

## DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

**Ward:** Redlands

**App Ref:** 240091/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):** 26 January 2024      **Target Decision date:** 22 March 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 feature such as stained glass windows and front door and chimney stacks, the property retains the original striking gable frontage at first floor level, above a bay fronted lounge.

The property has a larger than average north facing rear garden which slopes away, there is difference in height of approximately 4 feet between the existing rear elevation and that of the natural 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:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024



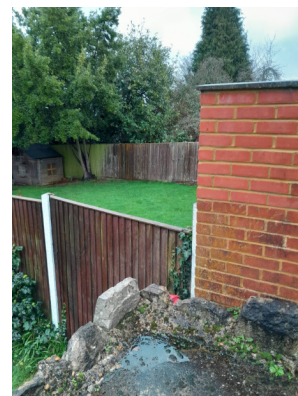
Front: gable fronted elevation.



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 gabled, sloping roof line across the rear with a depth of 3.5m to create a kitchen, dining / living area with separate shower room.

Two storey side extension with hipped roof, reconstruct garage with first floor extension above garage pulled out to in line with the existing gable fronted elevation.

Raised patio to a depth of 1m from the new rear elevation with steps down to a lower patio area. Bi-Fold doors and skylights to the single storey rear element, new large window to front elevation of bedroom no.4 and various internal alterations.

Plans & documents considered:

Application form - dated 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 24

Drawing no: D2869-01 rev A - Existing Floor Plans, Elevations & Local Plan - dated Dec 23

Drawing no: D2869-02 rev A - Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan - dated Dec 23 (superseded)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Drawing no: D2869-02 rev B - Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan - dated Dec 23 (superseded)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Drawing no: D2869-02 rev C - Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Roof Plan - dated Dec 23

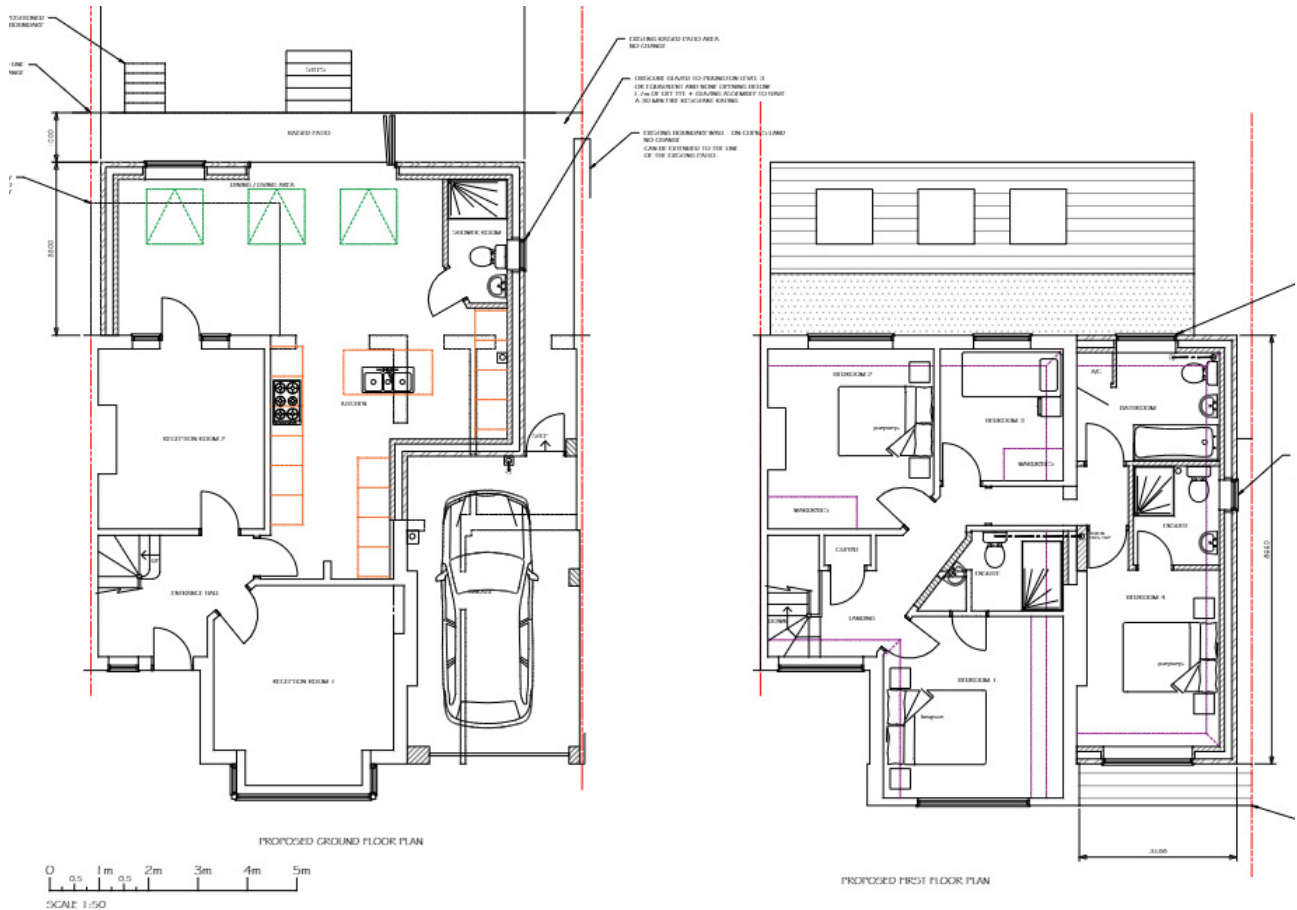
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Tree Experts) - dated 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 24

