

DR MICHAEL PARKER

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Marcie Rejwerska
Planning Department
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

18/03/2024

Dear Ms Rejwerska,

Re: Planning Application Number :240054

I am writing to you to indicate my **Objection** to the Planning Application 240054. I will indicate my objections using the applicants Planning, Design and Access Statement as a framework. I live at 169 Kidmore Road on the Eastern boundary of the development.

1 p3 **Introduction**

I will dispute the sentiments expressed in the final paragraph in more detail later on.

2 p4 **Planning Policies**

The document claims the application meets the objectives of the relevant local and national planning policies.

Section H11 Development of Private Residential Gardens in the Reading Local Planning Policy framework (introduced in November 2019 and reviewed in March 2023) states that development within the curtilage of a private residential will be acceptable where:

4) The proposal **does not lead to a tandem development.**

This development is a tandem development in that the new dwelling is built behind the original building and does not have any frontage directly on to Conisboro Avenue and is accessed by a new private roadway.

6) The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants. This will form the basis of my objection detailed later.

Section CC8 Safeguarding Amenity. It is recommended that this section should be considered with all applications and that developments would not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties in terms of:

Privacy and overlooking

Access to sunlight and daylight

Visual dominance and Overbearing

Harm to outlook.

The policy states the distance between dwellings should be **20 metres**. The submitted plan indicates that on the east boundary there is a distance of **13.5 metres** between the proposed building and 169 Kidmore Road. This contravenes by a significant margin the safeguarding recommendations of RBC's LPPF.

The NPPF published in December tries to speed up planning applications, but it still indicates that reference should be made to LPPFs such as RBC's robust policies.

3 p5 Site Context

The proposal lists the surrounding properties affected by the development. Those in Morecambe Avenue are said to have long rear gardens but this is an exaggeration where the maximum length is 23 metres to the boundary and the shortest 12metres and an average of 18metres. The boundary to the back of 169 Kidmore Road is only 12metres.

5 p15 Proposed Development

5.1 Safeguarding Amenity and 5.2 Scale, Appearance and Layout

I have linked these sections because they have interwoven consequences.

The proposed dwelling starts on the south corner of 169 Kidmore Road's west boundary and extends northwards to cover 75% of the boundary. The initial section includes the garage with one window facing outwards there is then a utility room with an external door facing 169 Kidmore Road. I presume this is a solid door but when open will allow direct views into my sitting room and constitutes an infringement of my privacy.

The proposed ridge height of the main building is said to be **6.5metres**. There is no indication of the heights of the roof ridge over the garage in the south or over the drawing room in the north. Both are sufficiently high to cover the dormer windows so from the drawings it would suggest the height of the roof over the garage is approximately 5,5 metres. As a visual aid they have measured the magnolia tree in my garden at 6.5 metres. I also note that this section of roof has two roof lights facing 169 Kidmore Road with direct viewing access to the garden and the adjacent rooms of my house.

The garage roof constitutes a massive visual obstruction in the southern half of my garden, it will be totally domineering and overbearing. It will obliterate the outlook I now enjoy from my sitting room and recreational patios placed in the southern half of the garden. My visual horizon in that section of the garden will be reduced from the trees on the far side of Conisboro avenue at approximately 100metres to the garage roof at 13.5 metres.

A similar argument can be made against the drawing room roof, it is less overbearing because it is further away from the boundary. However, it will constitute a domineering and overbearing outlook for the northern half of my garden and kitchen. It is this section of roof which will obscure the late afternoon and setting sun we currently enjoy.

The proposed roofing material of grey slate is disappointing, looking around the houses near the development it is noted that there are no slate roofs (there are further afield). The large block of grey slate 13.5mtres from my property is profoundly depressing.

It is fanciful to claim that the proposed design is poised to be a positive addition improving the existing character of the site. It confers no benefit to the surrounding area and the size and configuration is out of proportion to the space within which it will sit. Why should the garage and drawing room require such large and obtrusive roofs?

The proximity of the proposed dwelling to 169 Kidmore Road directly causes a detrimental impact by virtue of its dominating and overbearing design, its obliteration of the open outlook and because we will be so close to the new property a loss of privacy and some loss of direct sunshine.

5.4 Landscaping and trees

Some trees have been omitted from the arboreal survey on my western boundary. From the left corner to the magnolia, I planted three ornamental cherry trees in 2021, these are now well established. It is also noted that a further cherry tree, beyond the hornbeam, has been omitted.

The removal of the privet hedge H3 will be a great loss and the suggestion that new hedging can be planted along the new property's eastern boundary between the fence and the building wall is unlikely to produce a viable substantial hedge.

5.6 Ecology and Biodiversity

An impressive and lengthy Biodiversity report.

4.2 Conclusions and recommendations

The modified grassland and shrub beds have low ecological value, the scattered trees have moderate value, the buildings have no value and the hedges H1, H2 and H3 are of priority value. These will be lost under the development resulting in a loss of biodiversity mitigation can be achieved by further planting of hedges and trees.

The gardens surrounding the development site, especially those of Morcombe Avenue combine with the development site to form a large and varied habitat we are told there is little in the way of protected species in the area, but no mention is made of the more common species we see regularly. The grey squirrel, foxes and the occasional muntjac deer along with a great variety of bird life some of which nest in the area.

The development is likely to decrease the biodiversity in the area as a human presence oust the natural world.

Sustainable Urban Drainage System

Looking through the documents attached to the application I was interested to see that the council had asked for surface water percolation tests, which showed that surface water would not drain away in a surface soakaway. This appears to be due to the soil and subsoil structures. The recommended solution is to have a deep bore hole soakaway.

I have noticed that a section of my garden on the western border around the magnolia tree has become “boggy” and the grass has been replaced by moss. This is a new phenomenon not noticed in previous years.

I am concerned that surface water drainage from my property will not be adversely affected by the construction of this property and would like reassurance that such adverse effects will not occur.

Conclusion

I object to this development because:

It doesn't comply with RBC planning policy framework.

The proximity to the rear of 169 Kidmore Road is inappropriate.

The design, especially the garage roof, is visually dominant and overbearing.

It destroys the outlook from my garden and living room.

General amenity of my house is further diminished by reduced privacy and loss of sunlight.

For you to appreciate my concerns I would welcome a site visit at a time and date of your choosing.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Parker