

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Church

App Ref: 220284/HOU

Address: 153 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HG

Proposals: Two storey and single storey rear and side extension (Amended Description)

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Applicant: Mr Z Khan

Date received (valid from): 22 April 2022 **Agreed Decision date:** 25 August 2022

1. Site Description

The application site is a dwelling house at 153 Northcourt Avenue. This part of Northcourt Avenue is characterised by mainly houses that have a mix of redbrick and render finished exterior walls with distinct gaps between properties. The roofs are pitched with gable ends. The area comprises of detached and semi-detached houses of varying style and design with long narrow back gardens and detached garages located to the rear. Many properties have been extended with rear and side extensions of various sizes and designs.

The site is one of the houses on a row of semi-detached houses east of Northcourt Avenue with a uniform design and style. The site is a two storey semi-detached house with a converted loft floor. The original house has a tiled half-hipped roof. The property's front elevation has a first floor of white render and wood in a 'Tudor' effect and redbrick walls to ground floor, whereas the rest of the property is rendered white. The house has an existing single storey rear extension with a flat roof. The property is not listed and does not fall within a conservation area however part of the property is within an area classified as an Air Quality Management Area (due to garden being within the AQMA of the A327 Shinfield Road to the rear).

2. Background and Proposal

Planning application 211760 for a two storey and single storey rear and side extensions with flat roof rear dormer was refused on 3rd February 2022 due to harmful impact on character and appearance and residential amenity.

The current application is for a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and first floor rear extension. The proposed single storey rear extension would have a flat roof whereas the proposed two storey side extension and the first floor rear extension would have pitched roofs. The proposed development would be set away from the side boundary by approximately 1m and set back from the front by approximately 0.6m. The proposed two story side extension has a lower ridgeline than the existing house. The proposed front elevation would have a stepped profile and thus allowing the front elevation of the original house to retain its character. Exterior wall finishes would match the rest of the house.

Plans considered:

Drawing No: 34321-01 - Existing Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-02 - Existing First Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-03 - Existing Second Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-04 - Existing Elevations

Drawing No: 34321-05 Rev B - Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-09 Rev B - Location and Block Plans

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 22nd April 2022

Drawing No: 34321-06 Rev C - Proposed First Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-07 Rev D - Proposed Second Floor Plan

Drawing No: 34321-08 Rev D - Proposed Elevations

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23rd August 2022

3. Relevant Planning History

211760 - Two storey and single storey rear and side extension with flat roof rear dormer - application refused - 3/2/2022

121446 - Replacement of detached garage and home office/summer house - permitted - 10/10/2012

990790 - Erection of a single storey rear extension and side carport - permitted - 19/ 4/2000

4. Consultations

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

64 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7HQ

149 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7HG

151 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7HG

Northcourt Avenue Residents' Association, 42 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HD

116 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 7DA

116a Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 7DA

155 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HG

123 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HG

66 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HQ

66 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG2 7HQ

Four objections were received from the owners/occupants of neighbouring properties. A summary of objections is as follows:

1. Detrimental impact on character and appearance due to the following:

- Scale and location of proposed extension - This property has already been extended, and to extend any further would be an overbuild/overdevelopment of the site.

- The 2nd floor extension is out of character with other houses - **Revised plans have been received to exclude the proposed further extension of the existing rear dormer.**
2. Harmful impact on residential amenity -
 - The proposed flat roof could be used to hold parties which could have a harmful impact on amenity
 - Owing to its height and the way it sticks out, the 2nd Floor would overlook multiple gardens and infringe their privacy - **Revised plans have been received to exclude the proposed further extension of the existing rear dormer.**
 - Insufficient amenity space for the residents
 3. Lack of provision for off-road parking and increased pressure on roadside parking.
 4. Potential to turn the house into a large HMO which could result in increased occupancy of at least eight residents and could further cases of Anti-Social Behaviour currently experienced within the immediate neighbourhood **Not a material consideration to this planning application**
 5. Should this application be passed, there would be 3 houses in a row of HMOs - **Not a material consideration to this planning application.**
 6. Impact on health of future occupants due to the proposed arrangement of rooms **Not a material consideration**
 7. Increased generation of waste - **This is a domestic residential proposal, not a concern**

***Planning Officer Comment:** Please refer to 'Appraisal Section' to see assessment of the proposed development in relation to the above concerns, if not responded to in bold type above.*

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)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

TR3 (Access Traffic and Highway-related Matters)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

6. Appraisal

6.1 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 area is characterised by side and rear extensions including rear dormers of different types, designs and scales and thus there is no established design and pattern of extensions in the area. Nonetheless, single story rear and side extensions with flat roofs are common in the street.

The application includes a single storey rear extension, two storey side extension and first floor rear extension. The proposed development would have a combination of flat and pitched roofs with exterior walls matching the existing house. As a result of the proposed development, the roof design of the original house would also change from half-hipped to gable end. The revised plans received by the local planning authority on 23rd August 2022 excludes the proposed rear dormer extension and retains the existing dormer.

In order to assess the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance, the design and scale are the main elements to consider.

6.2 Design and scale

From the front elevation, the proposal is considered to be suitable, proposing a two-storey extension which is sympathetic to the property, being set in, set back and set down and complies with policy and guidance. However, whilst the proposed front elevation is set down and back thus allowing the front elevation of the original house to

retain its character, the proposed change in the roof design would detract from the character of the original house and that of the adjoining semi at 155 Northcourt Avenue. However, this alone is not considered likely to have a detrimental impact on the character of the wider street, as the street has a mix of roof styles and overall, a change from half-hip to full-gable will not be overly noticeable in the street scene.

Whilst the proposed rear extension would have a flat, this is considered unlikely to adversely harm the character of the existing house as currently there is a flat roof single storey rear extension and flat roof dormer. The existing single storey rear extension would marginally increase in depth as such would not result in a significant change from what currently exists. In addition, there are existing flat roofed extensions within the site's immediate surrounding area as such this kind of proposal is not considered harm to the character and appearance of neighbouring properties and the wider area. In addition, the proposed rear extension would not be very visible to the public realm which further eliminates any potential harm.

The proposed changes are considered acceptable in terms of design quality and scale and thus complies with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Council Plan 2019 the Design Guide to House Extensions 2021.

6.3 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.

These properties already have windows which look directly across from each other at close range, about 6 metres. However, these appear to be secondary windows. As a result of the proposal there would be a reduction in the number of windows in the upper floor side elevation from two to one as such there would be no loss of privacy to the neighbouring property.

The proposed first floor rear extension would be set away from both sides by approximately 1.6m on the northern side elevation and approximately 2.4m on the southern side elevation and would not have any side facing windows. There would be no additional rear facing windows as a result of the proposal as such the proposal would not result in any loss of privacy to the neighbouring properties.

To the ground floor, the number of side opening would increase from two to three but these are not considered to adversely impact neighbour amenity.

Due to the orientation of existing buildings and the design of the proposed side extension, it is considered unlikely to cause any significant loss of sunlight, daylight or create an unacceptable level of overshadowing to the neighbouring occupants

With regard to the amenity of gardens and outdoor areas, the site like many other properties in the area has a long, narrow and fair-sized back garden. The proposal would

increase the depth of the existing rear extension by approximately 1.4m as such it would not result in a significant reduction in the amount of useable amenity space to the detriment of present and future occupants.

In light of the above, the proposal complies with Policies H9, H10 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Plan 2019.

6.4 Ecology

The loft area in this property is not likely to be used by bats given the loft area is in habitable use already. The proposal therefore does not conflict with Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

6.5 Other matters

6.5.1 The proposal is for a householder extension therefore determination of this application is in line with relevant policies. However, should the applicant decide to convert this dwellinghouse to an HMO, a different planning application will be required to be submitted to and determined by the Local Planning Authority prior to changing the current use of the property. With regard to Anti-Social Behaviour, this is not a planning matter and therefore relevant departments will be required to deal with the matter accordingly.

6.5.2 The site is located within zone 3 of the parking standards zones and would have more than 4 bedrooms. The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD provides that a 4+ bedrooms dwellinghouse within zone 3 should have a minimum of 2 parking spaces and make provisions for x2 cycle storage spaces. The site has an existing off-road parking space enough to park two cars. The proposal therefore complies with the parking requirements.

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 (standard)

Approved Plans

Materials (To Match)

No new openings

Use of roof restricted