

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25th April 2018

ITEM NO. 11

Ward: Caversham
App No.: 180204
App Type: HOU
Address: 79 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 6DS
Proposal: First floor rear extension
Applicant: Mr Gavin Frost
Date valid: 1st February 2018
Minor Application: 8 week target decision date: 29th March 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

1. Time
2. Material Samples
3. Plans
4. No Additional Windows
5. Additional height to be added to fence on boundary with no. 77

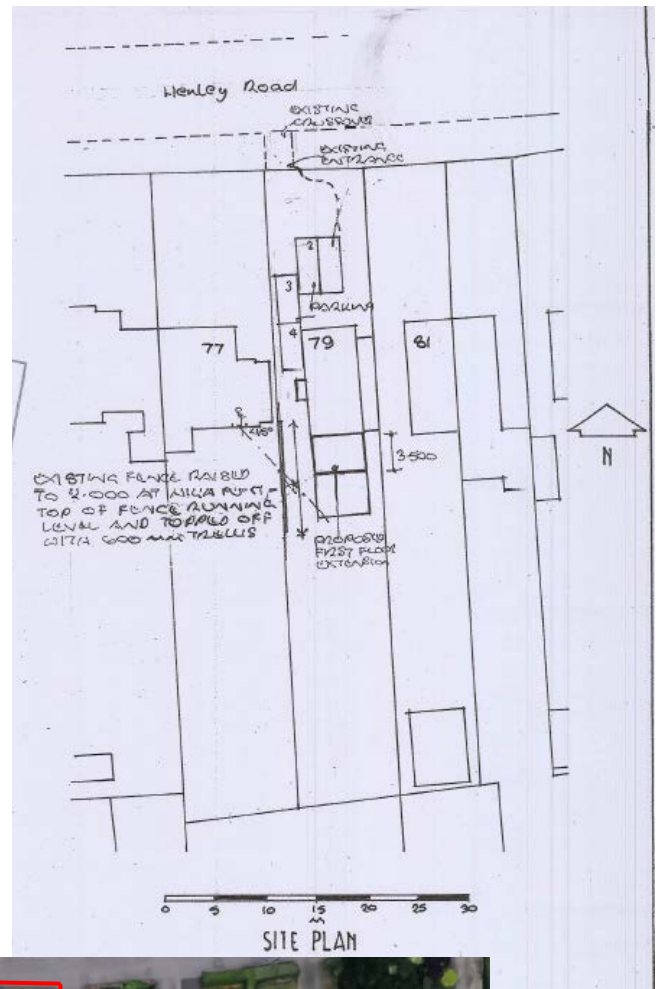
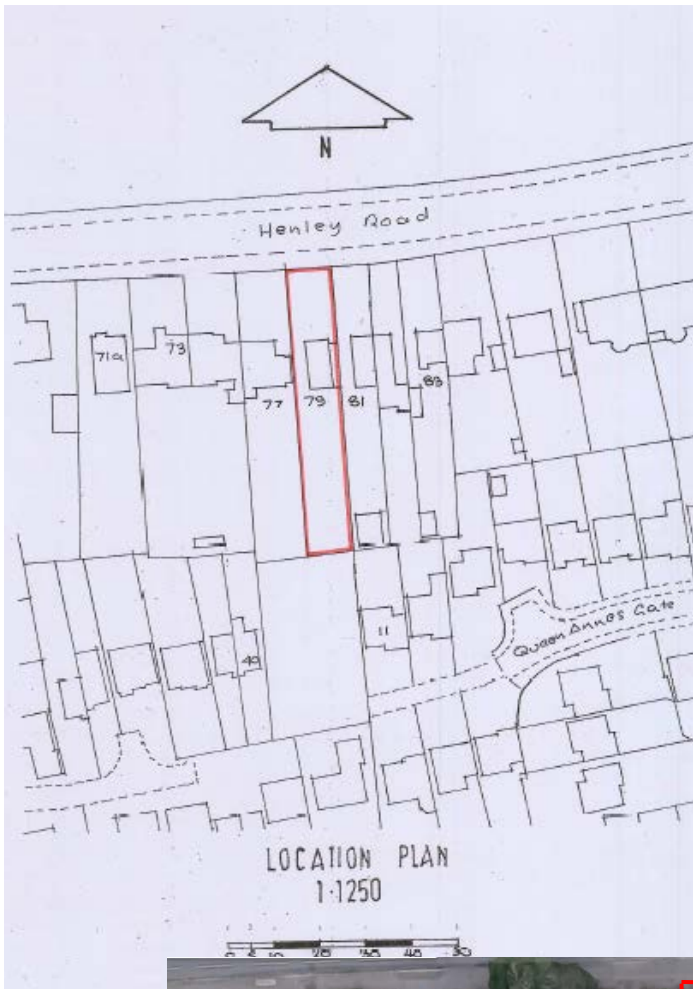
INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

