

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Mapledurham

App Ref: 211457/HOU

Address: 173 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR

Proposals: Proposed two storey rear extension, integral garage conversion and single storey side extension to create replacement garage.

Case Officer: James Schofield

Date received (valid from): 1 September 2021 Target Decision date: 26/1/22 (ext)

1. INTRODUCTION

The application relates to a two-storey detached dwelling located on the north-western side of Upper Woodcote Road. The site has an attached garage on the northern side of the ground floor facing the street. The front garden of the site includes a driveway capable of hosting 1-2 cars. There is no notable vegetation near the southern side or rear of the dwelling. The site falls within areas identified as being suitable for protected species. There is high archaeological potential for Roman remains to be encountered on site.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development is for the conversion of the existing garage to internal space, the erection of a new attached garage on the south side flank elevation and a two-storey rear extension. Plans considered;

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-01 Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-02 Proposed First Floor Plan

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-03 Proposed Elevations

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-04 Existing Plans & Elevations

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-05 Section A-A

Drawing No: HINCHMORE-0921-06 Block & Location Plans

As received on the 1st of September 2021

Project Ref: 607 Preliminary Roost Assessment

As received on the 19th of January 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App Ref: 170379

Description: Single storey side extension, two storey rear extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation. New vehicular access and driveway.

Decision: Permitted 7 July 2017

App Ref: 210927

Description: Single storey garage extension, loft conversion and existing integral garage conversion.

Decision: Withdrawn on 19 July 2021

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Neighbours

The applicant submitted a form indicating that a Site Notice was displayed on the 2nd of September 2021. The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Chazey Barn, Blagrove Farm Lane, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JX

175 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR

171 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR

No letters of representation have been received. The applicant and/or their agent submitted a form indicating that a Site Notice was displayed on the 2nd of September 2021.

4.2 Berkshire Archaeology

The Archaeology Officer indicated that:

“The proposed development has a footprint of c. 50 m2, and whilst this makes it borderline in terms of being of a size to warrant an archaeological condition, the high potential for relatively significant remains I think brings it above the threshold for requiring one.”

4.3 Ecology

The Ecology Officer indicated that the Bat Survey had been undertaken to an appropriate standard and that the proposed works were unlikely to affect bats.

5. 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.

6. 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 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN2 Areas of Archaeological Significance

EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network

H9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

H10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (adopted 2021)

Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of Development

The application seeks permission to convert the garage, build a new on the south side of the dwelling, and build a two-storey rear extension. Such domestic works are supported in principle by Policy H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Local Plan (2019) subject to a number of criteria ensuring the effects of such extensions and alterations respect its context

and are not harmful. These considerations will be examined in more detail in the following sections.

7.2 Character, scale, siting, and Archaeological Potential

Local Policy CC7 states that, development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in Reading in which it is located. Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it: respects the character of the house, respects the pattern of neighbouring properties, and does not present a large blank façade to public areas. Policies EN1 and EN2 require applicants in areas of Archaeological Significance to identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance to assess the potential impact on any archaeological remains, and where necessary, undertake appropriate works to avoid the destruction of any remains which may exist.

The only proposed changes viewable in the street-scene are the garage conversion and new attached garage on the south side of the ground floor. The proposed windows, their placement, and the materials for the new wall to fill the space of the former garage door are intended to be sympathetic and blend into the existing design and architectural language of the dwelling. The new attached garage would be subordinate to the dwelling and use materials and roof types which would ensure it would also be reasonably sympathetic.

The proposed two-storey rear extension would appear somewhat like an outrigger. Its hipped roof is designed to blend into that of the existing hipped roof and not protrude or be otherwise visible when viewed directly from the front of the dwelling. The materials proposed are intended to match that of the existing dwelling. The overall scale of the rear extension is large at 5 meters in depth running over half the width of the original dwelling. While this is counter to the Council's guidance of not exceeding a depth of 4 meters, it is deemed to not be harmful in this instance due to the size of the host dwelling, its favourable siting, and the overall size of the site. The proposal does not include any blank façades facing public areas and mirrors the patterns of the dwelling and others like it.

The Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology took the view that given the site's high potential for Roman remains that a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work should be proposed in writing and approved by the planning authority before any works take place. As such any permission granted for the proposal should carry the proposed condition in order to safeguard potential archaeological remains.

As such, the proposal accords with the aims of policies CC7, H9, EN1, and EN2 of the Local Plan (2019) with respect to character, scale and siting.

7.3 Amenity

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. The proposal includes a single-storey rear extension. The SPD 'Design Guide to House Extensions' provides guidance on design considerations for single-storey rear extensions, which outlines that the design should not detract from the existing dwelling, not encroach on a line taken 45 degrees from the mid-point of the nearest neighbouring habitable room, should avoid reducing back-to-back distance for dwellings like these to less than 20 meters, and should not harm common building lines or positive repeating design features.

The proposed rear extension, by virtue of its siting:

- approximately 5.6 meters from the boundary with 175 Upper Woodcote Road;
- no deeper into the site than the rear building line with number 175; and
- with these two dwellings having a west, slightly south-west rear aspect;

there is unlikely to be any unacceptable impact on number 175 in terms of overbearingness. Similarly, number 175 has no south facing windows which would be any more affected if then they

are currently by number 173 if the proposal were to be built. While overlooking of number 175's outdoor amenity space would be increased modestly by the new first-floor south-west facing window serving a new bedroom, this would not be to any unordinary or unacceptable degree. The proposal includes no north facing windows above the ground floor and no privacy impacts would be anticipated for number 175 if the proposal were to be built.

Because number 171 Upper Woodcote Road is located to the south of the proposal site, no impact on access to sunlight would occur due to the position of the sun relative to the dwellings. Despite the scale and height of the proposal, no sense of overbearingness or worsening of the enjoyment of outdoor amenity space is anticipated for number 171. This is due to the two-storey rear extension being proposed approximately 4 meters away from the boundary with number 171, and the presence of a garage and small rear extension at number 171 increasing the distance between the most used part of its garden and the proposed development. The proposal includes one south-facing windows for an existing bedroom which has one window at present. It appears number 171 has a north facing window also likely serving a bedroom and that the two already experience some degree of compromised privacy. However, Policy CC8 is clear on that development will not cause a detrimental impact on existing residential properties in terms of privacy and overlooking. The existing windows are out of the scope of this application, however, the newly proposed bedroom window would worsen the existing situation. As such, any granting of permission should include a condition requiring the window to be obscure-glazed. As there is an existing window serving this bedroom the existing quality and quantity of outlook for the bedroom would not change while access to light, resulting from the proposed window, would be improved. Similarly, another south facing window serving a room labelled 'Ensuite' should also be obscure-glazed to protect the privacy of the proposal dwelling and avoid the overlooking of the outdoor amenity space of number 171.

One front-facing window at the ground level is part of the proposal, however, due to it's location and the existing lack of privacy for adjacent front gardens, no amenity impacts are anticipated.

The proposal is considered to accord with the aims of policy CC8 and H10 of the Local Plan (2019) provided the discussed condition is included with any granting of permission.

7.4 Biodiversity and sustainability

Part 'b' of Policy EN12 indicates that all development sites should not result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. These aims are supported by Policy H9 which states that an extension will only be acceptable where it does not result in the loss of biodiversity within gardens. *Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System* requires the establishment of the presence or otherwise of protected species prior to the granting of planning permission.

A Bat Survey has been conducted and the resulting report has been reviewed by the Ecology Officer who has indicated there is no meaningful risk of harm to any protected species of Bats.

As such, the proposal is not considered likely to result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity and the proposal accords with the biodiversity and sustainability considerations of Policies H9 and EN12 of the local plan, and to accord with the requirements of Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed and the proposed works are in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

10. CONDITIONS

1. Standard time limit [TL1]
2. Standard approved plans [AP1]
3. Materials (to match) [M1]
4. Archaeology [AC1]
5. Obscure Glazed [PD3]]