

**WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON 12TH JUNE 2019**

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: (3) **Application No:** 19/00806/HOUSE **Page No.** 63 - 71
Site: 24 Donnington Square, Newbury RG14 1PJ

Planning Officer Presenting: Derek Carnegie

Member Presenting: N/A

Parish Representative speaking: N/A

Objector(s) speaking: Charlotte Hawkins
David Peacock

Supporter(s) speaking: N/A

Applicant/Agent speaking: Gareth Davies
Matt Taylor (Hungerford Design)

Ward Member(s): Councillor Lynne Doherty
Councillor Steve Masters

Update Information:

1. Comments from the Newbury Society

Following production of the Committee Agenda the following comments were received from the Newbury Society:

"The Newbury Society objects to the proposals in their current form.

Donnington Square is a Conservation Area, designated in May 1971. The fact that West Berkshire Council and its predecessors have failed to produce a formal appraisal for this CA over the last 48 years should not favour developments which may cause it harm. This failure is in spite of the town council and residents researching the Square in some detail, and producing a report submitted to West Berkshire Council more than 10 years ago which could have been the basis for a formal appraisal (*Donnington Square Conservation Area Report*, Newbury Town Council, 2008). Donnington Square is significant enough to be included in the Pevsner volume on *Berkshire* (2010 p. 406).

In spite of this being a Conservation Area, this application does not include a Heritage Statement. The design and access statement is minimal, and simply does not address heritage impact. The main issue here is the effect of the application on the character of the conservation area. Donnington Square is a mid-C19th development of large houses, punctuated by gaps between the houses. This punctuation is an essential part of the character of the area, providing a rhythm to the crescent, and a further erosion will damage its character.

The main concerns therefore are the size of the current three-storey extension proposed, and its design. We consider it to be inappropriately wide, and inappropriately high; filling in a significant part of the gap to the neighbouring property. The effect is detrimental to the conservation area.

The 3-storey extension to the adjoining no. 25 was approved in August 2007 under application 07/01106/HOUSE, and we consider that this should be used as an appropriate guide to the maximum width of an acceptable extension at no. 24. This would also help in re-imposing the symmetry of the pair of buildings, thereby making a more sympathetic contribution to the Conservation Area. The massing at no. 25 reflected the relationship to the adjacent building; for this application the relationship with no. 23 is even more sensitive, bearing in mind the relative height of the two buildings.

We have no objection to the principle of an extension. We do feel that in agreeing the acceptable size for an extension, the views of the occupants of no. 23, the neighbouring property most affected, should be given serious weight.

As a footnote, we have problems with the way this application is described in the planning and consultation process. To describe this as an application to "Replace existing garden room and store..." is not an appropriate way to begin listing a proposal for a substantial 3-storey extension."

Officers have considered the above comments but are not of the view that they raise any additional matters that have not already been addressed in the case officer's report and the amended plans.

2. Comments regarding shadow diagram

Since production of the Committee Agenda the following comments have been received in respect of the shadow diagram supporting the application and the impact of the :

"Further to the submission of the shadow diagram by the applicants' agents, we wanted to make a couple of comments on their content. We understand that these comments may not make it into the report but hope that our views will be taken into consideration and passed to the Committee as we are the nearest affected neighbours.

1) The layout of our property in the shadow diagram plan is incorrect. We have a conservatory to the right hand side of the main building which is missing and is shown as a blank wall. In fact, a conservatory is deemed to be a habitable room in planning terms and as such the effect of overshadowing is a material consideration in this case. The shadow diagram confirms that there will be overshadowing for an extended period around 10am on 21st March (winter equinox) as a direct result of the proposed extension.

2) The effect of the extended overshadowing on our son's bedroom will occur between 8.00 and 9.00 in the morning. Unfortunately as the diagram only shows shadowing in two hour sections thereby ignoring the possible extended shadowing on a habitable room.

Thanks for any help you can give in passing this to the Committee."

Officers have considered these comments, but note that although concerns are raised in respect of overshadowing of the neighbouring conservatory, this overshadowing would be limited in its extent to a degree that officers consider would not have an unacceptable level of impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupant, being restricted to two hours for a small part of the year (late March), and partial rather than significant loss of light. Loss of light to a bedroom on this side of the neighbouring dwelling would also be of a similarly limited extent, and not such as to render a significant and detrimental impact on the occupant of the dwelling, particularly in light of the considerable separation between the proposed extensions and neighbouring dwelling (approximately 8.5 metres at the closest point between the two and approximately 13 metres from the neighbouring conservatory) which has already been taken into account by the case officer in the report. Therefore officers are not of the view that the proposed works would generate overshadowing of the neighbouring dwelling such as might merit a reason for refusal of the application.

DC