

Planning application

Design, Access Statement

including the flood risk and sustainability statements

Extension forming 2 new flats

Revision A

44 Berkeley Ave, Reading

RG1 6JE

15th October 2024

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1. General location map



2. Context

- 2.1. The site, 44 Berkeley Ave, is located in a residential area within the RBC Zone 2 Primary Core Area. The property is a detached, 2 storey single family dwelling with ancillary garage & garden to the front and rear. As can be seen from the image this is a dense urban area.
- 2.2. This document has been prepared by a Chartered Architect at al3d in support of the planning application to provide the local planning authority and others interested in the proposals an explanation of how the various constraints and opportunities, both physical and planning, have steered the design process. The principle, objectives, and criteria on which the design is based are described within this document.
- 2.3. It is not a standalone document - it must be read with the plans which constitute the principal information which have priority over the statement.
- 2.4. This application is for the demolition of the garage and rear garden room and the erection of a 2 storey side extension to house 2 self-contained flats. This will retain the existing 3 bedroom dwelling, albeit with a new entrance porch whilst providing an additional two No. 1 bed, 1 person flats with dedicated rear garden area. Also proposed are alterations to the front garden area and driveway to provide better parking provisions and bin storage for the existing and new dwellings.
- 2.5. This document considers planning policy criteria to confirm compliance with the LPA policies, and the National Planning Policy Framework, revised 19 December 2023.

3. The architectural and historic context of the building

- 3.1. The property forms part of a row of similar detached properties along the northern side of Berkeley Avenue and was likely built in the 1970s. Most of these properties have the same mix of red brick and render with ancillary garages and generally all designed as 2 storey buildings with a simple pitched roof with the gable facing the road.
- 3.2. Berkeley Avenue sits on an incline running east to west with the ground levels of the adjoining properties sloping north to south. This raises the building of No. 44 by about 1-2m above the road level with a steep sloping driveway and a stepped access up to the entrance as well as retaining wall to the garden along the entire southern perimeter along the road.
- 3.3. The house is largely constructed with red brick masonry, with two large slightly recessed vertical bands in the front formed by the windows with rendered panels above and below. The front gable of the roof is covered by a tile hung cladding.
- 3.4. Like most of the properties in the vicinity, the house has been altered repeatedly over the years, with modern U-PVC windows and doors and the addition of a garden room extension to the garage building.



Existing view from the Berkeley Avenue



Birdseye view from south-east of the proposed

4. Vision, Design Objectives and Layout

4.1. The principal aims of the design are:

- a. to create two No. 1 bed, 1 person flats in accordance with the national space standards in line with Policy H5 of the RBC Local Plan.
- b. to adapt the existing house to replace elements lost due to the extension such as the entrance, ground floor WC and first floor windows to the landing, bathroom and bedroom.
- c. to match the existing materials and architectural details to create a visually sympathetic elevational treatment; and

d. to adapt the front garden, driveway and access to allow for two level parking spaces, a new dedicated refuse store and cycle parking as well as a new access to the existing house and new flats without compromising the biodiversity of the existing garden.

4.2. The two flats are formed within the proposed 2 storey side extension that is designed to match the appearance in form and material of the original main building. It is set back and kept lower than the main building so that it appears subservient.

4.3. The footprint of the new extension matches the width and depth of the existing single storey outbuildings and covered walkway.

4.4. Both flats share a single communal entrance with stairs leading up to the flat on the first floor.

4.5. Each flat occupies the full floor plate and consist of a large open plan living space with kitchen, a full size bathroom with shower and a bedroom with small ancillary space that could be used as a home office.

4.6. New roof will have an identical pitch to the existing building with tiling and finishes to match.

4.7. Fenestration and doors will be UPVC to match the existing building. To prevent overlooking there are no windows in the west elevation or any projecting balconies on the North or South elevation.

4.8. The west facing new boundary wall will be brickwork with a parapet roof edge to eliminate any need to access via the neighbouring property.

4.9. The revised front garden and parking area is designed to offer two level car parking spaces, a significant improvement over the dangerously sloping existing driveway as well as an improved stepped access to the front door and space for a refuse store and bicycle locker, again on level ground to the roadway. The small amount of garden that this displaces will be made up for with improved planting to the remaining garden area.

4.10. A new enclosed entrance porch to the existing building will replace the existing entrance where the new extension now sits. Similarly, a new first floor window to the rear for the bathroom will be added to replace the one lost and the front facing first floor window to the small bedroom will be enlarged to ensure sufficient daylight.



4.11. Part of the rear garden will be sectioned off to provide an external amenity space for the ground floor flat.

Proposed Birdseye view from Northwest.

Proposed front elevation showing the matching use of brick and render

5. Materials

5.1. Materials and architectural treatments will be used to match the existing materials to allow the extension to blend in with the existing building. New garden retaining walls will be brickwork to match the building as the existing Tyrock stone wall effect of the existing garden retaining wall will likely need to be replaced in the near future as its condition is deteriorating.

