

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2025/0000503/HHA
Site:	23 The Arboretum, Coventry, CV4 7HX
Ward:	Wainbody
Proposal:	Erection of single storey extension to front, sides and rear, increase / alteration to existing dormers to front, partial garage conversion to habitable room, and extension of driveway
Case Officer:	Richard Edgington

SUMMARY

The application proposes extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling and front driveway/amenity space. There have been previous applications on site, the previous application was refused and dismissed at appeal due to the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

As originally submitted as part of this application, the plans were very similar to those of the refused scheme which were deemed unacceptable. However, officers have worked positively with applicants to agree on a series of amendments to the plans to address previous concerns and the appeal decision. The scheme now being considered is deemed to be more sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with adopted Policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

BACKGROUND

As part of the application process, the Council consulted with adjoining neighbours who have raised objections to the application, as more than 5 objections have been received the application has been referred to planning committee in accordance with the scheme of delegation. This report sets out the relevant material planning considerations, recommended conditions and other relevant factors in the determination of this application.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	The application has been referred to planning committee due to more than 5 objections having been received.
Current use of site:	Residential dwelling
Proposed use of site:	Residential dwelling
Parking provision:	2+

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.

- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposal will not have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area.
- The proposal accords with Policies: H5, DS3, DE1, AC3 and GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the emerging Local Plan, together with the aims of the NPPF.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a detached, red-brick-built and tile hung two-storey dwelling with small front gable features set within the roof pitch. The site is within a prominent location within the cul-de-sac at the southern end facing the vehicular route. The site was constructed in the mid 1990's and includes mock Tudor frontages, it should be noted that as part of the original consent permitted development rights have been removed.

The site benefits from landscaping and off-street parking to the front, with a side gate providing access to the rear amenity space. Neighbouring dwellings do not have side facing habitable room windows to the application site. Neighbouring properties are all of a similar and distinct style with projecting gable to the front and an irregular stepped front elevation with landscaped frontages.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The application as proposed seeks consent for the erection of single storey extensions; to front to create an enlarged porch; to both sides to create an enlarged living space and extended garage (to the side), partial garage conversion to habitable room, extension of driveway and associated works.

Note: The alterations to the former windows as originally proposed have been removed from the development through the submission of amended plans.

PLANNING HISTORY

There have been a number of historic planning applications on this site; the following are the most recent/relevant:

Application Number	Description of Development	Decision and Date
PL/2024/0000763/HHA	Erection of single storey wrap around extension to front, sides and rear, extension of 2no. dormers to front, partial garage conversion, and extension to hardstanding	Refused Date: 15/07/2024 (Appeal Dismissed)
PL/2024/0000123/HHA	Erection of single storey extension to front, side and rear (wrap-around) and conversion of garage to habitable room	Refused Date: 14/03/2024
L1993/1850	Erection of 16 dwellings, detached domestic garages and access road	Granted Date: 28/04/1994

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve".

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2017, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application is:

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy GE3: Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

Policy AC4: Walking and Cycling

Policy EM5: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Policy H5: Managing existing housing stock

Emerging Local Policy Guidance – Local Plan Review Reg 19 Consultation

Local Plan review is currently at Reg 19 consultation. Relevant emerging policy relating to this application is:

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy GE3: Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

Policy AC4: Walking and Cycling

Policy EM5: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Policy H5: Managing existing housing stock

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPD Coventry Connected

SPD Householder Design Guide

CONSULTATION

Neighbour/Third Party Representations: Neighbours have been notified of the application through letters having been issued to adjoining neighbours. Five representations have been received, objecting to the proposals and raising the following material planning considerations:

- Application makes minimal changes to the refused scheme (dismissed at appeal)

- Out of character with the existing dwelling and locality
- Breach of 45-degree sightline
- Detrimental to highway safety
- Loss of landscaping
- Disruption during construction phase

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

APPRAISAL

The main issues in determining this application are principle of development, the impact upon the character of the area, the impact upon neighbouring amenity, highway considerations and ecology.

Principle of Development

In this instance the principle of development is considered to be acceptable given that there are no overarching site constraints which are relevant in the determination of this application which would weigh against the extension of a residential dwelling. Indeed, weight is also afforded to Paragraph 11 of the NPPF which sets out the clear presumption in favour of sustainable development, as does Policy DS3 of the adopted and emerging Local Plans. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF also states that; 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities', and is thereby expected in any new development proposals. On this basis the principle of development is therefore acceptable, the relevant material planning considerations are set out in the succeeding sections of this report.

Design & Character

Policy DE1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure high quality design and development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development, and; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

The adopted Housholder Design Guide SPD (2023) is a material consideration in the determination of applications which seek to extend and alter dwellinghouses within the city. The SPD sets out key principles as to how design will be considered for respective types and styles of extensions.

As referenced above the application site has been subject to two previous applications, one of which was appealed to the secretary of state and subsequently dismissed. Neighbouring residents have raised concerns as to the lack of changes within the current submission. It is the case that as submitted there were very minimal changes to the plans from those previously dismissed at appeal. The original plans included a larger front extension within the driveway, the installation of a new non-symmetrical dormer to the

front elevation, the side extension to the neighbour nearest to No. 21 having an incongruous roof type and profile, and the loss of additional soft landscaping to the front.

The previous application, which also included these elements was refused for the following reason:

'The proposals would be contrary to Policies H5 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017, the Householder Design Guide SPD 2023 and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and National Design Guidance by reason of: the siting, design, bulk and massing of the proposed front and side extensions in this prominent location within the street scene which would introduce a visually intrusive and incongruous feature into the street scene; and the extent of the hardstanding and resulting loss of soft landscaping from the site frontage would disrupt the open landscaped frontage characteristic to the locality; thus harming the character of the property and the wider area, to the serious detriment of the visual amenities of the locality'.

The inspector within the appeal decision had particular concern with the front extensions and impact on the street scene and whilst noting that the proposed gable window extensions would retain subservience to the existing larger gable at the property and the overall ridge height would be maintained, the proposal would result in the loss of small dormer windows.

This loss, the inspector viewed resulted in the notable loss of an important distinctive architectural feature thus eroding uniformity and the character of the area which was further exacerbated by the loss of landscaping and replacement of the cat-slide roof slope with window gables, in combination with the wrap around single storey extension, which would be conspicuous due to its shallow pitch hipped roof, would result in significantly greater visual massing and bulk.

The changes secured as part of this application seek to address the above concerns. When viewed within the Streetscene, the existing dormers are to be retained and the pitched cat slide roof would be continued to the boundary with No. 21 in place of the previous roof profile to maintain continuity. The front extension in front of the garage has also been significantly reduced and additional planting areas retained. When taken as a whole it is considered that the development is now acceptable and accords with the requirements of the adopted Householder Design Guide and addresses the previous concerns raised by both officers and the inspector. Subject to matching materials secured via condition the application is deemed acceptable in design terms.

Residential Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development proposals do not undermine the living conditions of surrounding residential occupiers, Policy DE1 of the adopted Local Plan (2017) and the Householder Design Guide SPD is consistent with the NPPF in this respect. The development as proposed includes provisions for front, side and rear extensions which can be accommodated, given the detached nature and presence of landscaping between dwellings and plots do benefit from separation between each dwelling which is a part of the character of the area.

The front and side extensions are not considered to give rise to amenity issues to neighbouring residents as there are no relationships with neighbouring windows which would be impeded as a result of the siting of each those elements of the extensions proposed.

When considering the impact of the rear extension, the adopted Householder Design Guide SPD states that a depth of a rear extension should not exceed either 4.0 metres (when measured externally from the neighbouring rear elevation) or impinge on an imaginary 45-degree sightline from the middle of the nearest rear-facing window to a habitable room on the neighbour's property, whichever gives the greatest depth. For clarity it should be noted that habitable rooms include living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms and conservatories, but not bathrooms, WCs, hallways, landings and utility rooms.

With regards the impact to the neighbour to the east at No. 10, the proposed extension protrudes 4.15m from the rear elevation of No. 21 (5.6m from the existing rear elevation of the application site). This has been reduced since earlier applications to ensure that the 45 degree line is not breached, thereby according with the requirements of the SPD.

The dwelling to the north west, No. 21 The Arboretum is noted to be orientated approximately 30 degrees, No. 10 benefits from a generous corner plot which is bound by landscaping and 1.8m boundary treatments. The separation distance between the sides of the respective dwellings are 6.45m at their closest point. The side elevation of the proposed single storey rear extension will be located 10.1m away from the rear patio doors of No. 21 and would not have direct sightlines from the extension itself. Given the distance and the orientation of the dwellings, with the application site being located to the east. Sun calculations have been taken and there is not deemed to be any light impacts upon the ground floor neighbouring windows given the south facing nature of the rear elevation, together with the modest height of the proposed extension. Whilst there is now an increase in pitch on the side extension on the western side of the dwelling to match the pitch of the existing roof, this again is not deemed to have a detrimental impact upon the light or living conditions of the neighbouring occupier.

During the consultation, it is noted that concerns have been raised as to the impact of the construction phase and the noise and disturbance to neighbours. Given the relatively modest scale of the development it is not considered that the impact would be severe or would warrant a construction and environmental management plan. Taking the above into account it is deemed the impact upon residential amenity is acceptable, it should be noted that this was also concluded on the previous applications also.

Highway Considerations

Policy AC3 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to ensure that development proposals provide a sufficient quantum of vehicle parking which accords with the standards as set out within Appendix 5 of the Coventry Connected SPD (2016). In this instance there is a requirement for 3-Bed plus dwellings to provide a 2 allocated parking spaces. As existing there are in excess of three spaces provided, thereby exceeding the maximum requirement, as this is existing and the re-development does not increase the parking further or indeed impact the overall provision in any way, the impact of the development in respect of parking and highways is deemed to be neutral.

Ecology

Policy GE3 of the Local Plan states proposals for development will be permitted provided that they protect, enhance and/or restore habitat biodiversity. Development proposals will be expected to ensure that they:

- Lead to a net gain of biodiversity, where appropriate, by means of an approved ecological assessment of existing site features and development impacts.
- Protect or enhance biodiversity assets and secure their long-term management and maintenance.
- Avoid negative impacts on existing biodiversity; and
- Preserve species which are legally protected, in decline, are rare within Coventry or which are covered by national, regional or local Biodiversity Action Plans.

A householder development of this scale is exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements and in this case the site is not located within, or in proximity of, a statutory or non-statutory wildlife site. The applicants have completed a certificate for bat scoping, the document shows that there is a low likelihood for bat roosting potential within the dwelling. The case officer has been to site and has observed that there is no damage to the roof or brickwork which would allow bats to enter the site to roost and therefore accepts the self-certification document as submitted. No further action is therefore required in the form of a planning condition.

Equality Implications

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.

There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and will not result in any significant impact upon visual or neighbour amenity, highway safety or ecology, subject to relevant conditions. The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the development is in accordance with: Policies H5, DS3, DE1 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the emerging Local Plan Policies together with the aims of the NPPF.

CONDITIONS/REASONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason *To conform with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)*

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations. DWG 23_05_P01M
Site and Location Plan DWG P03C

Reason *For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning*

3. Other than where specified on the approved plans, no facing and roofing materials shall be used other than materials similar in appearance to those used predominantly in the construction of the exterior of the existing building.

Reason *To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the emerging Local Plan.*