

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: 240567/HOU

Address: 8 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH

Proposals: Proposed single and double storey extension

Case Officer: Mr Gary Miles

Applicant: Mr Phil Lyon

Date received (valid from): 1 May 2024 **Target Decision date:** 26 June 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a gable fronted two storey semi-detached dwellinghouse constructed of red brick and tiled pitched roof, situated in a prominent location within Avebury Square. The property maintains a number of original features such as stained glass windows, original front door and chimney stacks along with original striking gable frontage at first floor level, above a bay fronted lounge. The property is attached to no.7 Avebury Square and linked detached with no.9 Avebury Square - adjoined by the existing downstairs bathroom and garage.

The property has a larger than average north facing rear garden which slopes downwards and away from the property. The property benefits from an existing patio area serving the applicant property adjacent to the existing conservatory, this patio area is mirrored on the other side of the boundary wall with no.9 Avebury Square albeit slightly higher, the patio lies elevated from the rest of the garden with steps down to the lawn and paths due to the natural sloping topography.

Avebury Square is characterised by semi-detached and detached properties of similar age and style. A number of properties have been subject to refurbishment and/or extensions. The property is not listed nor situated within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 21st February 2024

Site visit photos:



Front: gable fronted elevation. Rear elevation & sloping Topo. Rear elevation-adjoining no.7 View from exist patio into no.9

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal includes demolishing existing conservatory and replacing with a single storey rear extension with hipped and tiled roof across the rear with a depth of 3.5m to create a kitchen, dining/living area with separate shower room, Bi-Fold doors to the rear elevation and 2 large skylights above. Two storey side extension with hipped roof, reconstruct garage with first floor extension above garage pulled out to in-line with the existing front elevation above the front door. The first floor extension will be set off the boundary with no.9 Avebury Square. Various new window and door openings, obscure glazed bathroom windows. Small area of paving leading out from the rear ground floor extension with steps down in to the existing garden space. Internal alterations.

Plans & documents considered:

Application Form-dated Apr 2024

Drawing no: D2929-01 Rev A-Existing Floor Plans, Elevations & Location Plan-dated Apr 2024

Drawing no: D2929-02 Rev A-Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan-dated Apr 2024-superseded

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Tree Experts)-dated Feb 2024

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st May 2024

Drawing no: D2929-02 Rev B-Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan-dated Apr 2024-superseded

Drawing no: D2929-02 Rev C-Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan-dated Apr 2024
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 25th June 2024

Proposed Elevations



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

240091 - Proposed single and double storey extension - Refused - March 2024

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

9 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH
30 Malvern Court, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5PL
28 Malvern Court, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5PL
29 Malvern Court, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5PL
26 Malvern Court, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5PL
31 Malvern Court, Reading, RG1 5PL
7 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH
27 Malvern Court, Reading, RG1 5PL

1 letter of representation has been received from no.9 Avebury Square:

Following a review of the plans submitted by Mr Phil Lyon under planning application 240567 for 8 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH, we (my wife and I) wish to register an objection and provide comments, as below:

1) Overshadowing and loss of daylight/sunlight

a) The decision report for the previous planning application (ref 240091) determined that the scale of the proposed double storey side extension would cause a loss of daylight and sunlight to our property. We welcome the adjustments made in this new planning application to reduce the scale and mass of the double storey side extension, however we do still anticipate there will be overshadowing/loss of sunlight from the South onto our patio, particularly in the winter when the sun is lower. One potential mitigation could be for the roof extension ridge line to be set down from the existing roof ridge line.

b) We anticipate that the single storey rear extension would cause some loss of Westerly aspect view and sunlight onto our patio and into the West-facing window of our rear extension family room, particularly in the evenings when the sun starts to set and we enjoy the sunlight.

2) Overlooking

With regards to the proposed raised patio area at the rear, we still have a concern around the potential for overlooking onto our patio and into our kitchen/diner area and West-facing rear extension family room window by turning to face our property. This is owing to the patio area extending beyond the existing boundary brick wall which provides screening between the properties. The previous application decision report (ref 240091) also noted this potential for harm to privacy of adjacent neighbours, however these new plans do not appear to include any changes to mitigate this. As before, we would request the plans be revised to include appropriate measures to address the potential for overlooking, for example by extending the length, and height if necessary, of the boundary wall and/or fencing and anticipate this would be relatively simple to agree and achieve.

