

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 221200/HOU

Address: 122 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7NB

Proposals: Garage conversion with first floor extension above, two storey side extension, part two storey and single storey rear extension

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

Applicant: [REDACTED]

Date received (valid from): 12 August 2022

Target Decision date: 25 November 2022

1. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two storey detached dwelling with a pitched roof and gable end to the front and rear. There is a double height projecting bay to the front and an attached single storey garage with a hipped roofed single storey extension behind, creating an 'l'shaped form. There is a large rear garden, the property is set off to the side boundaries and set back from the road. The height of the existing property is approximately 8.4m.

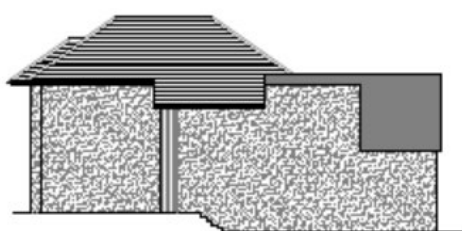
The property is not a listed building, nor does it fall within a conservation area. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The area comprises a range of styles of detached and semi-detached dwellings, but these are largely of relatively traditional appearance.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to convert the existing double garage into habitable accommodation with a new first floor element above the existing garage, which would extend for 9.6m in depth above the existing garage and above part of the existing single storey rear extension. The proposal also includes a wrap around two storey rear and side extension. The rear extension has a flat roof form, and part of the side extension would have a mono-pitched roof. The side element would be significantly set back from the front of the property. The front elevation includes two pitched roofed bay projections.



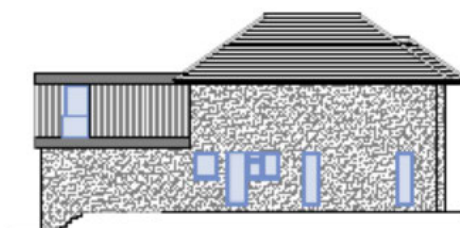
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

In the elevation plans provided as shown above, there is a first floor bathroom window missing from the side elevation plan when compared against the proposed first floor plan provided.

Plans considered:

Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-01 - Existing Ground Floor Plan received 12 August 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-02 - Existing First Floor Plan received 12 August 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-03 - Existing Elevations received 12 August 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-04 REV A - Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 9 December 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-05 REV A - Proposed First Floor Plan received 9 December 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-06 REV A - Proposed Elevation received 9 December 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-07 - Location Plan received 12 August 2022
Drawing No. 22048.S.PP-8 - Block Plan received 3 January 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

910193 - Ground floor side extension to provide bedroom, bathroom and utility room. PERMITTED

221201 - Rear extension measuring 8.0m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.80m, and 2.50m in height to eaves level. Notification of the construction of an extension under class A Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

27 Wrenfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7QE
120 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7NB
126 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7NB
126 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7NB
124 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7NB
31 Wrenfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7QE
29 Wrenfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7QE
6 Illingworth Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6RB

Four letters of objection were received with regards to the original plans submitted relating to the proposed development being a complete new rebuild of the dwelling with an unsympathetic design which would be out of keeping with the area.

Three additional letters were received from the same neighbours with regards to the amended plans received. The letters concluded that the design was an improvement from the original and the main concerns raised related to disruption from the building works and potential transport issues caused by work vehicles.

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)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking)

EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions (2021)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

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 agent was informed that due to the design originally submitted, the extent of the proposal comprised extensive changes such that the level of change was considered to be beyond the scope of what could be assessed and dealt with under a householder planning application. Subsequently, the agent decided to reflect a more traditional design to the principal elevation and provided amended plans.

The amended plans include changes to the front elevation and roof form, which although more consistent with the overall character and appearance of the area, the proposal still includes a number of elements, which are considered to be of poor design quality, which fail to respect the character of the house.

The combination of the side and rear wrap around extension appears bulky and sizeable in relation to the existing dwelling and the rear flat roof design does not integrate well with the existing roof and as such creates a jarring effect when viewed from the side and rear.

The side element of the wrap around extension has a separate mono-pitch roof form which creates a protruding section in the roof line of the side elevation, which adds to the overall poor roof form presented.

In terms of the front bays, although double height bays are a form present in the area and indeed the existing house, the ones proposed are significantly more prominent, not subservient

to the main dwelling and include mini pitches, which overall give rise to a detrimental effect on the appearance and character of the house.