1. Terms and Conditions.
2. Building Regulations
3. Construction and Demolition
4. Encroachment
5. Works Affecting Highways
6. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The application relates to a two storey, pitched roof, detached property on the south side of Henley Road. The property is a red brick, Victorian property with tan brick detailing, which is different in character to both neighbouring properties which appear to be of more recent construction. Although of a different design to the neighbouring properties the application property is of a similar depth and set back from the road. The property is orientated towards the west, with the front door and large arched, first floor windows facing towards the neighbouring property of 77 Henley Road. The property is set further away from this boundary than that with the other neighbouring property 81 Henley Road. To the front of the property, there is a bay window at ground floor level and two narrow first floor windows with a higher centrally located circular window above. There is driveway parking to the front of the property, and a single storey, lean to conservatory/storage space addition between the eastern elevation and the boundary with 81 Henley Road.
- 1.2 Originally, this property had a very large rear garden in comparison to neighbouring properties, being very long and wider at the bottom than it is closer to the property. In October 2017 planning permission was granted (171070) to construct 2 dwellings on the lower part of the garden with access from Fairfax Close, shortening the plot of 79 Henley Road to be the same as that of the neighbouring properties at 77 and 81 Henley Road.

- 1.3 Also, originally there was a bay window at ground floor level to the rear of the property and no first floor rear facing windows. On the 3rd November 2016 a decision was issued by the planning department that the single storey extension which had been proposed under the larger home extensions scheme did not require prior approval, and could be built under Permitted Development. This extension has now been built out. This single storey extension has a depth of 8m, a max. height of 4m and an eaves height of 2.5m. Although the built out extension complies with the above dimensions, as stated in the prior approval decision notice, there are a number of differences between the built out scheme and that submitted under the prior approval application. These are a pitched, rather than hipped, roof to the southern end of the extension, the inclusion of side windows to both sides of the extension and an element of flat roof immediately adjacent to the original application property (this has been left to allow for the construction of the proposed first floor extension which is the subject of this application). Following discussions with the Planning Enforcement team it was considered that the only element for which we would pursue enforcement action would be the flat section of roof. However, action will not been taken on this until this current application has been determined. Given that the pitched (rather than hipped) roof is not considered to have any notable impact on neighbouring properties and the side facing windows would be considered to constitute permitted development had they been inserted after the extension had been complete, it is not considered expedient to pursue enforcement action on these points. (N.B. An enforcement investigation made in June 2017 has already considered the side facing windows, and the above conclusion was reached.)
- 1.4 The application was called in by Councillor Lovelock due to neighbour objections, particularly regarding privacy.



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 This is an application for a first floor extension to the rear of the property, to be constructed on top of part of the existing ground floor extension.
- 2.2 The extension is to project 3.5m from the rear of the existing property. An arched window, to match those found on the west facing elevation of the original house, is proposed to the rear elevation of the extension. No side facing windows are proposed. It is proposed that the ridge height and eaves height of this element will be set down 100mm from those of the main house.