3) Layout and density, impact on appearance and character of area

We welcome the revision of the 1st floor element of the proposed double storey side extension to be set back in-line with the existing front elevation to reduce scale and mass. We do still have a concern that this extension being built up to the side boundary over the proposed garage could reduce the existing spaciousness around and between our houses which is potentially harmful to the established appearance and character of the street, especially given the unique look of our adjoining garages at the end of the cul-de-sac. One potential mitigation we would

like to suggest again would be for the roof extension ridge line to be set down from the existing roof. This would help to keep the proposed extension in proportion with, and subservient to, the original house, and generally with the neighbouring properties as per the guidance set out in the RBC design guide section 7.2. Dwellings no. 4, 12 and 14 Avebury Square have employed this roof set-down measure. As mentioned above, this could also help to reduce overshadowing on our property caused by the extended roof ridge line.

4) Additional point to note

Although the new plans state 'rear extension not to be considered an issue as per previous planning application decision notice', we note that the previous decision notice and associated report (ref 240091) did find issues and determined that the rear extension did not comply with relevant planning policy. Issues included a reduction in existing spaciousness within the plot and adjacent dwellings, and harm to residential amenity for the neighbours to either side with the gable-ended roof considered overbearing and detrimental in terms of scale and appearance. It appears no changes have been made to the proposed rear extension since the previous application. As recommended in the previous application decision report, a hipped style roof would help reduce the impact of the scale of the rear extension.

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.

5. 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 Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)
EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and 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. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The previous application 240091 was refused, as the agent failed to consider reducing the bulkiness and the massing of the original proposal and it was considered the scale of the proposed double storey side extension would be harmful to the streetscene of Avebury Square and neighbour at no.9 Avebury Square.

Following discussions with the agent, revised plans were received under a new application showing the maximum forward projection at first floor level to be in-line with the existing front elevation above the original front door. This amendment respects the character, the form, and the original projecting front gable feature with recessive main roof. The amendment also mitigates the terracing effect of the double storey side extension against no.9 Avebury Square.

The ridge of the new roof structure above the 2 storey element has been stepped down, this furthermore protects the form of the existing structure and makes the 2 storey side extension appear more subservient than the original proposal under application 240091.

Officers consider the proposal will fit it sympathetically with the neighbouring properties and the wider streetscene within the cul-de-sac. The proposal protects the form of the existing structure and respects the projecting front gable feature with recessive main roof. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of design and character and therefore complies with policies H9 and CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 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 previous application 240091 that was refused, considered the scale of the proposed double storey side extension would be harmful to daylight and sunlight to the neighbours at no.9 Avebury Square. Following discussions with the agent, revised plans were received for this application showing the maximum forward projection at first floor level is to be in-line with the existing front elevation above the original front door. This amendment helps to reduce the overshadowing and the feel of reduced privacy and overlooking to no.9 Avebury Square. The ridge of the new roof structure above the 2 storey element has been stepped down, this helps the extension to appear less overbearing and reduces the harm to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring properties.

The proposed single storey rear extension had a lean-to style part tiled part flat roof. As per the previous planning application 240091, officers felt the gable sides were harmful to the residential amenity of both neighbouring properties. The agent submitted revised plans changing the proposed roof to hipped style. Officers believe this amendment will further reduce the overbearing effect and improve light levels for both neighbours at no.7 and no.9 Avebury Square.

The ridge of the new roof structure above the 2 storey element has been stepped down, this will reduce the overbearing impacts and be less harmful to light levels to the neighbours at no.9 Avebury Square.

Under the previous application 240091, it was felt the patio area and steps down to the rear garden could be harmful to the neighbours, the revised plans proposed the steps down in to the rear garden to be moved away from both the boundaries mitigating against additional harm. Whilst neighbours at no.9 have concerns around the patio area, officers do not consider this not to be an issue as the harm to privacy is already present with the existing rear patio. It should also be noted that the neighbouring property and patio at no.9 is set higher than the house and patio of no.8 Avebury Square.

If the applicant wishes to raise the wall then this is something which can be explored at a later date, but it does not form part of this application.

The proposal is considered compliant with residential amenity and therefore complies with policies H9 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Transport

The proposal will retain the single garage along with additional off-street parking. The Transport officer has no objections and therefore the proposal is compliant with policies H9 & TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Ecology

The Ecology officer was consulted and requested a Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment as the property is surrounded by habitat of high suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats (large connected gardens with trees in all directions). As such, there is a risk that the proposals may affect roosting bats and a bat survey report will need to be provided before this application can be determined.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Tree Experts) - dated 27th Feb 24 was received and reviewed by the planning officer but not the Ecological officer due to time constraints however, the report confirms there are no visible features externally on the building which could be utilised by roosting bats or in which bats could access the building to roost. The report confirms no further survey effort is required.

Based on the above, officers confirm the proposal is compliant with policy H9 and EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Natural Environment

There are no trees within 15m of the proposal, furthermore no trees are to be pruned or removed as part of the proposal. The Tree officer has no objections and therefore the proposal is compliant with policy H9 & E14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

TL1

AP1

M1

PD2

PD3

PD5