

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Battle Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0155 Householder planning permission

Address: 15 PANGBOURNE STREET, READING, RG30 1HS

Proposal: Retrospective application for a detached outbuilding to form habitable accommodation ancillary to host dwelling for immediate family.

Applicant: Ms J Cordery

Received date: 29/01/2025

Target Decision date: 27/03/2025

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is an end-terraced, two-storey property facing a green space that separates Pangbourne Street from Ledbury Close. The property has a side gate providing access to the rear garden. There are existing outbuildings in the rear gardens of neighbouring properties. Sulham Place is to the east of the proposal site. The property is neither listed nor within a Conservation Area.



Fig 1: Front View of the property, 13/02/2025



Fig 2: Snap from the Council's GIS system, 19/03/2025

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to regularise the existing unauthorised single storey detached outbuilding in the rear garden of the host dwelling. The outbuilding has a flat roof, measuring 4.25m in length and 4.23m in width, with a total height of 2.5m. It contains a bedroom, shower room, and a small kitchen area. There is one east-facing, white-framed door and window, and all the bricks are red.



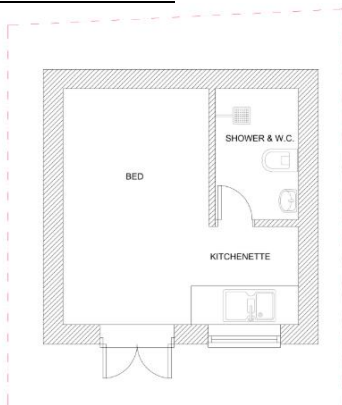
Fig 3: Front View of the existing outbuilding, 12/11/2024

It is understood that the outbuilding was completed in July 2022 and was built for family use. However, it is also understood that the building has been used as a short-term let (via Airbnb) called 'Tranquil Escape' and has received 19 reviews online. The use appears to have started around 28th October 2023, as there are no reviews before that date.

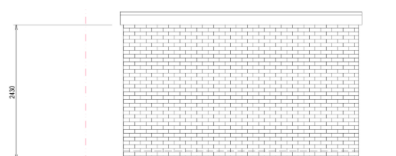
Following plans/materials are under consideration:

- Application Form received 29th January 2025.
- Drawing no. 28324-01 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 29th January 2025.
- Drawing no. 28324-02 – Proposed Elevations received 29th January 2025.
- Drawing no. 28324-03 – Location Plan and Block Plan received 29th January 2025.
- An email from the agent, dated 13th March 2025, confirmed that the outbuilding would only be used as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling and not for short-term let.

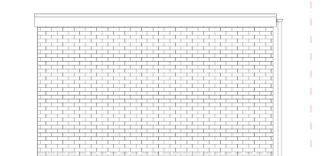
Submitted Plans:



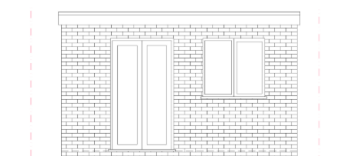
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



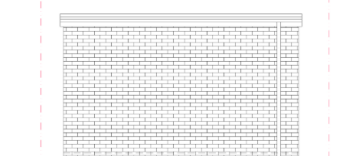
PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed on 13th February 2025 in front of the application site. The 21-day consultation period ended on 6th March 2025. No letters of representation have been received.



Fig 4: Site Notice Photo

Equality Act 2010:

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

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

5. APPRAISAL

Use

Policy H9 states that ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, will be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately. The supporting text to the policy at 4.4.76 provides additional clarification:

“ancillary accommodation should not be a way of introducing new dwellings by stealth. Therefore, planning conditions and, where necessary, obligations will ensure that extra accommodation remains ancillary to the main dwelling. Ancillary accommodation could be considered a separate dwelling where it:

- Is self-sufficient in terms of facilities e.g. kitchens and bathrooms;
- Has its own front door without internal links to the main house; and/or
- Has its own external facilities, e.g. access, drive, garden; or has scope for these external facilities to be easily created”.

In this instance it is evident (see the floor plan above) that the ancillary accommodation is self-sufficient in terms of its facilities as it has its own kitchenette and bathroom, has its own front door without any internal link to the main house and can be separately accessed via the existing external side passage. Accordingly, the outbuilding includes the characteristics where it **could** be considered a separate dwelling. The understood use of the outbuilding as a short-term let (via Airbnb), as referenced above, also points to this. Set within this context, the agent was asked to clarify the intended use, with this being confirmed as such via email on 13/03/2025:

“I can confirm that the out building would only be ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling and not for short term let”.

Set within this context, strictly on balance in the context of these specific proposals, officers consider that a planning condition can suitably secure the use, as proposed. This is considered to be necessary to ensure that the proposals accord with the terms of the application as proposed, whilst also making it abundantly clear on what basis permission has been granted. As such, if the future use were to fall outside of the terms of the permission, the local planning authority would have the means to remedy any possible future breach of condition.

More specifically, the condition shall ensure that the outbuilding is not occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the main dwelling and shall at no time shall be sold, sub-let or rented independently to the occupation of 15 Pangbourne Street, Reading, RG30 1HS. Furthermore, at no time shall the outbuilding hereby permitted have; i) a separate postal address, ii) separate metres for the provision of services or iii) a separate and registered Land Registry title. These are considered to be reasonable and necessary safeguards in this specific instance in order to make the proposals acceptable.

Without this condition, the proposals would not have been supported, given the characteristics of the development and the policy context referenced above.

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house, or other householder development as in this instance, will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

There are no identified risks to the character and appearance of the main house or neighbouring properties, as it is a single storey detached outbuilding located in the rear garden. Additionally, the brickwork, windows, and doors are considered to respect the main house. This is in compliance with Policies H9 and CC7.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension, or other householder development as in this instance, will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours, and it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

There are no identified risks in terms of privacy, overbearing impact, or blocking light to neighbouring properties, considering its single storey detached nature and lack of side windows. The remaining private garden space is considered sufficient for outdoor activities. The condition, as referenced in the use section above, will also help protect the amenity of neighbours.

For current and future occupiers, the proposed outbuilding will provide additional ancillary accommodation at the plot for the benefit of occupiers, improving the overall quality of accommodation at the site.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following condition.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Condition

Recommended Condition:
Ancillary Domestic Use