

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Church Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0156 Householder planning permission

Address: 306 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, READING, RG2 8DE

Proposal: Single storey side and rear extension

Applicant: Mr Mudassar Shahzad

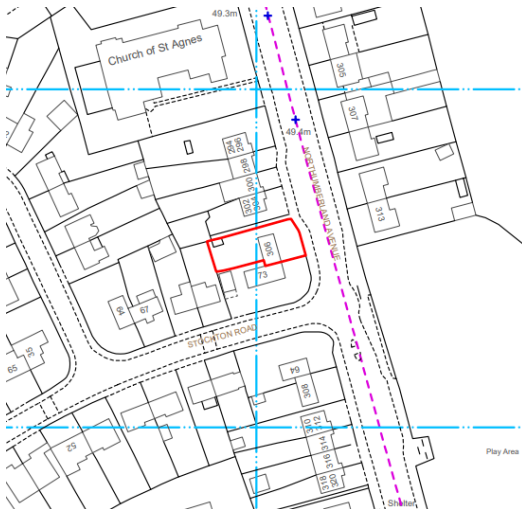
Received date: 30/01/2025

Target Decision date: 20/05/2025

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two storey semi-detached property located on the west side of Northumberland Avenue in Whitley. The adjoining property is located on the corner of Northumberland Avenue and Stockton Road, attached at an angle to create an 'L' shape with the application property. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and comprises two storey dwellings.



Extract of the location plan

Site visit date: 03/04/2025 (photos below)



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a wrap-around single storey side and rear extension with materials to match those of the existing dwelling.

Plans/documents considered:

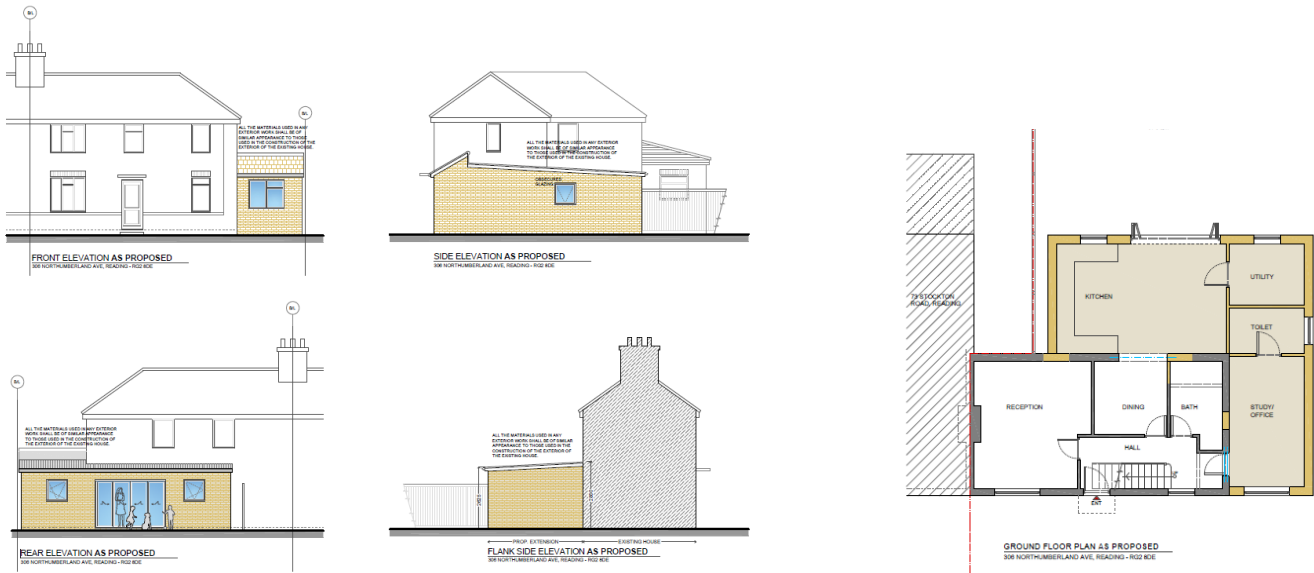
Drawing No. PL A687 02 – Existing Elevations received 30 January 2025

Arboricultural Impact Assessment received 25 March 2025

Drawing No. PL A687 01A – Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 2 May 2025

Drawing No. PL A687 04A – Location and Block Plans received 2 May 2025

Drawing No. PL A687 03A – Proposed Elevations received 19 May 2025



3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 3rd April 2025 for a period of 21 days. No letters of representation have been received.

RBC Natural Environment

The property is not covered by a Conservation Area or any TPO's. With reference to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, 13th March 2025. Project no. 25_5837_02_74, it is noted that there are several trees and hedges within the site boundary.

