

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Tilehurst

App Ref: 200064/HOU

Address: 8 Wootton Close, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5JE

Proposals: Part two storey and single storey side and rear extension.

Case Officer: James Schofield

Date received (valid from): 15 January 2020 **Target Decision date:** 11 March 2020

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

8 Wootton Close is a semi-detached dwelling on a plot with a decreasing topographical elevation from south east to north west resulting in 9 Wootton Close being lower than that of 8 Wootton Close. The site does not benefit from listed status, conservation area protection or having protected trees on the site. The Close includes terraced dwellings with similar design detail and 9 Wootton Close has had a first floor side extension above the attached garage.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is for first-floor side extension mirroring that seen at 9 Wootton Close above the attached garage and part two/part single storey rear extensions matching the depth of similar rear extensions to adjacent 7 Wootton Close.

Plans considered:

Drawing No: 8889-PL-01 Location Plan
Drawing No: 8889-PL-03 Existing and Proposed Block Plan
Drawing No: 8889-PL-04 Existing Plans
Drawing No: 8889-PL-05 Existing Elevations
Drawing No: 8889-PL-06 Proposed Site Plan
Drawing No: 8889-PL-07 Proposed Plans
Drawing No: 8889-PL-08 Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 8889-PL-09 Proposed Street Scene
As received 17 January 2020

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Neighbours

All adjoining neighbours were consulted by letter and one objection was received from a neighbour adjacent to the rear boundary; 5 Berkshire Drive. It is noted that the objector appears to be primarily concerned about the cumulative effect of development on amenity grounds, particularly loss of privacy and loss of light. These points are addressed more fully in section 7.3 regarding amenity.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

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 (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of development

The application seeks permission for part two/part single storey rear and side extensions to an existing residential dwelling. 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 and scale

Policy CC7 of the Local Plan 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, the pattern of neighbouring properties and building lines.

The Council's design guide indicates that gaps between buildings often make an important contribution to the character of an area and that extensions which fill or encroach excessively on space around a building may contribute towards an inappropriate "terracing effect" or result in a cramped appearance.

The design detail of the front elevation integrates elements seen elsewhere within the wider context, particularly, by reflecting the existing design detail of the main dwelling, a similar second storey side extension at 9 Wootton Close and the terrace houses opposite. The proposed side extension would be set back and down from the main dwelling; retaining a clear sense of visual subordination to the main dwelling. The change in elevation between 8 and 9 Wootton

Close is reflected in the proposed side extension as it would remain proportionately higher than the side extension of 9 Wootton Close. The proposal is deemed to avoid an inappropriate “terracing effect” as it retains a sense of belonging to the main dwelling while being subordinate to it and avoiding cramping either the dwelling or neighbours. Both 8 and 9 would maintain a sense of being separate but connected non-terrace dwellings; the space above the garage is not considered to contribute to the defined character of this cul-de-sac, as the dwellings are already link-detached and have always relied on design detail to delineate where one ends and the other begins. This does not change as a result of the proposal. Furthermore, the proposal is considered to re-introduce some of the symmetry in the streetscene between 8 and 9 Wootton Close, previously reduced with the first-floor side extension above the garage of No 9. On balance, this is considered generally to have a positive effect upon for the quality and coherence of the street scene overall.

The rear extensions at both the ground and first floor largely mimic those seen at 7 Wootton Close, and are considered to be of an appropriate scale to the dwelling.

For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with the main dwelling and the wider context. The development is not harmful to the character or appearance of the site or its wider context, and does not cause any inappropriate “terracing effect”. As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and H8 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Councils Supplementary Planning Guidance “A Design Guide to House Extensions” (2003).

7.3 Amenity

Policy CC8 requires development to refrain from causing a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or resulting in unacceptable living conditions for residents of the dwelling. Policy H9 compliments these aims by indicating that acceptable development will not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or public areas.

No new views are introduced across adjoining plots, with first floor windows moving 3 meters deeper into the garden. The closest wall of the proposed rear extensions and the properties opposite (Berkshire Drive) would be in excess of 20 meters apart, with trees offering partial screening at the boundary line. It is considered there is no detrimental impact upon the privacy amenity of neighbouring sites. The objector’s comment appears to agree, noting that their perceived loss of privacy would not alone be sufficient to warrant refusing the application.

The rear of 8 Wootton Close has a south-westerly aspect. This means the dwellings on Berkshire Drive and 7 Wootton Close are south of the dwelling, while 9 Wootton Close is staggered as such to avoid shadows being cast upon it, these facts are considered to eliminate the possibility for the site to negatively impact the sunlight amenity of neighbouring dwellings along Berkshire Drive, 7 or 9 Wootton Close.

The site enjoys a large rear garden and the proposed development would leave over half the plot undeveloped.

Subsequent to the above analysis, whilst constituting a large extension, in this instance and based on the sites individual circumstances, the proposed development is deemed to accord with Policy CC8 and the overbearingness considerations of Policy H9.

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, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible through new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and other ecological enhancements. 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.

The site does not benefit from any protected trees or identified Green Links. The proposal is not considered likely to result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. As such the proposal is considered to accord with the biodiversity and sustainability considerations of Policies H9 and EN12 of the local plan.

8. CONCLUSION

In light of the above assessment the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the development plan. As such, the proposed development is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

10. CONDITIONS

1. TL1 Standard time-limit
2. AP1 Standard approved plans
3. M3 Materials as specified