

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Battle

App Ref: PL/23/1556

Address: 108 Elm Park Road, Reading, RG30 2TJ

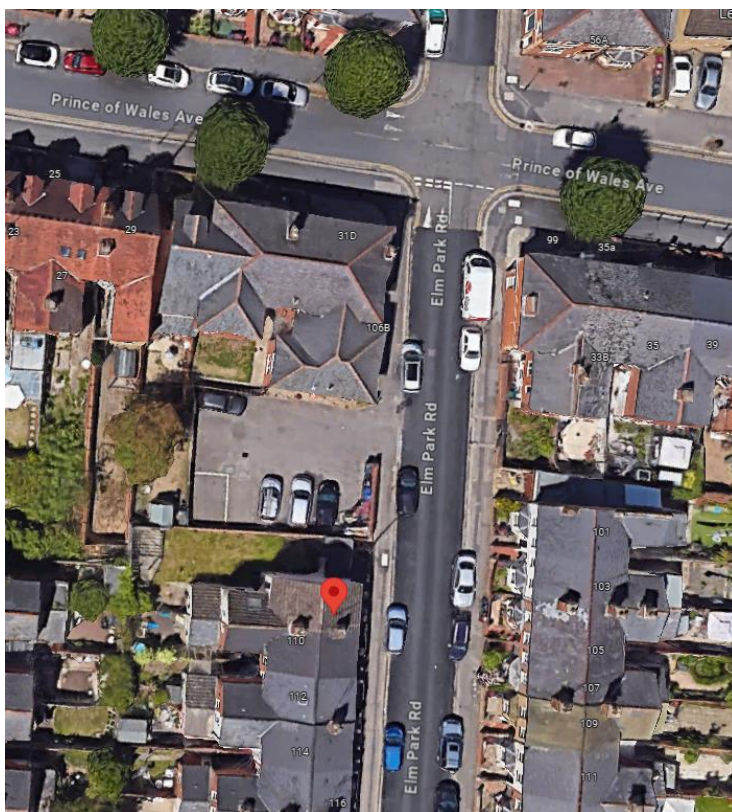
Proposals: Proposed rear dormer and single storey rear extension and subdivision of plot to create 1 new 2-bedroom dwelling (C3)

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Date received (valid from): 16 January 2024 **Target Decision date:** 20 June 2025 (EOT)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is situated on the west side of Elm Park Road. Number 108 Elm Park Road is a two-storey end-terrace property with a side garden which is not typical for properties in the surrounding area. The surrounding area is residential, comprised of terraced properties in similar character.



Aerial view of the application site taken from Google Maps on 22/04/2024.



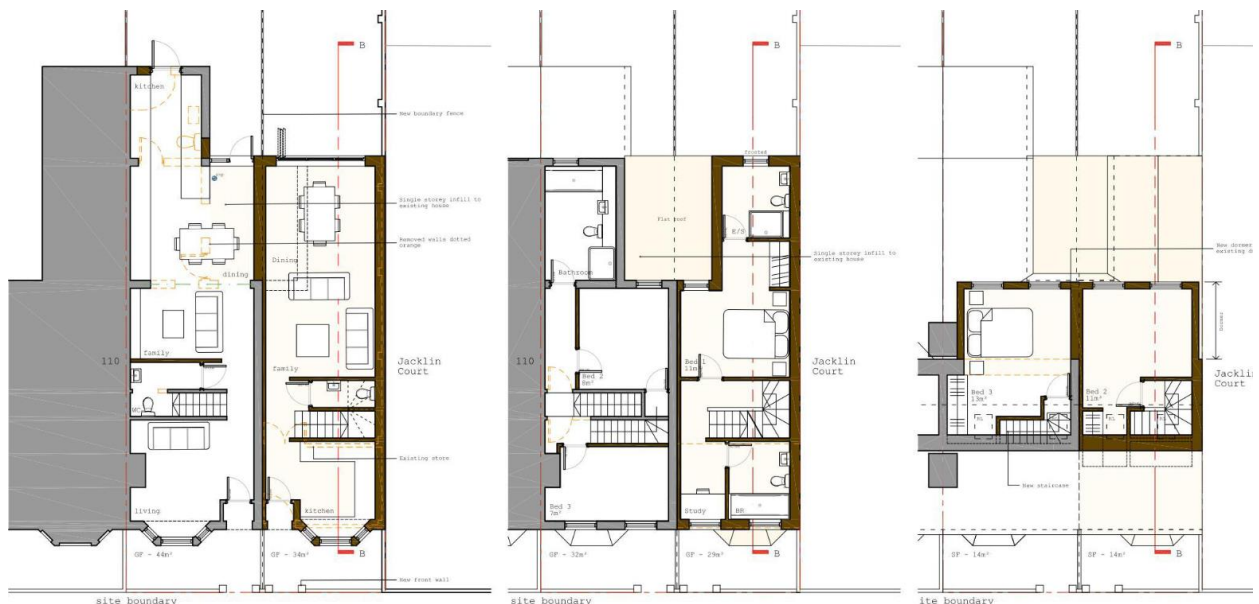
Street view of the application site taken from Google Maps on 22/04/2024.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a rear dormer and single storey rear extension for 108 Elm Park Road, and erection of a new dwelling to the north in the same character with a rear dormer and single storey extension to match the proposed for 108 Elm Park Road.

