

## DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

**App Ref:** 201009/HOU

**Address:** 241 Newcastle Road, Reading, RG2 7TW

**Proposals:** Proposed removal of existing single storey rear extension and replacement with full width extension measuring 3.0m deep, and new single storey side extension to existing dwelling.

**Case Officer:** Mr David Brett

**Applicant:** Mrs M Khan

**Date received (valid from):** 14/07/2020

**Target Decision date:** 08/09/2020

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The proposal site is two storey end terraced dwelling on Newcastle Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and consists of similarly designed two storey terraced dwellings. Although the front of the property (north) is only accessible by foot, with a highway to the rear, it is clear from the character of the surrounding area that the front elevation of the property (and this terrace of properties) is certainly the north elevation and the rear is the south elevation.

The end of terrace house is also adjacent to a woodland (identified as an area of biodiversity interest in accordance with Policy EN12), which is a priority habitat (as per the NPPF; more specifically it is a Lowland Deciduous Woodland and is also a designated Local Wildlife Site) and provides highly suitable habitat for use by foraging and commuting bats. As such, there are a considerable number of trees beyond the eastern boundary of the site, as evidenced in the aerial view below.

The application has been submitted as a householder application and has been assessed as such.



Fig 1. Aerial photo of 241 Newcastle Road (outlined in red). Image obtained from Google Maps on 01/09/2020.

A site visit for this application was not possible due to the Coronavirus lockdown. Site photos were supplied on 11/06/2020 by the Reading Borough Council Natural Environment Officer in relation to separate application 200550. These photos were used for the purpose of determining this application.

### 2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development is for the removal of existing single storey rear extension and replacement with full width extension measuring 3.0m deep, and a new single storey side extension to the east elevation of the existing dwelling.

Plans considered:

- Site Block Plan - KH241:201
- Site Location Plan - KH241:202
- Existing Elevations - KH241:204
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans - KH241:205
- Proposed Elevations - KH241:206
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan for 241 Newcastle Road

Received on 14/07/2020

### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

200855 - Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed removal of existing single storey rear extension and replacement with full width extension measuring 3.0m deep, and new single storey side extension to existing dwelling. - Application permitted on 14/08/2020.

200550 - Proposed removal of existing single storey rear extension and replacement with full width extension measuring 3.0m deep, and new double storey side extension to existing dwelling. - Application withdrawn on 12/06/2020.

During the course of application 200550 the applicant was advised that the application would not be supported by officers for the following reasons:

1. The proposal fails to demonstrate no harm to the adjacent NPPF priority habitat (Lowland Deciduous Woodland) or protected species within the woodland, which is also a designated Local Wildlife Site. In addition, by virtue of its proximity, the proposal will result in future pressure to prune or fell adjacent trees within this important, high amenity woodland. As a result, the proposal is in conflict with Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019) policies EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network and EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland.
2. The proposed development, by allowing a substantial increase in the size of the building and associated increased occupancy of the Class C4 HMO, would result in a reduction in outdoor amenity space, additional visual impact from the extensions themselves, together with impacts on adjacent protected trees and designated wildlife areas. The resulting overdevelopment of the plot would be harmful to the character of the area, the amenity of occupiers and adjacent trees and wildlife. As a result, the proposal is in conflict with Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019) policies H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation, and policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space.

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

#### 4.1 The following addresses were consulted by letter.

239 Newcastle Road, Reading, RG2 7TW - No consultation response received.

Reading Borough Council, Transport - Response received on 06/08/2020

- As previously advised in Transport comments for application 200550, for this site, submitted plans suggested that this was an HMO. *Planning officer note: The application has been submitted as a householder application and has been assessed as such.*
- Plans do not illustrate any off-road parking provision, and it was established (during previous application discussions) that the existing property is not provided with any off road parking and therefore any proposed provision would be acceptable.
- Plans submitted for this application, do not illustrate that any off parking is proposed, therefore there are no changes to the existing arrangements.

- If this is a HMO, then cycle storage should be provided in accordance with the Council's current standards and should be illustrated on revised plans.
- Based on the Council's current Parking Standards a small HMO would generate the same demand for parking as a 3 bedroom C3 Dwelling, therefore there are no Transport objections to this application, however there are a number of trees in close proximity to the site, therefore the Natural Environmental Officer should be contacted to ensure there is no damage to tree or tree roots.

