

## DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

**Ward:** Caversham Heights

**App Ref:** 230726/HOU

**Address:** 147 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR

**Proposals:** Front, side and rear extensions, front porch addition and part first floor extension

**Case Officer:** Sian Hickey

**Applicant:** Mr and Mrs Bhupinder and Tajinder Purewal

**Date received (valid from):** 25 May 2023

**Decision date (ext):** 1st October 2024

### 1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a chalet style bungalow on Upper Woodcote Road in Caversham Heights. The surrounding area is residential, characterised by detached dwellings in varying character and style. The application site is in the Air Quality Management Area and an Area of Archaeological Potential.

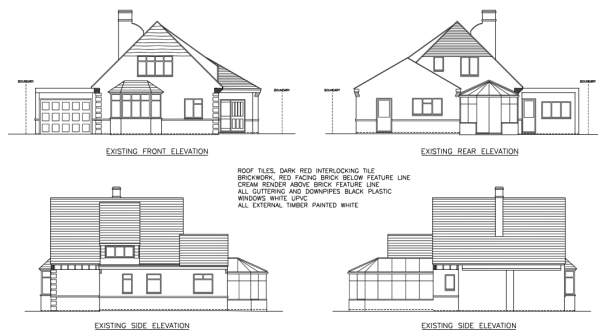
**Site visit date:** 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023



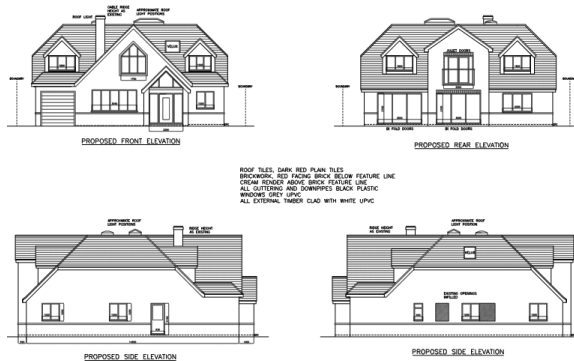
### 2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to relocate the existing entrance door forward to the front elevation of the dwelling incorporating a new front porch. The proposal also includes removing the existing single storey side garage and rear conservatory, and the erection of part two storey and part single storey side and rear extensions with front and rear facing dormers at first floor level.

Existing Elevations:



## Proposed Elevations:



## Google image:



## Plans considered

- Drawing No. PL.001 – Existing Elevations received 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- Drawing No. PL.003 – Existing Ground Floor Plan received 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- Drawing No. PL.004 – Existing First Floor Plan received 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- Drawing No. PL.007 – Existing Roof Floor Plan received 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- Drawing No. PL.010 – Location Plan received 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- Drawing No. PL.002 C – Proposed Elevations received 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Drawing No. PL.005 C – Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Drawing No. PL.006 C – Proposed First Floor Plan received 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Drawing No. PL.008 C – Proposed Roof Floor Plan received 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- Drawing No. PL.009 D – Proposed Block Plan received 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

070449 - Conservatory to rear of property. – PERMITTED

901194 - Single storey pitched roof extension to side and rear. - PERMITTED

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

Cherry Trees, Blagrove Lane, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DZ  
149 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks, RG4 7JR  
Ebor, Blagrove Lane, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DZ  
Finedon, Blagrove Lane, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DZ

Two letters of objection have been received with concerns regards the following:

Scale, overbearing effects, harm to outlook, loss of biodiversity

**Officer note:** *these matters will be assessed in more depth below.*

#### **Discussions with agent**

Planning officers had concerns with the original plans submitted. It was considered that the original scheme would alter the character of the house given the overall scale and bulk, specifically at first floor level. The proposal would also present an overbearing impact on the adjoining properties, it was also considered the harm would be exacerbated by the extended and dominating flank walls on both sides of the property.

Subsequently, the agent provided amended plans to overcome the concerns raised. The scale at first floor level has been reduced significantly, in turn reducing the side flank walls and the bulk of flat roof form proposed. The main gable feature at the front of the house has been retained and remains prominent. The plans also illustrate that the 45 degree line of light would not be breached for the neighbouring properties.