- 2.3 It is proposed that the materials, detailing and fenestration will match that of the existing property.
- 2.4 It is also proposed to increase the fence height along this boundary with no. 77 to 2m topped off with a 0.6m trellis. 77 Henley Road has a raised patio to the rear, and the occupiers of this property have raised concerns that the side facing windows inserted in the ground floor extension will reduce their privacy.
- 2.5 The following plans, received 1st February 2018, have been assessed:
- Drawing No: 17/62/01 rev B - Existing Floor Plans and Elevations
 - Drawing No: 17/62/02 rev A - Proposals Drawing

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

171302/HOU - First floor extension (rear). Withdrawn 28/09/2017

171070/FUL - Erection of two dwellings with associated hard surfacing and landscaping. Permitted 19/10/2017

170730/CLP - First floor rear extension. Withdrawn 25/07/2017

161789/HPA - Rear extension measuring 8m in depth, with a maximum height of 4m, and 2.5m in height to eaves level. Prior approval not required 03/11/2016

150151/FUL - Erection of two detached dwellings with associated hard surfacing and Landscaping. Refused 09/09/2016. Appeal dismissed 13/3/2017

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory:
None

4.2 Non-Statutory:

Ecologist: No objection.

The application site comprises a detached house where it is proposed to construct a two-storey rear extension. The proposed extension will affect the rear gable end only and appears to fall below the existing apex. Considering the extent of the proposed works and the good condition of the building, it is unlikely that the proposals will adversely affect bats or other protected species. As such, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Highways: No objection subject to informative.

The site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's Revised 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. The parking required for a 3 bedroom dwelling within this zone is 2 parking spaces.

Plans submitted indicate the proposed rear extension does not change or impact on the existing parking arrangements. The plans illustrate that there is sufficient space at the front of the property on an area of hard standing to accommodate more than two vehicles off road, which would comply with our standards.

Transport does not have any objections to this proposal, subject to the works affecting a highway informative.

4.3 Public/ local consultation and comments received

Two letters of objection received from 2 properties (No's 77 and 81A Henley Road). Objectors raised the following concerns:

- Application should be for both ground and first floor extension

Case Officer response - The ground floor extension has been completed, and therefore the current application is considered as separate from the ground floor extension. Although the completed ground floor extension has not been completed entirely in accordance with the details submitted under prior approval application 161789, this issue is discussed above in paragraph 1.3.

- Overshadowing of patio of no.77
- Overlooking of no.77 from side facing ground windows, and overlooking of garden from rear facing first floor window
- Overlooking of 81A's garden, decking and a bedroom window
- Light pollution from proposed windows

Case Officer response - The impact of light spill from the glazing proposed for this extension is considered to be limited, within normal householder levels and would not warrant the refusal of this application.

- Belief that first floor side windows will be added in the future

Case Officer response - This is not considered to constitute a viable reason for refusal. Side facing windows are not proposed under the current scheme and a condition will be attached, should consent be granted, removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows (permitted development allows for such windows if they are obscure glazed and fixed shut above 1.7m.). Should side facing windows be added at first floor level in the future, the windows would be a breach of condition, and any harm caused would be assessed with a view to potential enforcement action. The applicant was advised under withdrawn application 171312 that such windows would be considered unacceptable; they were subsequently removed from the plans.

- No consideration given to surface water disposal

Case Officer response - This is a Building Control issue, not a planning concern and therefore cannot form a reason for refusal of a planning application.

- More than 50% of the plot is being developed

Case Officer response - If it were proposed that built form would cover over 50% of the plot, that would be considered to be overdevelopment and unacceptable. However, in this case, even if the works to construct two new houses to the far south of the site are included, the proposed built form would cover significantly less than 50% of the plot. As such, it is not considered that the plot is being overdeveloped.

- Concerns regarding impact on bats

Case Officer response - An Ecologist has been consulted by RBC on this application and they have stated that bats are unlikely to be adversely affected and they have no ecological concerns with regards to this proposal.

These issues not responded to above are considered in the appraisal below.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 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"

5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS24: Car/Cycle Parking

CS36: Biodiversity and Geology

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents:

Residential Conversions SPD (2013)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties
- Impact on character of the application property