With reference to the AIA, it confirms the need for the removal of T4 and a 5m section of H1, as they are in direct conflict with the proposed plan. Both T4 and H1 have been placed in Category B, so they are of moderate quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 20 years. This isn't ideal for the surrounding landscape and this category of tree is one that should be worked around. However, replanting is mentioned within the AIA, if replacement trees and landscape plan are obtained and guidance is followed for replanting, I wouldn't object to the removals of T4 and a 5m section of H1.

The area of proposed works does slightly encroach on T3's RPA and canopy, but the AIA states 'No pruning works are required to facilitate the proposed development'. I believe pruning works may be required as it is so close to the proposed development area, however no 'crown clearance' height is given in the tree survey to assist, as is normally included – clarity is required. It also states in the AIA '*adequate space has been allowed between all retained trees and the proposed development works. consequently, the proposal shall not result in increased pressure to remove or prune any of the retained trees*', but the Tree Assessment Plan within the AIA, shows the canopy of T3 in the development area. The RPA of T3

is also within the development area. A trial, hand excavation could be performed to comply with the BS5837 2012 guidance of 'To avoid damage to tree roots, existing ground levels should be retained within the RPA. Intrusion into soil (other than for piling) within the RPA is generally not acceptable, and topsoil within it should be retained in situ. However, limited manual excavation within the RPA might be acceptable'. An AMS including TPP will be required to confirm pruning and specifications for works within the RPA of T3. In conclusion conditions would be applicable here. A landscaping plan would be required to show a tree replanting plan and an AMS including a TPP is required to provide protection to the retained trees.

Discussions with agent

Officers had concerns regarding the scale of the of the original scheme submitted along with the proximity to the boundary with no.73 Stockton Road and amenity impacts for this neighbour. Furthermore, the front door located on the proposed side extension raised concerns with regards to the property remaining in one C3 use.

Subsequently, the agent provided revised plans to set the rear element of the extension further away from the shared boundary with no.73 Stockton Road, and the door in the front elevation of the side element of the extension was amended to a window.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

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.

5. 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
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

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. The submission version of the Local Plan was submitted 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 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’.

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house 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.

The depth of the proposed rear extension does not exceed the 4m guidance within the design guide to house extensions SPD. The amount of useable garden space retained at the rear is considered sufficient. The proposed extension is single storey in nature and considered subservient to the existing two storey dwelling. It is also considered that the plot is capable of taking a development of this scale and size.

In terms of design, the proposed extension is considered suitable with materials to match the existing. The bulk of the proposed development is contained at the rear of the site, whilst the side element of the proposed development would be visible from the street scene, it is not considered to result in such an incongruous addition to result in any unacceptable harm to either the character of the host property or the wider area, furthermore, the property is set back from the roadside. There are a variety of extensions within the surrounding area (for example the extension on the other side of this pair of semi-detached dwellings), and, therefore, the proposed development is not considered out of character for its location.

It is considered necessary to add a condition to ensure that the proposed extension remains ancillary to the existing dwelling.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. 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.

Although the combined side and rear extension is large in scale, the proposal is single storey in nature and there are no identified risks of the proposal causing significantly harmful overbearing effects. The development would be more visually dominant and overbearing to the rear elevation of No. 73 at ground floor level (where there are three windows), however, the level of harm is not considered sufficient for there

to be a level of detrimental harm to warrant a sustainable reason for refusal of the application. The proposed extension would not be significantly higher than the existing boundary fence, and the extension would be set away from the shared boundary. With regards to the three windows in the rear elevation of no.73, one window serves a bathroom and is obscure glazed, while the other two windows are located within a kitchen room which is also served by additional windows in the front and side elevations of the property. With regards to no's 302/304 Northumberland Avenue, a sufficient distance would remain between these dwellings and the proposed development. One window would be located in the side elevation of the extension facing these neighbours, however, the window would serve a W/C and would be obscure glazed, this would be ensured via a condition attached to this planning permission.

Although the roof of the proposed extension is gently sloping, it is considered necessary to include a condition stipulating that the proposed roof area shall not be used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity area without the grant of further specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority, and any access out onto this area shall be for maintenance/means of escape purposes only. This is in order to prevent any detrimental impacts of overlooking and/or noise and disturbance of the neighbouring premises.

For current and any future occupiers of the host building, the proposed works will facilitate an improved standard of accommodation, via the additional space created, and the amount of remaining amenity space is considered acceptable.

Trees

There are several trees and hedges within the site boundary and the proposed development includes the removal of one tree. As per the comments above from the Natural Environment Officer, there are no objections subject to conditions.

The recommendation includes a pre-commencement planning condition therefore in accordance with section 100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, the Local Planning Authority served notice upon the applicant to seek agreement to the imposition of such a condition. Notice was served in writing on 4 April 2025.

7. 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.

8. RECOMMENDATION - GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

Time Limit

Materials

Approved Plans

AMS (to be submitted)

Landscaping small scale (to be approved)

Ancillary use

Flat roof restriction

Obscure glazing