

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: PL/25/0864 Householder planning permission

Address: 7 GURNEY CLOSE, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7LE

Proposal: Two storey side extension and first floor rear extension

Applicant: Mr David Rankin

Received date: 12/06/2025

Target Decision date: 27/08/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey, detached chalet style dwellinghouse located on the western side of Gurney Close, constructed from red brick and tiled pitched roof. The original property has a dormer to the front roof slope, 3 windows at first floor level serve 2 bedrooms and a bathroom. The property benefits from a private frontage providing lawn and off-street parking for 2 vehicles, along with a single detached garage to the side of the main house. The property has a south-westerly facing rear garden providing ample outdoor space including access around the entire property with a large gap between the host property and the neighbour at no.5 Gurney Close.

Gurney Close is made up of detached bungalows and chalet style houses. The properties have definitive gaps between them. Properties have been subject to refurbishments alterations and extensions of differing scales and design. The property is not listed, nor within a conservation area.

Site visit date: 10th July 2025



Existing front elevation, with front garden, driveway parking and garage to side (behind van).



Rear elevation(s) and rear garden layout.

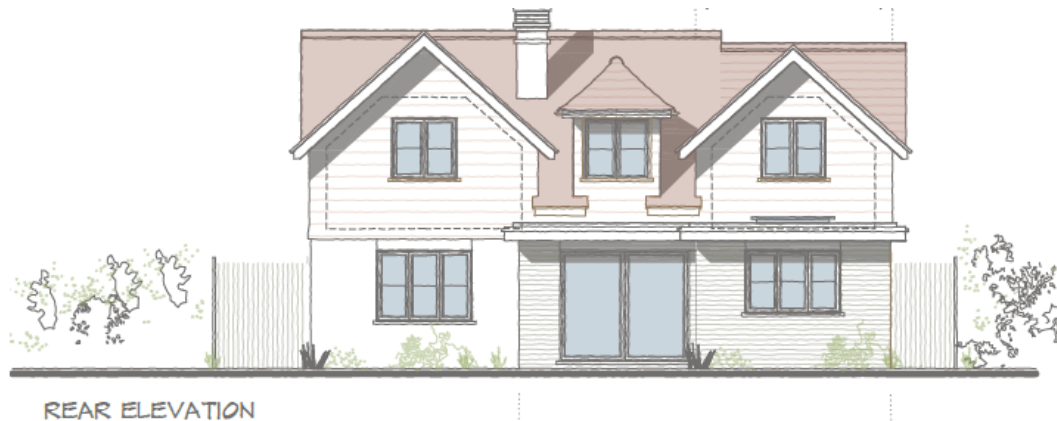
2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal consists of demolition of existing garage and the creation of a two-storey side extension to the south measuring circa 3.4m in width and a pitched roof above. First-floor extension to the rear with pitched roof - effectively building into the rear roof slope above the existing ground floor. Creation of 3 cottage style dormers to front elevation and one new cottage style dormer to the rear. A single storey doglegged rear extension measuring circa 7m in width, with a maximum projection of 3m and a roof height of 2.9m. The proposal includes a new porch to the front elevation with a projection of 1m, finished with a pitched roof to match the rest of the pitched roofs and cottage style dormers. New windows and doors.

Plans considered:

Drawing no: 0000/200 – Block and Location Plan, dated Mar 25
 Drawing no: 0000/201 – Ground Floor Plan, dated Mar 25
 Drawing no: 0000/202 – First Floor Plan, dated Mar 25
 Drawing no: 0000/203 – Proposed Elevations 1of2, dated Mar 25
 Drawing no: 0000/204 – Proposed Elevations 2of2, dated Mar 25
 Bat Survey Report (NKM Associates) dated 7th Mar 25
 Received by the LPA on 12th June 2025





3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

A planning notice was affixed to the property on 10th July and left in place a minimum of 21 days for the statutory consultation period.

One letter of representation was received:

- Neighbour at 5 Gurney Close – in support of the proposed development.

5. 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. 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)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

7. 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 proposed development has been sympathetically designed to respect the character of the existing chalet style property in terms of roof angles and ridge heights, re-creation of dormers albeit cottage style dormers to the front and back

Whilst the development includes a new two-storey side extension, the extension is set back from the original front elevation, respects the character of the host property and wider streetscene in terms of materials, and design. The pattern of neighbouring properties is respected with the extension being pulled away from the boundary-a gap of circa 0.9m will be maintained along the boundary with no.5 Gurney Close.

The proposal is considered 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 extension is not considered overbearing to neighbours, due to the positioning of the properties – the neighbour at no.5 is set closer to the highway, whilst the neighbour at no.9 is set further back from the highway – in a staggered formation. Whilst new windows are introduced at first floor level to the rear elevation, it should be noted that a rear dormer with windows could be achieved under Permitted Development for this specific property.

The proposal includes a new high level window at first floor level along the southern elevation which is to serve the master bedroom, however this replaces an existing full waist height window already serving a bedroom, therefore it could be argued that loss of privacy to no.5 Gurney Close is partially reduced as a result of the proposed development.

The proposed extension to the south, is to be pulled off the boundary, reducing the feeling of any overbearingness. The property retains ample outdoor space for socialising and enjoyment.

The proposal is considered acceptable with policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Ecology

The application site comprises of an older original style property which may have features potentially suitable for use by foraging bats. A Bat Survey Report (NKM Associates) was submitted with the application. The report concludes at the time of the survey for the proposed works, 7 Gurney Close was not identified as a bat roost or hibernation site, and as such no further surveys or mitigation measures are required.

If plans change and works will affect the northwest gable wall, then at least two nocturnal surveys are to be undertaken in the summer roosting period 1st May – 30th September with at least one in the optimal period 1st May – 31st August. No birds' nests were observed either in or on 7 Gurney Close.

Officers consider the proposal is compliant with policies EN12 & H9 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

Tree Matters

No tree docs submitted at the time of submission. The site visit confirmed the minimal presence of trees with only one ornamental tree present. A tree survey was not deemed necessary for 1 tree. An informative will be included in the decision notice stating the following:

I36/29 – Advice to use tree protection

You advised that demolition and related activity may harm adjacent trees and/or their Root Protection Areas (as defined by BS5837:2012). As such, it is recommended that protective fencing is erected prior to commencement of demolition to protect both tree canopies and Root Protection Areas. If trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order are present or the site is within a Conservation Area, such protection measures are a necessity to prevent tree damage (potentially subject to enforcement action) and advice should be sought from the Natural Environment Team.

8. 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.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Recommended Conditions:

TL1
AP1
M3
PD5