Amenity

77 Henley Road

- 6.1 Concerns have been put forward with regards to the impact of the proposals on various aspects of the amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at 77 Henley Road. With regards to overlooking, it is considered that the first floor rear facing window would not have an unacceptable overlooking impact on 77 Henley Road; it is considered that the relationship between the proposed window and the neighbouring properties would be normal for this sort of situation between neighbouring properties and would be no more harmful in terms of overlooking than the existing rear facing windows of the neighbouring properties. No side facing windows are proposed, and as stated above (in response to neighbour concerns) a condition is recommended should permission be granted removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows (permitted development allows for such windows if they are obscure glazed and fixed shut above 1.7m.) as it is considered that given the relative proximity of 77 Henley Road, any future side facing windows would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that they would not cause issues of overlooking or perceived overlooking.
- 6.2 Although the ground floor extension at the application property has been completed and the current application is only considering the first floor extension, the applicant proposes to erect a 2m fence topped with a 0.6m trellis along the boundary with 77 Henley Road, to mitigate any overlooking or perception of overlooking of no. 77, given the privacy concerns regarding the existing side facing windows of the ground floor extension. The height of this fence is not considered harmful to the amenity of no.77 given the existing raised patio and the relative ground levels and as such the proposed fence is supported in this instance as an appropriate measure to mitigate against any potential overlooking from the ground floor side facing windows. We recommend that this fencing is secured by condition.
- 6.3 With regards to overshadowing it is considered that due to the orientation of the properties, with a south facing outlook to the rear, the separation distance between the properties (approx. 5m) and the limited depth of this first floor proposal, the extension would not cause an unacceptable loss of light to the occupiers of no.77. The extension avoids a 45 degree line taken from the centre of the closest window to a habitable room at no.77, which is an accepted indication of whether unacceptable loss of light will be caused. It is considered that the extension may cause some level of shading to the rear terrace of no.77 in the morning, however this is not considered to be sufficiently harmful to refuse the application.

- 6.4 With regards to the extension potentially forming an unacceptably overbearing feature, it is considered that the separation distance between the properties and the limited depth of the extension (considering it is at first floor level) ensure that the extension would not be unacceptably overbearing on the occupants of no.77.

81 Henley Road

- 6.5 As the other immediate neighbour to the application site, the impact on the amenity of the occupiers of 81 Henley Road should also be considered. With regards to overlooking, it is considered that the impact on this property will be similar to that on no.77 as discussed above, and there would be no unacceptable overlooking impacts from the proposed extension. Again, the condition removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows is recommended for the elevation facing 81 Henley Road, for the same reasons as stated for the 77 Henley Road elevation.
- 6.6 With regards to overshadowing it is considered that due to the orientation of the properties, with a south facing outlook to the rear, the separation distance between the properties (approx. 4.5m) and the limited depth of this first floor extension, the proposal would not cause an unacceptable loss of light to the rear windows of this property and the amenity area immediately to the rear of the property. It is considered that the first floor element of the proposal will have some level of negative impact in terms of light levels on the side facing bedroom window at this property. However, given that window currently looks straight onto the side wall of the application property, and a view of the current end of the application property can only be gained at an oblique angle from this window, it is considered that the impact of the proposed first floor extension on light levels to this room would be limited. This window would be far more affected if it were proposed that the eaves height of the application property were to be increased. As such, it is not considered that loss of light to the first floor side facing window of this property warrants refusal of this application.
- 6.7 It is considered that given the proximity of the proposed extension to the boundary with no.81 and the cumulative effect of having an existing extension at no.81A along the other boundary to no.81, the overbearing effect of the extension on this property will be greater than on no.77. However, it is considered that the separation distance between the properties and the limited depth (considering it is at first floor level), mitigate this and ensure that the extension would not be unacceptably overbearing on the occupants of no.81.

81A Henley Road

- 6.8 Lastly, concerns have also been put forward with regards to the impact of the proposal on the amenity of the occupiers of 81A Henley Road. It is considered that any overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking effects on this property would be very minor given the separation distance between no.81A and the proposed extension and the orientation of the properties. It is therefore considered that the amenity of the occupiers of this property would not be unacceptably affected.

Character of the application property

- 6.9 The proposals put forward under withdrawn application 171302, proposed a deeper first floor element, a ridge line to match that of the main house and a roof to the ground floor element which was hipped up to a flat roof. These proposals were considered to cause unacceptable harm to the character of the property. It was considered that the depth of the proposed extension and the fact that it has not been set down from the height of the main house would result in a proposed property which would appear excessively elongated which would extend beyond the logical limits of the property. It was also considered that the proposed roof of the single storey element failed to integrate satisfactorily with the two storey element of the proposal.
- 6.10 It is considered that the proposals put forward under the current application have satisfactorily resolved the issues raised under the previous application. The reduction of

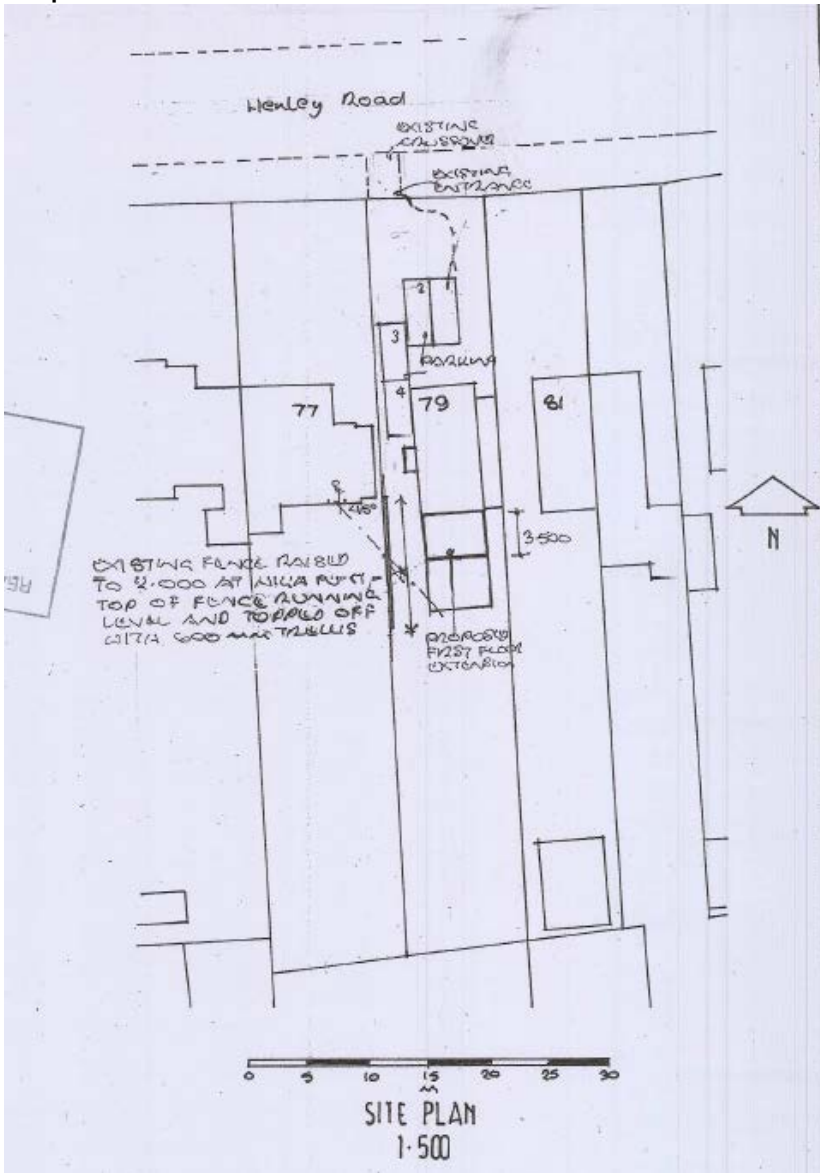
the depth of the first floor element from 5m to 3.5m and the slight drop in ridge and eaves height from that of the main roof (0.1m), allows the first floor element to appear subservient to the main house. The amended design for the roof of the ground floor element is considered to integrate better with the main house, reflecting its simple roof form. The detailing and fenestration of the building is also proposed to reflect that of the original property, which will help to visually unite the new and original elements of the property. Although the first floor element is not insignificant and the proposals considerably increase the floor space of the original house, it is considered that given the above elements of the design which seek to lessen harm to the character of the application property and the location of the extensions to the rear of the property, it is considered that the character of the application property will not be caused unacceptable harm by the proposed extensions.

