

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: 240380/FUL

Address: 539 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0SH

Proposals: New dropped kerb, and erection of a part single and part three storey extension to the rear, including loft conversion with roof lights and two front dormer windows to enlarge the existing two flats

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

Date received (valid from): 2 April 2024 **Target Decision date (ext):** 28 June 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey terraced property consisting of two x 1-bed flats. The site is located on Basingstoke Road in a predominantly residential area. The area is characterised by semi-detached and terraced properties of similar design and style with large back gardens. The property is not listed and does not fall within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 16/04/2024

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a part single storey and part three storey extension to the rear, along with a loft conversion with the addition of roof lights and two front pitched roof dormers. The proposal is to enlarge the existing 2 flats at 539 Basingstoke Road.

Plans/documents considered:

Planning Statement received 26th March 2024

Bat Scoping Report and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal received 26th March 2024

Drawing No. BR539:103 - Existing Floor Plans received 26th March 2024

Drawing No. BR539:105 - Existing Elevations received 26th March 2024

Drawing No. BR539:106 rev P1 - Proposed Elevations received 7th May 2024

Drawing No. BR539:104 rev P1 - Proposed Floor Plans received 7th May 2024

Drawing No. BR539:101 - Block Plan rev P3 Block Plan received 18th June 2024

Construction Method Statement received 18th June 2024

Compound Plan received 18th June 2024

Drawing No. BR539:102 rev P3 - Location Plan received 21st June 2024



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

201805 - Change of use of property from single dwelling house into 2no 1 bedroom flats. - Certificate granted on 09/03/2021

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

541 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0SH
Flat 2, Tiverton House, 83a Ambrook Road, Reading, RG2 8SN
537 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0SH
Flat 5, Tiverton House, 83a Ambrook Road, Reading, RG2 8SN
Flat 3 Tiverton House, 83a Ambrook Road, Reading, RG2 8SN
Flat 1, Tiverton House, 83a Ambrook Road, Reading, RG2 8SN
Flat 4, Tiverton House, 83a Ambrook Road, Reading, RG2 8SN

Letters of representation have been received as follows:

One observation letter was received from the neighbouring property with regards to party wall matters, however, no concerns were raised with regards to material planning considerations. Furthermore, the rear dormer has since been removed from the proposal.

Discussions with agent

Planning officers had concerns with the original plans submitted. The original scheme included a flat roof rear dormer and a flat roof two storey rear extension. The proposal was not considered in accordance with planning policies and the 'Design Guide to House Extensions' SPD, as the dormer was considered overbearing and the overall design of the development did not maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Subsequently, the agent submitted revised plans removing the flat roof rear dormer and creating a high pitched roof over the two storey element. An additional cottage style dormer window was also included in the forward roof slope.

Ecology

The application site comprises a terraced house in South Reading where it is proposed to extend the property by converting the loft and erecting a part singles part double storey extension to the rear.

The bat survey report (The Ecology Coop, November 2023) concludes that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Transport

The proposed works will extend the existing 2 x 1 bedroom flats in to 2 x 2 bedroom units.

The submitted planning statement states that the existing 1 bedroom units are provided with 2 spaces, this falls below the Councils current 'Parking Standards and Design' SPD where it states that each 1 or 2 bedroom unit should be provided with 1.5 parking spaces, this would equate to a total of 3 spaces. However, given this is existing provision, 2 can be accepted in this instance.

Confirmation is required if the property is served via an existing dropped crossing as there are no recent images available to confirm. If no vehicle crossing is present, this would indicate that the occupants have been undertaking illegal manoeuvres over the footway to access the area of hardstanding currently used for parking. A licence from the Highways department will be required to undertake all works on the public highway which includes the introduction of a dropped crossing. Plans will be required illustrating the dropped kerb. I am happy to deal with this by way of condition.

Given there are no changes in the number of units the cycle storage and refuse collection arrangements, will remain unaffected and unchanged as a result of this proposal.

In principle, there are no Transport objections to this application subject to conditions. Given the sites location in a residential and unrestricted road, I would suggest a scaled down version of a CMS to cover the main points, i.e. storage, parking, highway maintenance etc.

Planning officer note: To avoid pre-commencement conditions, the agent provided a construction method statement (CMS) and amended plans to include a dropped kerb into the proposed development. The transport officer confirmed the details within the CMS were acceptable, and the width of the access acceptable.

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 and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
H9: HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION
H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPD

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Design Guide to House Extensions (2021)

APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension 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 single storey element of the proposed rear extension would project 5.28m from the original rear wall of the building. Although the depth of the extension exceeds the guidance within the SPD, it is considered that the site can take an extension of this size and the amount of remaining amenity space is considered acceptable.

Whilst the ground floor element of the rear extension would have a flat roof it would be considered unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the existing building due to its single storey nature. It is considered that the two/three storey element of the proposal would integrate well with the host dwelling. The maximum depth of the extension would be 3.8m from the original rear wall, and its pitched roof would not exceed the height of the main roof ridge. The proposed development is not considered out of character for its location as there are a variety of single storey rear extensions in the surrounding area. Whilst additional stories are less common, there is a two storey extension and a flat roof rear dormer at the attached neighbouring property, 541 Basingstoke Road. The bulk of the proposed development is contained at the rear causing minimal harm to the street scene, however, the proposal does include two cottage style dormers in the front roof slope of the building. The design, scale and positioning of the dormers are considered acceptable and would match with the front facing dormer in the roof slope of the neighbouring property in terms of scale and design.

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.

With regards to no. 537 Basingstoke Road, the proposed rear extension has been designed to ensure that it does not breach the line of light for sunlight and daylight impact assessment. A gap of 0.95m would be retained between the proposed rear extension and the boundary with this neighbour, moreover, the proposed extension would be further set in at first and second floor level. The proposal includes roof lights located in both side facing roof slopes of the new pitched roof element of the extension, a condition is attached to this planning permission to ensure that these roof lights will be obscure glazed. The proposal does not include any other side facing windows, therefore, there are no identified risks in relation to privacy and overlooking concerns.

The single storey element of the proposed rear extension would not project beyond the existing single storey rear extension at no. 541 Basingstoke Road. At first floor level, a gap would be created between the proposed two storey element of the extension and the existing two storey extension at no. 541 Basingstoke Road as the existing neighbouring extension is set away from the boundary. Although this creates a tunnelling effect to the closest rear facing neighbouring window, it was apparent from the site visit that this window is obscure glazed and hosts a bathroom and is, therefore, not a habitable room.

Other matters

The proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of biodiversity and no trees would be affected by the proposals.

Conclusion

The proposed development has been assessed against the relevant policies and is considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION - Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

Time limit

Approved plans

Materials

Construction Method Statement

Vehicle parking

Vehicle access

Obscure glazing