#### Reading Borough Council, Ecology

- The application site comprises an end of terrace house adjacent to a woodland which is a priority habitat (as per the NPPF) and provides highly suitable habitat for use by foraging and commuting bats. It is proposed to extend the building following the demolition of the existing extension.
- As per our comments for previous similar application 200550, the building may contain features suitable for use by roosting bats which could be affected by the proposals (e.g. gaps under hanging tiles). Furthermore, due to the adjacent woodland, the site could be used by other protected and priority species such as badger, nesting birds, and hedgehog.
- As such, there is a risk that the proposals could affect bats and other protected species and an ecological assessment report (comprising an extended Phase 1 Habitat and Species Scoping Survey, bat survey(s) of the building, and any phase 2 surveys) would need to be submitted prior to the determination of the application.
- The proposals could affect protected species and priority habitat. As such, an ecological assessment will need to be submitted prior to the determination of the application, or the application should be refused on the grounds that insufficient information has been provided for the council to determine the likely impact of the proposals upon protected species and priority habitats
- For completeness, the comments made at the time of application 200550 (referenced above) are detailed in full below (they are considered to continue to apply to this application too):
  - The application site comprises an end of terrace house adjacent to a woodland which is a priority habitat (as per the NPPF) and provides highly suitable habitat for use by foraging and commuting bats. It is proposed to extend the building following the demolition of the existing extension.
  - The building may contain features suitable for use by roosting bats which could be affected by the proposals. Furthermore, due to the adjacent woodland, the site could be used by other protected and priority species such as badger and hedgehog.
  - As such, there is a risk that the proposals could affect bats and other protected species and an ecological assessment report (comprising an extended Phase 1 Habitat and Species Scoping Survey, bat survey(s) of the building, and any phase 2 surveys) would need to be submitted prior to the determination of the application.
  - The proposals could affect protected species and priority habitat. As such, an ecological assessment will need to be submitted prior to the determination of the application, or the application should be refused on the grounds that insufficient information has been provided for the council to determine the likely impact of the proposals upon protected species and priority habitats.

#### Reading Borough Council, Trees

- Objections were raised on tree/landscape/ecology grounds to application 200550 - suggested reasons for refusal were given - see below for reference. I note that the application was withdrawn.
- This current proposal is marginally worse than that proposed under 200550 in that it 'squares off' the extensions creating an entire wrap-around extension rear and side, whereas previously it was a separate side and rear extension. As such, the proposal is still unacceptable for the same reason:
  - By virtue of its proximity, the proposal will result in future pressure to prune or fell adjacent trees within the high amenity woodland to the east, which is designated as an NPPF priority habitat (Lowland Deciduous Woodland) and is a designated Local Wildlife Site.

A site notice was displayed from 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020, expiring on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020 - no further responses have been received.

## 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 Policy

National Planning Policy Framework  
National Planning Practice Guidance

### Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm  
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity  
H9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation  
H10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space  
EN12 Biodiversity and The Green Network  
EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland  
TR3 Access, Traffic and Highways-Related matters  
TR5 Car and cycle parking and Electric Vehicle Parking

### SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG  
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

## 7. APPRAISAL

### 7.1 Design

In accordance with Reading Borough Local Plan policy H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation, house extension proposals are acceptable where it:

- *Respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale and locations.*
- *Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and any important existing building line.*
- *Does not result in a loss of biodiversity within gardens.*

The existing dwelling includes a single storey rear extension that has been illustrated as the existing kitchen on the existing plans. The proposed development involves the demolition of the existing single storey rear extension to allow for the proposed single storey wraparound extension. The existing single storey rear extension has a depth of 2.7m and a width of 2.8m, and features a flat roof. The existing dwelling has a footprint of approximately 52m<sup>2</sup>, the proposed development would increase the footprint of the existing dwelling to 90m<sup>2</sup>.

The proposed development consists of a single-storey wraparound extension. The width of the side extension is 2.6m and extends 3m beyond the rear elevation of 241 Newcastle Road. The front elevation of the side extension is in line with the front elevation of the existing dwelling. The proposed rear extension has a depth of 3m when measured from the rear elevation of the existing dwelling. The ground to eaves height of the proposal when measured from the front of the dwelling is 2.85m. The proposed wraparound extension features a flat roof.

Single storey rear extensions are considered characteristic of the surrounding area, with examples of flat roof single storey rear extensions at 227, 231 to 235 Newcastle Road. It is considered that the proposed rear extension would not infringe any important building line to the rear of the terraced row between 223 and 241 Newcastle Road.

In terms of detailed design matters, the proposal includes brickwork, window and roof tiles to match existing. While the arrangement of windows and doors in relation to the existing dwelling is considered acceptable. Had the proposals been supported, a compliance condition would have secured the materials detailed on the application form.

