

Mr H Wieringa
Hives Architects LLP
John Adams House
29 Castle Street
Reading
RG1 7SB

Your contact is: Claire Ringwood, Planning

Without prejudice

Dear Mr Wieringa

Re: 151831/PREAPP - Pre-application advice for a two storey rear extension and loft conversion with hip to gable roof extension at 121 Highgrove Street, Reading.

Further to your pre-application request received on 12th October 2015 here is my advice in relation to your proposal. Apologies for the delay responding.

The following information was submitted:

Drawing No: 01 Rev A - Existing Plans

Drawing No: 02 Rev B - Proposed Plans

Pre Application Statement

121 Highgrove Street is a two storey semi-detached property with a hipped roof. The adjoining property at 123 Highgrove Street has a single storey rear extension measuring approximately 3m in depth. The neighbouring property at 119 Highgrove Street is a similar style property but is at a lower level than 121 Highgrove Street. The surrounding area is predominantly residential of mixed styles and designs.

Property History:

There is no recent planning history.

Consultation Responses:

Transport raised no objection.

Ecology raised no objection.

Environmental Health raised no objection but advised that given the long history of noise complaints from the residents regarding the various uses at 125 Highgrove Street it is recommended that care is taken to ensure glazing has a sufficient sound reduction index to reduce external noise especially as the proposal will bring occupants closer to the alleged

noise source(s). There should be no burning of waste on the site and information on construction and demolition nuisance law can be found at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/article/2563/Construction--Demolition>

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance:

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS36: Biodiversity and Geology

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (Oct 2012)

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

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

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of development
- b) Design and impact on the character of the area
- c) Impact on neighbours
- d) Submitting a planning application

a) Principle of development

In principle there are no objections to a rear extension however, there are concerns with the size and appearance of the proposal and the impact on the neighbouring properties which are detailed below. The proposed materials would match those on the existing property and this is acceptable.

b) Design and impact on the character of the building and area

The proposed extensions involve a single storey rear extension, a two storey rear extension and a side and rear hip to gable roof extension that extends above the proposed two storey extension.

The proposed single storey rear extension measures 4m in depth and extends the full width of the property with a flat roof. There are differing levels on the site and a raised patio area is proposed to the rear and side with steps down to the garden. This creates an extension that is 3.2m in height from ground level. The depth of 4m is in line with the Council's guidance and the proposed height is not considered excessive and in this regard there are no objections to a single storey rear extension. There are concerns with regards to the patio extending to the side and the impact on the neighbouring property at 119 Highgrove Street which is addressed below.

The proposed two storey rear extension measures 2.5m in depth and would extend above the proposed single storey rear extension. The proposed two storey extension would extend the full width of the property. The proposal also involves a hip to gable roof extension to the side of the property and also to the rear of the property. Introducing a gable end to the rear of the property involves raising the eaves height of the existing property from 5m to 6m at the rear and the height of the proposal would be the same height as the existing property.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions states that two storey extensions should be designed to be smaller in scale than the main house and this is achieved by setting down the roof. Policy DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) also states that an extension to a house should respect the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and respect 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.

As the proposal increases the eaves height and extends to the rear of the property at main roof ridge level it is not considered a subservient addition to the property and creates excessive bulk at roof level. The lack of subservience creates a proposal that is considered out of character with the existing property and unbalances the pair of semi-detached properties. The window design, although modern, would be out of keeping with the existing property and the neighbouring properties and the windows in the rear gable end create the impression of a large three storey property rather than a modest two storey semi-detached property.

Taking all of the above into consideration, the proposal does not reflect the scale and proportions of the original property due to its design and size and is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm), Policy DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions.

c) Impact on neighbouring properties

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions states that rear extensions should be located as far away from side boundaries as possible. A basic way to protect light reaching main rooms in adjacent houses and to safeguard their outlook is to avoid extensions that would infringe on an area measured at an angle of 45 degrees from the midpoint of the closest window in a habitable room in a neighbouring property. This is of particular importance for two storey extensions.

The proposed rear extension extends directly up to the boundary with the neighbouring property at 123 Highgrove Street and also increases in height. 123 Highgrove Street has a bedroom window adjacent to the boundary and a line taken at 45 degrees from the proposed first floor plan shows that the proposal would impact on this window. The proposal is therefore considered overbearing and visually dominant on the residents of this neighbouring property and contrary to Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity in the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions.

The neighbouring property at 119 Highgrove Street is at a lower level than 121 Highgrove Street and there is approximately 1m between the side of each property and the boundary. This means the proposal as submitted would be visually dominant and overbearing on the residents of this property due to its height, roof design and lack of subservience. Three full height double windows are also proposed along the side elevation facing 119 Highgrove Street. Due to the difference in levels these windows would impact on the residents of this neighbouring property in terms of loss of privacy and overlooking and any side windows along this side elevation would not be considered acceptable. The proposed patio also extends to

the side of the property which brings it closer to the boundary with this neighbouring property. Due to the difference in levels the patio should only extend directly to the rear of the property to protect the privacy of the residents of the neighbouring property at 119 Highgrove Street.

d) Submitting a planning application

The Council's Planning Application Validation Information Requirements document should be read prior to submitting an application. This document can be found on the Reading Borough Council website www.reading.gov.uk or via this link:

http://beta.reading.gov.uk/media/2660/Validation-Checklist-Updated-Jul-2015/pdf/Validation_Checklist_Final_-_JULY_15.pdf

The following is required should an application be submitted:

- Correct fee of £172.
- Completed application form and certificates.
- Location Plan with the application site outline in red, to a scale of 1:1250 showing at least two road names.
- Block Plan showing the proposed development and the 45 degree line from habitable windows at the neighbouring property to a scale of 1:500 or 1:200.
- Full (not part) existing elevations and floor plans (1:50 or 1:100).
- Full (not part) proposed elevations and floor plans (1:50 or 1:100).
- Section drawings to show the difference in levels with the neighbouring properties.
- Planning Statement (for more details refer to page 7 of the Validation document above).

To conclude, the proposal as submitted is not considered acceptable for the reasons set out above. There is scope for an extension to the property however, amendments are required in order for the proposal to accord with planning policy and guidance in terms of design and appearance and impact on neighbouring properties.

I would recommend you contact the Building Control Department in order to obtain their comments in respect of your proposal on 0118 937 2449.

This advice is given on a without-prejudice basis and in good faith and will not over-ride the formal consideration of a planning application by the Council. If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact me on the number given above.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Ringwood
Planning Section

SDV