightly higher ground than the adjoining property at No 9. The adjoining properties have existing side and/or front facing windows and some of which would appear to serve habitable rooms (living rooms).

The proposed three storey development would be set from the north-west boundary by approximately 1.4m and would extend up to the property boundary south-east of the property. As a result of the proposed development, the height of the building would increase by 3.2m.

Considering the height and bulk of the proposed development, the relationship with neighbouring windows and that the development would be on the boundary shared with No 13 and very close to the property boundary shared with No. 9, the proposal would overshadow neighbouring buildings and cause a reduction in the amount of daylight and sunlight reaching the neighbouring properties. The harm would be exacerbated by the difference in ground levels between the site and the neighbouring properties particularly No 9 which also has a side facing ground floor window serving a living room. In addition, the proposal would significantly breach the 45 degree line measured from the middle of the neighbouring windows. Overall the proposed development is considered to result in a significant adverse impact on the general living conditions of neighbouring occupants and consequently their quality of life would be adversely affected contrary to Policy CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

The applicant has not supplied any daylight and sunlight assessment report to demonstrate the impact of the proposed development on the amount of natural light neighbouring property would be able to enjoy as a result it is difficult to determine the level of impact or lack of harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. In addition, the application does not appear to acknowledge the impact the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring occupants and as such no mitigating measures have been suggested.

Overbearing effects - As already discussed, the proposed development, by reason of its scale and how close it would be to the eastern and western boundaries would have overbearing effects to the adjoining properties especially No. 9.

In light of the above, the proposal in its current form would conflict with Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Reading Borough Local 2019.

Transport Matters

The application site has adequate car parking space within the property frontage and the current car parking space would not be affected by the proposed development as such the proposal is considered to be in compliance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be unacceptable for the reasons set out below.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Application refused

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposed alterations to the existing house and the resultant building, by reason of the excessive scale, unsympathetic design and detailing and prominent siting would fail to respond positively to the context and would detract from the character and appearance of the existing house, neighbouring houses and the wider area contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019
2. The proposed development, by reason of the new second floor and three new windows in the rear elevation at second floor level, would overlook neighbouring properties and would introduce harmful views that would result in loss of privacy and harm to the living conditions of the occupants of the adjoining properties, contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
3. Given its size, scale and height, the proposed development would significantly overshadow neighbouring properties and would have a significant adverse impact on the amount of daylight and sunlight received by adjoining properties which would result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, contrary to Policy CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
4. The proposed development, given its height, design, scale and location on the south-east boundary and close to the north-west boundary, would be dominant and would have an overbearing effect on adjoining properties, contrary to Policy CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives

- Positive and Proactive Working - Refusal
- Pre-App Advice
- Plans Refused