7. CONCLUSION

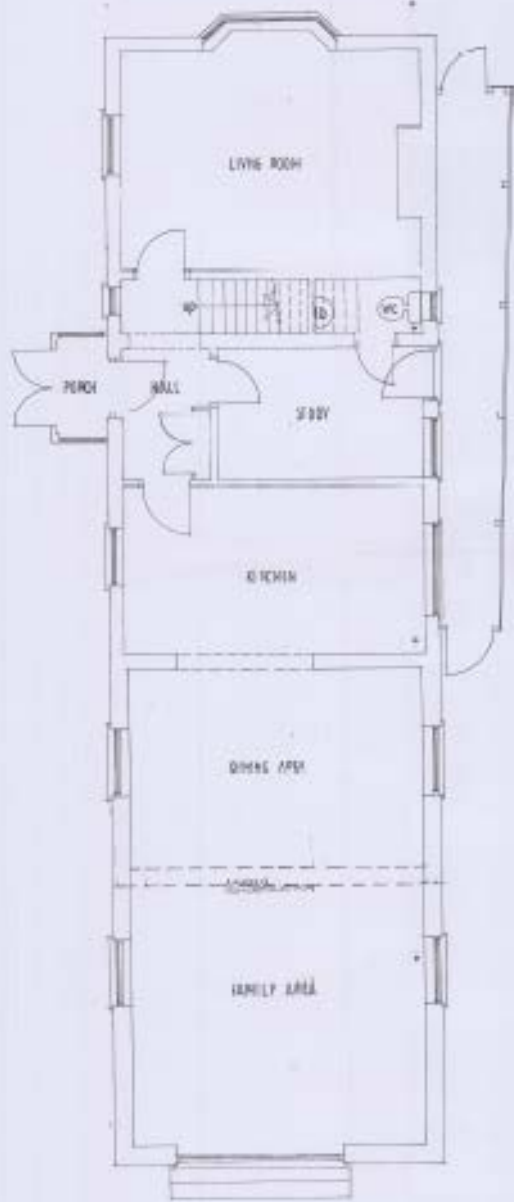
- 7.1 It is concluded that the proposed extension has overcome the concerns of the previous application at this site and is in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy and Policies DM4 and DM9 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, this development is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Heather Banks

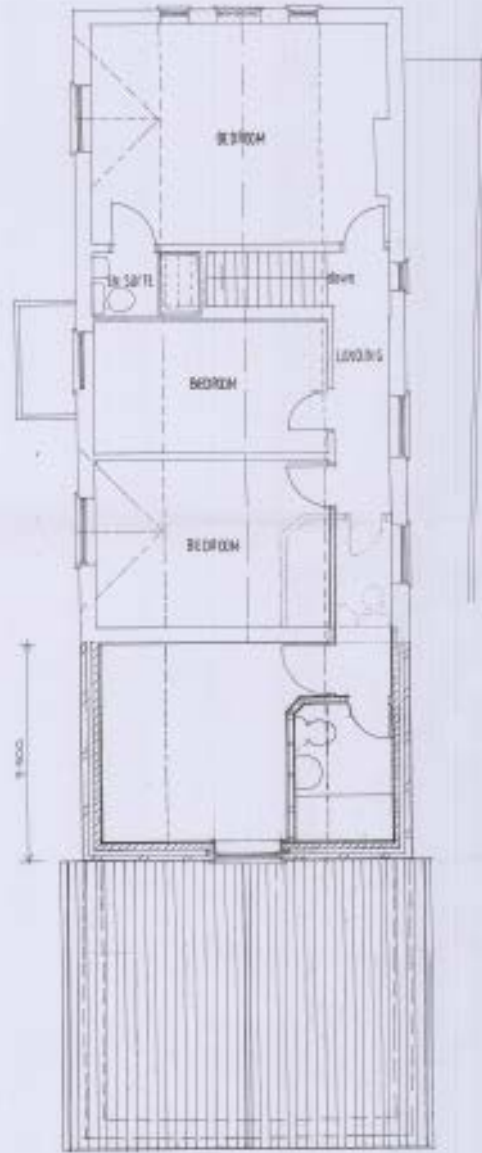
Proposed Site Plan



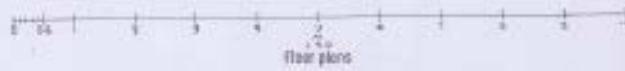
Proposed Plans



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Proposed Elevations



Photo taken from garden of 81 Henley Road (N.B. this was taken during withdrawn application 171302, when the ground floor extension was still under construction)



Photo taken from patio to the rear of 77 Henley Road. (N.B. this was taken during withdrawn application 171302, when the ground floor extension was still under



construction)