

2793 025 P5

18/02/2021

Design and Access Statement

Belstone
Upper Warren Avenue
Caversham
RG4 7EB

To be read in conjunction with...

Architects Drawings:

2793 001 Site Location Plan, Block Plan and Roof Plan

2793 002 Existing Plans

2793 003 Existing Elevations

2793 004 Proposed Plans

2793 005 Proposed Elevations

2783 007 Proposed and Existing 3D's

2793 008 Impact on Neighbour

Transport Consultant:

J32-5576-002 Vehicle Swept Path Analysis Parking Assessment

J32-5576-003 River Road Vehicular Access Visibility Assessment

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Introduction

Property description

The property is a Semi-Detached Victorian house with an attached garage built at a later date, the property is believed to date back to 1895 and was originally part of a larger house, now split. The dwelling forms a 3-storey family home, with rooms within the loft. The Neighbour to the north is attached, and originally formed part of the



Site Context Satellite view

single house. The house is set back a considerable amount (20m) from Upper Warren Avenue, with houses either side positioned much closer (12.8m and 13.3m) to the road, further south. The western boundary consists largely of a 2.5m high fence, with behind this a number of single storey outbuildings alongside much of this boundary.

Context

Site Location

The site is located within Caversham Heights, approximately 2.5 miles to the north west of Reading City Centre. The application site lies to the western edge of Caversham. The site is bounded on all sides by residential uses and styles and character of these properties is eclectic and varied. The applicant's site is a corner plot that sits on the corner connecting Upper Warren Avenue to River Road.

Upper warren is a public road lined both sides with tall trees and hedges with access via St Peters Avenue.

Neighbouring Belstone are Hilgay, located to the west, 34 Upper Warren Avenue to the east to the other side of River Road. The attached property is Northgate located to the north our property and previously being part of the same building as Belstone, but now a separate dwelling.

Site Features

The site slopes upwards to the north giving the site a level difference of roughly 1m from south to north. The site is surrounded by tall hedges and boundary trees and very well screened from neighbours and Upper Warren Avenue. The existing building has a striking presence from the street thanks to its elegant brick detailing and large pitched roof with tall chimneys.

Flooding

A review of the Environment Agency's flood maps shows there are no records of historic flooding on the site and the risk of fluvial or coastal flooding is considered to be low.

Street Views

Below image shows the corner connecting River Road and Upper Warren Avenue. Large existing trees on Upper Warren Avenue and hedges alongside both sides of the road screen Belstone.



Existing street view from upper warren avenue, the proposal would not be visible within this view

Visual impact of the proposed changes will be minimal when seen from the road.

Upper Warren Avenue looking east; the new proposal would be screened by existing hedges and vegetation, similarly to the existing garage.



Existing view from Upper warren avenue, the proposal would not be visible within this view as it would be screened by the hedges along Hilgay



Existing view from upper warren avenue, taken at 2.4m height, existing garage just visible.

Upper Warren Avenue looking north, over 2.5m hedge. Please note this is taken from above eye level at around 2.4m, thus in fact less of the new proposal would be visible from typical eye level of 1.7m. The gable roof over the extension would be visible in this view.

The proposal will replace the existing attached garage. The proposal takes inspiration from the main building, matching the brick detailing on the central section, whilst referencing roof pitches and widths of bays and dormers/gables.

The new extension would appear subservient to the house and be sited tucked alongside the west boundary. New planting will provide ample screening and blend the proposal in with the existing massing on site.



Existing South Elevation photograph with garage beyond

Planning Context

Related Applications

A summary of the relevant planning history is included in the table below:

Application Reference	Description	Outcome	Decision Date
930502	Septic Tank	Approved	10 May 1994

Conservation Area

The application site is not included within a conservation area.

Listed Buildings

The application site is in the vicinity of Listed Building 'Four Corners' on the opposite side of Upper Warren Avenue.

