

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 190624/HOU

Address: 21 Coley Avenue

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Ahmed

Proposal: Two storey side extension following part-demolition of existing single storey side extension. Single storey rear extension. Dropped kerb along Coley Avenue with parking at the front of the house.

Target date: 18/06/19

EOT: 27/06/19

Case officer: Connie Davis

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site is a two storey semi-detached property located on the eastern side of Coley Avenue. The property is one of six properties of similar architectural style and are characterised by frontages of entirely soft landscaping. The property has a parking space at the rear of the site and leads directly in to the rear garden.

The property is not listed however is located within the Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation area and an air quality management area.

Proposal:

The proposal comprises of a two storey side/ rear extension and single storey rear extension. The two storey side extension would measure a width of 3.5m, maximum height of 7.3m and a depth of 7.5m. However only approximately 2.5m of the two storey side/ rear extension would project beyond the rear elevation of the adjacent neighbour no. 23 Coley Avenue. The extension would be set down from the ridge of the main house by 0.7m and set back from the front elevation by 1.4m.

The single storey element would have a depth of 4.2m, height of 2.8m and width of 6.8m. It would have two roof lanterns.

All materials are to match the existing property.

In addition, the front of the site is to be reconfigured with the introduction of hard landscaping to provide an area suitable for car parking. Changes to the access to the site are required to facilitate this. Some soft landscaping would be retained.

Plans Considered:

Drawing No.

2760 001 - P1 - Location Plan

2760 003 P2 - Existing Floor Plans

Received 17th April 2019.

2760 010 P3 - Proposed Block Plan

2760 011 P3 - Side Elevations

2760 007 P4 - Proposed Elevations

2760 008 P4 - 3D Views

2760 005 P5 - Proposed Site Plan

Received 12th June 2019.

2760 006 P4 - Proposed Plans
2760 004 P3 - Existing Elevations
2760 002 P3 - Existing Site Plan

Received 11th June 2019.

Relevant Planning History:

None.

Consultation Responses:

Internal Consultees

Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

No response received.

Heritage Consultant

The RBC heritage consultant reviewed the application and raised no objections. Although acknowledged that the alterations to the frontage of the property would be somewhat out of keeping with the remaining 5 properties to the north, other properties within the Avenue do have a driveways/ hard landscaping and therefore this addition is not considered a reason to warrant refusal of the application.

The consultant did encourage the applicants to provide as much soft landscaping as possible alongside the hardstanding materials. A revised plan was received illustrating a slightly greater increase in the amount of soft landscaping proposed and this is also secured by landscaping conditions attached to the permission.

Natural Environment Officer (Trees)

The natural environment officer raised no objections to the application subject to conditions relating to an arboricultural method statement being submitted and further details of the proposed landscaping. This will be secured by pre-commencement conditions.

It was also noted that 3 trees are proposed to be removed as a result of the development. The Natural Environment Officer raised no objections to these being removed but noted that the removal of trees within a conservation area (which are not TPOs) requires prior notification being sent to the council 6 weeks before the trees are to be removed.

Transport

The RBC transport officer reviewed the application and required revised plans to be received which illustrated the proposed visibility splays that will be needed to facilitate the new driveway.

Following a site visit, the officer confirmed that the proposed transport arrangements were acceptable and therefore no objections were received. The following conditions and informatives were suggested:

- DC1 Vehicle parking space provided in accordance with approved plans
- DC2 Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans

Informatives

IF3 Highways

- i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
- ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.

External Consultation

The following addresses were formally consulted via letter on 25/04/19:

9, 19, 23 Coley Avenue
28 (Flats 1-11), 22 (Flats 1-5), 24, 30, 30A Castle Crescent

In addition a site notice was displayed at the property until 28th May 2019. As the application site is in a conservation area, the application was also advertised in the local newspaper. The article was printed on 29/04/19.

Two letters of objection have been received by nos 19 and 23 Coley Avenue. The issues raised by each objector are summarised as follows:

No 19 Coley Avenue:

- The occupier of no. 19 has not been in consultation with the applicants regarding the proposal which is contrary to section 4.0 of the submitted Design & Access Statement

Officer comment: Immediate neighbours are contacted directly via letter from the LPA to inform them of the application. In addition, a site notice has been displayed at the site. It is at the applicant's discretion as to how well they inform their neighbour of the proposal prior to this.

- If the proposal were to be accepted, it would disrupt the uniformity of the row of 6 semidetached properties which have a similar style

Officer comment: See appraisal.

