

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham

App Ref: PL/25/0035 Householder planning permission

Address: 71A HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 6DS

Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension with open deck and single storey side extension to form porch.

Applicant: Mr Ganesh Narasimhaiya

Received date: 08/01/2025

Target Decision date: 05/03/2025

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a detached residential bungalow located on the south side of Henley Road in Caversham, between the junctions with Rufus Isaacs Close and Donegal Close. The surrounding area comprises a variety of house styles, and Queen Annes School playing fields is opposite the application site to the north. The property is not a listed building, nor does it fall within a conservation area.



Extract of the location plan

Site visit date: 21/01/2025 Site visit photos:

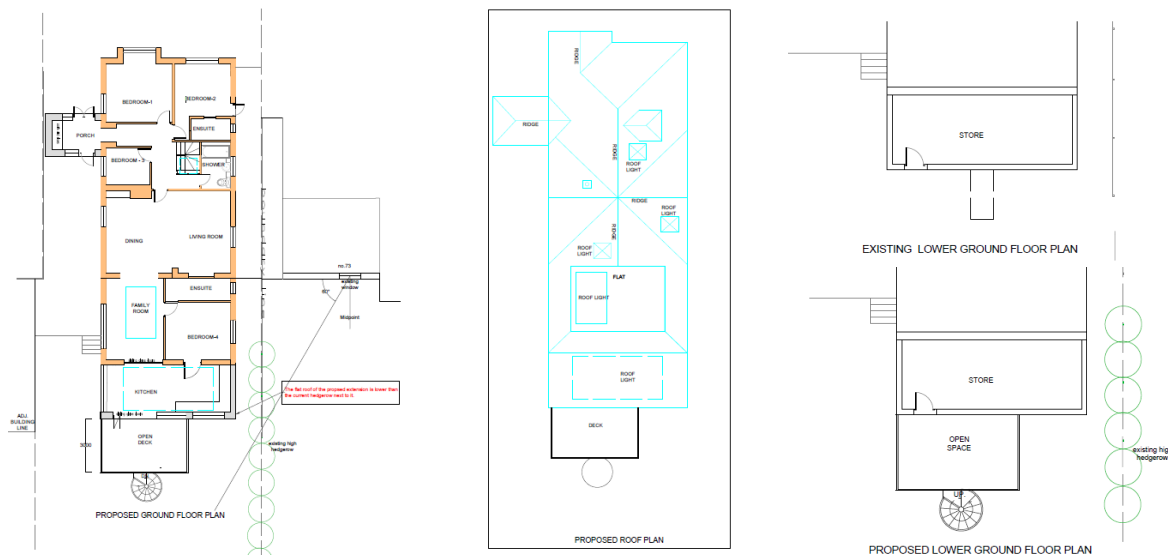


2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a single storey rear extension to replace the existing decking. The proposed extension would have a depth of 3m. One window would be located in the west side elevation, and one window and sliding doors would be located in the rear elevation. Beyond the proposed rear extension would be a new decking area with spiral stairs attached. The depth of the decking area would be 3m. The decking would not extend across the full width of the extension.

The proposal also includes a side porch addition with a hipped roof. The porch would include a door in the front elevation and a door in the rear elevation.

The materials proposed will match those of the existing dwelling.



Plans considered:

Drawing No. HR-03 – Existing Elevations received 8th January 2025

Drawing No. HR-01 – Location and Block Plan received 7th February 2025

Drawing No. HR-04 R2 – Proposed Floor Plans received 11th February 2025

Drawing No. HR-02 R – Existing Floor Plans received 5th March 2025 (Officer note: this plan also includes the proposed lower ground floor plan, as shown above)

Drawing No. HR-05 R2 – Proposed South and East Elevations received 5th March 2025

Drawing No. HR-06 R1 – Proposed North and West Elevations received 5th March 2025

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

08/0873 - Loft conversion and roof extensions at first floor level. REFUSED 21/10/2008 and allowed at appeal

08/0641 – Roof extensions at first floor level (Resubmission). PERMITTED 21/05/2008

07/1497 - Roof extensions at first floor level. REFUSED 15/02/2008

17/0810 – Single storey rear extension. PERMITTED 17/07/2017

4. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed by the case officer on 21st January 2025 for a period of 21-days. No letters of representation have been received.

