

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Application No. and Parish</b>	<b>8/13 week date</b>	<b>Proposal, Location and Applicant</b>
(2)	10/02410/OOD Tilehurst	21 October 2010	<p><b>Consultation response to Reading Borough Council</b></p> <p>Construction of new 3 bedroom detached dwelling house</p> <p>154 Overdown Road, Tilehurst, RG31 6NJ</p> <p>Mr A Graves</p>

**Recommendation Summary:** To **AUTHORISE** the Head of Planning and Countryside to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** , and to **SEND A COPY OF THIS REPORT** to Reading Borough Council.

**Ward Member(s):** Cllr L.F. Zverko

**Reason for Committee determination:** Referred by the Development Control Manager because of the level of objection to Planning Application 10/02308/FUL.

**Committee Site Visit:** No

#### **Contact Officer Details**

**Name:** Bob Dray  
**Job Title:** Planning Officer  
**Tel No:** (01635) 519111  
**Email:** Bdray@westberks.gov.uk

## 1. Planning History

There is no relevant planning history within West Berkshire. The following planning history has been provided by Reading Borough Council:

**00/00516/FUL** First floor side extension over existing garage and kitchen and front porch – granted planning permission.

**92/00379/FUL** Single storey side extension – granted planning permission.

## 2. Publicity of Application

In relation to Planning Application 10/02308/FUL, neighbour notification letters have been sent to properties in close proximity to the site, both in West Berkshire and Reading. A site notice has also been displayed on the fence adjacent to Ullswater Drive.

Site Notice Expired: 27 October 2010

Last Neighbour Notification Expired: 28 October 2010

## 3. Consultations and Representations

The following consultation response have been received in relation to 10/02308/FUL, but are also relevant to the Council's consideration of the consultation response.

**Parish Council:** This Council believes that an ancient hedgerow is in existence but does not appear to be shown on any of the plans. The Overdown Road Estate was initially one dwelling per plot. Does this still apply? The access to this is on a slope and when the weather is bad, the safety on the highway may be an issue as well as the risk of flooding.

**Officer's response:** the Countryside Service has no evidence that this is an ancient hedgerow. Legal covenants are not material planning considerations; however residential density is relevant to the principle of development.

**Highways: Access**

There have been representations made on the siting of the access near to the bend.

The main highway concern therefore is whether the access complies with visibility splay requirements. A road subject to a 30 mph speed limit would normally require visibility splays of 2 metres x 43 metres for a single dwelling. On the assumption that vehicles are travelling at 25 mph in the vicinity of the site this could be relaxed, in accordance with Manual for Streets, to splays of 2 metres x 33 metres.

Drawing number 11151-08 shows that the visibility splays that can be achieved at the access. The plan complies with Manual for Streets and so the highway authority could not sustain an objection on these

grounds.

### ***Highway safety***

With regards to vehicle speeds and the siting of the access at the foot of a steep 'fast' hill, the main issue here is whether the access complies with visibility splay requirements.

### ***Traffic generation***

With regards to the additional traffic generation. A single dwelling can generate between 6-8 vehicle movements per day. That is 3-4 out and 3-4 in. Given that this is a relatively low level it would be extremely difficult for the highway authority to justify any objections on the grounds of the additional traffic that would be generated. The probability of conflict of movements is too low.

### ***Street lighting column***

There is a street lighting column that may require relocating at the cost of the applicant. Due to the age of the street lighting column, the applicant would need to pay for the transfer of the services to Scottish and Southern Electricity, but the Council would pay for a new column to update it in the process.

### ***Red line plan***

Concern has been raised that the red line plan includes some land that is within the ownership of West Berkshire Council Highway Authority. This is not the case.

### ***Car parking***

Two parking spaces have been proposed which is acceptable for the proposal. However the spaces should be 2.4 metres x 4.8 metres with a 6 metre forecourt depth for manoeuvring.

The site proposes to have two parking spaces with on-site turning. The highway authority is not able to request a greater provision of car parking for this dwelling in this location (although note my previous comments on the dimensions which should be rectified). As the parking complies with current guidance, the dwelling should have sufficient car parking for its requirements to remove the potential for roadside car parking. These policies are national guidance and contained within the Local Plan. I am unable to request a greater provision to alleviate concerns that roadside parking may occur. I could certainly not refuse the application on this basis given the relative sustainability of the site.

### ***Cycle storage***

A shed should be provided in the rear garden of the dwelling for cycle

storage.

### **Contribution**

As the majority of the site is within the jurisdiction of Reading Borough I will not be seeking a contribution. Although the highway network within West Berkshire will see some impact from the development, it is likely that the infrastructure/services within Reading Borough would be impacted more.

**Trees:** We have no record of the vegetation to the rear of 154 Ullswater Drive being a historic hedge. It is not in a conservation area or covered by a tree preservation order. Recommends a landscaping condition.

