

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: 13 Highdown Hill Road

Application No: 180186

Proposal: Erect a two storey side and rear extension

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Robinson

Date received (valid from): 30/01/2018

Target Decision date: 27/03/2018

Case officer: Tom French

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application property is a two storey detached dwelling located on the eastern side of Highdown Hill Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature with mostly detached properties of varying design, albeit No.13 and No. 15 are almost identical in scale and design.

2. The Proposal

A householder application for planning permission is sought for a two storey rear and side extension. The proposed rear extension would be full width, would replace the existing conservatory and would be two storeys reducing to single storey to the north of the application property. The proposed rear extension would project 3.2m from the existing rear elevation of the of the garage, 2.7m from the existing rear elevation of the kitchen and 3.8m from the existing rear elevation of the lounge (in place of the existing conservatory).

It is proposed that the rear extension would follow the existing roof form, with the protruding rear gable and cat slide feature reducing the proposal from two storeys to one storey.

The side element of the proposal would have two storeys and project 2.2m from the existing south side elevation. The side extension would be set back 0.9m from the existing front elevation with a hipped roof 0.3m lower than the main ridge line of the house.

Following discussion with officers, the proposal has been amended and it is now proposed that the side element of the proposal would be set back from the existing front elevation by 0.9m at ground floor level and 3.7m at first floor level. The proposal would still project 2.2m from the existing south side elevation the proposed hipped roof would join the existing roof 1m below the ridge.

3. Consultation

Neighbours consultation:

Neighbour consultation letters went sent out on 07/02/2018. In response to these two objections were lodged on the basis of the following:

- The possible detrimental implication for a future planning application to extend no. 11 Highdown Hill Road.
- Reduction in light and overbearing with specific reference to the first floor bedroom and the family bathroom at no. 11
- The potential for future windows in the side window that could cause a loss of privacy for no. 11

- The finishing of the proposed extension to match the current finishing of no. 13 Highdown Hill Road - concerns relating to the materials being used and if they will maintain the character of the property
- Creation of shadow in the rear garden at no. 11
- The proposed extension would appear out of keeping with the appearance of other nearby properties
- Highdown Hill Road has insufficient parking provision for such a large house

Transport:

The RBC Transport Development Control Advisor provided a consultation on this application and advised that there are no transport objections to the proposal.

Ecology:

Following the submission of a bat survey the RBC ecology consultants provided the following comments: The bat activity survey report has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and, since no bats were recorded roosting in the building, it has been concluded that the works are unlikely to adversely affect roosting bats. As such, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the following plans & documents:

Drawing No.:

- A100 - Existing

As received: 30/01/2018

- 10590 02 - Rev. P B - Proposed Extension & Alterations

As received: 25/05/2018

5. Relevant Planning History

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/D/17/3180449 - Appeal outcome of application 170768 - Appeal Dismissed

170768 - HOU - Erect a two storey side and rear extension. Resubmission of 170289 - Application Refused

170289 - HOU - Erect two storey side and rear extension - Application Refused

040119 - FUL - Two storey rear and side extensions and new conservatory - Application Permitted

6. 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.

7. Relevant Planning 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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' 2008 (Altered 2015) and 'Sites and Detailed Policies Document' 2012 (Altered 2015).

The 'National Planning Policy framework' ('NPPF') 2012 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

8. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Practice Guidance

RBC Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)

CS7 Design and the Public Realm
CS36 Biodiversity and Geology

Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)

DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)
DM9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
DM10 (Amenity Space)
Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003)

9. Appraisal

Design, impact on the host dwelling, character of the area and street scene

One of the reasons for refusal for the previous application at this site, 170768, was:

'Due to the design, combined width and two storey nature of the proposed side extensions, it is considered that they would cause unacceptable harm to the character of the application property and the surrounding area.'

This was a view supported by the appeal inspector (see Relevant Planning History section above) who wrote:

'I find that the side extension elements of the proposal would not respond to the host dwelling, or each other, with regards to scale and massing. The proposal would consequently harm the character and appearance of the property. The result would be a property that did not enhance the character and appearance of the area.'

It is considered that this application, by proposing only one side element, has overcome the above issues associated with the impact on the character of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Considering the scale of the proposed extension, and the varied design and scale of the of the properties along Highdown Hill Road, this proposal would not be significantly out of character with the host dwelling or surrounding area. The proposal would be set 0.7m off the boundary with no. 11 Highdown Hill Road and would retain the existing 1m gap to the boundary with no. 15 Highdown Hill Road. As such the proposal would retain the appearance of spaciousness and would not appear unduly cramped.

