

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 231246/HOU

Address: 6 Kelmscott Close, Reading, RG4 7DG

Proposals: Removal of existing garage, to be replaced with double storey side extension.

Case Officer: Mr Gary Miles

Applicant: Mr Frank-Gemmill

Date received (valid from): 30 August 2023 **Target Decision date:** 24 November 2023

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The property is a large two storey detached dwellinghouse located at the end of Kelmscott Close, in Caversham Heights. The property is set down and back from the road and has a frontage with shrubs and off-street parking for a couple of cars. The property has a large south-facing rear garden. The application property and neighbouring properties are constructed of red brick and brown tiled roofs. Kelmscott Close is residential and the properties are of similar character and appearance, the property is not listed nor within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 22nd September 2023

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal consists of removal of existing large garage to be made smaller and part converted to store, external and internal remodelling of the existing ground floor. Proposed double storey side extension with new windows to front and rear, remodelled roof to accommodate the proposed first floor side extension, 2 no. skylights in side/western elevation roof slope.

Plans/documents considered:

Drawing No: 2261_001_00-Location Plan-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_002_00-Block Plan-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Drawing No: 2261_003_01-Planning Existing & Proposed Site Plan-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Drawing No: 2261_005_01-Planning Existing-Plans & Elevations-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Drawing No: 2261_007_01-Planning Existing-Elevations Materials-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Drawing No: 2261_010_01-Planning Proposed-Plans & Elevations-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Drawing No: 2261_011_01-Planning-Proposed Elevations-dated Aug 23 (Superseded)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 31st August 2023

Drawing No: 2261_001_01-Location Plan-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_002_01-Block Plan-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_003_03-Planning Existing & Proposed Site Plan-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_005_02-Planning Existing-Plans & Elevations-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_007_02-Planning Existing-Elevations Materials-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_010_04-Planning Proposed-Plans & Elevations-dated Aug 23

Drawing No: 2261_011_04-Planning-Proposed Elevations-dated Aug 23

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 12th October 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4. CONSULTATIONS

External: The following addresses were consulted by letter.

5 Kelmscott Close, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7DG
7 Kelmscott Close, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DG

One letters of representation has been received as follows:

The neighbour at no.7 Kelmscott Close supports the proposal: the neighbour explains how the neighbours have discussed the proposal with the applicant and so long as there is a 1m gap at first floor level between the proposed extension and the boundary line with their property they would be supportive of the proposals.

The neighbour explains how the existing proposal could block light in to the property and on to the rear patio. The neighbour reiterates the importance of the visible gap between properties as there is a gap between each and every house in Kelmscott Close of around 2m, but also because numbers 6 & 7 are the focal point as you enter the Close.

The neighbour confirms they would be supportive of the proposals so long as there is a 1m gap at first floor level.

Internal:

The Ecology Officer has been consulted as part of this application as the house 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).

The agent submitted the (Arbtech) Preliminary Roost Assessment dated 24/09/2023

In respect of the documents submitted by the agent on 10th November 2023 the Ecology officer states: The bat survey (Arbtech, September 2023) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the proposals is minimal. There are therefore no objections to this application on ecology grounds and the proposal is considered compliant with policies H9 and EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

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)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

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.

The original plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 31st August 2023 proposed the ground floor to be remodelled including the side/eastern elevation brickwork to maximise the amount of floor space at both ground floor and first floor level. This original proposal followed the line of the boundary between the host property and no.7 Kelmscott Close. Whilst the ground floor element would be fine hugging the boundary, would be mainly out of sight, the first floor element, by hugging the boundary created a huge mass to the side/eastern elevation abutting no.7, and the first floor proposal was completely overbearing and detrimental to the character of the host property and the wider streetscene.

When looking at the front/northern elevation - the proposal at first floor level zig zagged out hugging the boundary with no.7 to maximise internal floor space. Add to this the proposed roof amendments and the overall proposed side and first floor extension would have appeared huge in terms of scale and would effectively closed up the gap between the two neighbouring properties and changing the appearance of Kelmscott Close.

The amended plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 12th October 2023 propose the existing garage is reduced in size but to remain as a store/garage. The ground floor side/eastern elevation is to be demolished and realigned following the parallel line of the original property at 90 degrees. By doing this, the extension is pulled away from the boundary with no.7 thus increasing the gap between the two properties.

By pulling away from the boundary and reducing the overall width of the proposed the first floor element and roofline appear less overbearing and more in character with the existing property and streetscene. The amended first floor element looks better from the front/north, side/west and rear/south elevations as the gap between the two properties at first floor level has been increased, by Increasing the gap at ground floor level.

In terms of scale, design and materials, officers consider the amended proposal to be compliant with policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

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 original plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 31st August 2023 proposed an additional 3 forward facing windows at ground and first floor level and 2 additional skylights in the eastern roof slope. The forward facing windows on the south elevation would have been significantly detrimental to the privacy of the side bedroom window at no.7 Kelmscott Close. The original plans with the side/eastern elevation abutting the adjoining boundary at ground floor and first floor level would have been significantly detrimental to daylight and sunlight in respect of no.7 and it would have been significantly overbearing to no.7 whilst sitting in the garden or in the bedroom to the side. The original plans created a mass of brickwork and additional roofline and eaves with the 2 new skylights on the eastern roof slope would have been closer to the boundary with no.7, reducing their privacy and feeling of being overlooked.

The amended plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 12th October 2023 remove 2 of the 3 forward facing windows, therefore respecting the neighbours privacy at ground floor level and reducing the impact at first floor level.

The amended plans show the ground floor side/eastern elevation is to be demolished and realigned following the parallel line of the original property at 90 degrees. By doing this, the extension is pulled away from the boundary with no.7 thus increasing the gap between the two properties. By pulling the proposed away from the boundary line - the gap has increased at ground and first floor level. This has reduced the bulk of the proposal and mitigated the overbearing effect.

In terms of privacy, overbearing effects and sunlight/daylight, officers consider the amended proposal to be compliant with policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

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

GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

TL1
AP1
M1
PD2
PD3