

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0826

Address: 11 ARGYLE ROAD, READING, RG1 7YL

Proposals: Single storey rear and side extension following the demolition of existing garage and store + detached out building

Case Officer: Mishga Marshall

Applicant: Mr Adil Ahmed Iqbal

Date received (valid from): 23/06/2025

Target Decision date: 18/08/2025

EOT Agreed Decision date: 22/12/2025

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two storey semi-detached dwelling on the southern side of Argyle Road. The property is set back from the road by way of a front garden and paved driveway. The property has a single garage attached at the side/rear of the dwelling. Argyle Road is a residential road comprised of detached and semi-detached dwellings in similar character. The property is not listed nor in a conservation area.

A number of mature trees of amenity value are located both within the site and on adjacent land, including several 'B' category trees situated within neighbouring gardens. Notably, a 'B' category Yew tree is located on the shared boundary with No. 9 Argyle Road. The site lies within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), where the retention and enhancement of trees and soft landscaping are of particular importance.

Site visit date: 18/07/2025

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single-storey rear and side extension following the demolition of an existing garage and store, together with the erection of a detached outbuilding within the rear garden.

The proposed single-storey rear and side extension would project approximately 4 metres from the original rear elevation of the dwelling and would have a flat roof with a maximum height of approximately 3 metres. The side extension would project approximately 2.1 metres from the existing side elevation wall to the boundary, while the rear extension would extend across the full width of the dwelling, measuring approximately 7.8 metres.

The proposed detached outbuilding would be sited within the rear garden and would measure approximately 4.5 metres in depth and 7.8 metres in width, with a flat roof and a maximum height of approximately 2.8 metres. The outbuilding is intended for ancillary domestic use and would include a shower room.

No works have been undertaken or started in relation to the proposed extension development.

During the assessment of this application, a number of concerns were raised with the applicant. While the submission includes a set of revised plans, it is noted that the original scheme also generated significant concerns, many of which remain relevant to the assessment of the current proposal. The applicant and their agent were given ample time to provide the additional information requested by the Council; however, the information was ultimately not provided.

The applicant was offered the opportunity to withdraw the application but indicated that they did not wish to do so.

Plans considered received 5th June 2025:

08925-01 EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN dated May 2025

08925-02 EXISTING ELEVATIONS dated May 2025

08925-05 OUTBUILDING PROPOSED ELEVATIONS & GROUND FLOOR PLAN dated May 2025

Plans considered received 8th August 2025:

08925-03 REV A PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN dated May 2025

08925-04 REV A PROPOSED ELEVATIONS dated May 2025

08925-06 REV B BLOCK AND LOCATION PLANS dated MAY 2025

Plans considered received 11th August 2025:

11 Argyle Rd - AIA - July 2025

11 Argyle Rd - TCP - July 2025

Plans submitted:

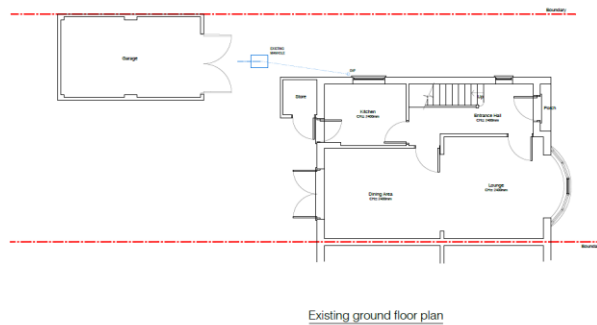
Existing Elevations Plan:



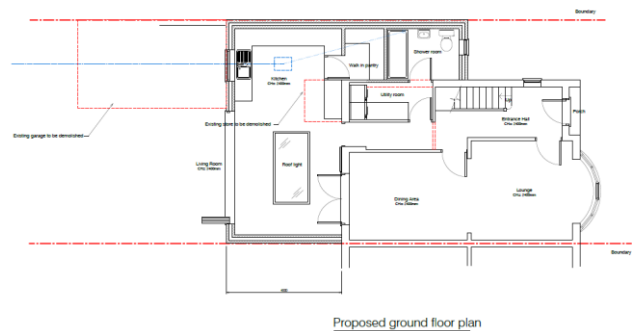
Proposed Elevations Plan:



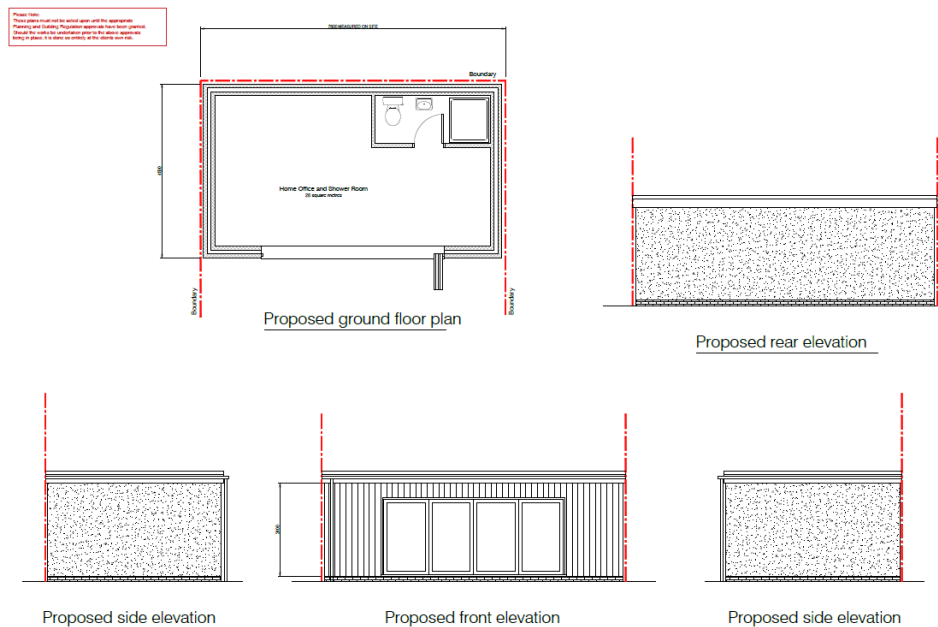
Existing Floor Plan:



Proposed Floor Plan:



Proposed Outbuilding Elevations and Floor Plan:



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

N/A

4. CONSULTATIONS

Site notice displayed on 03/07/2025

Late Representation Received: A representation was received from a neighbouring occupier after the formal consultation period had ended. As the application was still under assessment at the time the comments were received, the representation has been taken into consideration in the determination of the application. The neighbour raises concerns regarding the perceived massing and impact of the proposed side extension, stating that it would extend along the length of the shared boundary and result in a lengthy wall close to their property. Reference is also made to the proximity of the development to the neighbour's dining room window and the sloping nature of the site. Additional concerns are raised regarding ground conditions, noting that the area comprises heavy clay soil which is prone to movement.

RBC Transport: Stated the loss of the detached garage will result in the loss of a parking space and parking alongside the property. And that the plans provided have not been provided illustrating a proposed parking layout for 2 vehicles which would be required in accordance with the Councils current parking standards. This was then provided by the Agent. No further comments were received.

RBC Natural Environment: The Council's Natural Environment Officer has raised objections to the proposal due to unresolved and significant deficiencies in the submitted Arboricultural information. The site contains a number of off-site trees within adjacent properties, the majority of which are categorised as 'B' quality, including a 'B' category Yew tree located on the shared boundary with No. 9 Argyle Road.

Despite the submission of a BS5837:2012 Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), the proposal fails to adequately demonstrate the extent of impacts on retained trees. In particular, there is insufficient clarity regarding conflicts between tree canopies and the proposed rear extension and outbuilding, and the extent of any required pruning works has not been specified or illustrated. This makes it difficult to assess the potential impact on tree health and amenity.

The proposed detached outbuilding is shown to fall within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of several retained trees, including T2 (Yew), T3 (Sycamore), T5 (Holly) and T7. The submitted drawings do not clearly specify the proposed foundation type, and there is inconsistency between the AIA and the architectural drawings regarding whether the outbuilding would be constructed using a concrete slab. As such, it has not been demonstrated that excavation within RPAs would be avoided or minimised.

In addition, no Tree Protection Plan has been submitted to demonstrate how retained trees would be safeguarded during demolition and construction works. The proposal includes a shower room within the outbuilding; however, service routes have not been plotted or assessed as part of the AIA. There is also insufficient information regarding changes in ground levels, access paths, landscaping proposals and how no-dig construction techniques would be implemented within RPAs.

