

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Tilehurst
App Ref: 191967
Address: 34 Chapel Hill, Tilehurst, RG4 7BP
Proposal: Addition of a first-floor and a single-storey rear extension to an existing bungalow.
Case Officer: Mr James Schofield
Applicant: Mr Richard Bridge
Date received (valid from): 13 December 2019
Target Decision date: 7 February 2020 extended to 3 March 2020.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

34 Chapel Hill is a detached dwelling located at the corner of the intersection of Chapel Hill, Heathway, Hildens Drive and Lower Elmstone Drive. The elevation steeply reduces along this stretch of Chapel Hill, ensuring development has a stepped appearance (see appendix for photographs). As a result 34 Chapel Hill and its garden are lower than the adjacent roads and footpaths. The wider area is largely suburban and characterised by a mix of detached, semi-detached and terrace houses. The site does not benefit from listed status, conservation area protection or protected trees on the site.

The existing design detail of 34 Chapel Hill employs a low-detail render and timber treatment to elevations in a vague nod to the mock Tudor style common in early 20th century suburban dwellings. The existing dwelling has a gable-ended roof and a porch to the north end of the rear/east elevation. Newer dwellings in the wider context are typically brick with some, such as 32a Chapel Hill, employing painted wood cladding in their elevations. Roof typology is typically gable ended throughout the development site and its wider context.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is for the addition of a first-floor to the existing bungalow (a ridge height increase of 0.5 metres) and a single-storey rear extension to the ground floor at a depth of 4 metres.

Plans considered:

Design & Access Statement	(superseded during application)
Site Location Plan	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_AR_P CAD Renderings	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_SP_P Proposed Site Plan	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_WE_P Proposed West Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_SE_P Proposed South Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_NE_P Proposed North Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_EE_P Proposed East Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_FP_P_A Proposed Floorplans	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_MAT Local Design & Material Survey	
Drawing ID 34CH_PH_E Existing site photographs	
Drawing ID 34CH_WE_E Existing West Elevation	
Drawing ID 34CH_SE_E Existing South Elevation	
Drawing ID 34CH_NE_E Existing North Elevation	

Drawing ID 34CH_EE_E Existing East Elevation
Drawing ID 34CH_FP_E Existing Floorplan
As received 13 December 2019

Design & Access Statement	(superseded during application)
Site Location Plan	
Drawing ID 34CH_AR_P CAD Renderings	(superseded during application)
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Drawing ID 34CH_SE_P Proposed South Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_NE_P Proposed North Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_EE_P Proposed East Elevation	(superseded during application)
Drawing ID 34CH_FP_P_A Proposed Floorplans	
As received 11 February 2020	

Design & Access Statement
Drawing ID 34CH_AR_P CAD Renderings
Drawing ID 34CH_WE_P Proposed West Elevation
Drawing ID 34CH_SE_P Proposed South Elevation
Drawing ID 34CH_NE_P Proposed North Elevation
Drawing ID 34CH_EE_P Proposed East Elevation
As received 14 February 2020

Drawing ID 34CH_SV_P Proposed Streetviews
As received 27 February 2020

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

APP Ref:	191361/PRE
Proposal:	Conversion of an existing detached 2 bedroom bungalow into a 4 bedroom family house by means of a first floor extension and rear conservatory.
Decision:	Observations sent
Decision date:	20/9/2019

APP Ref:	180580/FUL
Proposal:	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a two storey detached House.
Decision:	Permitted
Decision date:	12/9/2018

APP Ref:	180039/PRE
Proposal:	Demolition of existing bungalow and for the development of a new two-storey house. Proposed floor area 94m2
Decision:	Observations sent
Decision date:	19/2/2018

4. CONSULTATIONS

Neighbours

All adjoining neighbours were consulted by letter and no responses were received.

Transport

No objections; suggested conditions & informatives.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

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

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of development

The application seeks permission for a first-floor extension and a ground-floor rear extension to an existing residential bungalow. 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 existing dwelling has a markedly different appearance from the wider context in terms of; its smaller scale, design detail and plot layout. Historic OS Map data suggests that the dwelling predates the other dwellings within its context; information which would seem to explain why

neighbouring dwellings appear to respond to the development site by avoiding the placement of sensitive windows or windows which could meaningfully overlook the proposed site and differ markedly in design detail.

The application initially proposed two dormers, front and rear, running the full width and length of the ground floor. The choice of Western Red Cedar as the cladding material to the dormers was considered to add architectural interest in a manner which differs from the wider context in that the wood cladding is proposed to be stained rather than painted. This was not considered to be a harmful difference due to the role the site prominence. However, the character was found to be unacceptable overall due to the scale of the dormers dominating the roofscape as viewed from the North and South elevations. This would have been very prominent visually within the streetscene due to the lower elevation of the site relative to the roads and footpaths. The dormer elements of the proposal were considered to convey an appearance of a poorly concealed first storey extension.

Following on from discussions with the developer, amended plans were submitted on the 11th of February which changed the proposal to that of a first storey extension which includes a new gable ended roof 0.5 meter higher than the existing ridgeline, and a new more integrated and symmetrical fenestration plan. The Western Red Cedar wood cladding was proposed to be extended throughout the entirety of the new first floor elevations and a white render treatment applied across the entirety of the ground floor. Further discussions with the developer resulted in the gable end elevations (North and South) employing the same white render treatments employed in the ground floor. This is considered to visually tie both stories together to an acceptable degree without eliminating the novel architectural interest offered by the wood cladding in the first floor East and West elevations.

The proposed single-storey rear extension with roof lights is at a depth which is in line with the recommended maximum of 4 metres for rear extensions in the Council's design guide. This is facilitated by the re-siting of the front door to the north/west corner of the dwelling in line with other dwellings in the wider context. These changes are considered appropriate to the character of the dwelling, wider area and building lines.

For the reasons discussed above, the development is not considered to cause any harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling, the wider area and existing building lines. The design approach is considered appropriate to the specifics of the site and its context, and as such, the proposed development accords with the aims of Policy CC7 and the design considerations of H9.

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.

As demonstrated on plans, the proposed first-floor extension would not result in an unacceptable loss of light or an overbearing impact on either neighbours or public areas due to both the scale and design of the proposed development and site-specific details of the application site; particularly helpful changes in elevation which ensure the majority of new mass resulting from the proposed development would be below neighbouring sites.

The ground floor elements of the side and rear extensions are deemed to avoid any concerns about detrimental impact on neighbour's privacy, sunlight or overbearingness by virtue of its single-storey height.

The proposed development would not obstruct the 45-degree line of views for residents of 101 Lower Elmstone Road because the only window overlooking the proposed development is a first-floor window in the side/south elevation, which the site visit revealed features obscure-glazing. The same is true of 32a Chapel Hill at the ground floor side/west elevation. However, windows in the first-floor dormers would see the ridgeline of the roof raise 0.5 metre resulting in an a minor intensification of already partially obscured views without resulting in fully obscuring the views from these windows. It is noted this is an incremental reduction in the quality of outlook offered by these bedroom windows; it is also noted that these windows are principally oriented to overlook the development site.

Due to a portion of 32a Chapel Hill's roof restricting the angle of views from the side/south dormer windows, no views into or out of the skylights in the ground floor rear extension would result. However, this is not the case with the proposed windows to the rear/east elevation of the proposed first floor. It was considered that some mutual loss of privacy result at 32a and 34 Chapel Hill due to siting and proximity. Amendments addressing this detrimental impact on residential amenity was sought and provided on the 14th of February 2020. This resulted in the re-siting of bathrooms within the proposed floorplan and changes to the fenestration plan at the first floor. Bathroom windows are proposed to utilise obscure glazing and the only bedroom windows remaining on this elevation (bedroom 4) have been designed specifically to maintain outlook while minimising the potential for loss of privacy. This window would not overlook the garden of 32a Chapel Hill or 101 Elmstone Drive, and as such, would not introduce any new views into these properties or their gardens - in part due to extensive screening offered by the garden of 32a Chapel Hill.

The proposed development would not introduce any new views into neighbouring gardens or windows, obstruct sunlight or introduce development which would be overbearing for neighbours. The proposed development would leave over half the plot undeveloped. Subsequent to the above analysis, the proposed development, based on the site's individual characteristics, is deemed to avoid any detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of the dwelling or neighbouring sites; with the exception of a minor reduction in bedroom window outlook quality at the dormers of 32a Chapel Hill. In all other respects the proposed development is deemed to accord with the considerations of policies CC8 and H9 regarding residential amenity. It is considered that construction works can frequently result in a temporary detrimental impact on residential amenity. A condition limiting the timing of construction works is considered to aid in ameliorating some of the worst effects of construction works on neighbouring sites.

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, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible through new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and other ecological enhancements. 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.

The site does not benefit from any protected trees or identified Green Links. The proposal is not considered likely to result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. And the site plan includes

minor contributions to biodiversity. As such the proposal is considered to accord with the biodiversity and sustainability considerations of Policies H9 and EN12 of the local plan.

8. CONCLUSION

In light of the above assessment the proposal is considered, on balance, to accord with the requirements of the development plan. It is considered that the minor reduction in bedroom outlook quality of 32a Chapel Hill is sufficiently offset by the benefit offered in converting the site into a modern dwelling capable of housing a larger family. Furthermore, it is noted the windows in question rely on overlooking the proposed site for their outlook, and that a reasonable expectation that their neighbours will change their property to meet their own needs within reason should exist. 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. M3 Materials as specified
4. PD3 Obscure Glazing
5. C1 Hours of Construction/Demolition

APPENDIX
Site Photos

Photographs taken in the course of a site visit conducted on the 6th of February 2020.















Site photo taken as of the 14th of February 2020.

