

DELEGATED FULL APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Church

App Ref: 201271/FUL

Address: 9 Linden Road

Proposal: Erection of new 2 bedroom dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling

Case Officer: Mr James Overall

Date received (valid from): 16 September 2020

Target Decision Date: 11 November 2020

PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

9 Linden Road is a two-storey end-terrace property within a row of four properties and is separated from the semi-detached property at 11 Linden Road by a significant gap. The surrounding area is predominantly residential comprising a mixture of small blocks of terrace properties and semi-detached properties of varying design.

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Date Received
Location Plan	Existing	01	9 Sept-20
Block Plan	Proposed	02	9 Sept-20
Site Plan	Existing	03	9 Sept-20
Elevations	Existing	04	9 Sept-20
Site Plan	Proposed	05	9 Sept-20
Elevations	Proposed	06	9 Sept-20
Visibility Splays	Proposed	07	9 Sept-20

PLANNING HISTORY

Reference No.	Description	Outcome
89/01203/OUT (Civica Ref: 890585)	Erection of house and integral garage. Refused 19/12/1989.	Application Refused on 19 Dec-89
11/01072/FUL (Civica Ref: 110944)	Two storey side and rear extension	Application Refused on 5 Oct-11
151380/PREAPP	Pre-application enquiry relating to the erection of a new 3 bed dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling (floor area 80m2)	Observations sent 25/09/2015
152207/FUL	Erection of new 3 bedroom dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling	Application Withdrawn 22/02/2016
160884/FUL	Erection of new 3 bedroom dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling (resubmission of application 152207)	Application Withdrawn 28/07/2016
172024/FUL	Erection of new 2 bedroom dwelling adjacent to existing dwelling	Application Refused on

11/01072/FUL (Civica Ref: 110944)

This application was refused due to its excessive scale and poor design that would appear as an unsympathetic addition to the main house and a prominent feature with the Linden Road street scene. Due to its location at first floor and close proximity to 11 Linden Road the

proposal was also considered overbearing and would overshadow the first-floor side bedroom window of this neighbouring property.

151380/Pre-App

The pre-application response stated the proposed house was too large and would harm the spacious character of the area by closing the gap between houses and a more modest two storey side extension would probably be more appropriate. It was also noted that the hipped roof design did not reflect the gable end design of the terrace, the front garden would be dominated by vehicle parking and the proposal would overshadow and be overbearing on the neighbouring property at 11 Linden Road.

152207/FUL

The proposal did not overcome the concerns raised at pre-application stage in terms of character of the area and the effect on neighbouring amenity. It did introduce a gable end to match the row of terrace properties.

160884/FUL

The proposal did not overcome the concerns raised following the pre-application response and application 152207/FUL.

172024/FUL

This application was refused due to the design of the proposed dwelling being out of character with the row of properties to which it would be attached and the proximity to 11 Linden Road would result in a visually dominant and overbearing structure that would result in a loss of light to the first-floor side bedroom window of this neighbouring property.

CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

- 7 Linden Road
- 9 Linden Road
- 11 Linden Road
- 164 Linden Road
- 166 Linden Road
- 168 Linden Road
- 5 Beech Road
- 196 Shinfield Road
- 198 Shinfield Road
- 198a Shinfield Road
- 200 Shinfield Road

One letter of representation was received from 11 Linden Road objecting to the application. The full letter can be viewed on the Council's website, but to summarise, the following concerns were highlighted:

- The design does not respect local context, street pattern, scale and proportions of the surrounding buildings.
- An increased gap of 10cm does not overcome reason for refusal 2 of the previous application.
- The bin store is directly outside of No.11 rear kitchen door
- The relationship between No. 4 and No. 170 exists from when the homes were first built. This makes the distance between homes a choice of the owners. No. 11 was chosen by its owners for its open space.

- Due to the obstruction angle being considerably greater than 25° (approximately 50°) a substantial negative effect on the diffuse skylight will be received, increasing the need for electric lighting in No.11s kitchen, side door hallway and upstairs bedroom.
- With the windows/doors in question on No .11 Linden road being north facing, if the development was to proceed these rooms would be afforded even less natural light than it already receives, and again electric lighting will be needed more of the time.
- The bedroom window in question is the only window in No.11s side facing bedroom. The proposal would result in harmful outlook for the occupant of this bedroom, which would consequently adversely affect the amenity of this bedroom. Also, if the development were to go ahead the bedroom would look into the window of bedroom 2 of the proposed dwelling; which would harm the amenity of both dwellings.
- There will be a detrimental effect on the spacious character of the neighbourhood.
- Additional concentration of traffic will potentially cause traffic problems and create a safety hazard for other motorists.
- There is already intense on-street parking pressure opposite the proposed site on Linden road, which the visibility splay doesn't consider, as none of the other properties at the start of the road have off road parking, this makes vehicle manoeuvre's very difficult and near on impossible to reverse a car safely into or out of the proposed drives putting more of a burden on highway safety.