- The proposed extension is too large which means it will be greatly noticeable. The house is already big enough for a family of 5.

Officer comment: See appraisal. It should be noted though that homeowners have a right to extend their home so long as it is compliant with policy.

- Parking arrangements at the rear are safe enough and provide enough space for a family of five

Officer comment: Homeowners have a right to apply to increase their parking provision so long as it complies with policy. The RBC transport officer has also

assessed the application and raises no objections in terms of safety of the proposed new layout.

- The new extension has not got a ridge line significantly lower than the original house

Officer comment: See appraisal.

The Opportunities section 6.0 of the proposal is very poorly justified.

Officer comment: The proposal is assessed by officers rather than relying on the information provided in the Design & Access statement.

- First floor extension created a balcony which could result in overlooking directly in to neighbouring gardens.

Officer comment: See appraisal. The balcony was removed from the proposed plans in the interest of neighbouring properties.

- The proposal, if accepted, could lead to a precedent of similar developments. This could lead to the front garden of the remaining five properties being converted.

Officer comment: Each application is judged on its own merits and does not necessarily mean a precedent would be set.

The objector also noted that they objected to an application to also develop the rear and side extensions on number 17 into a block of two flats in the interests of preserving the character of the conservation area.

Officer comment: It is noted that this application at no. 17 was refused, however each application is assessed on its own merits. The reason for refusal was also not based on the impact it would have on the character of the conservation area, but for other relating to the suitability of flats in this location, car parking provision and the absence of a legal agreement to provide affordable housing.

The objector also wished to present his argument should the application be presented to the Planning Applications Committee.

Officer comment: This application is to be determined under delegated powers as it has not been called in by committee members for determination.

No. 23 Coley Avenue:

The letter of objection read as follows:

The two storey extension will block light to my property and the balcony will directly overlook my garden. He already has parking and garage at the rear. With the dropped kerb the front area at nearly 2000sq ft will give parking ROOM for 10 cars. There is a busy entrance to a 34 flat complex just opposite the new entrance. It is already difficult to cross the road without a new busy entrance. The new parking will generate noise and traffic on an already busy road. Older people can already have a long wait to cross. It is difficult for limited mobility people.

Officer comment: See appraisal for further discussion on the issues raised.

Discussions with applicant/ agent

The agent was contacted and asked to provide revised plans addressing the concerns raised by transport officers. In addition, several amendments to the proposal were made. These included the removal of the first floor rear balcony in the interest of protecting neighbouring amenity, the reduction in width of the extension so that the proposed side elevation is level on the ground and first floor and for more landscaping to be introduced to the proposed driveway area.

The agent was also advised that several pre-commencement conditions were required to be attached to permission relating to landscaping which were agreed via email on 21st June 2019.

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.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

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

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

RBC Local Development Framework

Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)

CS7 Design and the Public Realm
CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)

DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
DM9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation
DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
DM19 Air Quality

Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003)

Appraisal Checklist

DM9 states: An extension to a house will be acceptable where it:

A. Respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design;

To assess this, the following has been considered - would the proposal:

- detract from the appearance of the original building through the use of ill-matching materials and by not fitting in with the design, scale and proportions of the original building; **NO**, the proposed extension is set down from the ridge height of the main property by 0.7m and set back from the front elevation of the main property by 1.4m. Thus, the extension is considered adequately subservient when viewed from the street.
- reduce the amount of usable amenity space for the property to an unacceptable degree; **NO**
- require the loss of trees in the garden or put significant trees at risk; **NO**, as confirmed by the Natural Environment Officer. The proposed works to the trees in the front garden will require prior notification to the Council due to them being located within a conservation area, however it is not considered a detrimental loss should they be removed. Pre-commencement conditions relating to landscaping will be attached to the permission to ensure that an element of soft landscaping is retained within the front garden. This is considered to be appropriate given the site is within a conservation area.

B. Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line; Respects neighbour's amenities and does not present a large blank façade to public areas.