6. Amenity – sun, light and overlooking.

6.1. There will be no loss of daylight or sunlight to any of the principal habitable rooms of any adjacent properties since extension is at least 6m away to the North East from the nearest window and the only potentially affected neighbouring property sits further up the slope with a ground floor level approx. 1.5m above the proposed extension's ground floor.

6.2. The existing building and site layout has determined the orientation and style of windows to the extension, so to tackle undue solar gain the new south facing windows will be using a low-G glass to strike a balance between excess solar gain in the summer and improved heat in the winter whilst still matching in with the existing fenestration in appearance.

6.3. A new shared front access path and steps grant access to both the existing building and new flats with a new stepped access formed for the existing house's garden.

6.4. Part of the rear garden will be portioned off to provide external



amenity space for the ground floor flat.

7. Boundary walls, fences, and railings

7.1. The existing boundary rear garden fence will be retained as it is with a new fence introduced between the new extension's amenity space and the remaining rear garden.

7.2. There is no shared party wall, and the new extension will sit over the footprint of the existing garage and garden room, wholly within the ownership boundary.

8. Site access

- 8.1. The existing site access is set back from the main line of traffic via a layby recess that was once used as a bus stop but is now a single short term parking bay with the access to the application property driveway and the neighbouring driveway via a portion that has been marked off with a white cross box (see photo 8.2).



- 8.2. The curb has been dropped along the entire length of the layby. Image of the existing site access. There will be a minor change in the site requiring the vehicular access to be extended eastward by approx. 3.5m. This will still leave plenty of space (approx. 6.9m) for the short term parking space. As noted above, the curb is already dropped, so the only change will be the increase in the length of the painted white cross box.

9. Car Parking

- 9.1. The site lies within Zone 2 (Primary Core Area), very close to Zone 1 of the RBC Zonal Scheme with excellent public transport connections and easy walking and cycling distance, with Berkeley Ave listed as one of the major Cycle Routes under policy TR4. Walking distances are under 20mins to the town centre and under 30mins to Reading Station.
- 9.2. The standard parking provisions required for a 3 bed dwelling house and 2 No 1 bed flats would normally be 4 spaces, however given the existing dwelling house only currently has 1 parking space in the current driveway and the two flats are only 1 bed dwellings 2 dedicated parking spaces are proposed, one to replace the existing driveway and one that could be offered to the flat residents, although the flats would be occupied as car-free developments, a provision that due to the close proximity to the centre and a good public transport connection is not an undue burden.
- 9.3. Increasing the parking provision to the mandated 4 spaces would sacrifice too much of the front garden, impacting biodiversity. It would also eliminate the current short term parking space as there would not be sufficient space.
- 9.4. Limiting the provision of parking spaces would also be in keeping with tackling the climate emergency and help towards meeting the council's carbon neutrality targets.

9.5. The minimum cycle standard for C3 Dwelling Flat 1/2-bed is 0.5, however, to compensate for the reduction in parking it is proposed to providing a secure bicycle locker for 2 bicycles, one space for each flat. The dwelling will be able to utilise its own garden access for any cycle storage.

10. Environmental Sustainability

- 10.1. The proposed works will require Building Regulations approval and will be carried out in accordance with those regulations to meet or exceed the required high levels of thermal insulation.
- 10.2. The proposals do not require any change to the current drainage from the site which will be maintained and remain unaltered outside the curtilage. The existing provision for water supply to the site will remain unchanged.
- 10.3. Water use within the new dwellings will utilise water efficiency measures.
- 10.4. There is a small increase in the roof area replacing approx. 52m² of existing roof area with 72m² over the new extension. All external hard landscaped areas are largely a like-for like replacement and will utilise permeable surfaces where feasible (subject to ground condition).
- 10.5. All new lights will be low energy LED and be operated with movement sensors and timers in communal areas, where possible, helping to reduce the light pollution. Small amount of wall mounted domestic external lighting is proposed, details of which are yet to be

developed but they will be just enough to provide safe movement within the site.

- 10.6. Each flat will allow for cross ventilation which can be supplemented with mechanical heat extraction ventilation.
- 10.7. Material choices and options for solar control are limited due to having to match with the existing property and its orientation.

11. Air Quality

- 11.1. The property sits within the boundary of the Air Quality Management Area under policy EN15
- 11.2. There is no impact on the air quality of others as the use is solely as a dwelling.
- 11.3. No new emission sources will be added. Existing combi-boiler to the main house to be retained and new flats to utilise combustion free heating solutions.
- 11.4. As a result, it is assessed that there is no impact on the air quality.

12. Biodiversity survey and report

- 12.1. As the proposed works replace existing single storey built structures and part of a domestic garden the impact is minimal. As the biodiversity

loss plan shows, a loss of less than 10m² is expected, below the 25m² trigger requiring a full assessment. See appended plan drawing 444-207.