It is considered that the combination of both of the side extensions and the rear extension due to the overall scale and bulk, result in overly dominant features that would be out of proportion with the host dwelling. The overall scale of the proposed extensions. Combined with the large flat roof elements at the rear, the front bays, and the mono-pitched side elevation, would result in a discordant and contrived appearance that would not integrate well with the host property and would fail to constitute subservient additions to the property. The rear windows of the two storey wrap around extension create an uncharacteristic 'glass wall' which are not considered to reflect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. In addition, the submitted drawings seem to indicate the use of three different exterior wall finishes which are considered would further detract from the appearance of the host house and the neighbouring properties. Therefore, for the reasons identified above the proposed design would not comply with policies CC7 and H9 and hence a reason for refusal related to design is included.

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 first floor side extension closest to number 124 Kidmore Road, and the rear extension, would breach the 45 degree line of light to that neighbouring property. As a result, this could create a potential overbearing effect and loss of light to a habitable room especially as the extension would be to the south of that neighbouring property. This is a further indication that the scale of the proposal should be reduced. Furthermore, the first floor full height rear windows wrap around to create a full height side facing window which could also create overlooking issues and loss of privacy for this neighbour. Therefore, the proposed extensions could have some potentially harmful impacts on 124 Kidmore Road. Due to the full width and full height windows across the whole of the proposed first floor rear elevation this would likely create additional and harmful overlooking and loss of privacy to the rear gardens of both neighbouring properties. With regards to the neighbouring property at number 120 Kidmore Road, the first floor side facing bathroom window could have been conditioned to ensure that this would have been obscure glazed had the scheme been considered acceptable overall. Therefore, the proposal would not comply with Policies CC8 and H9 and amenity concerns form another reason for refusal.

Trees

Policy EN14 states that trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.

The proposal originally included a new drop kerb access via landside mound, there is a tree growing in that location on the grass verge and it is likely that this would negatively affect one street tree and is not acceptable. This element was removed from the proposal, however, other trees on site or from neighbouring properties may be negatively affected by the proposal but we are not aware of this as a tree survey has not been provided.

A tree survey was requested but has not been received.

Due to the lack of tree information provided and the extensive proposals (including foundation trenching near a protected tree), the application is currently not supported in terms of trees as it fails to demonstrate lack of harm to protected trees. This would represent a further reason for refusal.

Ecology

Policy EN12 states that the identified Green Network shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity and should protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site.

The proposal includes significant changes to the roof and Ecology confirmed that the building may host roosting bats and that confirmation of whether this is the case, and if so how bats would be affected by the proposals, would need to be carried out through a bat survey. Such a survey would be required prior to determination of the application. A bat survey was requested, but this has not been received, and as no survey has been submitted there is, therefore, insufficient evidence to determine the likely impacts on bats (which are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process) and this forms a further reason for refusal.

Transport

The proposal will result in the loss of the garage to provide ancillary accommodation, this therefore will result in the loss of parking. However, an amended Block Plan was received to illustrate 3 parking spaces on the site. This was confirmed acceptable by RBC Transport.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and it is considered to be unacceptable for the reasons set out below.

8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

1. Due to the form, size, bulk, and new roof forms of the proposed extensions, the overall development fails to respect the character of the existing house and results in overly dominant features that would be out of proportion with the host dwelling, and would create a discordant and contrived appearance, particularly when viewed from the side and rear. It is not considered that the extensions would integrate well with the host property and would fail to constitute subservient additions to the property. The uncharacteristic full wall of glass to the rear and the different wall finishes further detract from the appearance of the house and the neighbouring properties. Overall, therefore, the proposal is not considered to present a high quality design, which would be contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide to House Extensions (2021).
2. The proposed first floor side extension and rear extension breach the 45 degree line to no. 124 Kidmore Road and therefore, there is a potential overbearing effect and loss of light to a habitable room especially as the extension would lie to the south of this neighbouring property. This combined with full height side and rear windows to the two storey wrap around extension would likely cause overlooking and loss of privacy to both

nos. 124 and 120 Kidmore Road which would be contrary to Policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

3. In the absence of a completed full bat survey report, the impact the proposal would have on bats, which are a protected species and a material consideration in the planning process, cannot be determined. As such, the proposal is not compliant with Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).
4. Due to the proximity to two protected Oak trees (T1 and T2 of 393/06), the proposed development, and the assumed associated construction site operation areas which would be required, would be likely to cause immediate damage to trees of high amenity in the area, including through trenching and soil compaction within root protection areas, and as a result of potential pruning to enable development, and by increasing future pressure to prune to maintain clearance to the new extensions. The application does not include a Tree Survey and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, therefore, it fails to demonstrate lack of harm to existing trees, which is contrary to Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and to Objectives 5 and 11 of the Council's adopted Tree Strategy (2021).

Informatives

1. Plans submitted
2. Positive and proactive working
3. Pre-application advice