

**ITEM NUMBER: 5b**

<b>22/00099/FHA</b>	<b>Single storey rear extension, first floor front extension, velux windows to front and associated alterations</b>	
<b>Site Address:</b>	<b>5 Becketts Square, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1BZ</b>	
<b>Applicant/Agent:</b>	<b>Mr Louis Starnowski</b>	<b>Mr Harry Riddick</b>
<b>Case Officer:</b>	<b>Jane Miller</b>	
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	<b>Berkhamsted Town Council</b>	<b>Berkhamsted Castle</b>
<b>Referral to Committee:</b>	<b>Contrary views of Berkhamsted Town Council</b>	

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be GRANTED.

**2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The application site is located within the town of Berkhamsted wherein the proposed development is acceptable in principle, in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS4 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013).

2.2 The overall size, scale and design of the proposed alterations are acceptable, they relate well to the parent dwelling, and would not result in any harm to the character or appearance of the street scene/area. The works are not considered to have any significant adverse impacts on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by being visually overbearing or resulting in a loss of light. The proposed velux roof lights will permit views to the front of No. 4 Becketts Square but these can be inserted at the property without the need for planning permission which is a material consideration. The first floor and rear extension would not result in a loss of privacy.

2.3 Furthermore, it is not considered that the scheme would have an adverse impact on the road network or create the significant parking stress

2.4 Given all of the above, the proposal complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), Policies CS1, CS4, CS11, CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013), Saved Appendices 3 and 7 of the Local Plan (2004) and the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (2020).

**3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

3.1 The application site is located on the north side of Becketts Square within a residential area of Berkhamsted. The site comprises an end of terraced two storey 1970a dwelling. Land levels at Becketts Square fall towards the west.

3.2 The immediate character area comprises similarly designed dwellinghouses of relatively identical build, age, height and size; the overall character of the area is evident.

**4. PROPOSAL**

4.1 This application seeks permission for a single storey rear extension, first floor front extension, velux windows to front and associated alterations

**5. PLANNING HISTORY**

Planning Applications :

21/03424/FHA - Single-storey rear extension and landscaping.  
GRA - 28th October 2021

21/03425/FHA - Loft conversion  
REF - 2nd November 2021

21/04503/FHA - Single storey front and rear extensions with pitched roof front dormers.  
WDN - 13th January 2022

## **6. CONSTRAINTS**

Area of Archaeological Significance: 21  
BCA Townscape Group  
CIL Zone: CIL1  
Parish: Berkhamsted CP  
RAF Halton and Chenies Zone: Green (15.2m)  
RAF Halton and Chenies Zone: RAF HALTON: DOTTED BLACK ZONE  
Residential Area (Town/Village): Residential Area in Town Village (Berkhamsted)  
Residential Character Area: BCA15  
Parking Standards: New Zone 3  
EA Source Protection Zone: 3  
Town: Berkhamsted

## **7. REPRESENTATIONS**

### Consultation responses

7.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix A.

### Neighbour notification/site notice responses

7.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix B.

## **8. PLANNING POLICIES**

Main Documents:

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)  
Dacorum Borough Core Strategy 2006-2031 (adopted September 2013)  
Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1999-2011 (adopted April 2004)

Relevant Policies

Dacorum Core Strategy

NP1 - Supporting Development  
CS1 - Distribution of Development  
CS4 - The Towns and Large Villages  
CS11 - Quality of Neighbourhood Design  
CS12 - Quality of Site Design  
CS29 - Sustainable Design and Construction

Dacorum Local Plan

Appendix 3 – Layout and Design of Residential Areas  
Appendix 7 – Small-scale House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:

Site Layout and Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (2011)  
Parking SPD (November 2020)

## **9. CONSIDERATIONS**

### Principle of Development

9.1 The application site is located within a residential area, wherein in accordance with Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy (2013) the principle of residential development is acceptable subject to compliance with the relevant national and local policies. The main issues of consideration relate to the impact of the proposal's character and appearance upon the existing dwelling house, immediate street scene and residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

9.2 Taking the above policies into account, the proposal is acceptable in principle.

### Quality of Design / Impact on Visual Amenity

9.3 Dacorum's Core Strategy Policies CS11 (Quality of Neighbourhood Design) and CS12 (Quality of Site Design) state that development within settlements and neighbourhoods should preserve attractive streetscapes; integrate with the streetscape character and respect adjoining properties in terms of scale, height, bulk and materials. Chapter 12 of the Framework emphasises the importance of good design in context and, in particular, paragraph 130 states permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

9.4 Cat slide roofs are a feature of many of the properties within Becketts Square, whereby approximately 2/3 of the width of the roof descends as a cat-slide, whilst the remaining front elevation is set back, with the eaves sitting immediately above the first floor windows. When these properties were constructed a single integral garage sat at ground floor level behind the set-back, which itself provided for additional vehicular off street parking provision in front of the garage doors. Many of these garages have since been converted into rooms as is the case at No. 5. The recess at No. 5 sits adjacent to the next dwelling in the terrace i.e. No.6.

