

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Battle

App Ref: PL/24/0164/FUL

Address: Flat 2, 5 Tidmarsh Street, Reading, RG30 1HX

Proposals: Proposed loft conversion and removal of the chimney.

Case Officer: James Schofield

Target Decision date: Originally 6 June 2024: Extension of time agreed until the 16th of August 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is a semi-detached dwelling which has been subdivided into two flats. The site is within flood zone 2.

Site visit date: 27/06/2024

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is to remove an existing chimney and install skylights into the roof slopes to facilitate the conversion of the loft into a bedroom for Flat 2 at 5 Tidmarsh Street. Plans considered:

Drwg No. 13 Existing block plan
Drwg No. 12 Existing elevations
Drwg No. 11 Existing floor plans
Drwg No. 00 Location plan
Drwg No. 13 Proposed block plan
Drwg No. 12 Proposed elevations
Drwg No. 11 Rev A Proposed floor plans
As received on the 9th of February 2024

Drwg No. 14 Proposed Sections
As received on the 11th of March 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application: 03-00012-CLE
Description: Conversion of property into 2 flats
Decision: Permitted 07/03/2003 with no conditions.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Flat 1, 5 Tidmarsh Street, Reading, RG30 1HX
Unit 2, 179A Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UZ
3 Tidmarsh Street, Reading, RG30 1HX
Flat 1, 7 Tidmarsh Street, Reading, RG30 1HX
Flat 2, 7 Tidmarsh Street, Reading, RG30 1HX
784 Oxford Road, Reading, RG30 1EL

No letters of representation have been received.

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 2023
National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)
EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

The loft conversion is in principle relatively minor, it would result in an increase from two bedrooms to three. An informative reminding the owner that they will need to apply to convert the site into a small HMO if they would like to do that would be prudent, given how common they are in the area and how constrained this site is.

Character and Appearance

While not directly relevant, as the application site is for a flat and the application is for a full planning consent, Policy H9 and associated guidance is relevant due to the nature of this converted dwelling and its appearance. Policy H9 states that an alteration 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 lines. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The most significant change proposed is the loss of the chimney. The building is not within a conservation area and the chimney in question is not visible from the street, as such no visible harm to the building would result from its removal.

The insertion of skylights into the roof-slopes is a common feature within the immediate context and is permitted development for those sites not converted to flats. No harm is considered to result.

The proposal satisfies the character considerations of local policy CC7.

Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 states an alteration will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

Given the limited outlook of the rooflights, and the placement of the bathroom to the rear, no significant negative overbearing, sunlight, or privacy effects are considered to arise due to the angle of the roof and the outlook across commercial premises.

Further to this analysis, the proposal is considered to accord with the aims of local policies CC8 on amenity.

Flood Risk

The proposed development is within Flood Zone 2. Policy EN18 indicates proposed development will be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance following the Sequential and Exceptions Test set out in the NPPF. Paragraph 164 of the NPPF indicates that “applications for some minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific risk assessments...” Footnote 51 indicates that this includes householder development, small non-residential extensions (with a footprint of less than 250 m²) and changes of use; except for changes of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site, where the sequential and exception tests should be applied as appropriate.

The proposed extensions are within the size threshold.

As such, the proposal accords with the local Policy EN18 as it is deemed acceptable by the Environment Agency’s standing advice for development proposals of this size.

Conclusion

The siting and scale of the proposal ensure there is no harm, and that it accords with the local plan policies.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit

2. Approved plans
3. Materials (to match)