The proposals would decrease the size of the rear amenity space; however, a suitably sized garden would remain, so no concerns are raised in relation to Policy H10.

## *7.2 Design and the Public Realm*

Proposed developments of the size and scale are not considered characteristic of the surrounding area. The single storey wraparound side extension represents significant changes in the context of the existing situation. Whilst this is the case, it is considered that given the location of the proposal site, the proposed works would likely not significantly harm the character and appearance of the public realm. The proposal site is an end terrace dwelling that borders nearby woodland, as a result, the proposal would have little impact on the overall street scene.

## *7.3 Safeguarding Amenity*

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to factors including:

- *Privacy and overlooking*
- *Access to sunlight and daylight*
- *Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development*
- *Harm to outlook*

It is also relevant that Policy H9 also guards against extensions which present an overbearing impact on neighbours.

It is considered unlikely that the proposed development would significantly harm the living conditions at the adjoining property 239 Newcastle Road. While the proposed single storey rear extension is to the side boundary at number 239 Newcastle Road, the proposed rear extension would only extend a further 0.3m beyond the existing single storey rear extension at 241 Newcastle Road. This small change in depths to the rear extension leads to the view that the living conditions at number 239 with regards to loss of light or harm to outlook is not considered harmful to the point of refusal for this application. The rear elevation of the terraced row from 223 to 241 Newcastle Road is south facing, so any potential loss of light to habitable rooms at number 239 is considered minimal.

With regard to the wider surrounding area, it is considered that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions at neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, visual dominance or loss of privacy.

It is also recognised that the proposed development would improve the quality of accommodation at the property by providing additional internal floorspace for occupiers to utilise.

#### 7.4 Transport

As per the transport observations above, there is no objection to this application in terms of harm to vehicle parking arrangement on site. As the vehicle parking space requirement is the same for all dwellings consisting of 3 or more bedrooms, the need for additional parking site is not required in accordance with the Revised Parking Standards SPD.

#### 7.5 Trees and Natural Environment

The proposal site is adjacent to woodland which is a priority habitat (as per the NPPF). A concern has been raised by the Ecology consultant for Reading Borough Council that the proposed works could affect bats and other protected species. An Ecological Assessment Report was requested to be carried out to address these concerns. An Ecological Assessment Report was not forthcoming to support this application, as such, it is considered that there has been a failure to demonstrate that the proposed development would not harm protected species within the adjacent woodland.

Reading Borough Council's Natural Environment Officer also raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposed works on the adjacent woodland. The Natural Environment referred back to previous concerns raised during application 200550. During a site visit at the time of application 200550 (which was withdrawn by the applicant prior to a formal decision being made by the local planning authority), the Natural Environment Officer noticed the imposing nature of the woodland in relation to 241 Newcastle Road. With regards to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment provided to support this application, the report has failed to alleviate concerns that there would be a pressure to prune the nearby woodland, particularly in relation to the proposed single storey side extension. The imposing nature of the woodland is evident, as illustrated in fig 2 below, which shows the growth of the woodland in relation to the side elevation at 241 Newcastle Road.



Fig 2. Woodland to the side elevation of 241 Newcastle Road (front, looking south, image captured on 11/06/2020).



Fig 3. Woodland to the side elevation of 241 Newcastle Road (rear, looking north, image captured on 11/06/2020)

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment also appears to be a resubmission of the assessment provided for application 200550, as a result, the Tree Protection Plan within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment does not represent the proposed development within application 201009 (the two applications contrast in the following ways: application 200550 also included a first floor side extension, whereas application 201009 does not have a first floor side extension but includes a single storey wraparound element). The proposed ground floor plan (KH241:205) demonstrates

that the proposed kitchen would be within the area designated for the protective fencing and within the construction and storage exclusion zone. It is expected that if the Arboricultural Impact Assessment is resubmitted (as part of any future separate application), that the Tree Protection Plan would be appropriately updated to reflect the latest proposal, in this instance that has not been done.

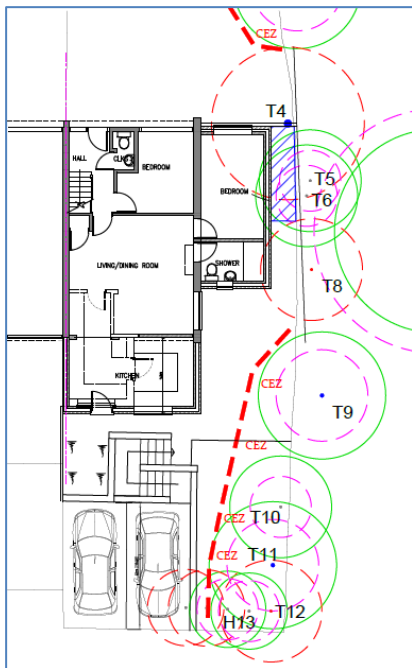


Fig 4. Tree Protection Plan submitted within application 201009.

