

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green

App Ref: PL/24/0972 Householder planning permission

Address: 7 HIGHDOWN HILL ROAD, EMMER GREEN, READING, RG4 8QR

Proposal: Front porch extension and part single part two-storey rear extension.

Applicant: Ms S Cheong

Received date: 30-07-2024

Target Decision date: 24-09-2024 extended to 31-03-2025

Case Officer: James Schofield

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site is a modern detached dwelling which has been extended to the rear at the first floor.

Site visit date: 03/10/2024 & again on 04/03/2025

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposed development is for a porch with new lean-to roof linking the porch to the existing bay window, a two-storey rear extension with a hipped-roof, and a single-storey rear extension with a flat roof. Initially the proposal included conversion and expansion of the garage into a outbuilding – but this was removed through the course of the application. Submitted documents:

Dwg No. 04624-01 Existing Ground Floor Plan

Dwg No. 04624-02 Existing Floor and Roof Plans

Dwg No. 04624-03 Existing Elevations

~~Dwg No. 04624-04 Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Superseded)~~

~~Dwg No. 04624-05 Proposed Floor & Roof Plans (Superseded)~~

~~Dwg No. 04624-06 Proposed Elevations (Superseded)~~

~~Dwg No. 04624-07 Location & Block Plan (Superseded)~~

As received on the 30th of July 2024

~~Drwg No. 04624-04 Rev. A Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Superseded)~~

~~Drwg No. 04624-06 Rev A. Proposed Elevations (Superseded)~~

~~Drwg No. 04624-07 Rev A. Location & Block Plan (Superseded)~~

As received on the 7th of October 2024

~~Drwg No. 04624-04 Rev. B Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Superseded)~~
~~Drwg No. 04624-05 Rev A. Proposed Floor & Roof Plans (Superseded)~~
~~Drwg No. 04624-06 Rev B. Proposed Elevations (Superseded)~~
As received on the 21st of October 2024

Drwg No. 04624-07 Rev B. Location & Block Plan
As received on the 23rd of October 2024

Drwg No. 04624-04 Rev C. Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Drwg No. 04624-05 Rev C. Proposed Floor & Roof Plans
Drwg No. 04624-06 Rev D. Proposed Elevations
As received on the 10th of March 2025

BS5837:2012 TREE SURVEY AND ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT Dated: 28th February 2025, reference: GHA/DS/160221:25
Arboricultural Impact Assessment [Appendix A – separate file same document]
Tree Protection Plan dated March 2025 from GHA Trees
As finalised on the 19th of March 2025*

**Please note a number of versions were received, and for the sake of clarity, only the latest versions which were acknowledged as sufficient by the Trees Officer have been uploaded to the public portal. Earlier versions were not sufficient or complete.*

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None found.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The site notice was sent to the applicant and posted by them on the 15th of August 2024. Photographic evidence was sent to the council on the 17th of August. This notice was observed at the first site visit. The following addresses were consulted by letter on the 1st of August 2024.

- 5 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QR
- 8 Eric Avenue, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QX
- 12 Eric Avenue, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QX
- 11 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QR
- 9 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QR
- 6 Eric Avenue, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QX
- 10 Eric Avenue, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QX

No letters of representation were received.

Following on from significant time elapsing and changes being made to the proposal, these addresses were re-consulted on the 12th of March running until the end of the 21st of March. No response was received.

- 5 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QR
- 9 Highdown Hill Road, Emmer Green, READING, RG4 8QR

Archaeology

The Archaeology Officer has indicated that the proposal site lies within and has uncovered six records of archaeological features of some importance in the past, and that the proposed works could do the same. As such, he has recommended a condition requiring survey work and a contingency plan for protecting and managing the items/structures of archaeological significance should they be found. It is the view of the Planning Officer that this approach will be sufficient, and that their proposed condition should be included in any decision to grant approval.

Ecology

A bat survey was conducted and submitted in the Spring of 2025, our Ecology Officer has indicated this survey met the required standard and that they believe the risk to bats is minimal.

Trees

An Arboricultural Survey, and Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan were submitted in February and March 2025, and it is the view of the Tree Officer that her suggested condition requiring the works be undertaken in line with the Tree Protection Plan should ensure damage to the trees is minimised. It is the view of the officer that this is in line with adopted policy and any decision to grant approval should include this condition.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

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 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance 2019 onwards

Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that alterations to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of location, materials and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The design of the proposed porch would integrate well into the modern host dwelling. The use of the gable and lean-to roof would add visual interest into the otherwise unadorned front elevation with its flat-roof over the bay window. The scale of the porch would be of appropriate size for a dwelling of this size.

