

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley

App Ref: PL/24/0415 Full planning permission

Address: Land to South Of 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY

Proposal: Erection of a detached dwelling with parking and amenity space

Applicant: Gareth Bertram Ltd

Received date: 2024-04-02

Target Decision date: 2025-04-30 (EOT)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwerska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a parcel of land south of number 104 Berkeley Avenue, which has recently been renovated as part of a previous planning application to erect one new dwelling north of 104 Berkeley Avenue. The approved plans show the application site as a side garden to number 104 Berkeley Avenue. The surrounding area is predominately residential on a busy highway, approaching the junction with A4155 Bath Road. The character of surrounding dwellings is varied, with staggered building lines across north of Bath Road and cramped layout on Benyon Court at the rear.



Aerial view of the application site. Image taken from Google Maps on 07/08/2024.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached dwelling with associated parking and amenity space. The proposed dwelling is a bungalow with two bedrooms in the loft space. The design of the property reflects the design of the neighbouring new dwellings on the wider site which share the proposed/partly implemented private access off Berkeley Avenue.



Proposed CGI visuals in context



Proposed Block Plan

Measurements:

GIA = 121.42m²

Rear garden = 123.85m²

Proposed rear garden of existing 104 Berkeley Avenue = 127.56m²

Bedroom 1 = 8.51m²

Bedroom 2 = 13.48m²

Bedroom 3 = 18.72m²

2.1. Information Submitted:

- 005 Rev D Proposed Block Plan, dated 05/03/2024, received 28 October 2024
- 005.2 Rev B Tracking Diagrams, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 006 Rev B Proposed Ground Floor, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 006.1 Rev A Proposed First Floor, dated 05/07/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 007 Rev B Proposed Roof Plan, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 008 Rev B Proposed Elevations, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 009 Rev A Proposed Elevations, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 010 Rev A Street View, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 016 Rev B Proposed Landscape, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024

- 017 Rev B Proposed Service Plan, dated 05/03/2024, received 11 July 2024
- 018 Rev A Construction Management Site Plan, received 11 July 2024
- AIA.BAR.2206.Sk02 Arboricultural Assessment & Method Statement, Mark Welby, dated 13 June 2024, received 14 June 2024
- 001 Location Plan, dated 05/03/2024, received 03 April 2024
- 002 Existing Plan, dated 05/03/2024, received 03 April 2024
- 003 Existing Elevations, dated 05/03/2024, received 03 April 2024
- 004 Existing Elevations, dated 05/03/2024, received 03 April 2024
- Planning and Design and Access Statement, received 03 April 2024
- LUS24124 BS&BGP Biodiversity Statement and Biodiversity Gain Plan, Luscinia Ecology, dated 15/08/2024, received 3 September 2024
- LUS24124-03 On-site Post Intervention Map, dated 18/10/2024, received 18 October 2024
- BNG Metric Calculations, received 18 October 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/23/1643 - Erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with parking and amenity space. – Application withdrawn

PL/22/0413 - Works of demolition and the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with parking and amenity space. – Application permitted on 19/05/2023

PL/21/0420 - Demolition of the existing dwelling and garage and the erection of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings with parking and amenity space. – Application withdrawn

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- **RBC Transport Development Control** – No objections following revisions made to tracking diagram and refuse collection point.
- **RBC Natural Environment** - The application is supported in terms of trees and landscaping subject to conditions to secure implementation of tree protection measures and to secure better proposed tree species mix and root barriers around the proposed soakaway.
- **Ecology** – Revised BNG metric calculations show a net gain mostly due to new tree planting, however, new trees in gardens do not count towards net gain. The site is subject to the self-build exemption and only subject to Policy EN12 requirements and in this case adding new (native) trees and a native hedge line along the boundary, along with bird and bat boxes are an acceptable way to increase biodiversity on site. Condition required to secure scheme of eradication of Japanese Knotweed identified on site.

The following addresses were consulted by letter:

- 102 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY
- 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY

No letters of representation received.

A re-consultation was held from 15th July 2024 to 5th August 2024 due to a change in the site boundary line and significantly revised proposed drawings. No letters of representation were received at that time.

A site notice was displayed on site by the applicant.

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'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING

H2: DENSITY AND MIX

H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING

H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE

H11: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPD

Affordable Housing (2021)

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Planning Obligations Under S106 (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction (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.

6. APPRAISAL

6.1. Land Use Matters

The NPPF (2023) states that LPAs should “*encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high*

environmental value". The NPPF definition of 'previously developed land' excludes private residential gardens in built up areas. Therefore, it is clear that the priority for development should be on previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings.

