

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green Ward

App Ref: PL/24/1569 Householder planning permission

Address: 67 ROTHERFIELD WAY, EMMER GREEN, READING, RG4 8PJ

Proposal: Single storey rear extension and double storey side extension

Applicant: Ms Meltem Ozkan Girgin

Received date: 25/11/2024

Target Decision date: 19/05/2025 (EXT)

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site contains a two-storey semi-detached house which is located on the northern side of Rotherfield Way. The levels of the site slope upwards from Rotherfield Way and the property has a very steep garden to the rear. The surrounding area is residential in nature and surrounding dwellings are mainly semi-detached properties of a similar character. The Surley Row Conservation Area is located to the east of the application site, with two listed buildings in close proximity to the site.



Fig 1 & 2: View from front of the property, taken on 17/01/25; extract of submitted Location Plan

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal involves the erection of a two-storey side extension and a single-storey rear extension. The existing detached garage would be removed to facilitate the proposal. The two-storey side extension would be built along the angled boundary, with a 1m gap. The ground floor of the proposed two-storey extension would project 78cm from the front building line and would have a width of approximately 6.2m, with a mono-gable roof. The first floor would be set back and set down from the existing frontage and ridgeline. Regarding the proposed single-storey rear extension, it would extend across the entire rear wall, with a depth and maximum height of 3m. The proposed roof would be flat.

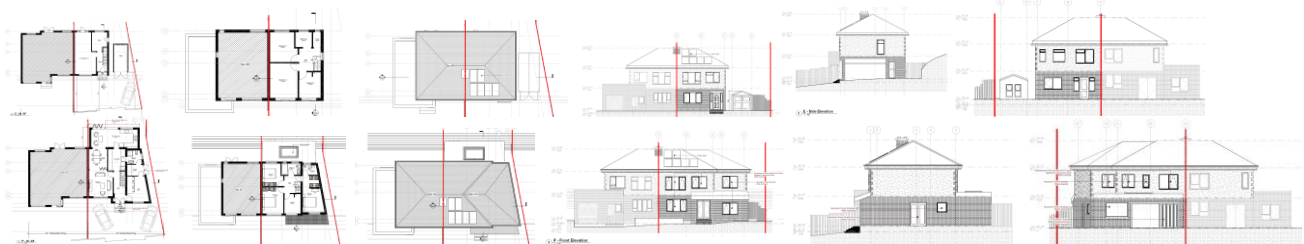
All proposed windows and doors would have aluminium frames in white, matching the existing. According to the application form, the proposed bricks and roof materials would be similar to those of the existing structure.

Plans considered:

- ~~Existing and Proposed Plans~~
- Application Form
- Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Site Block Plans
- Ecological Report
- Declaration Letter from 65 Rotherfield Way states that they support this proposal. Received 25th November 2025.

- Existing and Proposed Plans (amended plans) received 17th February 2025.
 - Drawing No. AE100 – Existing and Proposed Block Plan
 - Drawing No. AE101 – Existing Ground Floor Plan
 - Drawing No. AE102 – Existing First Floor Plan
 - Drawing No. AE103 – Existing Roof Plan
 - Drawing No. AE201 – Existing Front Elevation
 - Drawing No. AE202 – Existing Side Elevation
 - Drawing No. AE203 – Existing Rear Elevation
 - Drawing No. AE301 – Existing Sections
 - Drawing No. AP101 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
 - Drawing No. AP102 – Proposed First Floor Plan
 - Drawing No. AP103 – Proposed Roof Plan
 - Drawing No. AP201 – Proposed Front Elevation
 - Drawing No. AP202 – Proposed Side Elevation
 - Drawing No. AP203 – Proposed Rear Elevation
 - Drawing No. AP301 – Proposed Sections
 - ~~Drawing No. AP501 – Trees~~
 - Drawing No. AP901 – 3D
- BS:5837 Arboricultural Report, ref: AIA/AMS 06676/2025, prepared by Sarah Duckworth received 3rd April 2025.
- BS:5837 Tree Protection Plan, received 3rd April 2025.
- Retaining Wall Feasibility Confirmation from Ali Erturk, Nova Dec Limited, received 28th April 2025.

Existing (up) and proposed (down) plans:



Relevant planning histories:

- PL/14/1188 – 57 Rotherfield Way – Proposed front porch and first floor side & rear extension Plus Garage & loft conversions. Approved 25/09/2014.
- PL/13/1358 – 39 Rotherfield Way - First floor side extension and single storey front extension. Approved 02/12/2023.

3. CONSULTATIONS

- Planning Natural Environment (Tree), Reading Borough Council – Objection
 - Transport, Reading Borough Council – No objection.
 - Ecology, Reading Borough Council – No objection.
- For further information, please refer to the appraisal section.

A site notice was displayed on 17th January 2025 in front of the application site. The 21-day consultation period ended on 7th February 2025. No letters of representation have been received.



Fig 3: 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 2024
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)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)
EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

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 9th May 2025.

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 would 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

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house would 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.