The existing number 108 Elm Park Road is a 2-bedroom property with a Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 68m². The proposed rear dormer would create a new third bedroom and increase the GIA to 90m².

The proposed new dwelling would have 2 bedrooms and a GIA of 77m².



Proposed floor plans



Proposed front and rear elevations

Plans considered:

Preliminary Roost Assessment, Daniel Ahern Ecology, December 2023

Received 16 January 2024

Design and Access Statement

Received 22 January 2024

894-02-01 – Site Location Plan

894-02-02 – Existing Block Plan

894-05-00 – Existing Elevations and Sections

894-03-00 – Existing Floor Plans

894-05-10 – Proposed Elevations and Sections

Received on 1 November 2023

894-03-10 Rev B – Proposed Floor Plans

Received 13 March 2024

Received 28 March 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Non-statutory:

- RBC Transport – No objections to revised plans.
- RBC Natural Environment – No tree protection required.
- Ecology – Application is exempt from mandatory BNG. Condition recommended.

Public:

All nearby and adjacent addresses were consulted via letter. No letters of representation received.

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 and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING
H2: DENSITY AND MIX
H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING
H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE
H11: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS
TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPD

Affordable Housing (2021)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

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.

APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- I) Principle of development
- II) Character and design
- III) Standards for new housing
- IV) Residential amenity
- V) Transport and parking
- VI) Biodiversity and the natural environment
- VII) Other matters

I) Principle of development

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF states *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land”*.

The definition with the NPPF states that brownfield land (previously developed land) is defined as: *“Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.” The definition excludes residential gardens.*

The development would therefore need to be assessed in terms of the requirements of the NPPF paragraph 72 that seeks to ensure that policies are set out to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens. Also, at local level, the Council's Local Plan (Policy H11) establishes a number of criteria against which applications for the development of private residential gardens need to be assessed

Proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:

1. *The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:*
 - The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area;*
 - *A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage;*
 - *Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc.;*

- *Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area;*
 - *The materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary;*
 - *The arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings. Discussed later in the report.*
2. *The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking; Discussed later in the report.*
 3. *The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards; Discussed later in the report.*
 4. *The proposal does not lead to tandem development; The proposal does not lead to tandem development as the property has a frontage and access directly onto Elm Park Road.*
 5. *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures; Discussed later in the report.*
 6. *The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants; Discussed later in the report.*
 7. *The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing; Proposal is for a 2-bedroom property.*
 8. *The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens which as a unit or in association with adjacent green space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network; and Discussed later in the report.*
 9. *The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.*

It is not considered that the proposed development would prejudice the satisfactory development of the wider residential area, which consists largely of family sized homes.

There is also no in principle objection to the proposed development, provided the development complies with the policies set out within the Reading Borough Local Plan, which will be discussed further within this report.

II) Character and design

Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires all development to be of high quality design and maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area. In this specific case; this concerns the following components:

- Layout
- Landscape
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

The application is also subject to the relevant criteria of Policy H11 as outlined above.

The character and design of the property follows the pattern of the terraced housing on Elm Park Road and responds well to the character of the area. While rear dormers are less common on Elm Park Road, the proposed dormers are appropriately designed to sit within the roof slope. Unusually, the rear dormers would be connected by a party wall, however, this is not considered harmful to the character of the properties.

The proposed single storey rear extensions similarly respond well to the character of the street and are considered acceptable in terms of scale and size.

