

## **DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT**

**Application No:** 220404/HOU

**Address:** 18 Highmead Close, Reading

**Proposal:** Erection of single storey front porch, single storey rear extension, loft conversion including two rear dormer windows and outbuilding, following demolition of existing outbuilding (amended description)

**Case officer:** Ethne Humphreys

**Target Date:** 17/05/2022; EOT agreed until 27/05/2022

### **Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application property is a two storey end of terraced dwelling located on the east side of Highmead Close. The dwelling benefits from a part two part single storey side extension which serves as a granny annexe and there is a detached outbuilding to the rear of the garden.

Aerial photography indicates a large tree at the bottom of the garden adjacent the east rear boundary. The agent has confirmed that whilst there was a tree in the corner of the rear garden, this has been felled - and as confirmed by site photos. The tree was not protected, nor is the site located within a conservation area.

The immediate character of the area is that of 5 similar terraced rows positioned around the cul-de-sac, all of similar design, some of which have been extended.

### **Proposal:**

This is an application for a single storey front porch extension, single storey rear extension, loft conversion including two rear dormer windows and a new outbuilding in the rear garden following demolition of the existing outbuilding.

The materials will consist of red multi brickwork to match existing.

### **Plans Considered:**

Drawing No: General Arrangement as Proposed 21170-FD-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3001 Rev P.01

Received 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Drawing No: Site Location Plan 21170-FD-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1001

Drawing No: Site Block Plan 21170-FD-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1002

Drawing No: General Arrangement as Existing 21170-FD-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3000

Received 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**Relevant Planning History:**

00-00243-FUL Two storey side extension. Permitted and implemented.

**Consultation Responses:**

None.

Neighbour letters were sent to adjoining properties. No letters of representation received.

**Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:**

The agent was advised that the two flat roof dormer windows on the front and rear elevations, as originally proposed, would be overly bulky and incongruous features that would negatively impact on the character of the host property and visual amenities of the street scene. Revised plans were received omitting the front dormer window completely and replacing the rear with two smaller pitched roof dormer windows.

No formal pre-application advice was sought prior to the submission of this application.

**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.

**Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance**

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'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. In this case the development plan consists of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

**Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)**

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

**Supplementary Planning Guidance**

A Design Guide to House Extensions (2021)

**Appraisal**

The main issues are considered to be:

- Design, impact on the host dwelling, character of the area and street scene
- Impact on neighbouring amenity

Design, impact on the host dwelling, character of the area and street scene

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires all development to be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form include layout, landscape, density and mix, scale - height and massing and architectural detail and materials. Policy H9 (applicable as the proposal relates to an extension to an existing house) seeks that houses extensions should respect the character of the host dwelling, character and pattern of surrounding dwellings and the area in terms of scale, design and any important existing building line.

Given the relatively small scale nature of the proposed single storey rear extension and front porch extension, the nature of the dormer windows and that the proposed outbuilding would replace an existing, the overall increase in the actual footprint of the dwelling is not considered to be unduly excessive, even within the acknowledged context of the already extended dwelling (two storey side extension - see relevant history above). Given this and that a suitable amount of rear amenity space would be retained (and the shape / nature of this being of a functional nature), it is considered that the proposals can be suitably accommodated without giving a feeling of overdevelopment or crampedness.

Concern was raised during the course of the application that the originally proposed large box dormer windows on the front and rear elevations would appear overly bulky and incongruous, out of keeping with both the host property and the wider street scene. Revised plans were received omitting the front dormer window completely and replacing the rear with two smaller pitched roof dormer windows. The dormer windows, as now proposed, would sit relatively comfortably within the roof slope and given their location would not be readily visible from the public domain. The design style and scale is largely in compliance with the recommendations within the Design Guide to House Extensions SPD and not considered to be so incongruous to warrant a refusal.

Given the form and flat roof of the proposed single storey rear extension, this may appear visually at odds viewed against the adjacent single storey rear extension. However, it would not be as deep as the existing rear extension and the materials would match the host property to aid its integration. Furthermore, given its location at the rear of the property, it would not be readily visible from the public domain.

Single storey front extensions are not prevalent within the immediate street scene. However, there are example of front additions within the wider area, including at No.10 Highmead Close. Given its single storey nature, the porch extension would remain subservient to the host property with materials to match. Given this and its relatively small scale, whilst clearly visible, it is not considered to be so incongruous so as to result in any significant adverse effect on either the character of the host property or visual amenities of the street scene to warrant a refusal.

The proposed outbuilding would replace an existing which is somewhat rundown in appearance. It would be in a similar location albeit closer to the rear boundary, and the footprint would be similar to the existing. Given the size and shower shown on the proposed plans, a condition is recommended to restrict the use of the outbuilding so that it remains ancillary to the host property, rather than becoming its own separate self-contained residential unit.

In overall terms, the combination of extensions and differing roof forms to the rear may result in the rear elevation appearing somewhat convoluted in appearance. However, as noted above, the proposals would not be readily visible from the public domain and the extensions would largely comply with the Design Guide to Extensions SPD in terms of scale. It is not considered that the proposals would result in any significant material adverse effect on

the character of host property or the visual amenities of the street scene such to warrant a refusal.

Therefore, in overall terms it is considered that the proposals comply with Policies CC7, H9 and H10.

#### Impact on neighbouring amenity

Policy CC8 (Residential Amenity) seeks that proposals should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; and Crime and safety.

The neighbouring properties potentially affected by the proposals are No's 17 and 19/20 Highmead Close located to the north and south of the dwelling respectively.

With regard to No. 17, given the position of the proposed outbuilding no significant overbearing effects are considered to arise. Similarly, given the position and scale of the proposed porch extension, no significant overbearing effects are considered to arise.

The proposed single storey rear extension would be located immediately adjacent the common boundary and there will be some impact to the nearest habitable room window of No.17. However, the depth would be modest at 3m and would comply with the recommendations in the Council's Design Guide to House Extensions SPD. Furthermore, the roof would be flat to minimise the impact. Given this no material overbearing effects are considered to arise to a level which would warrant a sustainable reason for refusal on this basis.

Owing to the element of flat roof proposed, it is considered necessary to include a condition stipulating that the flat roof area shall not be used as a roof terrace, and any access out onto this area shall be for maintenance/means of escape purposes only. This is in order to prevent any detrimental impacts of overlooking and/or noise and disturbance of the neighbouring premises.

With regard to No.19/20, given the position of the single storey rear extension and porch extension, no significant overbearing effects are considered to arise. The proposed outbuilding would be located immediately adjacent the common boundary. However, the roof would be

hipped away to minimise the impact and it would be sited further away from No.19/20 than existing. No overbearing effects are considered to arise over and above the current situation.

Therefore, in overall terms it is considered that the proposals comply with Policy CC8.

### Conclusion

Having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations therefore weigh in favour of granting planning permission subject to conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to conditions and informatives**