

DELEGATED FULL PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Minster

App Ref: 190685/FUL

Address: 20 Coley Hill, Reading

Proposals: Extension of existing property and conversion into one 2-bed flat and one 1-bed flat.

Case Officer: Mr James Overall

Date received (valid from): 30 April 2019

Target Decision Date: 25 June 2019

PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Date Received
Location & Block Plan	Proposed	20CH (L) 001	29 Apr-19
Floor Plans	Existing	20CH (L) 003	29 Apr-19
Floor Plans	Proposed	20CH (L) 006 Rev A	5 Nov-19
Elevations	Existing	20CH (L) 004	29 Apr-19
Elevations	Proposed	20CH (L) 007	29 Apr-19
Sectional Drawing	Existing	20CH (L) 005	29 Apr-19
Sectional Drawing	Proposed	20CH (L) 008	29 Apr-19
Visibility Splays	Proposed	20CH (L) 009	8 Jul-19

SITE HISTORY

Reference No.	Description	Outcome
880269	Side and rear two storey extension to form garage, lounge, bedroom and toilet.	Application Permitted on 6 Jan-99
891303	Change of use from residential to staff accommodation for adjoining Nursing home and erection of 2 storey side extension.	Application Withdrawn on 26 May-89
980814	2 Storey side and rear extension Renewal of previous application.	Application Permitted on 16 Feb-99
181440	Fell Bay tree, Holly Tree and reduce Walnut by 3-4m.	N/A
190072	Pre-application for extensions to existing property and conversion into two 2-bed flats.	Observations sent 7 Mar-19, which confirm that the principle of the scheme is unacceptable due to not being compliant with Policy DM8.

CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

- 18 Coley Hill
- 22 Coley Hill

No letters of representation have been received.

Transport

On 8 July 2019, the Transport Department provided the following comments: *“This application consists of the conversion of a detached property in to two, two-bedroom self-contained flats located within Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs.*

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide parking provision of 2 spaces for the proposed dwelling. Submitted floor plan illustrates 2 off road parking spaces in the front garden area. The plan indicates that the existing dropped crossing is to be extended and a second vehicle crossover introduced. Parking spaces should be a minimum of 2.4m x 4.8m with a forecourt depth of 6m. The introduction of a new dropped crossing will require revised plans illustrating visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m; in addition to this there is a bollard outside the property which plans indicate will require re locating. Any works required on the public highway including the removal of the bollard will require a license from the Highways Department and the cost met by the applicant.

The development site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area; Zone 09R. Under the Borough’s current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore, if this application is approved there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed dwellings will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits which should be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

In accordance with the Borough’s Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision of 0.5 cycle storage space should be provided per flat located, equating to a minimum provision of 1 storage space (1 Sheffield type stand). Cycle storage must be located in a conveniently located, lockable, covered store. There should be sufficient clearance to allow for the doors of the unit to be opened and cycles manoeuvred in and out.

Bin storage has been illustrated on plans, this is deemed acceptable as collection would occur on street as is the case for the rest of the residential dwellings on Coley Hill. It is recommended that the recycling and refuse team are contacted to ensure the correct capacity of bins is provided for the development.

Please ask the applicant to address the points above so that this application can be fully determined”.

On 9 July 2019 the applicant provided a visibility splay plan which covered the points mentioned above.

On 19 July 2019, this was confirmed acceptable, and the Transport department raised no objections to the application.

Ecology

On 2 June 2019, the Ecology department provided the following comments: *“The application site comprises a detached house and its adjoining garage where it is proposed to extend the existing house, to convert the loft, and to incorporate three rooflights. As per the plans submitted, it appears that the existing garage will be demolished, however, it is unlikely to be suitable for use by roosting bats. The building appears to be in good condition (as per Google StreetView). Considering the location, the extent of the works and the good condition of the house, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will affect bats or other protected species. As such, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds”.*

Conservation & Heritage

The building is a 20th century detached dwelling, located on the on west side of Coley Hill which is not of any special architectural interest. It is built of red brick, with corrugated concrete roof tiles, and a bay window to the front, with a side garage with access.

The proposals consist of the conversion of the property to two, two-bedroom self-contained flats through conversion of the ground floor, the first floor and loft. The proposals would involve the demolition of the lean-to side garage and rear conservatory to be replaced with a single-storey extension for a bedroom and an entrance porch on south elevation. Three rooflights are proposed on north and west elevations as part of loft conversion and the redundant windows and door openings to be infilled with matching brickwork.

The lap fence panels and timber vehicular gate are to be removed from front entrance frontage in order to allow parking along the front. This would involve re-location of the existing bollard, to allow vehicle cross-over and addition of a central grass area with a brick pier and railings along the front boundary.

The dwelling is located in the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area and it is necessary to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. There are no objections in principle to the proposed demolition of the existing conservatory and garage and their replacement with a single storey extension, the addition of rooflights and infilling of the side openings.

Whilst the proposed additional car parking within the front garden of the property and the additional requirements for bin storage associated with division of the building into 2 separate flats will not enhance the character of the area, this is comparable to work undertaken at a number of adjacent properties. On this basis the potential harm from the additional car parking space is considered to be of a low order.

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 policies in 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'

National Planning Policy Framework

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (November 2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE
CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
EN10: ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN15: AIR QUALITY
EN16: POLLUTION AND AIR QUALITY
EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE
H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING
H2: DENSITY AND MIX
H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING
H9: HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ANCILLARY ACCOMODATION
H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE
H11: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS
TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPG/SPD

Residential Conversions (2013)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015
A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003)
Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation Area Appraisal (2004)

Assessment

Principle

Policy H8 of the Local Plan states that proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats will only be acceptable subject to certain criteria. The minimum internal floorspace standards for conversions into flats given in Appendix 1 of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Residential Conversions (2013) (SPD) and the HMO Management Fact Sheet 12 (Fact Sheet) seek to provide adequate space within a dwelling for living, sleeping and normal family/household life.