While the two-storey rear extension would be large, it would not be out of scale with the host dwelling. This is aided by the design of the proposed roof, mirroring the hipped-roof of the host dwelling. While it is noted that the Design Guide encourages proposals to be set down from the original ridge-line, in this instance, due to site and proposal specific details – it is considered to be acceptable. As its location behind the dwelling combines with its place within the wider design of the proposal would ensure appropriate integration of this and other elements into the host dwelling.

The rear extension would not increase the overall footprint of the dwelling very substantially, as the host dwelling is already large, and the plot is both wide and deep.

Further to this analysis, the proposal satisfies the character considerations of local policies H9 and CC7.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not harm the privacy amenity of neighbouring sites. Policy CC8 states alterations to a house will be acceptable where they will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

The size and location of the proposed front porch would ensure the avoidance of any loss of light, privacy, or creating a sense of overbearingness.

Two-storey rear extension: While the two-storey rear extension would be large, it would not extend further than the back of the nearest neighbour number 9 Highdown Hill Road. There are side-facing windows at the first storey of this dwelling which would likely suffer loss of light, however, these windows appear to serve a bathroom rather than a habitable room. And the distance between the dwellings, in addition to the use of hipped-rooves, would reduce the loss of light further. It is noted that the overlooking situation could be worsened slightly by the presence of new windows and Juliet balconies nearer to the back of their two-storey rear extension. However, not to any degree considered harmful or unusual by the planning officer. A long window, above normal head height, is proposed; for the sake of insuring privacy is not compromised, a condition requiring this to be obscure glazed should be included.



Note the sewerage pipes typical of bathrooms.

The single-storey rear extension would not extend beyond the rear wall of the nearest neighbour, No 9, and while its flat roof could be converted into balcony or porch, a condition could adequately control this potential privacy problem. As such, should a decision to grant approval be granted, a condition removing the PD rights for the conversion of the flat roof should be included.

Further to the above analysis, the proposal is considered to accord with the aims of local policies H9, H10, and CC8 of the Local Plan provided the discussed conditions are included.

Archaeological Impact

Policy EN2 indicates planning permission will not be granted in cases where the assessment of the archaeological impacts is inadequate. The Archaeology Officer indicated that for this site, a condition requiring the survey and management of this risk should be included. It is the view of the planning officer that their proposed condition, if followed, will ensure the development is will to accord with Policy EN2 of the Local Plan (2019) and avoid damaging archaeological assets of importance.

Biodiversity and Sustainability

Part 'b' of Policy EN12 indicates that all development sites should not result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. These aims are supported by Policy H9 which states that extensions and alterations will only be acceptable where it does not result in the loss of biodiversity within gardens. *'Paragraph 99 of the government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System'* states that the presence or otherwise of protected species, including bats, must be established before planning permission is granted, and otherwise all relevant material considerations must be addressed first.

The bat survey was submitted and fully reviewed by the planning officer and the Council's Ecology officer who noted that the bat survey was done properly and the risk to bats is considered to be minimal.

As such the proposal is considered to accord with the biodiversity and sustainability considerations of Policies H9 and EN12 of the local plan.

Trees

Part 'b' of Policy EN12 indicates that all development sites should not result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. These aims are supported by Policy H9 which states that an extension will only be acceptable where it does not result in the loss of biodiversity within gardens.

There are no Tree Protection Orders within the proposal site, however, the end of the garden is part of a woodland TPO. The site does have a number of trees near to the proposal site of high value. And as such, a survey was undertaken and plans submitted for ensuring their protection. The Tree Officer concluded these were sufficient and recommended a condition that they be required to be followed as part of construction to manage potential damage to the trees.

The proposal is considered unlikely to result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity. As such the proposal is considered to accord with the biodiversity and sustainability considerations of Policies H9 and EN12 of the local plan provided the proposed condition is included as part of any decision to grant approval.

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

Recommended Conditions:

1. Standard time limit



2. Approved plans
3. Materials as specified
4. Curtil PD rights: roof conversion
5. Window to be obscure glazed
6. Archaeology
7. Trees