9.5 The application site (No.5) sits at the end of the terrace farthest away from the entrance to this small cul-de-sac off Bridgewater Road.

9.6 It should be noted that a previous application, reference 21/04503/FHA was withdrawn earlier this year following concerns about the visual impact of the introduction of two front dormer windows under dual pitched roofs. This current application removes the dormer windows and instead proposes the velux roof windows.

9.7 As shown on Drawing DD 21/166.3 A, the application proposes to insert three velux roof windows to the front roof slope. Two of which (left and middle when viewed from the front) will be inserted in the existing cat-slide roof and it should be acknowledged that these two velux windows can be inserted without the need for planning permission in line with the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) which is a material consideration. These two roof lights will serve the family bathroom and an office space. The proposed 'right hand' velux window, would require

planning permission because it will sit within the newly extended roof pitch, which replaces the existing first floor window. The roof lights are of an acceptable, size and scale and are sited such that they would not result in any visual harm to the property.

9.8 Further, this application proposes to partially extend the existing recessed area of the roof slope forward at first floor level only, extending the 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom into the eaves. This will create an undercroft below, thereby retaining the existing parking area and existing ground floor side window.

9.9 Again it should be noted that a previously withdrawn application 21/04503/FHA also proposed a first floor extension to the cat-slide roof. This current application has overcome the previous concerns by reducing the depth of the first floor element. As now proposed the side addition retains the overall appearance of the property (cat-slide) and appears subservient such that no significant visual harm is caused.

9.10 Berkhamsted Town Council have objected to this element as introducing a jarring roof scape, contrary to Policy CS12. However, when entering into Becketts Square, until almost opposite the site, the visibility of the extended roof slope would be minimal. There would be a change to the visual appearance of the street scene as a result of the works, however due to the positioning of No.5 within the cul-de-sac (at the very far end of the terrace of dwellings) and due to the fact that the proposal has been amended as requested to reduce the depth at first floor level so to appear subservient, on balance it is not considered that the changes would be harmful to such a level as to be detrimental to the street scene and warrant a refusal. The overall character and appearance of the area would be maintained and the proposal would successfully integrate.

9.11 Turning to the rear, the proposal would result in a full width single storey rear extension under a mono pitched roof with three roof lights. Approximate measurements are 2.5m (depth), 2m (eaves) and 3.5m (height), with some landscaping works. The size and scale are considered acceptable and would relate well to the parent property and given its siting to the rear it would not be visible from public vantage points.

9.12 The proposed external materials are considered acceptable, the proposed bricks, tiles, windows and doors shall match the existing. The proposed infill is to be finished with white horizontal weatherboard cladding to match the existing and the proposed roof lights will not protrude more than 150mm from the existing roof plane.

9.13 Overall, it is considered that the proposal does not appear unduly dominant in terms of bulk, scale and height to the parent building and street scene and will use sympathetic materials to match existing.

9.14 Therefore it is considered that the proposal would be generally sympathetic and in keeping with the surrounding area, respect adjoining properties and would therefore result in no significant adverse effects on the character and appearance of the street scene in terms of visual and residential amenity. This accords with the local and national policies mentioned above.

#### Impact on Residential Amenity

9.15 The NPPF outlines the importance of planning in securing good standards of amenity for existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Saved Appendix 3 of the Local Plan (2004) and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013), seek to ensure that new development does not result in detrimental impact upon neighbouring properties and their amenity space. Thus, the proposed should be designed to reduce any impact on neighbouring properties by way of visual intrusion, loss of light and privacy.

9.16 Objections have been received from both adjacent neighbours. Concerns have been raised from the adjoining neighbour at No.6 Becketts Square, in respect to the building works themselves and the shared walls however this would be a matter for building control / party wall agreements rather than a planning matter.

9.17 The other non-adjoining neighbouring property (No.4) sits perpendicular to the site, facing east, up toward the entrance to the square and Bridgewater Road. They have objected to the proposed front velux windows as they considered these windows will cause a loss of privacy into their front bedroom windows. There would be distance of approximately 4m between the windows. The velux windows will provide views to the front of No. 4 which are not currently possible, however it should be acknowledged that the two closest velux windows to No.4 can be inserted without planning permission in line with schedule 2, part 1, class C (other alterations to the roof of a dwelling house) of the General Permitted Development Order and this is a material consideration. The third roof light would be sited further from No. 4 and not result in any greater level of overlooking than the two velux windows which could be inserted without the need for permission. The views would be oblique and not direct and a refusal on this element alone could not be sustained.

