

Our ref: MH/CB/ROL01480

Planning and Building Control
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

BY EMAIL ONLY: Huimin.Chen@reading.gov.uk

30 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Planning application for a proposed two storey side extension at 18 Wrenfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, (planning reference number 240860) – Sunlight to neighbouring gardens

Anstey Horne & Co. Ltd. have been instructed by Linda Thielova and Marton Smazil (“the Applicants”), who are the owner/occupiers of 18 Wrenfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7QE, (“the Site”).

Instruction and Background

The Applicants have asked us to consider the proposed planning application at 18 Wrenfield Drive, (pursuant to planning reference: 240860); specifically in terms of the potential for overshadowing to the rear gardens of 21 and 22 Tymars (“the Properties”). The application is for a proposed two storey side extension, facade alterations, floor plan redesign and all other associated works. (“the Proposed Development”).

Our understanding of the Proposed Development is based upon the proposed RESI drawing ‘B244916-3100 Rev A’ submitted with the planning application.

Our understanding of the Site and the surrounding context is informed by the existing RESI drawing ‘B244916-1100 Rev A’ submitted with the planning application and desktop research, which includes review of Google Maps and Bing Maps.

As it is not considered necessary, we have not carried out any detailed technical analysis. Our observations and advice in this letter are based upon the above information and our professional experience and judgement.

Relevant Experience

Anstey Horne & Co. Ltd are a firm of chartered surveyors and consultants – we specialise in all aspects of natural light; including loss of light to surrounding buildings, the quality of light within new accommodation, solar glint and glare & convergence caused by the reflection of the sun on a surface, and the energy generation of solar PV and solar thermal panels. Our experience spans over two hundred years. We are the most experienced firm in the UK specialising in these types of matters.

Relevant Policies and Guidance

Adopted Reading Local Plan 2019

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity states that:

“Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of ... access to sunlight and daylight”¹.

Paragraph 4.1.42 further states that when seeking to safeguard neighbouring amenity:

“the ‘BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice’ document may be of use in ensuring that new development adjacent to residential properties is not of adverse bulk and does not block out sunlight and daylight to habitable rooms and outdoor living spaces”.

BRE Report 209, *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice* 3rd ed. 2022 (The BRE Guidelines)

The BRE Guidelines is the leading authority on matters to do with daylight and sunlight for planning applications; it is adopted and used by local authorities across the entirety of the United Kingdom.

Section 3.3 of the BRE Guidelines makes recommendations regarding the impact of new developments upon sunlight to open spaces between buildings, such as main gardens of houses². The BRE Guidelines recommends that the level of overshadowing on such areas should be checked on the vernal (spring) equinox (21 March).

When assessing the potential impact of a new development upon the level of direct sunlight of an existing open amenity, the BRE Guidelines recommends that:

“for it to appear adequately sunlit throughout the year, at least half of a garden or amenity area should receive at least two hours of sunlight on 21 March. If as a result of new development an existing garden or amenity area does not meet the above, and the area that can receive two hours of sun on 21 March is less than 0.80 times its former value, then the loss of sunlight is likely to be noticeable”³

¹ Page 30

² Paragraph 3.3.3

³ Paragraph 3.3.17

Review of Potential Overshadowing from Proposed Development

The gardens at 21 and 22 Tymawr are orientated predominantly due south, meaning they can benefit from morning, afternoon and evening direct sunlight on the prescribed 21 March testing date. The below image is taken from googles street view in November, where the sun will travel at a lower angle than it does in March.



The existing house adjacent to the Site can be seen between the two properties. The sun can be seen on the right hand side (west), suggesting the image is taken in the late-afternoon. The path of the sun will naturally incline the closer to the middle of the day, and would be visible from the gardens at 21 and 22 Tymawr for at least 2hrs over the course of the day. Naturally this position would improve even further on 21 March where the sun path will be even higher in the sky.

In our professional judgement, as the gardens should receive a minimum of 2hrs direct sunlight on the spring equinox, we can conclude that the Proposed Development would follow the numerical guidance within the BRE Guidelines in relation to overshadowing.

**Conclusion**

For the abovementioned reasons, we are of the view the gardens should receive the requisite amount of direct sunlight on 21 March (spring equinox) and, according to the BRE Guidelines, should therefore remain adequately sunlit throughout the year. Detailed technical analysis is not considered necessary to further compound our professional judgement and we fully support this planning application.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hensey", enclosed within a large, horizontal, oval-shaped flourish.

Matt Hensey

Senior Associate Director

Anstey Horne & Co. Ltd.