**Representations:** At the time of writing 16 objections have been received raising the following, summarised, concerns and points of objection:

- The existing bend and adverse camber in Ullswater Drive is already detrimental to highway safety.
- The existing bend is particularly dangerous in adverse weather conditions.
- The proposed access would be sited in a position whereby it would exacerbate the problems with highway safety.
- The proposed house would increase the likelihood of on-street parking, which would be detrimental to highway safety.
- Construction traffic may have an adverse effect on highway safety.
- Maintenance of highway land during construction works.
- Overdevelopment of a small plot
- Loss of privacy and daylight to gardens on Overdown Road.
- Risk of flooding and land slippage.
- Noise, disturbance, and construction working hours.
- The recent/ongoing felling of trees and removal of vegetation from the boundary with Ullswater Drive.
- Loss of privacy to properties on Ullswater Drive as a result of removed boundary vegetation.

## **4. Policy Considerations**

### National Planning Policy and Guidance

- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)
- Planning Policy Statement 1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change (PPS1A)
- Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3)
- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9)
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (PPG13)

### West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 Saved Policies 2007

- OVS.1: The Overall Strategy
- OVS.2: Core Policy
- OVS.3: Planning and Community Benefits

- OVS.10: Energy Efficiency
- HSG.1: The Identification of Settlements for Planning Purposes
- TRANS.1: Meeting the Transport Needs of New Development

#### Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents and other material considerations

- SPG 4/02: House Extensions (July 2004)
- SPG 4/04: Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development (September 2004)
- Supplementary Planning Document 'Quality Design – West Berkshire'
- DETR/CABE: By Design (Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice)
- DCLG/DfT: Manual for Streets

### **5. Description of Development**

- 5.1 154 Overdown Road is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located largely within Reading Borough. This application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a new 3 bedroom detached dwelling to the rear of the existing property, which fronts onto, and is accessed from, Ullswater Drive. Although the majority of the application site is located within the adjacent district, the north-western corner of the site is within West Berkshire.
- 5.2 The application site comprises the part of the garden of the existing dwelling. The land rises steeply up to Ullswater Drive. Owing to this significant change in ground levels, it is proposed to partially excavate the new dwelling. Consequently, the dwelling would appear as a bungalow when viewed from Ullswater Drive. The front door would be positioned at first floor level and accessed via a bridge which traverses a light well.
- 5.3 The existing curtilage would be subdivided with the curtilage of the new house extending approximately 30m back from Ullswater Drive. The dwelling would be located centrally within the plot, largely in line with 7 Ullswater Drive. A terrace and open amenity space would be provided to the rear, and 2 parking spaces, landscaping and a bin store are proposed within the frontage.
- 5.4 The proposed dwelling measures approximately 8.7m in width and 8.7m in depth. It would have a total ridge height of 7.8m, but would appear to be 5.1m in height when viewed from street level. It would have a dual-pitched gable-end roof using concrete tiles. The walls would be completed with facing brickwork.

### **Procedural matters**

- 5.5 The application site crosses the district boundary with Reading Borough. The majority of the site lies within the neighbouring district, including the proposed house, but the north-western corner of the site falls within West Berkshire.
- 5.6 A parallel application, comprising the same description and plans, has been submitted to West Berkshire Council (ref: 10/02308/FUL) and is also listed for consideration on this agenda. Given the level of objection received for this application, the Development Control Manager has also referred West Berkshire Council's consultation response to the Eastern Area Planning Committee.

- 5.7 Given that the majority of the application site, including the proposed house, falls within Reading Borough, the principle of development, the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties, and other such material considerations should fall to be determined by Reading Borough Council.

## **6. Consideration of the Proposal**

Insofar as it relates to West Berkshire, the main issues raised by this proposal are:

- The impact on the character and appearance of the surroundings area
- The impact on highway safety
- Trees and landscaping
- The impact on the living conditions of neighbours within West Berkshire
- The impact on local infrastructure, services and amenities

### **6.1 Character and appearance**

6.1.1 Policy OVS2 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan requires development proposals to show a high standard of design, including landscape treatment, which respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Policy HSG1 states that new housing development should have regard to the existing residential nature of the area surrounding the site.

6.1.2 It is proposed to partially excavate the application site so that the proposed house would appear as a single storey building from Ullswater Drive. Consequently the front door would be at first floor level on the front elevation, and it would be accessed by a bridge which traverses a light well for the ground floor windows.

6.1.3 The proposed building is in line with 7 Ullswater Drive, and is at a similar height. The ridge line is slightly higher than the neighbour, but this is considered to correspond with the slope of Ullswater Drive. The dwelling is set back from the road and therefore would not have a dominating effect on the street scene. The submitted street elevation drawings indicate that soft landscaping would be provided along the front boundary, and this would help assimilate the development into its surroundings.

6.1.4 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, and the erection of a dwelling in this area is not considered to appear out of place when viewed from Ullswater Drive. The proposed design and appearance of the property does not introduce any incongruous elements which would have an adverse effect on the street scene.