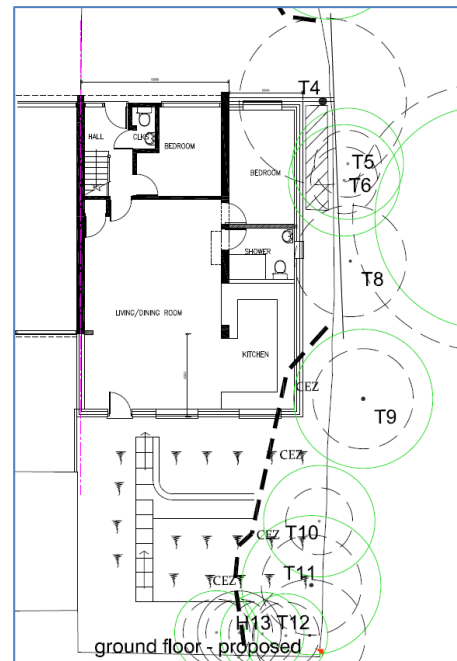


Fig 5. Proposed Ground Floor Plan (KH241:205)

It is acknowledged that in the time between application 200550 and this application at the site, a certificate of lawfulness application for a rear and side extension has been issued at the site (see relevant history section above). It is clarified that the certificate application was assessed under the terms of such applications (the General Permitted Development Order) and this householder application is also assessed under its own terms too (as detailed at section 6 above). In short, the fact that a certificate of lawfulness has been granted for part of the footprint of the works proposed by this scheme is not considered to outweigh the local plan policies and guidance which apply in this case.

## 8. CONCLUSION

It is acknowledged that in design and amenity terms the proposals, in themselves are considered to be appropriate. However, significant concerns have been raised from an ecology and tree perspective as to the potential impacts of the proposals too. Overall, the proposed development is not considered acceptable by officers due to the failure to demonstrate the impact of the proposal on habitats within the adjacent woodland. The application has also failed to demonstrate that there would not be a pressure to prune the nearby woodland. As a result, it is considered that the proposals have not demonstrated that they would not have a detrimental impact on the adjacent woodland in the long term. Whilst again acknowledging that with regards to the principle of the overall development, it is considered that a single storey rear and side extension would be achievable on site from a design/amenity perspective, however, it would need to address the shortcomings of this application with regards to impact on the adjacent woodland. Given this considerable planning constraint and the context of Policies EN12 and EN14, ultimately the planning balance weighs against supporting the application in this instance.

Officers did advise the agent of these shortcomings and this conclusion. The agent was provided with an opportunity to withdraw the application prior to a decision being made, but this was not forthcoming (also acknowledging the right to appeal). Hence the above conclusion reached on

the application, on the basis of the information submitted and consideration of all material matters.

Permission refused due to the following reasons:

1. The proposed development has failed to demonstrate that it would not cause harm to the adjacent NPPF priority habitat (Lowland Deciduous Woodland) or protected species within the woodland, which is also a designated Local Wildlife Site. In addition, by virtue of its proximity, the proposal will result in future pressure to prune or fell adjacent trees within this important, high amenity woodland. As a result, the proposal is in conflict with [Reading Borough Local Plan \(Adopted November 2019\)](#) policies EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network and EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland.

## 9. RECOMMENDATION

**REFUSE**

## 10. INFORMATIVES

### **IF0: Positive and Proactive Working - refusal**

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to see if relevant concerns could be resolved to allow permission to be granted. However, that has not been possible within the agreed extended timescale and therefore the decision to refuse planning permission has been taken.

### **C00: Plans Considered**

The refusal relates only to the following plans and information as received by the local planning authority:

Plans considered:

- Site Block Plan - KH241:201
- Site Location Plan - KH241:202
- Existing Elevations - KH241:204
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans - KH241:205
- Proposed Elevations - KH241:206
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan for 241 Newcastle Road

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### **I14: Pre-app Advice**

This planning application was submitted without the benefit of first seeking pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority, which can often result in the avoidance of refusal of planning permission. Please see the following link to the Council's pre-application service here: [http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1190/Pre-Application-Enquiry-Form/pdf/Pre-app\\_Nov\\_2016.pdf](http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1190/Pre-Application-Enquiry-Form/pdf/Pre-app_Nov_2016.pdf)