Policy H8 requires that properties to be converted into self-contained flats have four or more bedrooms or measure more than 120m² gross. The existing property measures 123.25 square metres (excluding the garage). The 1988 permission, resubmitted in 1998 show the existing plans at the time, to be largely the same as those submitted alongside this application. Therefore, it is considered that the conversion would comply with Policy H8.

Design and Impact upon the Character of the Surrounding Area and the Conservation Area

The proposal involves extending the existing property, in order to enable sufficient floor space to be provided for the proposed flats.

The listed building is located within Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area. As defined in the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area appraisal (Published 2004) Castle Hill is the principal street, notable for its varying width, hilly topography, and substantial Georgian buildings which lie on either side. The area consists of late 18th and 19th century development along Castle Hill having substantial Georgian buildings and residential suburbs containing listed terraces of early 19th century terraced houses (Coley Hill) and detached or semi-detached late 19th century houses (Castle Crescent) in leafy gardens.

There are some offices and shops along Castle Hill/Castle Street. Castle Street/Castle Hill has prestigious blocks of three or four storey houses built on the back of the pavement or set back from the road with landscaped front gardens. North of Castle Hill, the streets are contained by continuous terraces of 19th century houses, set back slightly from the pavement, with small front gardens or yards.

This is a predominantly urban Conservation Area, although trees and planting are important in Castle Hill and in several parts of the Conservation Area, most notably in Castle Crescent and Baker Street.

The Conservation Area appraisal identifies several groups of buildings, or individual houses, which can be said to act as important focal points. These include No. 111 Castle Hill, on the corner of Field Road. Castle Hill provides the greatest number of trees and front gardens within the Conservation Area, with the majority of the buildings being set back some distance from the street. Originally, the front boundaries were defined by cast or wrought iron railings but these have largely disappeared - a stone plinth wall can still be seen, somewhat damaged, outside no. No.111 Castle Street.

The main proposals include:

- conversion of the property to two self-contained flats a loft conversion.
- demolition of the lean-to garage and conservatory on south and west elevations

- construction of single storey extension on the south elevation to form a bedroom and an entrance porch
- three rooflights to north and west elevations as part of the loft conversion
- redundant windows and door openings to be infilled with matching brickwork.

The proposed scheme does not majorly change the front of the property, and therefore does not substantially change the character of the area or the street scene. The majority of the works are internal, and therefore it is considered that there will not be any detrimental harm to the character of the Conservation Area. A few conditions were recommended by the Conservation & Heritage Officer in order to secure materials for the boundary and bin storage, which are the major changes to the front of the property. An additional condition requested details for any proposed rooflights in order to ensure they are appropriate to the Conservation Area.

As such with the addition of these conditions it is considered that the proposal complies with Policies CC7 and EN1.

Impact upon Amenity of the Occupants and Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity states that development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of neighbouring properties in terms of privacy and overlooking; access to sunlight and daylight; visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; noise and disturbance; artificial lighting; vibration; dust and fumes, smell; or crime and safety.

The proposed extensions are moderate additions and the proposed windows would not overlook neighbouring properties.

Therefore in terms of the structural alterations to the property, these are unlikely to have an adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity.

The proposal will result in two separate flats, with the lower flat measuring 58.45 square metres, and the upper flat measuring 74.36 square metres.

The nationally described space standards provides the following table:

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) ¹			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		

¹ Notes:

1. Built-in storage areas are included within the overall GIAs and include an allowance of 0.5m² for fixed services or equipment such as a hot water cylinder, boiler or heat exchanger.
2. GIAs for one storey dwellings include enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room) in dwellings with 5 or more bedspaces. GIAs for two and three storey dwellings include enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room). Additional sanitary facilities may be included without increasing the GIA provided that all aspects of the space standard have been met.
3. Where a 1b1p has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.
4. Furnished layouts are not required to demonstrate compliance

This table highlights that the minimum GIA for a 2-bed flat, over a single storey, hosting 3 persons is 61 square metres; and is 70 square metres if it hosts 4 persons.

If the 2-bed flat has two storeys, the minimum floor space for 3 persons is 70 square metres, and 4 persons 79 square metres.

The plans do not indicate how many people would utilise each flat, although the upper flat, which is to contain one bedroom would be more than capable of suitably accommodating 2 persons. As for the lower flat, this falls slightly below the space standards for hosting 3 persons; however whilst this might be the case, the property does contain a reasonable amount of amenity space both internal and external. Whilst the property may be slightly below the nationally described space standard, it is considered sufficient to accommodate three people.

As such it is concluded that the level of amenity for the occupants of the proposed flats would be acceptable and therefore complies with Policy CC8.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Conversion of a residential property into two or more dwellings is not liable for CIL. Extensions would only be liable if the floor area created were 100sqm or more.

The new floor area created as part of the extension will not be greater than 100sqm.

Section 106 - Affordable Housing

Policy H3 states:

“the following types of residential development will be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing:

- *Replacement of a single dwelling with another single dwelling; and*
- *Conversion of a dwelling to self-contained flats where there is no new floorspace”.*

Since the proposal does not result in an increase in floor space, the proposal does not require an affordable housing contribution.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with Policies H8, CC7, EN1 and of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions and informatives.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant