

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames
App Ref: 191375
Address: Shipnells Farm, Gravel Hill, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8QL
Proposal: Single storey rear extension to the dwelling. Single storey side extension to the garage.
Case Officer: Mr James Schofield
Applicant: Mr R. Peacock
Date received (valid from): 21 August 2019
Target Decision date: 30 October 2019 (agreed extension from 16 October 2019)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is occupied by a dwellinghouse and detached garage. The former would have originally been formed out of two semi-detached agricultural cottages associated with Shipnell's Farm. The dwellinghouse is located immediately southwest of where a public bridle path running north-south crosses Gravel Hill - a single-track road running east-west. The dwellinghouse and garage front onto the bridle path with their north-facing flank elevations facing toward Gravel Hill. Gravel Hill is no longer open to car traffic west of this intersection and is currently used as a footpath offering views of the site and wider area. The site is triangular and has a spacious rear garden which tapers to a point at the rear. The 'Cottage' has already been added to repeatedly in the form of three subsequent two-storey rear extension and one single-storey rear extension. The original element of the cottage has retained much of its unique rustic character; including an attractive brick course proud of the main elevation and drip mouldings over the ground-floor windows. The dwelling is also set in an attractive semi-rural landscape. In this regard, Hemdean Bottom is a significant area of open land used for recreational purposes and a major landscape feature. The proposed site is not part of the Public and Strategic Open Space policy area, but is part of the Major Landscape Feature area identified in local plan policies CS37 and SA17

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is for a 4.5 meter single storey rear extension and single 0.7 meter single storey side extension to the garage.

Plans considered

Drawing No. 3644/100 Existing Site Location Plan

Drawing No. 3644/101 Existing Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No. 3644/102 Existing First Floor Plan

Drawing No. 3644/103 Existing Elevations

Drawing No. 3644/200 Proposed Site Location Plan

Drawing No. 3644/201 Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Drawing No. 3644/202 Proposed First Floor Plan

Drawing No. 3644/203 Proposed Elevations

As received 20 August 2019

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

00/00321/FUL:	Single and two-storey rear extension and detached double garage. Granted 20.03.2000
04/00900/FUL:	Two storey rear extension. Refused 20.03.2000 Dismissed 25.04.2005
05/00772/FUL:	Two storey rear extension. Permitted 13/10/2005
160363/CLP:	Certificate of lawfulness for proposed rear single storey extension in (matching) brick and oak. Permitted Development 30/5/2016

4. CONSULTATIONS

All adjoining neighbours were consulted by letter and a Site notice was displayed. No 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 Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CS37 (Major Landscape Features and Strategic Open Space)

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)
DM9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
SA17 (Major Landscape Features)

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of development

The application seeks permission to extend and alter an existing residential dwelling, to extend an existing garage and change the use of part of the detached garage to a home office.

When the detached double garage received planning permission, it was done so on the condition that the structure be used solely for the garaging of private motor vehicles and no further development would be carried out (LPA ref: 00/00321/FUL). The proposed alterations and changes of use to the garage would require planning permission to extinguish the extant condition prohibiting them. It is considered the proposed alterations and changes of use are not harmful to the major landscape feature, the character of the dwelling, nor the character of the area. And similarly the rear extension is not harmful to these considerations either. As such, these domestic works are supported in principle by Policy DM9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) of the SPDP (2012) subject to a number of criteria ensuring the effects of such extension and alterations are not harmful. This will be considered in more detail in the followings sections.

7.2 Scale, appearance and design

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy 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 DM9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it: respects the character of the house, respects the pattern of neighbouring properties, and does not present a large blank façade to public area. The SPD 'A design guide to house extensions' provides guidance on design considerations for two-storey side extensions, which outlines that an extension should be designed to respect the existing dwelling in terms of scale, and height and appear subservient to it. It also outlines the importance of maintaining the existing gaps between properties.

While the proposed extension to the rear of the dwelling is not in keeping with the character of the original cottage; it is considered that on balance it does not detract from it any further. A history of unsympathetic rear extensions to the charming rustic cottage serve to completely eliminate any historic architectural merit to the rear elevation ensuring it is experienced as a patchwork of modern additions with varying degrees of respect for the original dwelling. Some are so sympathetic so as to be minimally apparent; while others aspire for the rustic cottage to transform into a country manor. As such, it would be disingenuous to argue that a further addition to the patchwork at the rear would fail to be in keeping with this. It should be noted the front and side elevations still benefit from much of their original character. The proposed extension would be set down from the apex of the existing roof and match the main dwelling in terms of materials. In this regard, the siting and scale of the extension is acceptable and does not result in any material harm to the immediate character or appearance of the area, and thereby accords with the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) and Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).

7.3 Amenity

Policy DM4: 'Safeguarding Amenity' of the SPDP (2012) states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. The proposal includes a two-storey extension which extends into the rear garden of the host dwelling.

The two-storey extension is located a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties in order to prevent any material reduction in outlook or affect privacy in any way. The proposal would not result in any new views into adjoining gardens that would not already be possible from the first floor windows of the existing dwelling. In this regard the proposal safeguards residential amenity in accordance with Policy DM4 of the SPDP.

7.4 Major Landscape Feature

Views of the proposed extension to the rear elevation would be almost entirely obscured by the garage. Similarly the side extension and conversion of the garage do not reduce or harm views of the major landscape feature. It is considered the proposed works do not result in any adverse impact to the major landscape feature and as such they accord with Policies CS37 and SA17.

8. CONCLUSION

In light of the above assessment the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the development plan and is therefore recommended for approval subject conditions.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

10. CONDITIONS

1. Standard time limit
2. Standard approved plans
3. Materials to match