#### **RBC Transport**

*The proposal will result in the loss of parking within the garage. Submitted Block Plan illustrates 3 off road parking spaces at the front of the property on an area of existing hard standing. The property is served by 2 vehicle access points, no changes to the existing dropped kerb are proposed.*

*There are no Transport objections to this application.*

#### **RBC Ecology**

*The building may host roosting bats and to confirm whether this is the case, and if so how bats will be affected by the proposals, a bat survey will need to be carried out. The survey will need to be carried out prior to determination of the application or the application would need to be refused on the grounds that insufficient evidence had been provided to determine the likely impacts of the proposals on bats (which are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process).*

Following the above comments, an ecology report was provided which concluded that the house has a number of features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats. Therefore, a further bat emergence report was required and provided. The report concluded that the

building is in use by one common pipistrelle bat and that it is a small day roost of low conservation status.

As the proposed works will lead to the loss of a common pipistrelle day roost, a licence for development works affecting bats will need to be obtained from Natural England. As such, a condition is attached to ensure that a bat licence is obtained.

### **Berkshire Archaeology**

*There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record. The site lies in an area of Caversham that has shown a clear concentration of Late Iron Age and Roman activity. The HER records numerous individual coin finds including a silver denarius from the garden of no.155 Upper Woodcote Road. The site is close c.75m to the Late Iron Age/Roman site at Mapledurham Playing Fields which produced evidence for domestic activity. To the north of the site at 177 Upper Woodcote Road, excavations again revealed evidence for activity in the Late Iron Age/Roman period. The wider area has a number of records relating to possible Roman villa structures and burials, all of which suggest this area was intensively used during the Roman period.*

*As shown, the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that an archaeology condition is applied, should permission be granted, in order to mitigate the impacts of development. This is in accordance with Paragraph 205 of the NPPF(2021) which states that local planning authorities should 'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'.*

### **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)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)  
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)  
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

## **SPD**

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021  
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

## **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.

Although the overall proposal is large in scale, it is considered that the plot is capable of taking extensions of the proposed size and scale. A significant amount of amenity space would be retained. The application site and surrounding properties have relatively large rear gardens and many of the neighbouring properties have extensions, therefore the proposal is not considered out of character for its location. Furthermore, the road is not considered to have a distinct character, style, or scale of property thus the development is not considered to harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area or any existing building line.

In terms of design, the proposal is considered suitable and respects the host dwelling. The previous plans submitted would have resulted in an overly dominant development with large flank side walls which would detract from the appearance of the existing house. The revised scheme would be significantly more in keeping with the existing dwelling, the roof forms and the prominence of the front gable help the development to integrate well. The materials proposed are considered acceptable; there is a variety of cladding within the street.

The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of design, quality and scale and thus comply with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019 and the Design Guide to House Extensions 2021.

### **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.

The ground and first floor elements of the proposed extensions have been designed to ensure that they do not breach the lines of light from the windows of both the adjacent neighbouring properties. Although new views would be created at the rear from the additional first floor windows, it is not considered that these would result in detrimental overlooking issues.

With regards to the neighbouring property at No.149 Upper Woodcote Road, the ground floor element of the proposed extension would extend beyond the rear wall of this

neighbour by approximately 4m. This depth combined with the gap either side of the boundary fence is considered acceptable and would not be considered overbearing.

The neighbouring property to the south of the application site, Ebor, is set back from the front elevation of the application property, however, an attached side garage projection sits between the main property and the application site, furthermore, the first floor element of the proposal closest to Ebor has been set back significantly to reduce any overbearing impacts to the front elevation of this neighbour. It is also worth noting that there are no windows in the existing side elevation of Ebor closest to the application property. At the rear, the proposed development would not project beyond the main rear building line of this neighbouring dwelling, and any harm is further reduced at first floor level due to the proposed roof design.

### **Other matters**

The recommendation proposes 2 pre-commencement planning conditions therefore in accordance with section 100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, the Local Planning Authority served notice upon the applicant to seek agreement to the imposition of such a conditions. Notice was served in writing on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and agreed by the applicant.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit  
Approved plans  
Materials  
Archaeology  
Bat licence