This proposal has also been assessed against Reading Borough Local Plan policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space, which states that:

- *Dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens.*
- *The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.*

The rear garden of 108 Elm Park Road would be reduced to 26m² which is less than the size recommended by Policy H10, but reflects the character of the street where most rear gardens are relatively similar. The proposed size of the rear garden of the new property would be 30m² which in this instance is also considered acceptable.

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of character and design, and therefore in accordance with Policies CC7 and H10.

III) Standards for new housing

As this application seeks one new dwelling, policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) of the Reading Borough Local Plan is relevant.

Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) requires that development proposal incorporate sustainable design practices to take account of climate change. Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) requires that all new housing is be built to the higher level of water efficiency standards under Building Regulations and achieves at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rates above the Building Regulations standards and details of this in the form of design and construction stage SAP reviews can be secured by way of conditions.

The proposed dwelling meets the minimum gross internal floor areas and storage requirements as set out in policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The gross internal floor space of the proposed new dwelling is approx. 77m², which meets the policy requirement for 3 persons (70m²) and is just under the requirement for 4 persons (77m²). Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

IV) Residential amenity

Safeguarding Amenity, which states that proposals are acceptable where they will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties with regard to:

- Privacy and overlooking
- Access to sunlight and daylight
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development
- Harm to outlook

There are no identified concerns in relation to overshadowing or loss of access to daylight for either neighbouring properties or future occupiers of the proposed property. The proposed fenestration layout allows for suitable access to natural sunlight.

The car park for Jacklin House creates an adequate separation distance between the property and the new proposed dwelling, and, therefore, the development would not be considered overbearing or visually dominant.

The proposed dwelling is not considered to pose a risk of overlooking or loss of privacy to properties at the rear on Belmont Road. The proposed fenestration layout follows the pattern of the terrace on Elm Park Road, and the proposed rear dormers will not create any new viewpoints.

The proposal is considered in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.

V) Transport and parking

Elm Park Road has on-street parking regularly occurring on both sides of the carriageway. The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone.

The site is located within a Residents Permit Parking Zone 07R where there is significant pressure for on-street parking. The residents parking bays are shared-use between 8am and 8pm Monday to Sunday allowing 2 hours parking for daytime visitors without the use of a permit. At all other times, priority is given to residents over people who live outside of the zone and the bays are for use by permit holders only.

In accordance with the adopted Parking SPD, the new dwelling will require 2 off road parking spaces, there is no parking associated with the existing dwelling. Due to the constraints of the site there is no off road parking provided. The area has extensive parking restrictions in place. While a car free development is considered acceptable for this development, the occupants of the new dwelling would not be eligible to apply for resident or visitor permits as suggested in the Design and Access Statement, this will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

The proposed cycle storage and refuse storage locations and facilities are considered acceptable. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR3.

VI) Biodiversity and the natural environment

Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states *“New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained”*.

Furthermore, Policy EN12 states *“On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.”*

There are no existing trees within the application site. A condition is recommended to secure a scheme of soft landscaping.

The applicant has not submitted biodiversity net gain calculations, as the proposal includes only 23m² loss of non-priority habitat (as the rest of the footprint of the proposed dwelling is existing hard standing) and is therefore de minimis, and excluded from needing to provide a net gain. A condition is recommended for a scheme of habitat enhancements to comply with local Policy EN12.

VII) Other matters

The Council's adopted Policy H3: Affordable Housing states "on sites of 1 – 4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough."

The applicant has agreed to enter into a legal agreement to secure a financial contribution if planning permission were to be granted.

A Section 106 Legal Agreement has been drawn up, which secures a financial contribution of £16,250.00 for the purposes of providing affordable housing elsewhere within the Borough.

The figure has been calculated based on the valuations from two Estate Agents. As per Policy H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the Affordable Housing SPD (2021); for sites of 1-4 dwellings, where the contribution required by policy H3 is 10%, this will equate to 5% of GDV of the development.

This is considered acceptable and complies with Policy H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the Affordable Housing SPD (2021).

The proposal does not exceed 100m² of new area created and is, therefore, not CIL liable.

Conclusion

The proposal has been assessed in line with national and local adopted policies as outlined above and is considered in accordance with those properties.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit standard
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to be submitted
4. SAP – design stage (pre-commencement)
5. SAP – as built
6. Construction method statement (pre-commencement)
7. Cycle parking as specified
8. Refuse storage as specified
9. Parking permits 1

10. Parking permits 2

11. Landscaping small scale (pre-commencement)

12. Habitat enhancement scheme (pre-commencement)