It is proposed that the roof of both the side and rear extensions would be set down 1m from the existing main ridgeline. The proposed side extension would be set back from the existing front elevation by 0.9m at ground floor level and 3.7m at first floor level. As such the proposed development would appear subservient to the existing dwelling. Made with materials to match existing and with the rear extension keeping the characteristic cat slide roof form of the existing property; the proposal is considered to respect the character of the existing house in terms of scale, materials, location and design.

In order to ensure that the proposed development appears in keeping with the existing building and character of the surrounding area, a condition is recommended stating that the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall match those of the existing building.

The host dwelling would retain sufficient amenity space to the rear elevation, which is considered adequate for a dwelling of this size and relative to the character of amenity spaces to surrounding dwellings.

The proposal would accord with Policies, CS7, DM9 and DM10.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

The neighbouring properties potentially affected by the proposal are No. 11 and 15 Highdown Hill Road, located to the south and north respectively.

Regarding no. 15 Highdown Hill Road, the proposal would project 3.2m from the existing garage and the cat slide feature of the roof this side would continue rearwards. The proposed extension would project past the rear elevation of no. 15. However, the distance of 1m to the boundary would be retained, and no. 15 is set off the boundary by a similar distance. Whilst visible, the proposal would not breach a 45 degree line to the nearest habitable room windows at ground or first floor level. As such the proposal is not considered to result in a material loss of light or overbearing impact to no. 15.

A single, small roof light is proposed at first floor level in the north side elevation. Whilst small, the floor level indicates that there may be a chance of loss of privacy and also the rearwards bathroom window is large, although rear-facing in the middle of the property. As a precaution, the wc/bathroom windows should be obscure glazed and a condition is proposed to protect privacy/ overlooking.

The proposed extension would project past the rear elevation of no. 11 by 1m. The part of no. 11 closest to the boundary with the application property is single storey to the rear, with a cat-slide roof up to the main house. There are two side facing first floor windows at no.11, one serving a bedroom and one a bathroom. These windows will have approximately a 5m separation distance from the proposed side extension and the

extension would be located to the north of the windows. Further, a vertical sky component test demonstrates that there would be not be an unacceptable loss of light to the first floor side-facing windows at no. 11.

It is proposed that the side extension would be set back from the existing front elevation by 3.7m at first floor level. Combining this with the 0.7m gap to the boundary with no. 11, that no. 11 is set off the boundary by a similar distance and the separation distance between the proposal and the side facing windows at no. 11; the proposal is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact upon the amenity of no. 11 in terms of overbearing impact or a visually dominant appearance.

No windows are proposed in the south side elevation and as such there are no detrimental effects of the proposal, in relation to no. 11, in terms of privacy or overlooking. To protect the future amenity of no. 11 a condition is recommended stating that no windows, other than those shown on the approved plans shall at any time be placed in the south side elevation of the building/extension hereby permitted without the grant of a separate planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Whilst the proposal may result in a minor increase in shadowing to rear gardens this is not thought to be of an extent that it would cause significant harm to the amenity of either property and therefore is not considered grounds for refusal. Adequate garden space for the subject property would be retained, in accordance with Policy DM10.

The proposal would accord with policies DM4 and DM9.

Other Issues

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The proposal would not be liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Public consultation responses

The majority of the issues raised in the objections from nearby occupiers have been addressed above. It is also noted that some elements have been addressed through the submission of revisions to the original proposals. In relation to other matters, it is noted that every planning application, including any potential future applications, must be assessed on its own merits against all relevant planning policies. As per the transport consultation response (below), the proposal would not change or impact the existing parking arrangements which are in line with the council current standards and therefore considered acceptable.

Ecology consultation response

The RBC ecology consultant advised that the Preliminary Roost Assessment bat survey (Arbtech 2017) that was submitted alongside the application identified the application building as having 'moderate' potential to host roosting bats. As such further surveys were required to demonstrate that the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon a protected species. The Emergence and Activity Surveys (Arbtech 2017) were submitted 02/03/2018 and the RBC ecology consultants have advised that they are sufficient to eliminate any ecological objects to this proposal.

Transport consultation response

RBC Transport Development Control has advised that as the proposed side and rear extensions do not change or impact the existing parking arrangements and that no alterations to the dropped kerb are proposed, there are no transport objections to this

application subject to informatives relating to works affecting highways and the treatment of grass verges.

10. Recommendation

Grant planning permission