

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Kentwood
App Ref: 191852
Address: 16 Vale Crescent, Reading, RG30 6ED
Proposal: Replacement of double garage and utility room with a new garden room with wc and utility and a new garden store room.
Case Officer: Mr James Schofield
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Harrison
Date received (valid from): 27 November 2019
Target Decision date: 24 March 2020

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The dwelling of 16 Vale Crescent is located at the end of an alleyway giving access to Vale Crescent; vehicular access is derived from Gypsy Lane which is a woodland TPO (no 2/16) and a designated Green Link. Dwellings in the wider context, including 16 Vale Crescent, are typically modern semi-detached dwellings with moderately sized slopping gardens. The site falls within a habitat of moderate suitability for use by protected species of bats.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks permission for a single storey outbuilding to replace an existing garage. Additionally, the proposal includes significant changes to landscaping. Plans considered:

Drawing No. 263-(A1)-00-B Existing
Drawing No. 263-(A1)-03 Proposal 3
Arboricultural Report - Tree Survey for 16 Vale Crescent Ref: SH/5837-01/30.05
As received 19 November 2019

Bat Survey
As received 24 January 2020

Drawing No. 263-(A1)-03A Proposal 3A
Arboricultural Report - Tree Survey for 16 Vale Crescent Ref: PB/AMS-20/09.02
As received 13 February 2020

Arboricultural Report - Tree Survey for 16 Vale Crescent Ref: PB/AMS-20/09.02
As received 9 March 2020

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

APP Ref: 191374/PREAPP
Proposal: Pre-application enquiry relating to removal of trees within a designated green link in order to erect a single storey house extension, replacement shed, fencing and landscaping.
Decision: Observations sent
Decision date: 3/10/2019

4. CONSULTATIONS

Neighbours

A site notice was displayed on and all adjoining neighbours were consulted by letter and no responses were received.

Ecology

Officers indicated the site is part of a habitat where bats have previously been found. The site is on a tree lined road in a protected woodland with 175 meters to the southeast of McIlroy Park; an optimal bat foraging habitat. And as such a bat survey would be required prior to any permission being granted.

Environmental Health

An updated Arboricultural Report and amended plan demonstrating the placement of the sewer and pipes as it relates to the proposed WC. These were provided to the satisfaction of Environmental Health Officers provided the method statement was updated to include a requirement for photographic evidence of the tree protection to be submitted to RBC prior to the commencement of building works and 5 days' notice prior to it being removed on completion of the build to ensure compliance. This updated Arboricultural Report was then provided.

Transport

Officer raised no objections provided a condition limiting use to that of Ancillary to the enjoyment of the main dwelling is included.

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 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

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of development

Residential alterations including the construction of outbuildings 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 proposed outbuilding is considered to be in keeping with the established aesthetic of the site and wider area due to maintaining the same small scale as the existing garage; the area being defined by the protected woodland and the verdant small winding Gypsy Lane.

The landscaping plan is considered not to improve the character of this woodland; but no less than that already in place.

For the reasons discussed above, the development is not considered to cause any harm to the character or appearance of either the dwelling or the wider area, and therefore, accords with the aims of Policy CC7 and the design considerations of Policy H9.

7.3 Amenity

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

The ground floor elements of the outbuilding are deemed to avoid any concerns about detrimental impact on neighbour's privacy, sunlight or overbearingness by virtue of siting and design; with no views into adjacent neighbour's private outdoor amenity space being introduced.

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

Because the nature of the proposal includes the capacity for the outbuilding to become an independent dwelling; and this was not the nature of this application, a condition controlling the use of the building and practical subdivision of the site is considered to be prudent.

Subsequent to the above analysis, in this instance and based on the site's individual circumstances, the proposed development is deemed to accord with Policy CC8 and the overbearingness considerations of Policy H9 if the discussed conditions are included with any permission granted.

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. These aims are supported by Policy H9 which states that development will only be acceptable where it does not result in the loss of biodiversity within gardens. Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System requires the establishment of the presence or otherwise of protected species through surveys prior to the granting of planning permission in most instances.

The Ecology Officer indicated the site is part of a habitat where bats have previously been found. And that the site is on a tree lined road in a protected woodland with 175 meters to the southeast of Mcllroy Park; an optimal bat foraging habitat. As such, a statutory requirement for a bat survey was established. This was subsequently provided by the agent and was verified by the Ecology Officer to have been conducted correctly and to demonstrate there was no meaningful risk of harm to any protected species of Bats.

All trees on the site are protected due to being in a woodland TPO (no 2/16), and the site is within an identified Green Link. As such, the proposed development had to establish it would not negatively impact the biodiversity of the site. The tree survey and method statement was reviewed by the Environmental Health Officer's satisfaction; which indicated that the removal of specific trees and protection of the rest would be in the interest of the health of the woodland. The Officer indicated that the Method Statement would have to include enforcement measures; this was revised and provided by the agent thereafter.

As such, 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 and to accord with the requirements of Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05.

7.5 Highway safety

Policy TR3 indicates proposed development will accord with the most up-to-date objectives of the Local Transport Plan, comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority and refrain from having a material detrimental impact on the function of the transport network.

It is considered that provided the use of the building remains ancillary to the enjoyment of the main dwelling, no impact on the transport network result. As such, the development is considered to accord with Policy TR3 of the Local Plan (2019) provided conditions limiting the capacity for the site to be practically subdivided, the parking plan changed without approval or change of use from ancillary is included with the permission.

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 Time Limit
2. AP1 Approved Plans
3. M3 Materials as specified
4. L7A Arboricultural Method Statement (as specified)
5. PD6 Ancillary to Enjoyment
6. PD4 No fences or walls 0.5 meters from the boundary line without planning permission
7. DC4 Parking to plan; no new parking without planning permission
8. PD1 PD rights removed for Class F (Hard Standing)

APPENDIX

Site Photos

Photographs taken in the course of a site visit conducted on the 30th of January 2020.

















