

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights Ward

App Ref: PL/24/1701

Address: CHERRYCROFT, UPPER WARREN AVENUE, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7EB

Proposals: Two storey front, side and rear, single storey rear extensions following the demolition of the garage and car port.

Case Officer: Mishga Marshall

Applicant: Mr Sean McCarthy

Date received (valid from): 23/12/2024

Target Decision date: Extension of time agreed until 22/08/2025

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

Cherrycroft is set back from the main front road and consist of a two storey detached property with pitched roof. The surrounding area consists of two storey detached dwellings set amongst spacious plots. There is no level of uniformity along this section of the road as many properties having been redeveloped in recent years giving the surrounding area a more modern feel in terms of design but also retaining the leafy feel with low level frontages and high level vegetation remaining a key design/ character feature throughout the area.

Site visit date: 25/02/2025

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This application is for the construction of a two storey front, side and rear extension, which includes the demolition of the garage and car port prior the construction. The proposed extension would serve an annexe on the ground floor as well as an extended kitchen and family room and two extended bedrooms and an additional new bedroom on the first floor. The proposal would entail the loss of an existing garage, however it is evident that there is plenty of off-street parking still available on site.

No works have been undertaken or started in relation to the proposed extension development.

Amendments Sought

Amendments were sought during the determination of this planning application as the initial assessment of the proposed development described in the section above raised concerns. The applicant was requested to amend the scheme in a following way:

1. Roof design - currently, the various roof elements appear disjointed and do not integrate well with one another. The differing rooflines create a fragmented aesthetic that detracts from the overall composition of the building. To improve cohesion, I would suggest exploring ways to simplify the roof structure, ensuring that the transition between different sections feel intentional and visually balanced. Aligning the rooflines more effectively or incorporating consistent design elements could help unify the appearance.
2. Front elevation - the front extension presents a combination of different shapes that do not sit harmoniously together. In particular the side extension beyond the main front elevation wall disrupts the visual balance of the building. This current design has created a disjointed effect, making the dwelling appear less cohesive. It may be beneficial to reconsider its placement or refine its integration with the original dwelling to create a more unified frontage. Achieving a smoother transition between the extension and the main dwelling would contribute to a more polished and aesthetically pleasing design.

3. Rear elevation - the rear elevation also appears somewhat disconnected, with some elements appearing disjointed with one another, for example again the many different roofs to the rear. Aligning these key elements and ensuring a more fluid connection between the different sections of the elevation will help to achieve a more integrated and harmonious look.

The following assessment is on the amended plans received.

Plans considered received on 19/12/2024:

23924-01 Existing ground floor plan
23924-02 EXISTING FIRST FLOOR AND ROOF PLANS
23924-03 EXISTING ELEVATIONS
~~23924-04 PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN~~
~~23924-05 PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR AND ROOF PLANS~~
~~23924-06 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS~~
~~23924-07 Location and Block Plans~~

Documents considered received on 30/01/2025

~~Cherrycroft - AIA - January 2025~~
~~TREE REPORT (AIA) - Cherrycroft, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, RG4 7EB~~

Documents considered received on 16/04/2025

23924-07 REV A Location and Block Plans
23924-04 REV A PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Documents considered received on 22/04/2025

~~SPH/PEA-25/15.04 PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT CHERRYCROFT - 22 April 2025~~

Documents considered received on 29/04/2025

23924-05 REV A PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR AND ROOF PLANS
~~23924-06 REV A PROPOSED ELEVATIONS~~

Documents considered received on 14/07/2025

~~v3 TREE REPORT (AIA) - Cherrycroft, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, RG4 7EB~~
~~Cherrycroft - TPP - Rev B - July 2025~~
~~Cherrycroft - AIA - Rev D - July 2025~~

Documents considered received on 17/07/2025

SPH/PEA-25/15.04 PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL (DBW) AT CHERRYCROFT

Documents received 31/07/2025

23924-08 Existing Ground Floor Plan After All Demolition

Documents received on 15/08/2025

BS5837:2012 TREE SURVEY, ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT reference: GHA/DS/165890:25b, dated 1st August 2025
Tree Protection Plan Rev B dated August 2025

Documents received 22/08/2025

23924-06 REV B Proposed Elevations

Given the scale and extent of alterations proposed as part of this application, the Local Planning Authority requested the submission of a demolition plan. This was considered necessary in order to provide clarity on the extent of the works to the existing dwelling and to ensure that the proposed development would not amount to a complete or substantial demolition, which would instead require planning permission beyond the scope of a householder application. The demolition plan has since been provided and confirms that the proposed works can be

undertaken in association with the extensions and alterations applied for, and that the original dwelling would remain as the primary structure.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/24/1671 - Beech tree (T4) - remove 2 low branches over driveway. To allow clearance.