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



## PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS



### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

9 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH

7 Avebury Square, Reading, RG1 5JH

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 240091 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 sunlight**

*a) The block plan and elevation drawings do not show where our neighbouring windows are and which rooms they serve. The plans therefore do not show how the proposed extension will affect daylight to our habitable rooms by making use of the 45 degree rule of thumb as per RBC's 'Design Guide to House Extensions' sections 5.0.1 and 6.2.2.*

*b) We anticipate that the two storey side extension would cause 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.

c) We anticipate 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**

The original plan uploaded 24/01/24 showed a new raised patio projecting 3m from the proposed 3.5m deep single storey rear extension which we anticipated would have caused significant overlooking unless mitigations were included. We discussed this with the owners of number 8 who indicated they had no intention of taking the raised patio out as far as 3m and the plan merely represented them asking for the 'maximum' as contingency. As such, they have since provided an updated plan (uploaded 14/02/24) which now shows the new raised patio projecting 1m. This is a welcome reduction, however the plan shows it extending beyond the existing boundary brick wall which provides screening between the properties and means there is 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.

The proposed plans do not indicate how this potential for overlooking would be mitigated therefore we would like the plans to be updated to include appropriate measures to address this, 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**

The proposed plans show that the ridge line of the roof extension is not set down from the existing roof ridge line and the two storey side extension is to be built up to the side boundary. This could result in a terracing effect which is potentially harmful to the established appearance and character of the street.

One potential mitigation 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. Numbers 4 and 12 on the same street 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.

I wish to note that my wife and I have been in friendly discussions with the owners of 8 Avebury Square who have taken the time to explain their plans, listen to the concerns we've raised and seem willing to address these in any revised plans. The purpose of this email is therefore to register our comments through the formal consultation process so that they can be taken into account and addressed.

## **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)  
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)  
EN14 (Trees 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.

*Overall it is considered that the extensions would dominate the original house in terms of scale and form and would appear as unsympathetic additions. The extensions would reduce the spaciousness which currently exists within the plot and between the house and the adjacent dwelling. This harm would be accentuated due to the prominent position of the house when approaching from the entrance to the cul-de-sac.*

*The applicant was advised to reduce the proposed depth of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor element above the proposed garage, officers requested the proposed front elevation should be in line with that of the existing front elevation above the front door. The amendment was requested to reduce the bulk and massing of the proposal so that it better-respected the existing form of the dwelling. Also to preserve distinctive features the projecting front gable feature with recessive main roof and space to the side that is characteristic of Avebury Square. The amendment was also requested to reduce the terracing effect of the double storey side extension - as the proposal stands - it has potential to be harmful to no.9 Avebury Square.*

*The applicant was advised to amend the gable ended roof of the proposed single storey rear element to hipped style roof to reduce the impact of the scale on neighbouring properties both adjoined and detached.*

*The proposed double storey side extension by nature of the scale, mass and form over the proposed garage is considered harmful to the host dwelling, the adjoined dwelling and the wider streetscene. The proposal fails to demonstrate how the existing front gable (a feature of the host property) will be protected and enhanced. The proposed 1<sup>st</sup> floor has not been set back to in line with the existing front elevation and for this reason the proposed double storey side extension is not compliant with policy.*

*The recommended amendments to the proposed single storey rear element have not been addressed. Officers consider the proposed roof type is detrimental to the property and neighbouring properties in terms of scale and appearance.*

The proposal does not comply 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.

It is considered that the scale of the the proposed double storey side extension would be harmful to daylight and sunlight to the neighbours at no.9 Avebury Square.

*The proposed single storey rear extension is harmful to residential amenity for the neighbours to either side. The gable roof is considered overbearing to neighbours, particularly to no.7 due to the topography of the site and the difference in height between ground level of the house and ground level of the rear garden.*

Officers consider the proposed raised patio to the rear of the property by the nature of the height difference between house ground level and garden level will be harmful to privacy to both neighbours which would provide an unneighbourly vantage point, harmful to the privacy of neighbours who will not be able to enjoy their private amenity space without feeling overlooked.

*All of the above points were raised with the agent and examples provided of how to mitigate.*

The agent revised the small pitched roof above garage. Plans for the proposed rear patio area were not revised by the agent, plans for the double storey side extension above garage were not revised by the agent.

The proposal is harmful to residential amenity and fails to comply with policies H9 and CC8 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 27<sup>th</sup> 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 EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

### **Natural Environment (Trees)**

Whilst the property is surrounded by trees, no trees are present at the property, nor are any neighbouring trees within close proximity to the proposal. The proposal is therefore compliant with policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be unacceptable due to its excessive scale and overly dominant form. It would also harm neighbouring amenity due to overlooking.

The agent confirmed they did not wish to withdraw the application.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

REFUSE