

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: PL/25/1285 Householder planning permission

Address: 126 GREAT KNOLLYS STREET, READING, RG1 7HL

Proposal: Covered outside laundry area (Part Retrospective)

Applicant: Marilyn Findeis

Received date: 10/09/2025

Target Decision date: 05/11/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a 2-storey Victorian terraced property, located on the northern side of Great Knollys Street opposite the junction with Bedford Road. The property is constructed from red and grey patterned brickwork with a tiled pitched roof. The front elevation includes 2 separate windows to the first floor, with a single window and front door to the ground floor, with a small outside space / front garden and boundary brick wall and pedestrian gate. The property backs onto a unadopted service road to the rear of the property.

Neighbouring properties consists of terraced properties or similar appearance, age and scale. All properties have a small private frontage and a private rear garden mainly laid to lawn for outdoor amenity use. Some neighbouring properties have gated access to the unadopted service road which runs along the rear of the properties.

The rear garden of the property has been completely built over and replaced with an unauthorised single storey structure. The majority of the structure is constructed from breeze block with timber and corrugated roof, whilst the remainder of the structure is constructed from scraps and offcuts of timber for the walls, with a corrugated roof.

The structure includes two windows along the westerly elevation – these windows open and look directly into the neighbouring garden of no.128 Great Knollys Street.

The structure includes double timber garage doors to the rear allowing access to the unadopted service road behind.

The unauthorised structure is built right on the neighbouring boundaries.

At the time of my visit, it was observed that the unauthorised extensions are poorly constructed and include open eaves and soffits, the extensions are partially fitted with gutters, though these overhang the neighbouring property. The material choice and workmanship are particularly of poor quality. Officers consider the unauthorised structure would not pass any Building Control Inspection.

At the time of my visit the unauthorised structure was being fitted out with a separate bathroom, a separate kitchen and a living area. For the purposes of this report, it should be noted that I was unable to visit all the rooms in the property, however it was noted that the original front room was being used as a bedroom and the room to the rear a small second room/dining room. The existing property retains a kitchen, and a separate door was observed into another room possibly the existing bathroom on the ground floor. The unauthorised extensions include a separate bathroom and a separate kitchenette.

For the purposes of my report, it should be noted that the property at 126 Great Knollys Street had all the makings of an unauthorised House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO).

Site visit date: 2nd October 2025



Looking towards part of the westerly facing (unauthorised) elevation overlooking the garden of no.128 Great Knollys Street.



Looking towards part of the westerly facing (unauthorised) elevation constructed from timber.



Looking towards the northerly facing (unauthorised) elevation constructed from timber with double timber garage doors.



Wider photo for context; Photo shows unauthorised structure on the boundary and overlooking neighbour's outdoor amenity space.



Inside, Internal layout with window looking onto neighbour, out of view a kitchen is being created along with a separate bathroom.



Inside, Internal window looking onto neighbouring garden.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application is for retrospective permission for a structure which has been described by the applicant as a 'covered outside laundry area'. From the submitted documents it would appear the structure is a single storey rear extension. The extension is circa 16.4m in length (projection), a width of circa 4.8m and a maximum height of 3m. The plans show the section of extension closest to the original house

constructed from breeze blocks will be finished in smooth render, whilst the section further away from the property will be clad externally with timber. The plans show the garage style doors to the rear elevation will be retained, even though there is no garage. The plans show the two windows overlooking the garden of no.128 Great Knollys Street will be bricked up and rendered.

It should be noted that no changes have been made to the proposed plans. The structure still occupies the entire footprint of the plot with no changes made to pull the extension away from the neighbouring boundaries. The internal layout of the single storey extension remains unchanged and includes a separate bathroom. The space where the kitchen was observed is now empty on the plans and the room to the rear is left unchanged and unclear as to its proposed use.

Plans considered:

Drawing no: 15725-01-Existing Ground Floor Plan, dated Aug 25

Drawing no: 15725-02-Existing Elevations, dated Aug 25

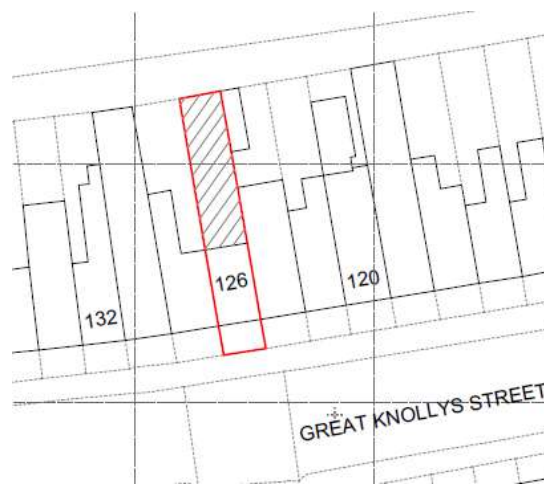
Drawing no: 15725-03-Proposed Ground Floor Plan, dated Aug 25

Drawing no: 15725-04-Proposed Elevations, dated Aug 25

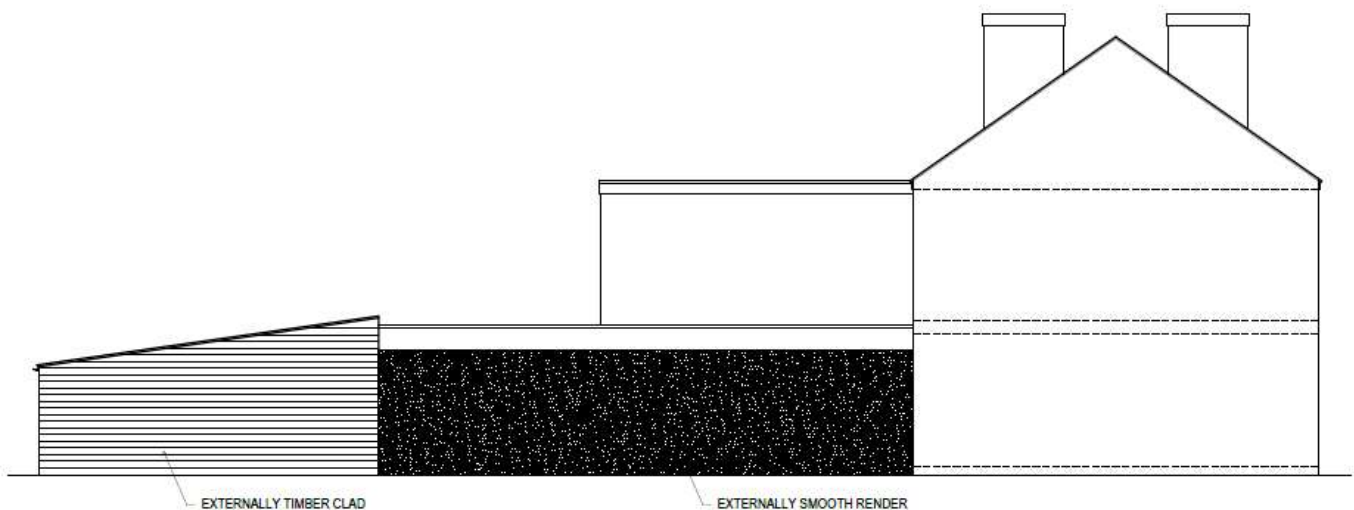
Drawing no: 15725-05-Block and Location Plans, dated Sept 25

Drawing no: 15725-06-Existing & Proposed Roof Plans, dated Aug 25

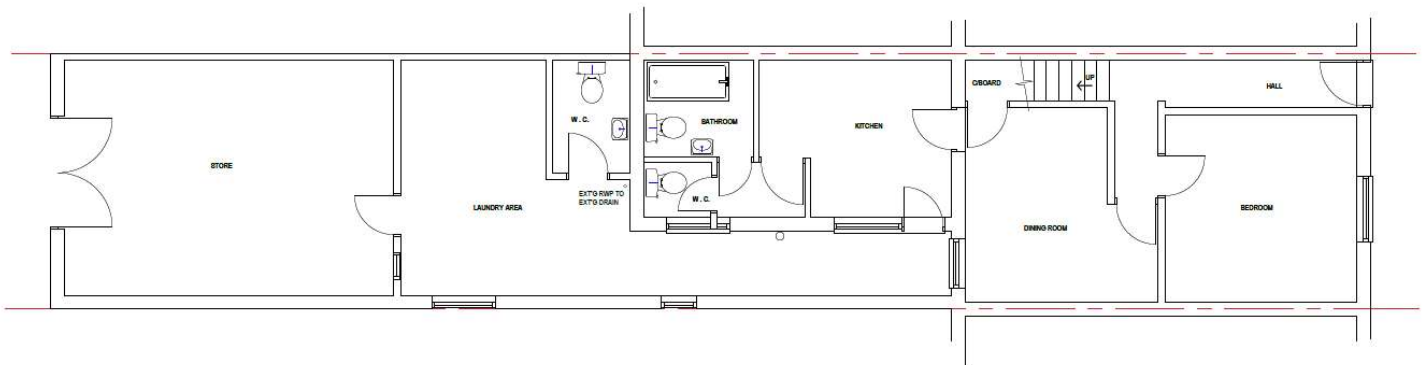
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 10th September 2025