12.2. There are no external indications of any variety of plant and animal life within the area of the proposed works, of a high level of interest which is usually considered to be important in this particular habitat. It is considered that there is not sufficient reasonable likelihood of any protected species to trigger a survey.

13. Contamination

Not relevant to this application.

14. Noise Assessment

14.1. The proposed development is residential in nature, next to an existing residential building within a residential neighbourhood and so will not have any undue noise impact on its surroundings.

14.2. The property faces a relatively busy urban 30mph road which is the primary source of noise pollution. As a result the bedrooms have been placed at the rear of the proposed flats and all windows and doors facing the road will be specified to achieve a good noise reduction and the property will use simple solutions to reduce the need for opening windows for background ventilation.

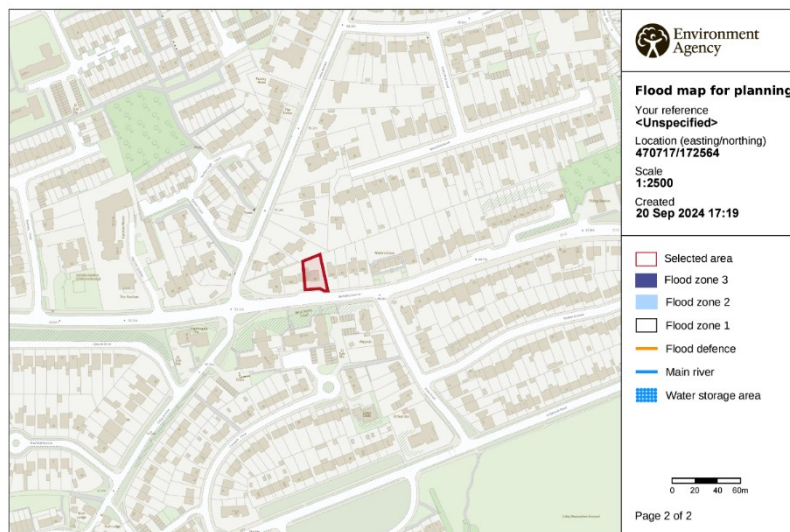
14.3. As residential units there will be no noise generated and the activities will be akin to a home, which is as the surrounding properties. There are no other external noises infiltrators such as bars, pubs, or industry nearby.

14.4. It is therefore assessed that the proposed new use will not have any impact on the surrounding properties. As the nature of the use is precisely the same as that of the surrounding properties. It is further assessed that the enjoyment of the residents within the new properties can be achieved using common, good construction techniques.

15. Flooding Risk assessment

15.1. The Environment Agency Flood map for planning indicates the site is in flood zone 1 which is a low flood risk. As this is a small domestic extension of less than 250m² in Flood Zone 1 it will not require a FRA.

16. Previous Planning



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- 16.1. There are no records of any planning applications on the RBC Online Planning database going back to 1988 for 44 Berkeley Avenue.

17. Community Infrastructure Levy

- 17.1. The development is liable for CIL payment as it comprises:
- 17.2. A development that creates 2 new dwellings despite being less than 100 m² Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA). The increase in GIA is calculated to be 74.6m²

18. Affordable Housing Statement

- 18.1. As a development with less than 4 dwellings in accordance with the RBLP policy H3 a financial contribution may be required towards affordable housing
- 18.2. Given the small size of the dwellings being provided a viability consideration will need to be taken into account. At this stage this cannot be determined as viability will depend on planning approval of this project and the volatility of the construction market.

19. Other planning policy considerations

19.1. The site does not fall under any other policy designation / zone, and it is not within a site or policy area listed below or fall within the scope requirements;

- Archaeological assessment
- Heritage Statement
- Landscape Principles
- Vibration Impact Assessment
- Open Space Statement
- Town Centre Impact Assessment
- Tree Survey
- Vent/Flue & Ventilation Details
- Viability Appraisal & Report
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Wind & Microclimate Assessment
- World Heritage Sites; and
- has no Scheduled Monuments nearby.

20. Submitted drawings.

Drawing Name	Number	Revision
Site & Location Plan	444-100	0
Existing Ground Floor Plan	444-101	0
Existing First Floor Plan	444-102	0
Existing Roof Plan	444-103	0
Existing Elevations	444-104	0
Existing Elevations	444-105	0
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	444-201	0
Proposed First Floor Plan	444-202	0
Proposed Roof Plan	444-203	0
Proposed Front & Rear Elevations	444-204	0
Proposed Side Elevations	444-205	0
Proposed Parking alteration	444-206	0
Biodiversity impact plan	444-207	0
Street Scape elevation	444-208	0

20.1. The following is a list of the drawings submitted with the application.

Drawings prepared by	Approved for issue by	Issue date	Unit 1, The Hall, 56 High Street, Tetsworth, Oxfordshire, OX9 7AB	Comments
al3d – P Reime	Aidan	23-09-2024	Client & Planning	0
al3d – P Reime	Aidan	15-10-2024	Client & Planning	0

