

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights Ward

App Ref: **PL/25/0751** Householder planning permission and App Ref **PL/25/0754** Listed building consent

Address: THE FISHERY, THE WARREN, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7TQ

Proposal: Internal/external alterations to Listed Building

Applicant: Mr & Mrs N. Topham

Received date: 20/05/2025

Target Decision date (agreed extension): 24/10/2025

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a large detached dwelling located within a generous plot on the north bank of the Thames. The site falls within Flood zones 2 and 3. There are several outbuildings within the curtilage of the site. The main property 'The Fishery' is a grade II listed building.

The national listing reads as follows:

THE WARREN 1. 5128 The Fishery SU 67 NE 14/598 II 2. A complex of mainly late C19 or early C20 extensions to a core of C17 or early C18. An eel-fishery mentioned on this site in mediaeval times. River front. 2½ storeys red brick. Old tile roof. 3 bay centre with later projecting gable breaks. Glazing bar sashes to centre and 2 gabled dormers. Ends have 1 range of circa 1900 windows, square bays on ground floor. Lean-to porch. Entrance side: kitchen projection to right, flanking cross wings and 2 hipped 2 storey projections in centre. Modern glazing to windows.

Listing NGR: SU6919475088

Site visit date: 5th June 2025

Site visit photos:

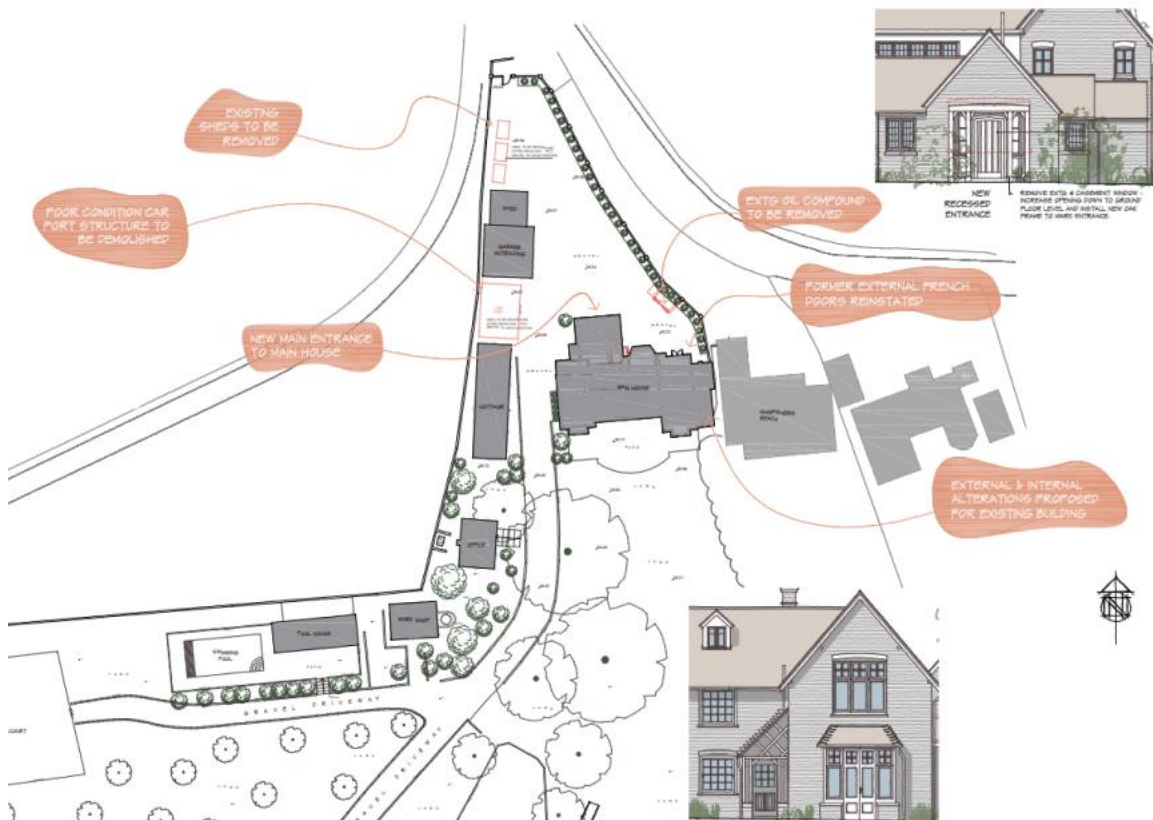


2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for external and internal alteration of the existing property. The proposal includes the following:

- New front porch on North elevation
- Reinstate French doors to the north elevation serving the family room
- Remove single storey flat roof modern extension at ground floor level adjacent to the library
- Install a new roof lantern within the flat roof of the southeastern modern extension
- Replace the existing framed, ledged, and braced solid door in the north wing with a new half-glazed door

- Replace the existing solid single door on the north elevation (eastern side) with a half-glazed door featuring six glazing panels
- Reconfigure the staircase
- Alterations associated with the reconfiguration of staircase
- General minor alterations are proposed to improve layout generally with regards to only to works affecting more recent structures. Such as minor openings, removal of modern partitions and inclusion of new infill partitions.
- Refurbish/replace existing doors and windows
- Remove oil tank compound, including brick walls and access gates
- Remove car ports
- Remove 3 sheds



Documents/plans submitted:

Application Form received 21 May 2025
 Heritage Statement received 21 May 2025
 Design and Access Statement received 21 May 2025
 Drawing No. 3940/101 rev B – Existing Site Plan received 21 May 2025
 Sheet 1 – Topographical Survey (existing site plan) received 21 May 2025
 Sheet 5 – Topographical Survey (existing elevations) received 21 May 2025
 Sheet 6 – Topographical Survey (existing floor plans) received 21 May 2025
 Drawing No. 3940/100 rev A – Location Plan received 21 May 2025
 Flood Zone form received 21 May 2025
 Drawing No. 3940/211 rev B – Main house proposed roof plan received 11 September 2025
 Doors & Windows Photographic Schedule received 11 September 2025
 Drawing No. 3940/214 rev A – Window Details received 11 September 2025
 Drawing No. 3940/202 rev K – Main house ground floor plan received 11 September 2025

Drawing No. 3940/215 rev A - Front Entrance and Doors Details received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/205 rev J – Main house proposed elevations 1 received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/203 rev J – Main house proposed first floor plan received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/206 rev G – Main house proposed elevations 2 received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/213 rev B – Internal Finishes received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/204 rev F – Main house second floor plan received 11 September 2025
Drawing No. 3940/201 rev G – Proposed site plan received 10 October 2025
Drawing No. 3940/216 rev B – Main house services received 10 October 2025
Drawing No. 3940/212 rev A – Main House Staircase and Balustrade Details received 10 October 2025
Drawing No. 3940/215 rev B – Main House Front Entrance and Doors Details received 10 October 2025

Relevant Planning History

PL/05/0048 – Refurbishment of existing dwelling, including a single storey side extension, reinstatement of outbuildings and new boundary wall. APPROVED 20/01/2006

PL/24/1519 - Internal/external alterations to Listed Building; Extension to existing garage outbuilding; Alterations to boundary wall and site access. ADVICE GIVEN 13/01/2025

3. CONSULTATIONS

No neighbours were consulted by letter, however, two site notice were displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 5th March 2025 for a period of 21 days.

No letters of representation have been received at the time of writing this report.

Ecology Comments

This application site lies at the western end of The Warren, adjacent to the River Thames. It is proposed to make a number of internal and external changes to the property. The submitted plans do not appear to affect the roof structure of the building(s), and the other buildings to be removed are small sheds and unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, considering the extent of the works, the structures to be affected), it is unlikely that bats or other protected species would be adversely affected by the proposals and there would be no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

There is however a small risk that birds may nest in these buildings and an informative should be included on the decision notice, wording below: "All birds, their nests and eggs, are protected by law. It is a criminal offence (with certain exemptions) to deliberately or recklessly take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built. The outbuildings may be used by nesting birds and any works to these buildings should take place outside the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive). If this is not practicable, they should first be checked for bird nests. If bird nests are found works that could disturb it must stop until any young have fledged the nest and the nest is no longer in use."

RBC Conservation officer comments

Alterations to the listed curtilage (No harm):

- Removal of the existing sheds – no significance, no harmful impact
- Removal of the port structure – no significance, no harmful impact
- Removal of the existing oil compound – negligible impact

I would prefer to see what the surface material would be after the removal of the structures above. Or is there any landscaping plan to be proposed?

External alterations to the listed building (Less than substantial harm at lower level)

- New main entrance and porch – The replacement of the existing window with a door and the erection of a timber porch on a brick base would cause some harm to the historic fabric of the late 19th-century element within the historic evolution of the building. Because the proposed materials for the door and porch would be suitable, and the reason behind this alteration is a functional improvement, this impact would be reduced. However, in terms of the appearance of the new porch and doors, I would prefer more contemporary details to be reflected in the design. The proposal looks nice, as if it has been within the original design of 19th 19th-century extension. However, I think it should reflect more of today's architecture and be legible. Because the proposed porch would compete with the existing side entrance in terms of its scale and dominate the northern elevation, I think it should look more contemporary. For instance, the proposed brick bonding should not be Flemish or English; simple / stretcher bonding should be considered. Likewise, large glazing to the proposed door would be more suitable to differentiate the new elements of the 2020s. I conclude less than substantial harm to the significance of the building at a moderate to low degree.
- Removal of existing flat-roofed structure – No harmful impact
- Reinstatement of French doors of the 1970s – very little benefit, should match on the photograph provided
- New lantern – acceptable, no harm
- Replacement door on eastern elevation – acceptable, no harm
- Reinstatement of former balustrades – has the potential to bring high benefit; however, the design should match the one in the historic photo, and I am wondering if there is enough information about the original design of the balustrades. The Council will need details of design and materials for the proposed balustrades. A condition will be necessary.

Alterations to windows (Less than substantial harm at moderate level)

There is a need for clarification about "All retained single glazed windows & doors to have glazing replaced with special heritage double glazing". The Council need confirmation and explanation about the reason for this, as double glazing is not a period material, and it is unacceptable to replace all single glazed windows with double glazing. There would be no heritage benefit but harm. There is no terminology as 'heritage double glazing' or 'heritage window'. If this is slim profile double glazing, again not all windows can be appropriate as they may have different designs and glazing bar features.

Again, there is also a need for clarification about the proposed rooflights, as the proposed roof plan and window schedule do not match. RL02 - 'Roof lantern', for instance, is proposed on the rear elevation drawing and roof plan, RL01 appears to show a roof flat lantern to be retained. I have no major objection; however, the Council needs clarification and details of the proposed roof lights and lanterns. I conclude that a window schedule would be harmful.

Alterations to doors (Less than substantial harm at lower level)

This aspect includes both external and internal doors. Again, I would like to have some clarification about which doors are original and which are not in relation to the ones proposed for removal. The Council would also need design details for each door to be replaced and newly installed.

Internal alterations to the listed building (Less than substantial harm low to moderate level)

I would raise no objection to the proposed layout and alterations to the staircase. There would be some additional harm due to the relocation of the bathrooms and the kitchen. Therefore, the proposed details of the following is required:

- Elevational drawings for proposed openings with arch (could be conditioned)
- Section elevation for the staircase – details of existing and proposed balustrades (could be conditioned following explanation/statement/ confirmation of the methodology)
- Elevational drawing for a new opening between the kitchen and the family room (could be conditioned)
- Details of proposed stud walls – section drawing and materials (could be conditioned)

- Details of proposed internal floor, wall, and ceiling finishes for each and every room (Could be conditioned)
- Details of proposed services, pipe routes, electricity, heating system, extractor fans, etc. (could be conditioned following explanation/statement/ confirmation of the methodology)

Officer note: All the above comments were taken on board by the agent, revised plans and additional information were received in order to cover any questions and concerns raised. The details were reviewed by the conservation officer and she confirmed that the proposals are acceptable in terms of heritage, subject to a condition that states 'All external and internal works of making good to the retained fabric shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter'.

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:

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Policy

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)
CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)
EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)
EN18 (Flooding and Drainage)

SPDs and other documentation

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

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 listed above 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 advice given below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

5. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance and Impact on Heritage Asset

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 requires that development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Policy EN1 states that all proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Policy EN3 states that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Policy EN6 states new development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities.

Policy CC1 states that a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

As the building is a Grade II Listed Building, there is a duty imposed by Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving its setting or any features of special architectural historic interest which it possesses. This is reflected in Policy EN1.

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and

the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The proposed scheme would seek to enhance the site and would ensure that the appearance and sustainability of the listed building would be improved.

With regards to the proposed internal and external refurbishments to the main building, when assessing the proposals against our design policies and the design guide to house extensions SPD, the alterations are considered fairly minor. The proposal does not include enlarging the existing building.

The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that there are no heritage objections to the proposed works subject to a condition to ensure all external and internal works of making good to the retained fabric shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Alterations to the exterior would remove later additions and alterations that are not positive contributors. Details for all doors and windows within the Listed Building have been provided and reviewed, including the reinstatement of the French double doors to replace the current ground floor north elevation window. The original plans also included the reinstatement of former external balustrades. However, this element has since been removed from the proposal.

In response to the conservation officer's comments, the proposed new entrance porch on the north elevation has been redesigned to incorporate a recessed layout, which is considered to be a less harmful solution.

All internal works, including the new staircase, are considered acceptable. Details of proposed services and underfloor heating have been submitted. With regards to the works on the walls and ceilings, the agent confirmed that traditional lime plaster and breathable paints would be used.

It is considered that removing the existing sheds, car port, and oil compound and reservicing the area with gravel to match the existing will tidy and enhance the external area surrounding the main dwelling as some structures are in poor condition.

Overall, it is not considered that the proposals would harm the character and appearance of the site, neighbouring properties, or the wider area. Therefore, the proposals are considered favourable against policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

It is considered that the proposals would improve the appearance and the sustainability of the existing listed building and, therefore, the proposals are considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies EN1 and EN3.

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.

The majority of the proposal works are considered fairly minor, therefore, due to the scale of the proposals, combined with the distance between the development and the closest neighbouring properties, there are no identified risks of the proposals causing any detrimental harm to neighbour amenity.

An informative is attached to this permission to remind the developer that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.

Other matters

The application site falls within Flood Zone 2. A Flood Risk Assessment has not been submitted, with it agreed in this instance that no FRA is required owing to the small-scale nature of the proposed development.

6. CONCLUSION

Having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations, therefore, weigh in favour of granting planning permission and listed building consent subject to conditions.

7. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent

Recommended conditions for PL/25/0751 (householder):

Time limit
Approved plans
Materials (as specified)

Recommended conditions for PL/25/0754 (listed building):

Time limit (LB)
Approved plans (LB)
Materials (as specified)
External and internal works of making good shall match the existing