6.1.5 Having regard to the above, the proposed development is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area insofar as it relates to West Berkshire. It falls to Reading Borough Council to assess the impacts on land within their district, including views of the development from properties on Overdown Road.

### **6.2 Highway matters**

6.2.1 Policy OVS2 requires development proposals to comply with highway standards in respect of access and parking. The majority of the objections refer to highway

safety. As such, the Council's Highways Authority was asked to specifically consider the issues which were raised.

- 6.2.2 Access to the site is proposed onto Ullswater Drive. Part of the access falls within West Berkshire, and consequently this also falls for consideration under planning application 10/02308/FUL. A plan showing achievable visibility splays has been submitted for consideration. Taking into account the likely speeds of vehicles, West Berkshire Council highways officers are satisfied that the proposed access is acceptable.
- 6.2.3 Concern has been expressed by interested parties that the access would be particularly hazardous in adverse weather conditions. However, because the access complies with highway standards, an objection cannot be sustained on these grounds. The proposed access would not worsen the existing road conditions.
- 6.2.4 The drawings show that adequate off-road parking may be provided to comply with highway standards. West Berkshire Council cannot insist on a greater level of parking than what is stipulated in the West Berkshire District Local Plan. The parking spaces shown in the current drawings are slightly substandard in size, but amended drawings have been requested. Any amendments will be reported in the update sheet, but without any amendments, a pre-condition could ensure the necessary details are approved prior to the commencement of development.
- 6.2.5 A single dwelling can generate between 6-8 vehicle movements per day. Given that this is relatively low in the context of the existing cul-de-sac, the anticipated increase is not considered likely to have a detrimental effect on highway safety.
- 6.2.6 An existing street lighting column is located at the proposed access. This would need to be relocated to enable the development. However, this is not a planning matter.
- 6.2.7 The proposed access complies with highway standards and the frontage is capable of accommodating the necessary parking provision and manoeuvring space. As such the proposal is considered to comply with Policy OVS2 in this respect.

### **6.3 Trees and landscaping**

- 6.3.1 The site contained several small trees along the rear boundary with Ullswater Drive. These have recently been removed. During the course of this application, the neighbouring property (not the applicant) has also removed some trees and vegetation, and this has generated some complaints from local residents. The trees within West Berkshire are not subject to a tree preservation order (TPO), and Reading Borough Council has confirmed the same for the trees within their district. Tilehurst Parish Council has stated that it believes that an ancient hedgerow exists in this location; however the Council's tree officers have no record of such.
- 6.3.2 It is recommended that a landscaping condition is imposed on planning application 10/02308/FUL in order to help assimilate the proposed development into the street scene. This has been supported by the tree officer.

## **6.4 Neighbouring living conditions**

- 6.4.1 Policy OVS2 requires development proposals to safeguard the amenities of adjoining occupiers. The proposed dwelling would be sited opposite 12, 14 and 16 Ullswater Drive (within West Berkshire).
- 6.4.2 There would be a separation distance of 27m between the front of the proposed dwelling and the closest point of 16 Ullswater Drive (directly opposite). This exceeds the guideline of 21m given in Part 2 (“Residential Development”) of Supplementary Planning Document ‘Quality Design’. Moreover, the dwelling would only appear to be 5.1m in height when viewed from Ullswater Drive, and indicative landscaping, which may be secured by condition, would provide some visual screening. Consequently, the proposed development is not considered to have an adverse effect on the living conditions of neighbouring within West Berkshire.

## **6.5 Local infrastructure, services and amenities**

- 6.5.1 The relevant services have been consulted on the proposal. However, given that the majority of the application site lies within Reading Borough, it is considered that seeking developer contributions is not justified in this instance.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 Having regard to the relevant planning policies and other material considerations as outlined in Sections 4 and 6, it is considered that the proposal, insofar as it relates to land within Reading Borough Councils boundary is acceptable.
- 7.2 The proposed dwelling, when viewed from Ullswater Drive, would be in keeping with the residential character of the area, and by virtue of its size, design and siting, it would not be an incongruous addition to the street scene. The proposal complies with highway standards in respect of access and parking. As such, it is recommended that the Head of Planning and Countryside is authorised to raise no objection send comments to Reading Borough Council, as detailed in Section 8.1, and to send a copy of this report.
- 7.3 Representations and consultation responses have already been provided to Reading Borough Council throughout the application.

## **8. Full Recommendation**

**AUTHORISE** the Head of Planning and Countryside to **RAISE NO OBJECTION**, and to **SEND A COPY OF THIS REPORT** to Reading Borough Council.

### **8.1 Comments to Reading Borough Council**

West Berkshire Council (WBC) raises no objection to the proposed development in respect of the impacts to its district. WBC believes that the principle of development, the impact on neighbouring living conditions, and other material considerations should be left to Reading Borough Council (RBC) to consider in accordance with its relevant development plan policies. It is requested that, if RBC grant planning permission, an informative is attached to the decision notice which advises the applicant that the RBC permission should be read in conjunction with the WBC permission.