

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Tilehurst
App Ref: 191839/HOU
Address: 17 Thicket Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4TY
Proposals: Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of new first floor rear extension.
Case Officer: James Schofield
Date received (valid from): 15 November 2019
Target Decision date: 5 June 2020

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

17 Thicket Road is a mid-twentieth century semi-detached dwelling. Dwellings in the immediate context are of a simple red brick construction with hipped roofs and shared ridgelines. The rear of the site has a northerly aspect which means 15 and 19 Thicket Road are to the east and west of the site respectively. The site does not benefit from listed status, conservation area protection or any protected trees on site. The site does fall within a habitat of optimal suitability for foraging by protected species of bats.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development includes part two and part single-storey rear extensions at 4 meters using gable and flat-pitched roof forms. Plans considered:

Drawing No: TRET/01 Location & Block Plan
Drawing No: TRET/02 Existing Plans & Elevations
Drawing No: TRET/03 Proposed Plans & Elevations
As received 18 November 2019

Drawing No: TRET/03a Proposed Plans & Elevations
As received 13 January 2020

Bat Survey
As received 26 May 2020

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Neighbours

All adjoining neighbours were consulted by letter and one response was received. This response was an objection made by 19 Thicket Road on the grounds of loss of outlook and amenity for a window on the west elevation which serves a stairwell and landing. These concerns are addressed in section 7.3 regarding amenity.

Ecology

Officers indicated the site is part of a habitat of optimal suitability for use by commuting or foraging bats associated with Blundells Copse. And as such a bat survey would be required prior to any permission being granted.

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

The application seeks permission for part ground part first floor rear 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 ground-floor rear extension is considered to be acceptable in terms of design and scale; being very similar to that already in place on site.

The two-storey rear projection with a hipped roof is considered to sympathetically respond to the existing dwelling while providing further accommodation. The ground-floor rear extension elements use a flat-roof but are the least visible elements of the proposed works.

The proposal is considered to be in accordance with CC7 (Design and the Public Realm), CC8 (Safeguarding amenity) and H8 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council's 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.

The ground floor rear extensions would not reduce privacy, sunlight or overbearingness by virtue of single-storey height and level topography.

The first-floor elements of the proposal is considered likely to affect access to sunlight and any outlook offered by the window in the west elevation identified by the objector comment received by 19 Thicket Road. This window serves a stairwell and landing and as such does not serve bedrooms or habitable rooms in which the occupants would spend any considerable amount of time. It is therefore not considered reasonable in planning terms to consider any detrimental loss of sunlight or outlook amenity to result for 19 Thicket Road due to the proposal in this circumstance.

Subsequent to the above analysis, 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. 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. 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 of optimal suitability for use by commuting or foraging bats associated with nearby Blundell Copse. 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.

The site does not have any protected trees or identified Green Links which could be negatively impacted by the specifics of the proposed development under consideration.

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.

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. M1 Materials to match