

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3rd November 2021

Ward: Peppard
App No: 210977/FUL
Address: 65 Kiln Road
Proposal: Erection of dwelling (C3 use)
Applicant: Siloam Construction
Extended Target Date: 5th November 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed within 3 months (unless officers or behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- an Affordable Housing contribution of £37,083.00 towards affordable housing in the Borough in accordance with Policy H3 Index-linked from the date of permission, to be paid on commencement of the development.

To be granted with the following conditions and informatives:

1. Standard Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. **[Pre-commencement]** Materials to be approved
4. **[Pre-commencement]** Construction Method Statement (to be submitted)
5. Vehicle Parking (as specified)
6. Cycle Parking (as specified)
7. Refuse and Recycling (as specified)
8. Electric Vehicle Charging Points
9. Vegetation to be removed outside of the bird nesting season
10. Details of biodiversity enhancements, to include 4 bird and or bat boxes, tiles or bricks on and around the new buildings, a new wildlife pond a minimum of 3 x 3m in size, and native and wildlife friendly landscaping to be submitted
11. No external lighting on the proposed access track without separate permission from the Local Planning Authority
13. Access to be constructed with permeable materials
14. **[Pre-commencement]** Landscaping (to be approved)
15. Arboricultural Method Statement (as specified)
16. Removal of Class A, B and E Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Permitted Development Rights
17. SAP Assessment Minor (As Built - to be approved)

Informatives to include:

1. Terms
2. Building Control
3. Complaints about construction and demolition
4. Encroachment
5. Highways

6. Do not damage the verge
7. CIL
8. The cost of any relocation of telegraph pole and lamp column will be met by t applicant
9. S106 agreement
10. Pre-commencement conditions agreed by applicant
11. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a portion of the rear garden of no. 65 Kiln Road. No. 65 is a bungalow located on the north-western side of Kiln Road. The site has an extensive rear garden measuring a depth of approx. 37m and is in places heavily overgrown. Trees in the rear garden were removed prior to the submission of this application.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is residential with properties in the immediate vicinity on Kiln Road being bungalows to the north, and two storey dwellings to the south. The site also backs on to the rear of properties situated in Russet Glade. To the north-west lies the rear plot of no. 3 Venetia Close and to the north-east are rear gardens of properties in Marchwood Avenue. To the east (opposite) is Clayfield Copse.
- 1.3 The property is not Listed, nor in a Conservation Area.
- 1.4 This application was called in to Planning Applications Committee for determination by ward Councillors Stanford-Beale, Robinson and Councillor Mitchell due to concern that the proposal was not in accordance with the Local Plan and in light of neighbouring objections.



Existing and proposed block plans

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a 3-bedroom chalet bungalow. It would have a maximum height of 6.5m, maximum depth of 11m and have a maximum width of 16.5m. The property would have a hipped roof. Access to the site property would be down a 5m wide access track that would run alongside nos. 63a and 65 Kiln Road; the access is already established with a dropped kerb in place but is not currently in use and is overgrown.

2.2 Documents/ Information submitted:

Drawing no.

Letter reference ETP200344 dated 26th August 2021 prepared by ET Planning Arboricultural Survey and Impact Assessment dated August 2021 by LandArb Solutions
Received 26th August 2021

Jewel Multi - Brick Specification

Received 24th August 2021

12A - Street Section

Planning Design and Access Statement

10 - Site Plan Location Plan and Context Plan

Ref: R2699/b June 2021 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Application Form

11a - Floor Plans and Elevations

Received 15th June 2021

2.3 The applicant has considered the suggested pre-commencement planning conditions and has confirmed acceptance of these should planning permission be granted.

2.4 The development would be liable to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy at the current rate of £156.71 per sqm.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 210115/FUL - Erection of new dwelling and creation of new access - Application Withdrawn

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Internal Consultees

Transport - No objections subject to conditions

Ecology - No objections subject to conditions

Natural Environment - No objections subject to conditions

4.2 External Consultation

4.3 The following addresses were formally notified of the application in writing on 18/06/21:

63a, 67, 69, 71 Kiln Road

1, 3 Marchwood Avenue

1, 3, 5, 7, 9 Russet Glade
3 Venetia Close

4.4 In addition, a site notice was displayed between 20th June 2020 - 11th July 2021.

4.5 13 representations were received; 12 letters of objection and 2 letters of support.

Objections related to the following matters:

- Overdevelopment of the site
- Impact on biodiversity
- Access to the site would be dangerous for pedestrians
- Impact on neighbouring properties - loss of light and privacy
- Loss of a greenfield site
- Out of character with existing properties
- Would lead to tandem development
- Overshadowing onto no. 67 Kiln Road's amenity space and trees/ plants
- Development would reduce the effectiveness of solar heating blanket
- Increase in traffic
- Removal of trees (prior to the submission of the application to make way for the development)
- Loss of privacy to no. 7 Russet Glade
- Design of the house is not considered in keeping with others in the vicinity
- The property would extend beyond the rear building line of properties at Venetia Close
- Emergency vehicles and rubbish bins will not be able to access the properties via the access track as it is not wide enough
- Concerns over the boundary fence with no. 63a Kiln Road being knocked down as a result of the access track
- Concerns that multiple cars will be parked outside the property and so would not leave room for turning
- The property would have no frontage to the road
- Concern the access track will result in crime being encouraged
- Water running off the drive may damage the foundations of no. 63a Kiln Road
- Concern over lighting on the access path
- Use of the patio at night would cause disturbance to neighbours
- Concern over vehicles during the construction phase
- Fumes from vehicles
- Applicant has ignored comments from neighbours and neighbours have not been consulted
- Consider the proposal has been designed to cause maximum distress to neighbours
- Redesigning of the proposal should be considered

Case officer comment: The above will be addressed throughout the report.

The letters of support referred to the following matters:

- Examples on infill development in the vicinity
- Would allow the owner of the existing property to consolidate and manage a smaller plot
- The development has aimed to minimize overlooking to neighbours

- Confident wildlife will still be attracted to the area
- Development will provide additional housing
- The construction of a single dwelling avoids a more substantial development of the site

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

5.3 Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaption to Climate Change

CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

CC9: Securing Infrastructure

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

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- Planning Obligations Under S106, April (2015)
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2021)
- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (2020)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues for consideration are:

- a) Principle of Development
- b) Design and impact on the character of the area
- c) Impact on Existing and Future occupiers
- d) Amenity Space
- e) Transport Matters
- f) The Natural Environment

- g) Sustainability
- h) Affordable Housing, S106 and CIL obligations

a) Principle of Development

- 6.2 The NPPF 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.
- 6.3 Therefore, the priority for development should be on previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. However, that does not mean that the development of private residential garden land is unacceptable in principle, rather that previously developed land should be the first choice for housing development. Further detail on the Council’s Policy on Development of Private Residential Gardens is found in Policy H11 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).
- 6.4 Policy H11: ‘Development of Private Residential Gardens’, states that new residential development that involves land within the curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:
- 1) *The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:*
 - *The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area;*
 - *A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage;*
 - *Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/ lawns and hedges, etc;*
 - *Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area;*
 - *The materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary;*
 - *The arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings.*
 - 2) *The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking;*
 - 3) *The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards;*
 - 4) *The proposal does not lead to tandem development;*
 - 5) *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures;*
 - 6) *The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants;*
 - 7) *The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing;*

8) The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent green space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network;

9) The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.

6.5 Therefore, while the proposed site is not 'previously developed land', the principle of redevelopment is considered acceptable providing the criteria outlined in Policy H11 is met.

6.6 With regard to the principle of the proposed use, from purely a land use perspective, it is considered that a proposal to introduce one residential unit in an established residential area would comply with the principles of Policy H1 which seeks the provision of an additional 689 new homes per year between 2013 - 2036. As such, the development would be contributing to meeting the housing needs within the borough with the addition of a family dwellinghouse, which also accords with point 7 of Policy H11 as outlined above.

b) **Design and impact on the character of the area**

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) 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.

Policy H11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) states: The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of: The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area; A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage etc.

6.7 As part of the neighbour consultation period, a number of representations were received considering the development to be unacceptable as it would be out of character with the surrounding properties in terms of design (in terms of the appearance of the dwelling itself) and due to it not fronting the road. Kiln Road has a mixture of dwelling types, and materials. As such, there is not considered an overly distinct particular type of dwelling. The proposed design of the dwelling is considered acceptable in terms of overall appearance; it would have a hipped roof in keeping with no. 65 and sensitively designed pitched roof dormers. Limited details on the proposed materials has been provided, however this can be secured as part of a pre-commencement condition.

6.8 The application site would have no frontage to Kiln Road meaning that any proposal here would be unable to have a frontage to any public highway. This does not however preclude the development from being able to respect and respond to the layout and urban structure of the locality. There are examples of dwellings in the vicinity that do not have a direct frontage to the road, such as 3 Venetia Close, situated behind 63a Kiln Road. The building line within Kiln Road is also not uniform, with a varied setback of front gardens, and various plot widths and depths. The

application site, excluding the access way, is considered of a similar size and depth to that of some surrounding plots on Kiln Road and Marchwood Avenue. Whilst properties on Kiln Road have gaps between them, those in Venetia Close, which the proposed dwelling would continue the building line of, have a closer relationship and therefore its proximity to these dwellings would not be considered unusual. The building line on the northern side of Venetia Close is also not totally uniform and so the slightly further set back of the proposed dwelling in relation to the building line is considered acceptable.

- 6.9 In terms of the street scene, the proposed dwelling would protrude 0.6m above the roof of the existing bungalow on site and extend 2m either side of the existing bungalow. As such, it is not considered that it would result in substantial harm to the general views on the street; it would rather remain largely obscured as a result of being back-land development and sat behind existing dwellings. This type of development is defined as 'tandem development'. A number of neighbouring residents have objected to the siting of a dwelling in the proposed location on the basis that it would be tandem development.
- 6.10 Policy H11 seeks to ensure that proposals make a positive contribution to the character of the area; such as by introducing tandem development. Committee members may recall application 190087/FUL for a new dwelling at Autumn Close, Emmer Green which was refused by members on 19th November 2019 and subsequently went to appeal. A principle concern by members was tandem development and the impact this arrangement would have on the character of the area and neighbouring amenity. Within this appeal decision, the Planning Inspector stated '*tandem development is not in principle objectionable unless it causes identifiable harm, for example to the character of an area or the living conditions of neighbouring occupants*' and so provides useful guidance to officers when assessing schemes which involve tandem development, such as in this instance. It is not considered all tandem development can and should be resisted based on Policy H11 for the reasons given at the aforementioned appeal. Each case needs to be assessed on a case by case basis to assess the level of harm that would be created. In this particular case, given the plot size, building line and other examples of once back-land development in Venetia Close, the proposal is considered justifiable in relation to the varied surrounding context. As such, it is not considered that this tandem development is unacceptable in this specific instance and there would be insufficient harm to justify a refusal on this basis.
- 6.11 As such, the proposal is, on balance, considered acceptable in terms of design and layout when assessed in terms of the character of the area. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in relation to Policies CC7 and H11 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

c) **Impact on Existing and Future Occupiers**

Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) is concerned with preventing significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties, including in terms of privacy and overlooking, loss of daylight and visual dominance, amongst other impacts.

Existing Occupiers

- 6.12 The neighbouring properties potentially most affected by the development are the existing property on site (no. 65 Kiln Road), nos. 63a and 67 Kiln Road to the south-

west and north-east of the site respectively. In addition. No. 3 Venetia Close would sit adjacent to the proposed dwelling. Lastly, properties that back on to the application site; particularly 3, 5, 7 Russet Glade and those that sit to the north-east in Marchwood Avenue.

6.13 No 63a Kiln Road

In relation to no. 63a, the development is unlikely to cause an adverse impact to this neighbour in terms of loss of light or overlooking. Whilst the rear windows of this neighbouring site would notice an increase in bulk as a result of the dwelling, built form would also be separated by approximately 28m (in excess of the 20m back-to-back distance specified in Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)). The access track would run alongside the boundary of this property and it has been raised in neighbour representations that the access track running alongside this property would have the potential to have an adverse impact on privacy in terms of noise, light (car headlights at night), vibration, and air pollution. However, given the scheme is for a single residential dwelling, it is not considered that vehicle movements would be so excessive that it would cause a level of disturbance or pollution to justify resisting the application. Nevertheless, a condition preventing external lighting being installed on the access track without separate planning permission from the Local Planning Authority is recommended to be attached in response to this concern.

6.14 No. 65 Kiln Road

Following the sub-division of the rear plot of no. 65, it is considered that adequate amenity space would be retained for this dwelling; comparable to properties within the vicinity, like no. 63a Kiln Road. As such, this element of the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Policy H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). There would also be a back-to-back distance of 20m between the rear windows of no. 65 and the proposed dwelling. In line with Policy CC8, this is considered a sufficient separation distance to maintain privacy. Furthermore, the existing and proposed dwelling would not have first floor level windows that would face onto one another. This combined with the proposal being for a chalet bungalow it is considered that the proposed dwelling would not be visually dominant and overbearing when seen from the amenity space of the existing dwelling on site.

6.15 No. 67 Kiln Road

The proposed dwelling would extend 8.6m along the boundary with no 67 with 5.2m of this being above single storey (1.5 storey). The development above ground floor level would be set off the boundary with this neighbour by 4.7m.

6.16 Whilst this neighbouring property would notice the development from their windows and rear amenity space, the development, above ground floor, would be set off the boundary by almost 5m. Combined with the substantial depth of the neighbouring plot (32m) this is considered to result in an acceptable arrangement that would not result in an overbearing impact to a substantially harmful degree to warrant refusal of the proposal. In terms of loss of light to this neighbour, the dwelling would be located approximately 20m from rear facing windows and so would not result in a loss of natural light for this dwelling.

6.17 Through the neighbour objections, Officers were made aware that this neighbour has a solar heating blanket in the rear garden and there was concern that the development would harm its effectiveness. Whilst impact on solar panels is a material consideration in the planning process due to the consequential environmental impacts this may result in, solar heating blankets are used for

swimming pools to capture solar heat. Officers therefore do not consider the impact should be afforded weight in the determination process as it is not generating electricity in the same way that solar panels might.

6.18 No. 3 Venetia Close

The proposed dwelling would be situated 7.5m from the side elevation of no. 3 Venetia Close. The neighbouring property has 3 side facing windows that would face the new dwelling. From the neighbouring objection, it was confirmed these serve a larder, toilet, along with the kitchen door. At first floor level, the window serves a landing. Larders, toilets and landings are not considered 'habitable rooms' for planning purposes. Whilst kitchens are, Officers do not consider the kitchen door would be the primary source of light to the kitchen space; rather it would be a kitchen window. As such, a loss of light or outlook for these windows is not a reason to resist the application.

6.19 Two side windows of the proposed dwelling would face towards no. 3 Venetia Close (1 x serving the kitchen room, although this is the kitchen's secondary window, along with a utility room door). Given these are at ground floor level, the boundary treatment in place, and the separation distance of over 7m between the site and the non-habitable rooms of no. 3 Venetia Close, it is considered that the proposed windows would not result in a loss of privacy for the neighbour.

6.20 Within the objection from this neighbour it is stated that the indicative illustration of a car with exhaust pointing towards the application site is concerning and would result in fumes projecting onto the neighbouring site. It is not considered that a vehicle would spend considerable time emitting pollution in the direction of the neighboring property (and may not face with the exhaust onto the property), rather just when vehicles are turned on, and then will proceed to turn to exit the site. As such, the neighbour is not considered to be exposed to a substantially harmful level of fumes from vehicles associated with a residential dwelling. It is also not considered that the general vehicle movements associated with of a single dwelling would result in a substantial level of harm to bedrooms of this neighbouring property, which was raised as concern, as these windows do not face onto the application site.

6.21 Nos. 5, 7 Russet Glade and 1, 3 Marchwood Avenue

Nos. 5 and 7 Russet Glade adjoin the rear of the application site. No. 7 is orientated so that windows are located on the side elevation of the property rather than primarily facing onto the site, especially at first floor level. This is not the case for no. 5 which has rear facing windows.

6.22 These sites (along with nos. 3 and 9 Russet Glade) are located in excess of 30m away from the application site, in excess of the recommended back-to-back distance of 20m included within Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). The property would be located at least 10m away from the rear amenity space of these properties also. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a level of harm in terms of loss of light and privacy, nor would it be considered overbearing, to a degree that would warrant a refusal of the application. Dwellings on Marchwood Avenue are located over 40m away from the proposed development beyond the garden serving no. 67 Kiln Road and therefore they would not be significantly impacted by loss of light or privacy.

6.23 Based on the above, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to immediate neighbouring properties in line with Policies CC8 and H11 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. However, Officers do consider it necessary to remove some Permitted Development

rights to the property that fall under Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 in the interests of neighbouring amenity. In particular, the removal of Class A rights (extensions) and Class B (additions or alterations to roofs) to ensure that adequate separation distances remain to preserve light and privacy and so development would not become visually overbearing and dominant. This means that additional development would require full planning permission from the Local Planning Authority and will be assessed under planning policy.

Future Occupiers

6.24 The development would exceed the minimum space standards for a 3 bedroom dwelling. The minimum for a 3-bedroom, 6 person dwelling (which from the bedroom arrangement indicates there are sleeping facilities for 6) is 102 sqm. The dwelling would have an internal floor area of 196 sqm. The proposal would contribute to the provision of family housing in accordance with Policies H1 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The property would be considered to receive acceptable light levels with windows being provided for all habitable rooms.

6.25 As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of Policies H1, H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) in these respects.

d) Amenity Space

6.26 The proposal seeks to subdivide the existing rear plot of no. 65. It is considered that the subdivision of the plot would create two plots (the plot of the existing dwelling and the proposed dwelling) that are broadly comparable to nos. 63 and 63a Kiln Road located to the south-west. The size of rear plots does also vary between properties on Kiln Road, and those surrounding the site; Venetia Close, Marchwood Avenue and Russet Glade. As such, the proposed amount of amenity space (including patio space) is considered sufficient and acceptable in relation to Policy H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) although a condition will be included to remove Class E Part 1, Schedule 2 permitted development rights to preserve the level of amenity space for future occupiers.

e) Transport Matters

6.27 The site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core Area of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide parking provision of 2 spaces for the proposed dwelling whilst maintaining 2 parking spaces for the existing dwelling (65 Kiln Road).

6.28 The submitted plans illustrate that the proposed dwelling will be provided with two parking spaces, on the forecourt area, a turning area is illustrated which will allow for vehicles to exit the site in forward gear. Retention of off-street parking for the existing dwelling (No. 65) has been illustrated and is deemed acceptable. Any surface water from the parking areas/ access drive should be constructed of a permeable material. This will be secured via condition.

6.29 The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. Policy TR5 requires each new house to be provided with an

electric charging point. An Electric Vehicle charging point has been illustrated on the proposed plans.

- 6.30 The new dwelling will be accessed directly from Kiln Road via an existing disused dropped kerb; any alterations will require a license from the Highways Team, relocation costs associated with the telegraph pole and lamp column located adjacent to the dropped kerb would be met by the applicant and this will be reminded via an informative.
- 6.31 Cycle storage has been provided in accordance with the Council's standards and is therefore deemed acceptable.
- 6.32 Bin storage should not be located further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods, and should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Plans illustrate that the bin collection area is located 15m from the access and is therefore deemed acceptable.
- 6.33 In response to neighbour concerns over the build itself and the highway/ transport implications of this, a pre-commencement condition requiring a Construction Method Statement to be submitted will be included to understand how construction would be managed.
- 6.34 As such, the proposal is deemed acceptable from a Highways perspective in accordance with Policies TR3, TR5 and point 3 of the criteria outlined in Policy H11, subject to conditions.

f) **The Natural Environment**

i) **Trees**

- 6.35 **Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) states that:** *New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.*
- 6.36 It is noted that some trees on site had been removed prior to the submission of this application. Whilst regrettable, these trees were not protected by way of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), nor were they located in a Conservation Area. As such, they could have been removed at any time. As part of this application 10 further trees are proposed to be removed entirely. The submitted tree survey schedule shows that most of these are fruit trees and all of them of category C - low quality trees with an estimated remaining life expectancy of 10 to 20 years. These trees are not worthy of TPOs, as confirmed by the Natural Environment Officer. Therefore, their removal will not be a reason to object to this application in itself, but it will increase the need for new tree planting for the proposal to meet the natural environment criteria in principle.
- 6.37 5 new trees are proposed, 3 of these trees can be large ultimate size species that develop a broad crown although this is still not meeting a 1:1 replacement ratio

requirement. However, on balance, given that the trees to be removed are all small crown, fruit trees of low quality, on condition that 3 of the proposed trees will be of large crown species, it can be considered that the replacement trees would compensate for the canopy loss. The species, maintenance and management schedule will have to be agreed upon with the Local Planning Authority prior to any construction works start on site and this will be secured via condition.

- 6.38 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan were submitted and considered acceptable in relation to off-site remaining trees. A condition will be applied for the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 6.39 The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in relation to Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

ii) Ecology/Biodiversity

- 6.40 A number of concerns have been raised by neighbours over the loss of biodiversity. Policy EN12 states that: '*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*'. The Reading Borough Council's Ecologist was consulted on the application.
- 6.41 An Ecological appraisal was carried out to support the application. The report states that the existing habitats are considered to be of low wildlife value and are unlikely to be suitable for reptiles, amphibians or other protected species. Nonetheless, the trees and scrub vegetation on the site are likely to be used by nesting birds, and as such, any vegetation clearance will need to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive).
- 6.42 Additionally, as per the recommendations given in the report and in line with the NPPF, biodiversity enhancements and a wildlife-friendly landscaping scheme should be incorporated into the development to ensure that the site is enhanced for wildlife. During the course of the application there had been disagreement between the applicant and neighbours regarding the loss of a pool of water and whether this was a pond or swimming pool. The area has now been filled in, however, a new wildlife pond has been agreed with the applicant to enhance biodiversity of site and this will be secured via condition.
- 6.43 The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in relation to Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) subject to conditions.

g) Sustainability

- 6.44 The sustainability credentials of the scheme are noted in the Design and Access Statement which are positive and include the use of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating, water efficient sanitary fittings, A-rated appliances and A-rated double-glazed windows. In line with Policies H5, CC2 and CC3 the following sustainability measures will be secured by condition to meet sustainability policies:
- Higher water efficiency standards of 110 litres per person per day; and
 - A 19% improvement over building regulations energy requirements

h) **Affordable Housing, S106**

- 6.45 Policy H3 requires that ‘...on sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough’. This policy would need to be taken into account in any submission and appropriate S106 contributions would be sought.
- 6.46 The agent has provided details of 3 valuations and based on these the Affordable Housing contribution figure would be £37,083.00. The applicant has agreed to pay this policy compliant contribution.
- 6.47 As such, the proposal is therefore acceptable in relation to Policy H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council’s Adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2021 subject to the completion of the S106 legal agreement.

Other Matters:

- 6.48 Response to other matters raised in neighbour representations (officer comment in ***bold and italic***):
- Damaging of boundary fences - ***this is not this is not a planning matter, but rather a civil matter. The developer would be required to take due care to ensure boundaries remain intact***
 - Emergency vehicles and rubbish bins will not be able to access the properties via the access track as it is not wide enough - ***rubbish collections will be taken from the top of the access track meaning a rubbish lorry will not be required to access the track. The Transport consultation response was also satisfied with the proposed access arrangement and its suitability for emergency vehicles***
 - Water running off the drive may damage the foundations of no. 63a Kiln Road and 3 Venetia Close - ***suitable drainage would have been secured during the Building Control/ regulations phase. A condition will be included to ensure the driveway is made of permeable material. Drainage details will also be secured via building regulations and with Thames Water***
 - Use of the patio at night would cause disturbance to neighbours - ***it is not considered that the proposed use of the patio would lead to a level of disturbance dissimilar to other properties in the vicinity utilising their rear garden or if the residents at 65 Kiln Road chose to make full use of their garden***
 - Applicant has ignored comments from neighbours and neighbours have not been consulted
Officer comment: All comments from neighbours have been considered in the determination of this application. The applicant is not required to consult with neighbours in advance of a planning application (although it is neighbourly to do so). The Local Planning Authority ensures that surrounding neighbours are notified of the proposal in order so they can comment
- 6.49 Equalities Impact

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics including age and disability. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 To summarise, the proposal is considered to have demonstrated acceptability in relation to a number of planning policies and is considered to be acceptable in relation to the criteria of Policy H11 which controls development within private residential gardens. To summarise, the criteria of Policy H11 has been reiterated with concluding comments on each matter (officer comment in ***bold and italic***):
- 1) The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area
The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area by providing a layout that is comparable to other dwellings in the vicinity in terms of general building line, is of a similar scale and provides sufficient landscaping opportunities. Given that the surrounding area is not considered uniform or overly distinct in terms of plot sizes and types of dwellings, Officers do not consider the proposal to represent a development that disturbs the character of the area to a degree that warrants refusal of the application.
 - 2) The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking
The plot is considered of sufficient size to provide a suitably sized dwelling, set off the boundaries from neighbouring properties with a comparable amount of rear amenity space. Adequate landscaping and parking can also be provided on site.
 - 3) The proposal includes access which meets highway standards;
As confirmed by the Reading Borough Council Transport Officer
 - 4) The proposal does not lead to tandem development;
Whilst the proposal does meet the definition of 'tandem development' outlined in Policy H11, officers are of the view that for tandem to be successfully resisted, it would need to result in a level of harm either to the surrounding area or neighbouring properties. As discussed in the report, this was not found to be the case with this proposal.
 - 5) The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures
The proposal would not expose private boundaries to public areas, nor would additional physical security measures be required.
 - 6) The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants
As discussed in paragraphs 6.12 - 6.23, whilst neighbours would notice an increase in bulk, there is considered sufficient separation distances between the dwelling and all neighbouring boundaries so as not to result in a

substantially harmful loss of light, privacy or be considered overbearing to a degree that would warrant refusal of the application.

- 7) The emphasis is on the provision of family housing;
The proposal would provide a family dwellinghouse.
 - 8) The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent green space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network
As confirmed by the Ecological surveys submitted which have been reviewed by the Reading Borough Council Ecologist. Suitable conditions (outlined at the start of the report) will be attached to ensure the proposal is acceptable in terms of biodiversity enhancements.
 - 9) The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area
There is no prospect of any further development coming forward on this particular site or the surrounding area and so it does not prejudice the development of the site or of a wider area.
- 7.2 This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and comments received. The proposal to develop the site for a new house is considered on balance to be a supportable scheme, which accords with relevant national and local policy. The planning application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions and the completion of a S106 legal agreement as detailed above.

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Scale: 1:1250



LAND TO BEAR OF
85 OILN ROAD
READING
RG29 5S

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

SITE PLAN
LOCATION PLAN AND CONTEXT PLAN
SCALE 1:200, 1:1250 DATE 10.05.21



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