Discussions with agent

Planning officers had concerns with regards to the original scheme submitted. It was considered that the total enlargement (the proposed rear extension together with existing rear extension) would not be a subservient addition to the dwelling and would not respect the character, appearance or scale of the original dwelling. The depth of the proposed extension together with the decking was considered excessive and would present an overbearing impact to the neighbouring property at no. 73 Henley Road. It was also considered that the additional side facing window in the East elevation should be obscure glazed to safeguard the amenities of this adjoining property.

Subsequently, the agent submitted amended plans reducing the depth of the proposed extension to 3m and stepping the decking in from the side boundary with no.73 to create some further relief to this neighbour. The agent also agreed for the new east facing window to be obscure glazed.

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)

SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

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 application site has a large rear garden and the proposed rear extension, terrace deck and spiral staircase will not represent an unacceptable loss in private outdoor space. Although the total enlargement at the rear (the existing extension together with the proposed development) is large in scale (acknowledging that the site topography means that in practice this is a two-storey addition), it is considered the plot is capable of taking a development of this size. The surrounding properties differ in terms of size, scale and design and therefore this development is not considered out of character or harmful to the surrounding area. The bulk of the development is contained at the rear, therefore posing minimal risk of harm to streetscape.

The proposed side porch addition will be visible from the street scene, however, the proposed porch is considered a subservient addition to the dwelling and would be significantly set back from the main front elevation. Moreover, the host property benefits from a fairly large forecourt at the front of the site, which further reduces the impact on the street scene from Henley Road. The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of design and would complement the existing dwelling with materials to match those of the existing.

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 proposed rear extension is set away from the side boundary with no.73 by approximately 0.7m, aligning with the side elevation of the host dwelling. The proposed decking area is stepped in further, at approximately 4m from the side boundary. The proposed floor plan illustrates that the line of light from the closest window at no.73 will not be breached by the proposed development. Furthermore, there is an existing high hedgerow along this boundary (albeit, this context may change in time without planning

permission being involved). The proposed side facing window in the East elevation of the existing rear extension will be obscure glazed, this will be ensured by a condition attached to this permission. A further condition will also prevent any additional openings on the flank elevations of the extension unless separate planning permission is sought and received. Overall, it is not considered that the impact on this neighbour would be significantly different to that of the existing arrangement. Whilst there is additional depth/bulk close to the boundary, thereby reducing outlook and slightly increasing a sense of enclosure, this is offset by the proposed decking area now being offset from the boundary, rather than the existing situation where the decking is far closer to the boundary – thereby reducing the scope for overlooking and a loss of privacy to the neighbouring building.

With regards to the neighbouring site at no. 71 Henley Road, there is a significant distance between the main dwelling at 71 and the common boundary with the application site, thereby reducing harmful amenity impacts from the proposed rear extension and terrace. The proposed rear extension and decking is located approximately 16m away from this neighbouring dwelling, moreover, a large outbuilding in the garden of no.71 would shield much of the proposal at the rear. The element of the proposed development closest to this neighbour would be the proposed side porch addition, however, due to the small-scale nature of the porch, there are no identified risks of this element causing any detrimental harm to neighbouring amenity. Overall, it is not considered that the proposals would result in any significant amenity concerns for this neighbour.

Other matters

The proposals do not affect the roof of the dwelling so it is unlikely that bats will be affected by the proposals.

The proposal does not result in the loss of parking and no changes to the existing dropped vehicle crossing are proposed.

The agent confirmed that the existing tree closest to the proposed development has been removed and the owner is planting a new one towards the rear boundary of the property (around 23m away). No other substantial trees fall within 15m of the proposed development.

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 – Time limit
M1 – Materials
AP1 – Approved plans
PD3 - Obscure glazing
PD2 – No new openings