Horse Chestnut tree (T5) - fell to ground level. Leaning tree.

Horse Chestnut (T6) - remove stem over driveway, remove low branch on neighbours side, cut back branch above to union approx 1 meter from main stem. To allow clearance and light to neighbours side.

Horse Chestnut (T7) - remove low branch and drooping branch on neighbours side. To allow light.

Horse Chestnut (T8) - remove 2 lowest branches on customers side, remove 2 branches in contact with phone line, remove small low branches on neighbours side. To allow clearance and light to neighbours side. - Split Decision

4. CONSULTATIONS

Site notice was erected at site.

One letter of representation has been received.

Ferndale, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, RG4 7EB (comment received 06/08/2025) - The resident has just learned about planning application PL/24/1701 for a major rebuild of *Cherrycroft*, a neighbouring property on Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham. They express concern that Reading Borough Council (RBC) did not notify them, despite being an affected party and RBC's statutory duty to consult. - **In Reading, we comply to the consultation obligations, by requiring planning officers to attend sites and to personally arrange for the display of notices in places where they can be seen and read by the public. When the site was visited this February, a site notice was on display at the front of Cherrycroft.*

They note that the original application was submitted on **19/12/2024** for a modest alteration, with a consultation expiry date of **25/07/2025**. However, **seven new documents** were submitted on **17/07/2025**, proposing a significantly larger development.

The resident seeks clarification on:

1. Whether the new submission is being treated as a **separate application** with a new consultation period. - **There is no statutory duty to notify neighbours of amendments to a planning proposal, but officers do tend to do this if it is believed that the change could have an impact on the neighbour. In this case the changes sought were to improve the design and appearance of the extended house and made no change to the floor plan or relationship with neighbouring properties. As such re-consultation was not deemed necessary.*
2. If not, whether the **original consultation period will be extended** to allow comments on the revised proposal. - **The original consultation period will not be extended for the reason above, however as the decision notice has yet to be published, RBC will take the comments raised into consideration.*

*Officer comment in *ITALICS*

The following statutory consultees were consulted.

RBC Ecology - Requested for a Bat Survey to be carried out, no objection upon receipt of requested bat survey

RBC Transport Development Control - No objection

RBC Trees - Planning Natural Environment - No objections subject to conditions.

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 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

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)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPG 2021

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.

It is acknowledged that the overall footprint of the proposed development would be relatively large in relation to the existing dwelling. However, the property benefits from a generous plot size, which comfortably accommodates the scale of the proposed additions without resulting in a cramped or overdeveloped appearance. Furthermore, the dwelling is set significantly back from the public highway, and as a result, the extensions would not be prominent in views from the street scene. This setback position greatly reduces the visual prominence of the proposed works, ensuring that the development would have a limited impact on the character and appearance of the wider area when viewed from public vantage points.

The current dwelling features some spaciousness at first floor level adjacent the east boundary, above the flat roof garage. The proposals would increase the built form at this point. However, there would be a gap to the side boundary and given the single storey nature of the adjacent property at this point, no unacceptable terracing affect is considered to arise.

Although the scale of the proposal is substantial when compared to the existing dwelling, it is not considered to constitute overdevelopment of the site. This conclusion takes into account not only the spacious nature of the plot and the position of the dwelling within it, but also the established character of the surrounding area. The street comprises a varied mix of dwellings of differing sizes, designs, and extensions, with several properties having benefitted from large-

scale alterations and additions in the past. There is no set design style and set within the context of the site and wider area, the proposed development would not appear incongruous or out of keeping such to warrant a refusal on this basis.