Transport

The site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core Area of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone is typically within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route' which provides high quality bus routes to the town centre and to major supermarkets and local centre facilities. In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 2 spaces for a 2-bedroom dwelling for the proposed house whilst maintaining the off-street parking provision for the existing dwelling.

Submitted Proposed Site Plan AL 01497 05 illustrates 2 off road parking spaces for the new dwelling to be served via the existing dropped kerb. A new dropped kerb is proposed for the new dwelling providing access to 2 off street parking spaces. The parking areas for both dwellings will need to be constructed from permeable material to avoid any increase of surface water run-off from the site on to the public highway, or a drainage channel provided where the driveway meets the back of the footway.

Parking sizes conform to the council's current adopted standards. The proposed provision is in line with the Council's current adopted standards and is therefore deemed acceptable.

The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. The Council's Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and this includes a requirement at Policy TR5 for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. This will need to be illustrated on revised plans.

Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m have been illustrated for the new dropped crossing serving the new dwelling and are deemed acceptable. It should be noted that a licence must be obtained from the Council's Highways section before any works are carried-out on any footway, carriageway, verge, or other land forming part of the public highway.

In accordance with the adopted Parking SPD, the new development is required to provide a minimum of 2 cycle parking spaces which should be in a conveniently located, lockable,

covered store. For a development of this nature, this can be provided in the form of a garden shed which has been illustrated in the submitted site plan.

Bin storage should be located no further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Submitted plans illustrate bin storage area at the side of the property, it is assumed that bins will be brought to the boundary for kerb side collection.

The Natural Environment Officer should be consulted on the trees that are present in the site to ensure that they will not impact and be impacted upon by the proposal.

There are no Transport objections to this application.

Trees

I note that the site is within the AQMA. There are no significant tree or landscape features on or adjacent to the site to be impacted by the development. The new development introduces parking bays at the front of the existing and new property. Although this greatly limits the potential for new landscaping within the site, I note that this is a common parking solution, already implemented to the front of many other residential properties along 9 Linden Road and therefore the loss of the front gardens in this case would not cause any significant harm to the character of the road. I therefore consider it would be unreasonable to object to the application on these grounds.

I would however I would want to see some provision for landscape planting to the front of the properties and at least one new tree of a suitable size to be planted within each rear garden. The dividing boundary between the two properties should be of a low-level hedge in order to improve the landscape credentials of the site. Landscaping can be agreed as a condition of consent (Condition L1) if planning permission is granted.

Ecology

Considering the good condition of the building (as viewed on Google Streetview), the habitats to be affected (hardstanding and potentially amenity grassland) and the extent of the works, it is unlikely that the proposals will adversely affect bats or other protected species.

There are therefore are no objections to the application on ecology grounds.

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'

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE
H2: DENSITY AND MIX
H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING
H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE
H11: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

SPG/SPD

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)
Revised S106 Planning Obligations (2013)
Affordable Housing (2013)
Tree Strategy for Reading (June 2010)
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

Assessment

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Design, appearance and impact upon the character of the area and the street scene
- b) Impact on neighbouring properties and amenity
- c) Other considerations

a) Design, appearance and impact upon the Character of the Area and the Street Scene

Policy CC7 states, “*All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located*”.

The pattern of development within Linden Road consists of small blocks of terrace properties (3 or 4 in a row) and semi-detached properties with a mixture of 2 storey front projections and cat slide roofs. All properties face the street with front and rear gardens. 9 Linden Road is unusual as it has a larger than average plot due to the gap to the side of the property. The

terrace row has gabled ends and the semi-detached properties hipped roofs. The proposed house is similar to the previous applications, however unlike the previously refused application, the proposal has reverted back to protruding past the rear elevation of the terrace (like the withdrawn applications), although this time only at a single storey level.

The proposed house has removed the two-storey front projection, which was proposed under the previously refused application. The proposed house would be approximately 1.44 metres narrower than the properties within the row. The external materials would be similar to 9 Linden Road (white render with feature band).

Whilst significantly narrower than the other dwellings in the conjoined terrace, the proposed dwelling is considered to fit in with the design and character of the block. It will however, extend the terrace to such an extent that from the crossroads to the north, a terracing effect with the semi-detached properties will occur, as the existing significant break will be lost. As such it is considered that the proposed dwelling fails to make a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of the pattern of development within the area and the relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CC7, H2 and H11 of the Local Plan (2019).

b) Impact on neighbouring properties and amenity

Policy CC8 seeks to ensure that new development will 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 among other things.