Trees

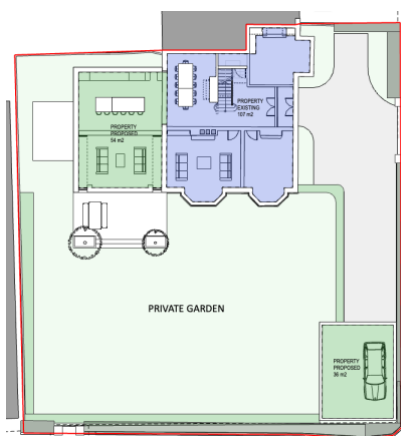
The site includes some small fruit trees and ornamental trees, but no significant trees. The mature lime trees on Upper Warren Avenue should be protected as they form an important feature of this road.

Pre-app

A pre-app was undertaken at end of 2020, reference 201465, assessed by planning officer Mrs Nathalie Weekes.

The pre-app scheme differed from current proposals in a few significant ways:

- the garage was proposed as a separate building at corner of River Road and Upper Warren Avenue
- the extension was nearer to the attached property and the northern boundary, and taller in this location
- the extension was fully flat roofed with a large lantern rooflight at the front



Proposed Extension at pre-app stage, with separate garage along Upper Warren Road, and a side extension alongside the boundary to Northgate

The main points assessed within the pre-app was as follows (quoted text in GREY), with our response to each issue added (in BLACK):

-Principle of development:

The pre-app response confirmed that the principle of development was acceptable, in particular a side extension in the location of the existing garages. However, the proposed garage on the corner of River Road was not deemed acceptable in that location.

-Design and impact on the character of the property and area:

The position of a garage to the front corner of the plot would be considered to have a detrimental impact on the street scene and character of the area in terms of layout and urban grain.

There are a variety of styles of detached properties along Upper Warren Avenue. The design submitted for the single storey side extension is not considered to be out of character with the area.

In response to comments the garage position has been altered. The gable roof added to the side extension aids to blend it in further with the existing architecture of the house.

-Heritage:

The house on the opposite side of Upper Warren Avenue, Four Corners is a listed property, and this proposal is considered to be in the vicinity of it. The context and setting of the proposed siting of the garage, as currently shown, is considered to have a detrimental impact on Four Corners and the prominent location of the garage would detract from the significance of the character of the area.

The proposed side extension is not considered to have a significant impact on the Listed Building.

In response the garage has been removed from the more prominent corner position.

-Impact on neighbouring properties

Due to the position and height of the proposed side extension, there is not considered to be a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties for the proposed side extension.

The revised proposal is located yet further away from the rear boundary, where impact on a neighbouring dwelling would be greatest, and thus further reduces the previously confirmed acceptable impact. The closer proximity to the western boundary is of no impact to the neighbour at Hilgay, as single storey buildings without windows are located along this boundary.

-Trees and Landscape

The development this pre-application seeks to evaluate would be agreeable in principle in tree & landscape terms. There are provisions for new hedges, replanted existing hedges, green roofs (on the new garage and house extension) and replanting a number (not yet specified) of fruit trees that will be removed in order to build the new access way.

There is one cause for concern and that is the distance from the large street Lime tree to the proposed garage.

In response to the issue around protection of trees along Upper Warren Avenue, it is proposed that the garage is located far away from any existing street trees. It is now proposed that a new brick pier can be erected upon the existing footings of the existing pier to the RH side of the gate, whilst a new pier would be erected to the LH side, nearer the boundary with Hilgay, 6.5m away from the centre of the nearest Lime tree. It is therefore not deemed necessary to provide root protection or other drawings to deal with these changes.

-Ecology

Due to limited scope for bat or other ecology impacts it was deemed unnecessary to provide a bat survey for demolition of the existing garage.

-Access and Transport

The following points should be noted... Minimum garage size 3m x 7m... visibility splays from River Road... vehicle crossing minimum 10m away from a junction... works to Public Highway require a licence... driveways should include suitable permeable surfacing materials

In response to the comments from highways, and heritage concerns, it was decided to reposition access, and retain most within the existing SW corner, via a widened gate, and with turning space provided on site. The single parking space off River Road has also been designed by transport consultants Mode to follow guidance. All other points have also been addressed within this application. Please refer to Mode transport drawing for details.