On balance, while the proposed development represents a significant increase in the size of the dwelling, the combination of the site's generous proportions, the property's substantial setback from the public highway, and the prevailing character of the area means that the proposal can be accommodated without undue harm to the local environment or residential amenity.

However, the success of the scheme from a design perspective will to an extent be dependent on the quality and finish of the materials. As such, it is considered necessary to secure material details of all facing materials by way of condition. As such, the development is considered visually acceptable, in compliance with Policy H9 and CC7.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. 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.

Cherrycroft is set further back in its plot than the neighbouring property 'Ferndale' to the west. Whilst the proposed extension may be visible to the occupiers of this property, it would be no closer to the common boundary than existing and the roof would be hipped away to minimise the impact. Combined with the separation distance to the common boundary and the property of Ferndale itself, no material concerns are considered to arise in terms of overbearing effects or loss of light. Whilst first floor windows are proposed on the flank elevation facing the garden of this property, these would serve ensuites and conditions will be attached to be obscurely glazed. No material loss of privacy is considered to arise.

In respect of 'Canadel', to the east, this property is set further back in its plot than Cherrycroft. The existing garage of Cherrycroft is currently sited adjacent the common boundary, in a similar position to the garage of Canadel. The proposed two storey element closest to the boundary would not project past the rear of the garage and the roof would be hipped away to minimise the impact. Canadel has a courtyard feature close to the common boundary. Whilst the extensions would clearly be visible, they are not considered to be so overbearing so as to result in significant material harm to the occupiers of this property in terms of overbearing effects and loss of light. No windows are proposed on the flank elevation which will be conditioned to prevent a loss of privacy.

The proposed Juliet balcony on the rear elevation is noted however, similar to the windows, it is not considered the use of the balcony would introduce a level of overlooking significantly above that which already exists.

Owing to the flat roof nature of the rear extension proposed, it is considered necessary to include a condition stipulating that the flat roof area shall not be used as a roof terrace, and any access out onto this area shall be for maintenance/means of escape purposes only. This is in order to prevent any detrimental impacts of overlooking and/or noise and disturbance of the neighbouring premises.

The extensions are not considered to give rise to any unacceptable impacts in terms of loss of privacy, loss of outlook, or overshadowing to adjacent occupiers. The relationship between the proposed development and surrounding dwellings remains acceptable, given the spatial characteristics of the site and the layout of neighbouring plots.

Therefore, the development is considered to have an acceptable impact on the amenity of all adjoining neighbours and on the occupiers of the application dwelling, complying with Policies CC8 and H9.

Ecology

As part of the application process, a preliminary bat survey was requested in order to inform the assessment of the application.

The applicant subsequently commissioned and submitted a bat survey, which was carried out by a qualified ecologist. The survey confirmed that there was no evidence of roosting bats within the building and that the proposed development would not result in any harm to protected species.

Upon receipt and review of the survey findings, RBC Ecology raised no objections to the proposed development. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in regard to ecological impact, and no further surveys or mitigation measures are required in this instance.

Transport and Parking

The proposal includes the demolition of the existing detached garage and car port, which will result in the loss of two covered parking spaces. However, the submitted block plan illustrates that three off-street parking spaces would be retained within the site boundary, which is in accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD.

No alterations are proposed to the existing vehicular access, and the proposed development would not result in any material increase in traffic generation or highway safety concerns.

The application has been reviewed by the Council's Transport team, who confirmed that the proposal complies with relevant parking standards and that they have no objections to the scheme. The development is therefore considered acceptable in respect of parking provision and highways impact, in line with Policies

Trees

The site contains several trees within or near the development boundary. During the course of the application an amended Tree Survey, AIA and AMS were submitted. The proposal has been reviewed by the Council's Tree Officer, who raised no objections, subject to the imposition of a standard condition to ensure appropriate protection of trees.

Subject to the inclusion of this condition, the proposed development is considered acceptable in relation to tree protection and complies with the relevant local planning policies and guidance.

Other Matters

The proposal would be a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development. An informative will be attached to the decision notice to advise the applicant of their responsibilities in this respect.

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

Time Limit
Approved Plans
Flat roof
Obscure Glazing
No new windows
Tree Protective Measures
Walls Retained

Ancillary Use
Materials to be submitted