To assess this, the following has been considered - would the proposal:

- significantly reduce the amount of daylight and sunlight enjoyed by neighbouring properties; **NO**, a line of 45 degrees was taken from the closest first floor neighbouring window at no. 23. The proposal did not breach this line. In relation to no. 19, the two storey extension will be set significantly off the boundary and therefore is not considered to impact light levels to first floor windows. The single storey rear extension, which will lie adjacent to the shared boundary with no. 19 will measure a depth of 4.2m. The Council's SPG on house extensions states that extensions should not exceed 4m in depth, however this extra 0.2m is not considered to be of substantial harm to this neighbouring property, nor will it reduce the amenity space of the host property to an unacceptable degree.
- invade the privacy of neighbouring properties through overlooking from windows or balconies; **NO**, no side windows are proposed on the extension and the proposed first floor rear balcony was removed from the proposal in response to the comments received by concerned neighbours. In addition, a condition would be placed on the permission preventing the flat roof of the rear extension being used as a balcony without permission from the Local Planning Authority in the interest of neighbouring amenity. Should any first floor side windows be installed once the development has been built, these will have to be obscure

glazed under the conditions of Permitted Development otherwise planning permission is required to be obtained under which the impact on neighbouring amenity would be assessed. Therefore it is not considered that the proposal would result in overlooking in this regard.

- detract from the character of neighbouring properties through siting, excessive bulk, ill-matching materials or inconsistent design; **NO**, it is acknowledged that this proposal will somewhat disrupt the uniformity of the 6 semi-detached houses on Coley Avenue that share the same design. However the site is fortunate to be located next to properties which are of differing architectural style and have front driveways. It is therefore considered that this proposal is acceptable on this particular property for this reason. The proposal is able to somewhat blend in with the transition to this different style of property.
- detract from the appearance of the street or area by using ill-matched materials, glazing and detailing; **NO**, materials are to match the existing property.

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity 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.

To assess this, the following has been considered - would the proposal cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking; **NO**, see above comments.
- Access to sunlight and daylight; **NO**, see above comments.
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; **NO**, see above comments.
- Noise and disturbance; **NO**
- Artificial lighting; **NO**
- Vibration; **NO**
- Dust and fumes; **NO**
- Smell; **NO**
- Crime and safety; **NO**

Other matters

Conservation Area (Policy CS33)

On balance, it is not considered that the proposal would be so substantially harmful to the Russell Street/ Castle Hill conservation area to warrant refusal of the application. Although acknowledged the extension is of a substantial size, when viewed from the street, the extension is not considered overly dominant. As discussed above, the property is situated next to a row of properties that of different architectural style and which have driveways. Thus the proposal is not considered to be conflicting with Policy CS33 to an unacceptable degree.

Transport/ Parking

The proposal has demonstrated that the parking layout would be suitable from a highways safety perspective and therefore is compliant with Policy DM12.

Conclusion

The proposed development would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the site or its surroundings and would not have a detrimental impact on the original building or neighbouring properties. As such the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008), DM4: Safeguarding Amenity and DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (Oct 2012) and the Councils Supplementary Planning Guidance A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003).

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION

Conditions

1. TL1 - 3 year time limit.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

2760 001 - P1 - Location Plan

Received 17th April 2019.

2760 010 P3 - Proposed Block Plan

2760 011 P3 - Side Elevations

2760 007 P4 - Proposed Elevations

2760 005 P5 - Proposed Site Plan

Received 12th June 2019.

2760 006 P4 - Proposed Plans

Received 11th June 2019.

Reason: because permission is granted in respect of the development as detailed in the approved plans only.

3. Matching Materials

4. The roof area of the extension hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area without the grant of further specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises from overlooking and loss of privacy in accordance with Policy DM4.

5. [Pre-commencement]

No development shall take place until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice for all existing trees that are not shown as being removed on the approved drawings, both within and adjacent to the site, has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Reason: to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy CS38.

6. [Pre-commencement]

No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include:

- (a) hard surfacing materials; and
- (b) proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines etc. indicating lines, manholes etc); and
- (c) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/planting densities where appropriate.
- (d) Tree pit specifications.

Reason: in the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment and in accordance with Policy CS7

7. All planted materials shall be maintained for five years and any trees or plants removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced with others of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: in the interests of the character and appearance of the new development and in accordance with Policy CS7.

8. The dwelling(s)/building(s) hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking space(s) have been provided in accordance with the approved plan (2760-010-P3). The space(s) shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users to accord with Policy CS24 & CS24 and Policy DM12.

9. No dwelling/building hereby permitted shall be occupied until the vehicle access serving it has been constructed in accordance with the approved drawing (2760-010-P3).

Reason: In the interests of road safety in accordance with Policy CS20 and Policy DM12.

Informatives

1. Building Control
2. Construction & Demolition
3. Terms
4. Pre-commencement conditions
5. Encroachment
6. Positive and Proactive
7. Works to the highway

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