

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Tilehurst

App Ref: PL/24/1324

Address: 307 The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4NS

Proposals: Single storey side and rear extension (amended)

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

Applicant: Mrs Saima Ahmed

Date received (valid from): 04/10/2024

Decision date (ext): 17/12/2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey link-detached property, joined to the neighbouring property by a single storey garage. The property lies within a row of similar properties on the southern side of the road. There is a relatively large area of hard standing at the front of the site, and a garden at the rear. The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

Site visit date: 24th October 2024

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey side and rear wrap-around extension. The proposed extension would project 6m in depth from the original rear wall of the dwelling. The proposed extension would have a flat roof with two roof lanterns. One window and bifold doors would be located in the rear elevation, and one window would be located in the front elevation. The existing garage would be demolished to facilitate the proposed development.





Plans submitted

Proposed Elevations Revised 3 received 2nd December 2024
 Proposed Revised 2 Parking Provision Block Plan received 2nd December 2024
 Proposed Plans Revised 5 received 2nd December 2024
 Location Plan received 4th October 2024
 Existing Elevations received 4th October 2024
 Existing Plans received 4th October 2024

Discussions with agent

The original scheme included a two-storey side extension. The agent was advised that officers had concerns regarding the proposed two storey side extension and it was considered that the first floor side element of the proposed extension could not be amended to overcome the concerns. The application property sits within a row of similar link-detached dwellings and a distinct feature within the row is the high-level gapping. It is considered that a two-storey side extension would significantly change the pattern of the link pairs and the strong character of openness. Thus, the proposed two-storey side extension would compromise the high level gapping/spacing and would not be in keeping with this feature within the area of the street scene. The agent was advised to remove the two-storey element from the scheme completely and continue with the application solely for the single storey elements of the proposed development.

Subsequently, revised plans were received.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport

The proposed extension will result in the loss of parking within the garage and along the side of the property to provide accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling.

In accordance with the Councils current standards a 3+ property in Zone 3 is required to provide 2 off road parking spaces. Plans have been submitted illustrating on site parking for 4 3 vehicles which is in excess of the current standards. No alterations to the existing vehicle access is proposed.

There are no Transport objections to this application as parking is being provided in accordance with current standards.

RBC Ecology

The application site is a house with attached garage located in a residential area of Tilehurst. The proposals include demolition of the garage and a two storey side extension.

The house is located in good habitat for roosting and commuting bats including a line of trees to the rear of the house. It lies adjacent to a Green Link (as per local policy EN12) which links Lousehill Copse woodland (and Local Wildlife Site) to the east with woodland and extensive open green areas associated with Calcot golf club to the west. Moreover, we have records of bat roost in buildings less than 70m away.

The plans will require significant works to one side of the roof, and it is unclear what will happen to the chimney. Nonetheless, there is a risk that the proposals may affect roosting bats and a bat survey report will need to be provided before this application can be determined. Further details are given below.

Legislation

All species of bats receive protection under UK law and it is a criminal offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitat Regulations), deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (the SNCO - Natural England in England).

Planning policy

Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System (this document was not revoked by the National Planning Policy Framework) states that:

“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted.”

In this case because neither the presence or otherwise of protected species, nor the extent to which they may be affected has been established, the application would not be in accordance with the above planning policy, or other planning policy in relation to biodiversity.

Survey requirements

A presence / absence bat survey is normally undertaken in two stages, firstly a preliminary roost assessment, whereby the inside and outside of the building is surveyed for bats and signs of bats. This survey can be undertaken at any time of year.

If bats are found or features within the building have the potential to support roosting bats and these will be affected by the proposals, further dusk emergence surveys during the bat active season (i.e. between May and the end of August) would need to be carried out. The applicant would then need to submit the results of the survey(s) along with any associated mitigation strategy prior to determination of the application.

Surveys should be carried out by suitably experienced ecologists who are a member of a professional organisation such as the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and / or are licensed or accredited by Natural England to survey bats.

Summary

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).

Officer note: as the two-storey element has been removed from the scheme, the amended proposal will not affect the existing roof of the dwelling and a bat survey is no longer considered necessary.

RBC Natural Environment

There is a sufficient distance from the nearest neighbours tree to not be of concern. As all the trees are off site they have physical protection from activity.

No objections and no conditions are necessary regarding trees.

The following addresses were consulted by letter:

All flats at Iris Court, New Lane Hill, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4JX
305 The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4NS
309 The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4NS

Letters of representation have been received as follows: **None**

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)
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.

In terms of design, the proposed extension is considered suitable, with materials and detailing to match the existing dwelling. In terms of scale, the proposed development is single storey in nature and considered subservient to the host dwelling. The proposed extension would replace the existing single storey garage projection and the high-level gapping would be retained above. The bulk of the proposal is contained at the rear of the site. Although the side element will be visible from the street scene, the dwelling is significantly set back from the roadside and it is not considered that the extension would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, or the property itself.

There are no objections to the proposed loss of the garage as there is sufficient space for 4 off road vehicle parking spaces at the front of the property, as confirmed by RBC Transport.

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.

Although the overall proposed development is large in scale, there are no identified risks of the proposed extensions causing overbearing effects to the neighbouring properties, or significantly reducing the amount of daylight and sunlight they receive. The depth of the proposed rear extension exceeds the 4m guidance within the SPD, however, the depth is not considered harmful due to its single storey form combined with the distances between the proposed extension and the main dwellings at the attached neighbouring sites. A single storey garage projection sits between the host dwelling and the main dwelling at 309 The Meadway, and a sufficient gap remains either side of the boundary fence with 305 The Meadway. The proposal does not include any side facing windows and therefore there would be no identified risks in relation to privacy and overlooking. Furthermore, a condition is attached to this permission to ensure the flat roof is not used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area.

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

Conditions

Time limit

Approved plans

Materials

Restriction of flat roof

Vehicle parking (as specified)