The neighbouring property at 11 Linden Road has a first-floor side window to a bedroom and this is the only window to this bedroom. All of the previous applications have identified harm to the amenity of 11 Linden Road due to overbearing and overshadowing on this window. The submitted drawings show there would be a gap of approximately 3.6 between the side of the proposed dwelling and the window at 11 Linden Road. It should also be noted that the proposed dwelling would host a window at first floor level, which would serve bedroom 2. It is considered that the proximity of the proposed dwelling to this habitable window would be visually dominant and overbearing on the residents of this room and result in a loss of direct light to this room. Further to this, given the close proximity of the two dwellings should this application be permitted, there would be a major overlooking concern as both the existing bedroom at No.11 and bedroom 2 of the proposed dwelling would look directly at one another. The proposed scheme is therefore clearly contrary to Policy CC8 of the Local Plan 2019.

The applicant has submitted examples of other side facing windows along Linden Road as a counter argument. These are:

- 4 Linden Road (North facing window towards 170)
 - 4 Linden Road does not have any accessible planning history with floor plans. This window could therefore potentially serve a non-habitable room, such as a bathroom. Even if this window were to serve a bedroom, it should not be used as an argument of precedence when the current proposal will cause noticeable harm to not only No.11 Linden Road, but also the occupants of the proposed dwelling.
- 6 Linden Road (South facing window towards 8)
 - These properties are offset from one another, and the fact that the window faces south allows the window to receive a much greater amount of natural

light than the window of the proposed scheme. It is noted that this window does serve a bedroom.

- 26 Linden Road (South facing window towards 28)
 - Similar to the above example, these properties are offset from one another, and the window is south facing. The planning history for 26 Linden Avenue only shows ground floor, and therefore this window could potentially serve a non-habitable room, such as a bathroom.

The examples provided by the applicant are not considered an acceptable justification for the detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity that will result if this application were approved. As such the scheme is still considered to be contrary to Policy CC8 of the Local Plan 2019.

In addition to the concerns with the first-floor side windows; the dining room at No.9 will be detrimentally impacted as a result of the proposed single storey rear extension. The roof height is proposed to start at a maximum of 3.58 metres and will slope away via a mono-pitch roof to a height of 2.5 metres for a distance of 4 metres. Given that No.9 has a single storey extension, which only protrudes from half the width of the dwelling, the proposed extension at the new dwelling will create a tunnelling effect from the outlook perspective of No.9's dining room. As well as this tunnelling effect, the dining room (which is a habitable room), will have natural light restricted to an unacceptable level as a result of the proposed single storey rear element of the proposed dwellinghouse. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy CC8 of the Local Plan (2019) for this reason as well.

Space Standards

Room sizes should also be in line with the Council's Policy H4 and the Department for Communities and Local Government - Technical housing standards - nationally described space standards:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf

Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m2)

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

The proposed dwellinghouse is shown to have two bedrooms, hosting three bed spaces. The property will be two-storey, which means that the property should have a minimum gross internal area (GIA) of 70 square metres. The proposed dwelling will have a GIA of 75.46 square metres. As such it is considered that the amount of internal amenity space provided is sufficient for the purposes of complying with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan (2019).

As for outdoor amenity space, the supporting text for Policy H10 states that the minimum provision that the Council has sought in the past is a useful guide. This means that the useable private outdoor space for houses should be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling to which it relates (measured externally and including garage space).

The submitted proposed site plan (dwg no.5) shows an inaccurate representation of external amenity space. It is therefore queried whether the proposed bike shed is genuinely to be positioned in this location, or whether it is supposed to be in the rear corner of the plot. Measuring the external amenity space via the proposed block plan (dwg no.2), it is considered that there is sufficient amenity space for the occupiers of the proposed dwelling, and thus this element of the proposal conforms with Policy H10 and CC8 of the Local Plan (2019).

c) Other considerations

Transport

The full comments from the transport department can be viewed in the consultees section above, however in summary there are no concerns subject to conditions.

Affordable Housing

Policy H3 states that *“on sites of 1 - 4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough”*.

Valuations of the scheme have been received, and the applicant would be willing to provide a Policy compliant affordable housing contribution.

However, given the concerns raised in the previous two sections of this appraisal; a Section 106 has not been pursued. In absence of a Section 106 legal agreement to secure a Policy compliant affordable housing contribution, this will make up an additional reason for refusal.

Conclusion

The proposed scheme is considered to have not overcome the previous reasons for refusal, and as such these concerns still stand. In addition to these reasons, the proposed scheme will also fail to comply with Policy CC8 as a result of causing detrimental impact upon the dining room of No.9. This element of detriment will therefore be added to reason for refusal 2, which lays out the amenity concerns.

RECOMMENDATION:

Refuse planning permission