9.18 Permission for the single storey rear extension has previously been granted planning permission under reference 21/03424/FHA. There have been no changes to planning policy or the site circumstances since that approval. Given its modest size, scale and height the rear extension would not result in any harm to the residential amenities of adjacent properties with regard to light, privacy or visual intrusion.

9.19 Overall, the two roof lights closest to No. 4 can be inserted without planning permission, and in respect of the remaining roof light, first floor front extension and rear extension, due to the height, positioning and separation distance between the proposed alterations and the surrounding dwelling houses it is considered that the proposal would result in no significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties when considering a loss of daylight, sunlight or privacy. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with Policy CS12.

### Other Considerations

#### Parking and access

9.20 The NPPF (2019), Policies CS8 and CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013), and the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (2020) all seek to ensure that new development provides safe and sufficient parking provision for current and future occupiers.

9.21 It is acknowledged that a first floor office space will be created under the eaves, however there are no changes to the number of bedrooms as a result of the proposal so no additional parking is required.

9.22 No changes have been proposed to the existing parking provision or site access.

9.23 It is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

#### Tree and Hedges

9.24 Section 6 of the application form states that no trees or hedges are within falling distance of the proposed development and that no tree or hedges need to be removed or pruned in order to carry out the proposal. The proposal would not affect any significant trees/landscaping.

## Archaeology

9.25 The site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance. The Archaeology Officer has been duly consulted and advises that the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest. The proposal complies with Policy CS27 in this regard.

## Response to Neighbour Comments

9.26 Covered in report.

## CIL Liable

9.27 Policy CS35 of the Core Strategy requires all developments to make appropriate contributions towards infrastructure required to support the development. These contributions will normally extend only to the payment of CIL where applicable. The Council's Community Infrastructure Levy was adopted in February 2015 and came into force on 1 July 2015. CIL relief is available for affordable housing, charities and Self Builders and may be claimed using the appropriate forms.

**No** (below 100sqm)

## Chiltern Beechwood Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

9.28 The planning application is within Zone of Influence of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (CB SAC). The Council has a duty under Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Reg 63) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (EU exit amendment) Regulations 2019 to protect the CB SAC from harm, including increased recreational pressures.

9.29 A screening assessment has been undertaken and no likely significant effect is considered to occur to the CB SAC therefore an appropriate assessment is not required in this case.

## **10. RECOMMENDATION**

10.1 That planning permission be granted.

### **Condition(s) and Reason(s):**

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the materials specified on the application form and plans**

Reason: To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character of the area in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013).

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

**DD 21/166.3 A existing and proposed elevations, floor layouts and location plans (received 28.01.2022)**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

**Informatives:**

1. Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.

**APPENDIX A: CONSULTEE RESPONSES**

Consultee	Comments
Berkhamsted Town Council	<p>Objection</p> <p>The Committee noted the objections from the neighbours. The Committee had no objection to the proposed ground floor extension to the rear of the property but objected to the proposed plans for the front as it would introduce a jarring roof scape.</p> <p>CS 12</p>
Archaeology Unit (HCC)	<p>Thank you for consulting this office on the above application. In this instance, I consider that this development is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and I have no comment to make upon the proposal.</p> <p>Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.</p>

**APPENDIX B: NEIGHBOUR RESPONSES**

**Number of Neighbour Comments**

Neighbour Consultations	Contributors	Neutral	Objections	Support
5	2	0	2	0

**Neighbour Responses**

Address	Comments
<p>4 Becketts Square Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 1BZ</p>	<p>I have reviewed the latest Planning Application for No 5 Becketts Square . I do not consider that changing the Dormer Windows for Velox Windows has altered my previous objection . The close location of the left hand window to my bedroom window is not acceptable because my neighbour could still look into my bedroom .</p> <p>The house is the end property of a group of four linked terraced houses and changes in the roof design would unbalances the total effect of the properties . Our house is so close to number 5 ( ie 8 feet ) that the changes to the roof design would have an adverse effect to the external view of my house . Under the circumstances " I Object to the Planning Application "</p>
<p>6 Becketts Square Berkhamsted Hertfordshire HP4 1BZ</p>	<p>I live at no 6 and note that a revised planning application has been submitted with the former dormer windows being replaced with velux windows. My previous concerns raised (ref 21/04503/FHA) still stand with this application, in particular with the side wall of my house which is parallel to the driveway of no 5 where the new extension would be built. Also the impact building work may have on the interior of my house also remains a concern. Having spoken to an architect and builder they say this wall does not need to be touched.</p> <p>The house is squeezed in at the bottom end of a row of 4 terraced houses, and has been built on an area that was originally designed to be a double garage for plot 4. However the developers abandoned this plan and squeezed in another house, no 5, heavily impacting on no 4 being overlooked with these proposed extension plans. I feel the planned changes would be out of appearance and design with the other properties in the Square.</p>