The application site comprises a parcel of land which is shown on previously approved plans to make up the side garden of 104 Berkeley Avenue. As such, the proposal is assessed in relation to local policy H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens. This requires that new residential development that involves land within the curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:

- a) It makes a positive contribution to the character of the area;
- b) The site is of an adequate size to accommodate the development;
- c) The proposal has a suitable access;
- d) The proposal would not lead to tandem development;
- e) The design minimises the exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas;
- f) It does not cause detrimental impact on residential amenities;
- g) The emphasis is on the provision of family housing;
- h) There is no adverse impact on biodiversity, and
- i) The proposal does not prejudice the development of a wider area.

The resulting plots for the proposed dwelling and 104 Berkeley Avenue are small, however, relative to the plots in the immediate surrounding area, this is not considered at odds with the pattern of development and layout. The proposal does not result in tandem development, nor does it prejudice the development of a wider area. The principle of development is therefore accepted on this site.

Design, amenity and biodiversity considerations are discussed further in this section.

6.2. Design and Character

The NPPF (Para 131) sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Policy CC7 states *"All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including:*

- *Layout: urban structure and urban grain;*
- *Landscape;*
- *Density and mix;*
- *Scale: height and massing; and*
- *Architectural detail and materials"*

The proposed dwelling reflects the design and follows the building line of 104 Berkeley Avenue and the recently approved and implemented new dwelling to the west, incorporating timber cladding and similar fenestration design and layout. The dwelling is accessed from the recently approved and implemented private access drive off Berkeley Avenue.

The proposed scale of the dwelling is appropriate in relation to the resultant plot created and is a good response to the pattern of development and urban grain along this section of Berkeley Avenue. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy CC7 and H11 of the Reading Local Plan.

6.3. Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 states: *“Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:*

- *Privacy and overlooking;*
- *Access to sunlight and daylight;*
- *Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;*
- *Harm to outlook;*
- *Noise and disturbance;*
- *Artificial lighting.”*

Furthermore, Policy H10 states: *“Dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children’s play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage, and drying space.”*

There are minimal risks identified for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents. The loft bedrooms are served by dormers at the front elevation and rooflights at the rear to prevent overlooking to 102 Berkeley Avenue. There is no risk of harm identified in relation to overshadowing or loss of privacy to either 102 or 104 Berkeley Avenue.

The resultant private outdoor amenity space for the dwelling will mostly be formed of a side garden measuring marginally above the GIA of the proposed dwelling, in line with recommendations of policy H10. The remaining garden of no. 104 Berkeley Avenue will be reduced but not to an unreasonable extent.

As such, the proposal is in accordance with policies CC8 and H10 of the Reading Local Plan.

6.4. Transport and Parking

Policy TR5 requires all development to provide car and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the borough to sustainable transport facilities. The site is located on a spur road off of Berkeley Avenue and is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council’s adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency ‘Premier Route’, which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.

The proposed car parking provision, electric vehicle charging point, and cycle storage are all in accordance with the guidance as outlined in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011, and the proposal is therefore in accordance with policy TR5 of the Reading Local Plan.

6.5. Biodiversity and Landscaping

Policy EN12 states *“On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.”*

Policy EN14 is also relevant, and states *“Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended.”*

The proposal is exempt from providing mandatory biodiversity net gain under Schedule 7A, as it is a self-build scheme. The proposal is therefore required to comply with policy EN12 alone, and the submitted biodiversity metric calculations demonstrate that a gain has been

achieved on site. Landscaping principles have been demonstrated and a condition is recommended to secure the further details of planting and maintenance.

Overall, the proposal accords with policies EN12 and EN14 of the Reading Local Plan.

6.6. Affordable Housing

Policy H3 states *“on sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing”*. The Affordable Housing SPD further outlines that *“For sites of 1-4 dwellings, where the contribution required by policy H3 is 10%, this will equate to 5% of GDV of the development.”*

The applicant has agreed to enter a legal agreement to secure £18,750.00 for the purpose of affordable housing.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposal has been assessed in line with national and local adopted policies as outlined above and is considered to accord with those policies.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Recommended Conditions:

1. Time Limit Standard
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials as Specified
4. SAP Assessment Minor Design Stage – To be submitted prior to commencement.
5. SAP Assessment Minor As Built Stage – To be submitted prior to first occupation.
6. Landscaping (small scale) – to be approved prior to first occupation.
7. Arboricultural Method Statement (As Specified)
8. Habitat Enhancement Scheme – To be submitted prior to commencement.
9. Japanese Knotweed Eradication Scheme – To be submitted prior to commencement.
10. Permitted Development Rights Removed – Class A (extensions) & Class E (Outbuildings)
11. Hours of Construction
12. No Bonfires
13. Construction Method Statement – to be submitted prior to commencement.
14. Vehicle Parking (As Specified)
15. Vehicular Access (As Specified)
16. Cycle Parking (As Specified)
17. Refuse and Recycling (As Specified)

Informatives:

1. Terms
2. Pre-commencement conditions
3. Building Control
4. Complaints about construction
5. Encroachment
6. Highways
7. Do not damage the verge



8. Trees
9. CIL
10. S106
11. Positive and Proactive