

Planning Statement

September 20, 2024

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New Detached house

33 Chapel Hill, Tilehurst, READING, Berkshire, RG31 5BT

Head of Planning
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

Date: 18 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

I am pleased to enclose a design submission for the erection of a new dwelling at the above location for a 4 Bedroom detached building .

Site Location and Description

The submitted information indicates that the proposed scheme would be for a 4-bedroom house, which would accord with Policy H2. We would include controls to ensure it remained as a single Class C3 dwelling on grounds of housing need. The overall plot density would accord with existing density patterns within the area.

There is no consistent building line along Chapel Hill, although the immediately adjoining properties are set back from the road with a mix of front gardens and driveway parking. There is a mix of brick and rendered elevational finishes.

No. 37 Chapel Hill has an unusual form of part flat roofed single storey with a recessed unevenly pitched first floor as can be seen above. It has two side facing windows towards the pre-application site. No. 29 has one first floor side facing window towards the site. It is unknown which rooms the windows serve.

There are no specific policy designations for the site, however, there are relevant Borough wide policies set out below.

This site is located within Chapel Hill, Tilehurst in the Borough of Reading, and 5 miles west of Reading. The site is accessed from Chapel Hill which has good transport links to both Reading Town Centre and central Reading, with bus stops nearby.

The site sits on the north side of Chapel Hill. The site comprises a residential property contained a detached two storey detached building, and a private garden to its south. Neighbouring properties are mix of detached/ semi detached properties.

Planning History

Based on available public records, there have been no past planning applications for the above site. However, there are numerous planning applications for the immediate surroundings.

Site Description/ Background:

The site is part of the former side garden and parking area of no. 37 Chapel Hill. It is currently overgrown with some evidence of hard standing and some remaining boundary hedging to the front and within the plot. The other boundaries are fencing. It is ca 0.03 ha in area. It is relatively level, although there is small slope up, for part of the depth, from the back edge of the pavement.

Constraints

The property is considered to be at minimal or no risk of flooding.

Proposals

The proposed development is the erection of a new dwelling within the current curtilage (Garden) . Designed a detached building building for 4 bedroom house. A new access point and driveway would be provided to the proposal on to Chapel Hill, including the provision of two parking spaces.

The proposed use would be a dwellinghouse falling within Use Class C3.

Principle of development

The submitted information indicates that the proposed scheme would be for a 4-bedroom house, which would accord with Policy H2. We would include controls to ensure it remained as a single Class C3 dwelling on grounds of housing need. The overall plot density would accord with existing density patterns within the area.

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There are no specific policy designations for the site, however, there are relevant Borough wide policies set out below.

The site lies within the settlement of Tilehurst, and is identified within the Reading Development Plan as a major development location.

As a major development location, Core Strategy policy CP9 has particular relevance, setting out that the scale of proposals shall reflect the existing or proposed level of facilities within the vicinity.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (NPPF) clearly sets out the importance of making efficient use of land. Core Strategy Policy CP3 reinforces this by outlining development proposals would use the full potential of the site.

Reading Borough Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 years' supply of housing, with recent appeal decisions establishing the housing shortfall as between 4.35 and 4.74 years. Consequently paragraph 11.d) of the NPPF is triggered – colloquially referred to as the 'tilted balance'.

In view of the above, the principle of development for the erection of a dwelling in this location is acceptable, subject to matters such as impact on the character of the area, residential amenity, etc, which are presented below.

Character and Appearance of the area

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB06 has particular relevance as the proposal involves the development of private residential gardens. TB06 sets out that proposals for new residential development that involves land within the curtilage of existing dwellings will only be granted where they make a positive contribution to the character of the area through appropriate layout and compatibility with surrounding buildings.

In terms of building lines and patterns of development, the proposal would occupy a similar position to the dwelling of nearby buildings.

By contrast, the existing dwelling of Chapel Hill is set notably back in comparison to the other dwellings fronting Chapel Hill in particular.

The proposed design would be of a high quality layout and appearance, and would retain the general character of detached dwellings.

Whilst surrounding dwellings are predominately two storey, this does not preclude two storey development given the presence of other two storey outbuildings, as well as the fact that design would have limited visibility due to its integration within and behind existing areas of landscaping, which provide significant contribution to the character of the area particularly around the road junction.

Whilst the proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy TB06, it is also noted TB06 would be considered an 'out-of-date' policy under the tilted balance, lending further support for this well-designed, proportionate scheme.

Trees and Landscaping (Submitted)

Consideration of garden space is provided in the below 'Residential Amenity' section. A sufficient care will be taken care for a green space.

Residential Amenity

Whilst the proposal would project north of the front elevation of Chapel Hill to the immediate east, design would be adequate to avoid any loss of light or privacy impacts, and this is evidenced by the 45 and 60degree angle tests annotated on the submitted plans.

With regard to the host dwelling of The Chapel Hill, there would be a sufficient separation distance exceeding 10 metres for almost all its length, in accordance with Reading Design Guide SPD. A limited area, set behind the very limited width of this section this is not considered inappropriate.

The proposal would provide a sizeable garden northward of the proposed dwelling of over 12.3 metres depth, with a significant space that would not be covered by tree canopies. The existing rear garden section of Chapel Hill would also be retained to provide appropriate private amenity to these occupants.

Highways and Parking

The proposal would provide a new access point and driveway from Chapel Hill, without impact upon the current access arrangements to the neighbour buildings with 2 car park spaces provided. Whilst these spaces would be in a tandem arrangement and with limited on-site turning space. Provision for both bin and cycle stores would be made. Sufficient car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) will be provided

Drainage

The property is considered to be at minimal or no risk of flooding.

Ecology:

No demolition of any existing buildings are proposed and also no trees around so ecology is not required.

Sustainability

The proposals would be designed and constructed of high sustainability standard, constituting environmental benefits.

Relevant Planning History:

None

Pre-Application Feedback (Reference 240561)

Conclusion

Residential use of the site is worth exploring further. Matters relating to Biodiversity Net Gain and some further off-set to the side boundaries need to be addressed.

It is considered that the overall scale of the dwelling, needs refinement to reduce its width and the bulky roof form. There would be sufficient space for parking and car space although this should be within a well-landscaped front forecourt.

Existing hedged boundaries should be retained as far as is possible to ensure that the site continues to contribute to the green appearance of the site and to soften the appearance of a new dwelling and to contribute towards meet relevant Policies EN12 and EN14.

Some adjustments to the roofscape and window siting would improve the appearance of the dwelling, the façade materials should be brick rather than render, but generally the proposed appearance of the dwelling would be appropriate within the existing character of the area.

CIL

The proposal would involve the creation of a new dwelling and is therefore CIL liable.

Summary

NPPF Paragraph 68 states: “Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should: a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved; b) use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward; c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and d) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.”

NPPF Paragraph 54 states: “Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.”

NPPF Paragraph 117 states: “Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”

In the consideration of the proposal and the absence of a five year housing supply paragraph 11.d) of the NPPF would be triggered – colloquially referred to as the ‘tilted balance’. Notwithstanding this, the above letter has presented that the proposal would be acceptable in principle given its location and policy designation. The design would be characteristic of the surrounding area, not only in respect of design and scale but also when considering the existing street scene pattern within Chapel Hill . Impacts on matters such as residential amenity and highway safety are also presented as acceptable.

I trust the above is of assistance. Officers’ views on the submitted proposal would be welcome, along with any additional information that may be required to support a future planning application.

Yours Faithfully,

Shashikanth
SK Design consultant