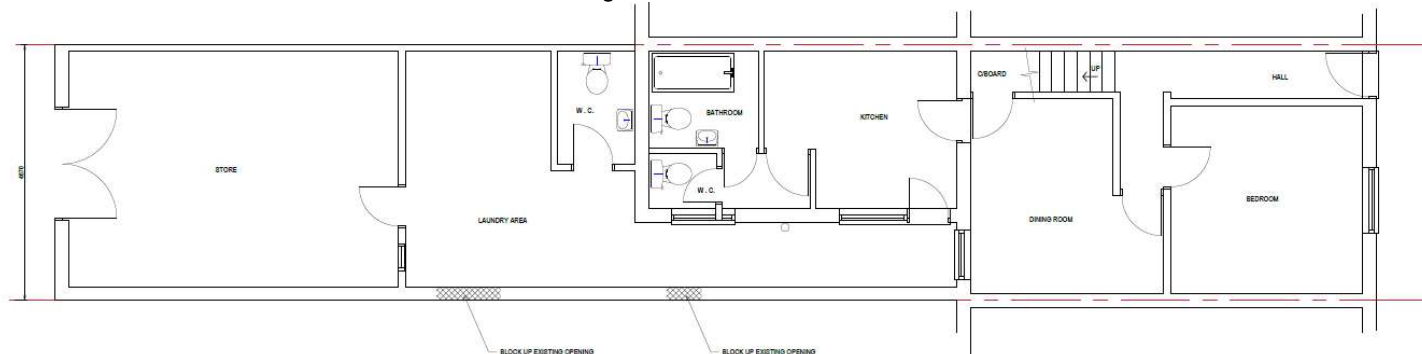
Proposed Block Plan



Proposed Side Elevation



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal

None.

External

A planning notice was attached to the front gate of the property on 2nd October 2025 and left in place for a minimum of 21 days for the statutory public consultation period.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. 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.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

7. APPRAISAL

Character & Appearance

Policy CC7 sets out relevant considerations for design. All development must enhance the character and appearance of Reading in which is located. In particular the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, height, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line.

It is considered that the unauthorised development has an overly dominant appearance due to the awkward arrangement of incremental extensions to the original property. This harmful arrangement is accentuated by the choice of construction materials and construction practices. The extension appears as an obtrusive addition to the garden. The resulting arrangement dominates the original house, is incongruent in appearance and inappropriate siting, fails to respect the character and appearance of the host building with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the wider area in terms of design and scale, not least to the neighbouring properties at 124 and 128 Great Knollys Street.

The unauthorised development at 126 Great Knollys Street adversely impacts the distinctive pattern of the rear space and rear gardens of neighbouring properties in Great Knollys Street.

The unauthorised development is harmful and fails to comply with policies H9 and CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

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.

By virtue of the volume of unauthorised extensions, privacy and the overbearingness severely impacts neighbouring residential amenity for both 124 and 128 Great Knollys Street.

Officers note the rear garden of the neighbouring properties at 128 Great Knollys Street is largely unaltered and mostly laid to lawn. Whilst the host property has no outdoor amenity space or garden.

The unauthorised development at 126 Great Knollys Street adversely impacts the residential amenity for residents using their rear gardens of the neighbouring properties at 124 and 128 Great Knollys Street.

Residential amenity is further adversely harmed to the occupants of 128 Great Knollys Street due to the positioning of two window openings along the westerly elevation, adversely impacts the loss of privacy and harm to the enjoyment of their own home internally, as well as externally.

It should be noted that there are no windows serving the ground floor rooms of the unauthorised structure, or the host property, other than a window serving the ground floor front bedroom. There are no forms of ventilation or natural daylight to the ground floor.

At the time of the visit, officers noted that the unauthorised structure was poorly constructed, poor choice of materials and unfinished-open soffits and fascia-increasing the risk of a fire hazard to the occupants of the host property and the neighbouring properties.

The proposal is detrimental to residential amenity and fails to comply with policies CC8, H9 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Biodiversity and The Green Network

Policy EN12 states that biodiversity shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Any development should enhance biodiversity. Permission will not be granted for development that negatively affects biodiversity.

By virtue of the volume of the unauthorised extensions, the host property retains no domestic garden laid to lawn or an area of courtyard with raised beds, flowers, shrubs, trees or hedges. The proposed plans do not include any amendments to the already constructed unauthorised structure, no outdoor space has been created or included with the proposal and therefore the proposal is harmful and detrimental to biodiversity.

The proposal is detrimental to biodiversity and fails to comply with policies EN12 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed and is considered unacceptable as it is an obtrusive and visually dominant addition which fails to integrate with or respect the character of the existing building and wider streetscene. The prominent position of the unauthorised structure appears obtrusive within the street scene and reduces the existing spaciousness and garden areas to the rear of the property. Harmful to residential amenity in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy and overbearing effects, loss of outdoor amenity to the host property as well as the adjoining neighbouring properties. The proposed development is also harmful to the occupants of the host property in terms of lack of natural light and ventilation at ground floor level. The proposal is contrary to policies CC7, CC8, H9 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019), the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide to House Extensions (2021) and Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE