

Our ref: OH/SM/50364

29 May 2020

Reading Borough Council
Planning
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU



Dear Sir or Madam,

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A SINGLE DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND AMENITY SPACE AT 19 OGMORE CLOSE, TILEHURST, READING, RG30 4SX

Please find attached information submitted via the planning portal (ref. PP-08733270) to support a full planning application for the erection of a single dwelling at 19 Ogmore Close, Tilehurst.

This application is a revised submission following the refusal of application 191120.

The following documents together with the contents of this letter comprise the planning submission:

- Completed planning application form and certificate
- Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement, prepared by Ecourban Ltd (dated 28th May 2020, Ref. No. 18112-AIA 2)
- Existing Site Survey (Ref. No. DTS051218-8Y7)
- Ecology and Arboricultural Statement in support of Revised Application prepared by RPS (dated 21 April 2020, Ref. No. JSL3524/ 170)
- Drawings prepared by Pro Vision:
 - Site Location Plan (Dwg No. PO-01 Rev A)
 - Proposed Site Plan / Block Plan (Dwg No. P1-01 Rev D)
 - Proposed Access Plan (Dwg No. P1-02 Rev C)
 - Proposed Floor and Roof Plans (Dwg No. P2-01 Rev C)
 - Proposed Elevations (Dwg No. P3-01 Rev C)
 - Proposed Contextual Elevations (Dwg No. P3-03 Rev B)

The application is a first revision of an application for development of the same character and within 12 months of a date of decision of the earlier application. Therefore, the fee is exempt.

The requisite CIL PAAIR form is also submitted.

Planning Statement

The Site and Surroundings

19 Ogmore Close ("the site") is located in a post-war residential estate in Tilehurst, near Reading. It is situated on a corner plot, between nos. 17 & 21 Ogmore Close. To the rear of the

site is Blundells Copse, a Wildlife Heritage Site and Local Nature Reserve. There are no other significant environmental or historical designations that are known to apply to the site.

The site comprises a 2-storey end of terrace dwelling, with associated amenity and access. The site extends to approximately 0.05 hectares and comprises garden land within the ownership of 19 Ogmores Close.

The unbuilt areas are mostly laid to lawn. There are several Category B and C trees within the site. There is a pair of semi-detached bungalows to the north of the site. Other surrounding properties are all 2-storey terraces and flats. To the west of the site, pairs of dwellings addressing the road are set back to create a staggered frontage. To the south-east properties are arranged in a linear pattern addressing the road.

Relevant Planning History

In December 2019 application 191120 for the erection of two dwellings with associated parking and amenity space, on the applicant site was refused. The decision notice contained 5 reasons for refusal which are addressed in the assessment.

On 8th April 2019, pre-application advice for residential development comprising 3 flats was provided. This confirmed the principle of residential development would be acceptable but would need to satisfy a number of policy requirements. The proposed parking was considered acceptable and there were no concerns regarding overlooking. On the other hand, concerns were raised regarding the style of proposal being out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area which is of relatively simple terraces and the need for bin storage facilities to be sited closer to the highway.

On 31st May 2000, planning consent was granted at 19 Ogmores Close for the erection of 1 dwelling (ref. 00/00307/FUL). This consent was never implemented and has now expired.

The Proposal

The proposal comprises the development of the corner plot of 19 Ogmores Close into one 2-storey dwelling.

The dwelling is a 3-bedroom house with a GIA of 93 square metres. The dwelling has its own private garden and separate bin storage area to the rear of the building (north west elevation). There is also a bin collection point to the front of the dwelling.

The proposed materials have been selected in order to match the surrounding properties. This includes the use of buff brick and plain tile hanging above for the walls, tiled roofs, and the use of timber fencing for the boundary treatment.

Parking provision includes 2 parking spaces, in accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards. Appropriate access is provided, utilising the existing vehicular access to no. 19 but modifying it to accommodate the proposal. The existing access will become a wider, shared driveway, with the existing parking at no. 19 proposed to be altered. This comprises moving the parking area to the west to make way for the proposed shared driveway access.

Planning Policy

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In November 2019 Reading Borough Council produced their Development Plan with the key document being the:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 2019)

The New Local Plan replaced previous development plans (the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) which no longer apply.

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

The relevant policies are:

- Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- Policy EN8: Undesignated Open Space
- Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- Policy EN13: Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- Policy H1: Provision of Housing
- Policy H2: Density and Mix
- Policy H3: Affordable Housing
- Policy H5: Standards for New Housing
- Policy H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens

Policy CC1 supports the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.

Policy CC7 reflects on how development must be of high-quality design, maintaining and enhancing the character and appearance of Reading.

EN8 states that there is a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space. Development should not jeopardise use and enjoyment of such space.

EN12 states how the identified Green Network, the key elements of which are shown on the Proposals Map, shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced.

EN13 states that planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature.

EN14 refers to individual trees, groups of tree, hedges and woodlands being protected from damage.

H1 outlines that provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.

H2 supports appropriate density of residential development.

H3 relates to affordable housing, that on sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution of 10% will be made.

H5 states that new build housing should be built to the standards as set out within the policy.

H11 reflects how residential proposals, including within a private residential garden will be acceptable where they make a positive contribution, of adequate size, is of appropriate design and layout, does not cause significant impact on neighbouring amenity.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019)

As well as emerging Development Plans, there are other material considerations. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that all material considerations are taken into account. Material considerations in this instance relate primarily to the NPPF.

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The sections of most relevance to this proposal are summarised below.

Paragraph 7 explains the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These comprise economic, social and environmental objectives.

Paragraph 11 highlights the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved "without delay".

Paragraph 59 confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.

Paragraph 63 outlines that affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major.

Paragraph 68 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly.

Paragraph 118 explains that planning decisions should support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.

Paragraph 124 states "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".

Paragraph 127 states planning decisions should ensure that developments optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks.

Planning Assessment

The proposal is a revised submission following the refusal of application 191120. Therefore, the assessment of this planning application will address the reasons for refusal concerning the previous application, as set out below. Note, the revised proposal is now comparable to the application which was granted permission (but not implemented) in 2000, which proposed the erection of one dwelling attached to 19 Ogmores Close.

1. Excessive area of hardstanding which is considered to have detrimental impact upon the street scene
2. Site layout is incongruous and a harmful addition to the street
3. The proposed development will result in overlooking
4. Unacceptable adverse impact on the “priority habitat”, Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve.
5. The absence of a legal agreement to secure acceptable affordable housing.

We will now address each reason in turn.

First Reason for Refusal

The revised scheme brings the bike store and bins further down the site which allows more space for a lawned garden and tree planting now proposed. This also results in less space afforded to hard standing and maintains the buffer between the residential units and Blundells Copse.

Second Reason for Refusal

Due to the location of the proposed dwelling being tucked into the corner of Ogmores Close, it will not have any significant street impact. Other houses around the area do not have a consistent terrace stagger and the proposed dwelling resembles the staggering of other properties nearby and is not therefore considered “incongruous”. The proposed dwelling is also deliberately set back to reduce overlooking to the property to the south and to allow good space for vehicle access and turning.

Third Reason for Refusal

To address overlooking concerns with regard to number 21, the proposed development has been reduced to 1 unit. This proposed unit is retained to the west side of the site, and the window serving bedroom 2 has been repositioned from the front to the side elevation, now looking out over Blundells Copse. The addition of a rooflight to the front further serves bedroom 2. The position of the proposed dwelling continues the staggered pattern established in the adjacent terrace to the south-west, and poses no overlooking concern as the singular window on this elevation would feature obscured glazing as it serves a bathroom.

Fourth Reason for Refusal

RPS have prepared a detailed report which explains how the proposed scheme does not justifiably warrant a reason for refusal on the grounds of ecology and arboriculture. With regards to ecology, RPS outline the existing garden to No. 19 Ogmores Close within which the proposed building would be sited is not semi-natural habitat and would therefore not impact or remove semi-natural habitats. Overshadowing is highly unlikely as the existing trees along the buffer are taller than the proposed dwelling and the introduction of non-native species is also unlikely. With regards to arboriculture, it is concluded that the trees are unlikely to cause nuisance to the occupiers of No. 19 Ogmores Close. Lastly, the roof is now proposed to be made of sedum which contributes positively to biodiversity and a bat loft.

Fifth Reason for Refusal

In accordance with NPPF para. 63 affordable housing contributions are not appropriate in this case, noting that the proposal is for minor scale development.

Summary and Conclusions

The proposed development is acceptable in principle, being located within the existing built up area and provides a dwelling in a sustainable location.

It represents a deliverable site which would make a modest but helpful contribution to high-quality new housing within the Borough in accordance with the NPPF objective to boost housing supply.

The erection of a residential dwelling in this location will result in a more effective use of land within an urban area, whilst at the same time ensuring no adverse impacts on the adjacent Wildlife Heritage Site and Local Nature Reserve of Blundells Copse.

The proposed scheme is a well-designed form of development which has been carefully considered to ensure it is in-keeping with the local character and its surroundings and fully respects the amenities of existing dwellings. This is a revised scheme that has specifically addressed the reasons for refusal of the previous proposal for two dwellings, refused in December last year.

In accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF and policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document, this proposal should therefore be approved without delay.

We trust that the information provided is sufficient to validate the application and look forward to receiving confirmation of this shortly.

Should you have any queries, please do contact me.

Yours faithfully

SCOT MASKER RIBA
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