The main issue raised by the pre-app submission was around the garage on the far SE corner of the plot, and impact on the listed building opposite. It was therefore decided that the garage could be attached to the side extension, thus limiting impact near Upper Warren Avenue and on the listed building.

The other significant change is the addition of a pitched roof to the side extension, in order to create a further continuation of the traditional architecture of the original building.

Evaluation - Impact

Impact on Conservation area

The site is not located within a conservation area. It is sited a 3-minute drive away from St Peters conservation area, there is no impact.

Impact on Listed Buildings

The nearest listed building to the applicant's property is 'Four Corners' a private house opposite the site, and around 32m south of the boundary, around 49m away from the south façade. Although the original proposal for the garage was deemed to impact, the current proposal is located a minimum of 44m away from the listed building and does not impact as it is located to the side of the existing house, as a single storey building, constructed alongside single storey extensions on Hilgay.

Impact on Trees

The proposal seeks to remove some small fruit trees along the western boundary and would replace these with other suitable trees to ensure ecology of the site is not impacted negatively. The proposal is to provide 4 trees along the boundary with River Road to re-enforce the tree lined avenue character of Upper Warren Road. The proposal would retain most existing hedging along the boundary of the site and proposes new hedging between the patio and drive within the site. The widened gate along Upper Warren Avenue would have the pier nearest any street trees located in exactly the same position as before to reduce potential damage to roots.

Impact on Neighbours

The proposal replaces an existing garage building with a side extension, which would be taller and marginally nearer the attached neighbour's fence (Northgate) but still only a single storey building, constructed around 3.5m away from the fence, with a height of 3m, locally reducing to around 2.8m for the utility room element which has a height of 2.7m. A new patio, at a height of the lower step already in existence near the fence, would not impact unduly on neighbours.

The proposal would be sited a minimum of 0.9m, increasing to 1.3m away from the boundary with Hilgay, which in any case has single storey buildings along most of this boundary, and is thus not impacted by the proposed height of 2.7m of the garage volume.

The existing pedestrian access off River Road would be complemented with a new parking space directly off River Road. This would be located 32m away from the junction. This space off River Road, which is a private, gravel, road with lower speeds, would reduce access onto Upper Warren Road and is thought to be able to contribute to improving traffic safety.

Design, Use

Description of Development

The applicant seeks permission for the demolition of the existing attached garage and erection of a new single storey extension, including a replacement garage located to the south east of the site. Both would be single storey height, and both would mimic the materials and style of the existing house.

Use of the site

The site will remain a family home, with new accommodation ancillary to this use.

Justification

The newly proposed extension will provide better living arrangements for the client, by providing space for a new kitchen, and living space in an open plan arrangement. The new space is proposed to flow into the dining space, but is set down from this level to reduce impact on neighbours. The proposed roof height will sit comfortably below the horizontal line created by the brick detailing on the house.

This detailing will be matched at the front of the proposed extension in keeping with the aesthetics of the main property. At the side a lower volume is created for the garage and utility room, with a back door providing improved access. A third element, in the form of a small gable roof with glazed walls below has been inserted to further reference existing bay windows and the various gables present in the existing roof volume.

The flat green roofs of the proposed extension will be at a height subservient to the eaves of the existing main property and the proposed extension and due to the sloped site will not visually impose on the views of the main property from the street.

Area

Gross Internal Area of the existing dwelling is 318m²: 109m² ground floor, 109m² first floor, 75m² third floor and 25m² for the existing attached garage.

Gross Internal Area of the proposed dwelling is 387m²: 203m² ground floor (Including extension & garage), 109m² first floor, 75m² third floor

The difference between the existing and proposed Gross Internal Area is 69m².

Design, Massing

Please refer to the 3D massing visuals that compare the existing massing to that proposed within the drawings issued.

Proposed Extension

The Proposed Extension will replace the existing double garage located to the west of the main property. The extension will be in keeping with the style of the main property by utilising a matching brick and continuing the brick detailing band highlighted prominently on the main property.

Proposed Garage

The new garage will replace the existing double garage currently attached to the house. It will be attached to the extension, but at a reduced height, in order to limit impact. The new garage will be of the requisite dimensions of 3x7m to provide a single parking space and bicycle storage. The driveway will be partially retained as per the drawings, it will be accessed via an enlarged gated entrance off upper warren avenue. An alternative parking space will also be added to the north east of the plot, accessed via the private river road.



Existing Garage with doors 2m wide suits only small cars.

Both the proposed Extension and Garage are proposed to have green roofs which would reduce stormwater run-off, and benefit biodiversity on site.

The proposed extension will use brick and some local brick detailing similar to the main property. Floor to ceiling height windows/doors will be used on the south and east elevations, below the gabled roof. Smaller windows are proposed to the north, south and west elevations.

The proposal would benefit from a green roof, with the extension also having velux windows set into a pitched plain tiled roof, and a flat roof light set within the lower roof.



Proposed Extension - Render & Block Plan

Building Lines

The proposed extension comes forward of the south elevations of the house, but is located to fall behind the building line running from Hilgay to 34 Upper Warren Ave. The Protruding gable element is designed to be similar in width to the bay windows and is set 3m forward of the front of the bays. The garage is set forward by a further 1.7m and is located alongside the western boundary. It should be noted that Hilgay has a single storey building running along Belstone's western boundary, and our single storey element would sit within the "shadow" of these buildings.



Building Line Diagram

Landscaping

Site boundaries are largely maintained as existing. Changes are noted on the block plan and include the widening of the access onto Upper Warren Avenue and the new parking space off River Road. New trees are proposed alongside River Road.



Existing Driveway



Existing Pedestrian Entrance

A new replacement patio is proposed near the north boundary, and a new patio proposed in front of the extension, to the south of the house, on the location of the current drive. Paths are re-routed around the extension.

A widened and re-surfaced permeable paved drive is proposed off River Road. A small area of hard standing is also added off River Road, to allow for parking of one car.

Dropped kerbs would be widened / created in both areas.

External lighting will be in line with policy to avoid disturbance of neighbours and wildlife.

No changes are proposed to the drainage principles of the site, and it is expected that the amount of surface water run-off will not change, green roofs will attenuate water run off to some extent, as will permeable paving to paths/drive. Foul drainage will continue to be dealt with on site via the existing septic tank also.

Proposed new hedges will be planted to obscure the new garage. New trees will be added and green roofs installed, all as shown on the block plan.

Access

Vehicle parking: the relocation of one parking space will allow safe access onto River Road for day to day use, whilst a new turning space is provided on the existing drive location, which is widened to ease access in a forward gear onto Upper Warren Avenue.

The proposal will not affect cycle storage, as the replacement garage would be sufficiently large to house bicycles for the household.

The proposal will not affect access for pedestrians. This is currently off River Road, towards the entrance into the house, and maintained as such.

The proposal is set lower than the main house, but this has been proposed in order to limit impact on neighbours and to meet the lower garden levels away from the house more comfortably. A ramp or platform lift could be provided in future if level access to the kitchen was required for users. Visitors can be accommodated in any case within one of the other reception rooms including the dining room.

Conclusion

We trust that the revised proposals presented in our drawings, and described in this design and access statement address all issues raised within the pre-app response. The proposed use, size and siting of the side extension were previously approved in principle, and we have addressed the issues raised around impact of the pre-app proposal for the garage by moving it away from the listed building opposite and tucking it into the space between the extension and western boundary, in order to reduce impact on the street scene and neighbours.

We trust that you will be able to approve the proposals as being in line with policy and sensible within the wider context of the site location.

We look forward to receiving any comments or queries you may have on proposals.