The single-storey rear extension would be modest in scale, with a height and depth of 3m. The proposed two-storey side extension would be proportionate to the existing dwelling, as the first floor would be set back and set down from the existing frontage and ridgeline. Additionally, part of the side extension would be invisible from the street due to the angled boundary. Although the ground floor of the proposed side extension would project forward of the existing frontage, it is not considered to detract from the character of the existing property or the streetscene, due to its modest scale, matching materials, and sloped roof. Rotherfield Way also features developments of a similar scale, including two-storey side extensions with projecting ground floors. The design of the proposed windows and doors is considered appropriate in terms of size, scale, and placement in relation to both the host dwelling and the adjoining property.

Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of character and appearance and is in compliance with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension would be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours, and that ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, would be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately. Policy H10 states that dwellings would be provided with functional private or communal open space. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house would be acceptable where it would 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, overlooking, overbearing impact, or loss of light to neighbouring properties, given that the rear extension is modest in scale and no side windows are proposed at first-floor level. Additionally, No. 69 Rotherfield Way is located approximately 5m from the proposal site and is slightly set back from the front building line of No. 67. Sufficient outdoor amenity space would be retained upon completion of the development. A condition would be included in the permission to ensure no new side windows would be installed on the first floor without the grant from the Local Planning Authority. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies H9, H10, and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Transport

Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

The proposal would result in the loss of an existing parking space, as the detached garage is to be removed to facilitate the proposed development. The original proposal included a parking layout for three vehicles. To accommodate this, alterations to the access and a widened dropped kerb would be required. This would involve a licence from the Highways team and would result in the partial loss of the grass verge outside the property, which forms part of the public highway, as well as the partial removal of the boundary wall.

Following communication with the agent, a revised proposed site plan has been submitted, showing two off-street parking spaces. This arrangement is in line with the Council's current Parking Standards and Design SPD, and the transport consultee has confirmed that it is acceptable in terms of transport considerations.

Ecology

The site is surrounded by habitat of good suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with woodland to the rear of the property providing a corridor linking two Local Wildlife Sites—Rotherfield Way Copse to the northeast and Highdown Wood LWS to the northwest. Therefore, the building may contain features potentially suitable for roosting bats. Given the location of the house and the extent of the proposed works, there is a potential risk that the development could affect roosting bats.

A Bat Survey was submitted as part of the application. The ecology consultee has confirmed that the Bat Survey Report (Urban Tree Experts, 24 July, ref: SPH/NP/PEA-24/23.07) was carried out to an appropriate standard and concludes that the building is unlikely to support roosting bats. As such, the proposals are not considered likely to impact bats or other protected species, and there are no objections to the application on ecological grounds.

Tree

Policy EN14 states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands would be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover would be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation would be maintained or enhanced.

There is a mature Sycamore tree in the rear garden of the application site, located on the boundary with 41 Surley Row. The tree is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and is approximately 6m away from the proposed single-storey rear extension. As a result, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment was requested. In response, an Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment, and Method Statement, dated April 2025, were submitted by Duckworths Arboricultural, along with an accompanying Tree Protection Plan.

The survey confirmed that the root protection area (RPA) of the tree currently extends up to, and slightly beyond, the rear elevation of the existing dwelling. As such, the proposed rear extension would fall within the RPA of the tree. Due to the required changes in ground levels, excavation would be necessary for the extension and rear pathway, which would affect 36m² of the RPA, approximately 12.4%. The report also states that the tree is in good physiological condition and would tolerate some loss of roots.

Following up on the confirmation of the required excavation, the report recommends the installation of a retaining wall and the establishment of a Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ) to minimise harm to the tree during construction and upon completion. Regarding the excavation into the bank, the report states that the appointed Arboricultural Consultant would attend the site during excavation to monitor for tree roots and address any unforeseen Arboricultural issues. In relation to the CEZ, the tree protection barrier would be installed before any construction works begin and would remain in place until the completion of the proposed development to ensure that no construction activities take place within the RPA.

The Natural Environment Officer requested confirmation from a third party regarding the feasibility of the proposed retaining wall. In response, the agent provided the required confirmation letter in April 2025,

which confirmed that the retaining wall system described in the reports is considered appropriate and feasible for the existing ground conditions at 67 Rotherfield Way.

However, the Natural Environment (NE) officer remains concerned about the required excavation and potential root loss, which could harm this high-amenity tree, and has therefore raised an objection to the proposal.

The tree survey confirmed that the proposed rear extension would impact the tree, but relevant protective measures, such as the retaining wall and tree protection barrier, have been incorporated into the report. Additionally, excavation works would be monitored by a professional arboriculturist. Although the tree has high-amenity value it is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and it is considered that the submitted documents demonstrate a feasible approach to minimise harm to the tree and subject to conditions to ensure tree protection measures are implemented appropriately, the proposed scheme is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the tree.

For current and future occupiers, the proposals would be beneficial, resulting in an office, storeroom, kitchen and bedroom, which would create a more spacious internal living environment.

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 conditions.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit

Approved plans

Materials (As specified)

Use of roof restricted

Arboricultural Method Statement (As specified)

No new openings