No mitigation planting or landscaping proposals have been provided to offset the increase in hard surfacing associated with the development. Given the site's location within an AQMA, this omission is of particular concern. The Natural Environment Officer advises that these matters cannot reasonably be addressed by condition and remains unsupportive of the application, considering it contrary to Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

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 2024
National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

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)
EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)
EN15 (Air Quality)
TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPG 2021
Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document 2011
Tree Strategy 2021
Biodiversity Action Plan 2021

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 surrounding area contains a mix of single-storey rear and side extensions, many of which incorporate flat roof forms. As such, the principle of a flat-roofed extension in this location is not uncommon and would not be entirely at odds with the prevailing character of development.

However, the host dwelling is characterised by a pitched roof form, and the Council's Design Guide to House Extensions SPD encourages extensions to reflect and complement the architectural characteristics of the original building where practicable. In this context, it is considered that a pitched roof would provide a more sympathetic design response and would better relate to the proportions and roof form of the host dwelling.

This matter was raised with the applicant's agent during the course of the application. The agent advised that a pitched roof, either as a mono-pitch or a side-to-side pitch forming a gable, was not pursued on the basis that matching clay roof tiles would not perform adequately at a shallow pitch. This explanation has been noted; however, it is not considered to be a compelling design justification, as alternative design solutions and materials could be explored to achieve a pitched form that accords with the guidance set out within the SPD.

Notwithstanding the above and acknowledging that flat roofs are prevalent in the area, the flat roof design is not, in itself, considered to result in such significant harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling or the wider area. Accordingly, while a pitched roof would be preferable and more consistent with the SPD, the design of the proposed extension does not form a determinative reason for refusal.

The proposed detached outbuilding would be sited within the rear garden and would remain visually subservient to the main dwelling. Its scale, flat roof form (acknowledging design matters above) and domestic appearance would ensure that it would not appear unduly prominent or out of keeping within the garden setting. There are other outbuildings of similar scale in the wider area. Overall, the scale, massing and design of the proposed development would be compatible with the character of the host property and the surrounding residential area.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of scale and design and therefore in accordance with Policies CC7 and H9 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 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 neighbouring properties potentially most affected by the proposals are No's 9 and 13 Argyle Road located to the east and west of the site respectively.

With regard to No. 9 Argyle Road, the adjoining semi-detached property, the extension would be located immediately adjacent the common boundary, would project approximately 4 metres from the rear elevation and would have a maximum height of approximately 3 metres. The extension would clearly be visible to neighbouring occupiers and would appear to breach a 45 degree line to nearest habitable room window. It is recognised that the roof would be flat to minimise the impact. However, the depth and height, located immediately on the boundary combined with the change in site levels is considered to result in an overbearing effect.

With regard to No.13 Argyle Road, the extension would be located immediately adjacent the common boundary and would form a substantial length along that boundary. Despite its single-storey

height, due to its extension directly on the boundary, combined with its depth, height and the elevated nature of the site, it would result in a noticeable sense of enclosure when experienced from No. 13.

The extension would be located in close proximity to the side elevation and habitable room windows of No. 13, including the dining room window referenced in the neighbour's representation. As a result, the development would appear overbearing and would materially harm the outlook enjoyed by the occupants of that property.

The proposed outbuilding would be sited to the end of the garden and not considered to result in any material overbearing effects.

As such, the proposal fails to comply with Policies H9 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Natural Environment

Policy EN14 states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced. Policy EN15 states that development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality.

In this case, the application has failed to provide sufficient Arboricultural information to demonstrate the acceptability of the development. Despite ongoing engagement and multiple opportunities to address the concerns raised by the Council's Natural Environment Officer, significant matters remain unresolved. These include the lack of a Tree Protection Plan, insufficient clarity regarding pruning works and canopy conflicts, unclear foundation design within RPAs, absence of plotted service routes, and inadequate landscaping and mitigation proposals.

The proposal would introduce built development and associated hard surfacing within RPAs of several retained 'B' category trees without sufficient justification or mitigation. Given the site's location within an AQMA, the failure to provide mitigation planting further weighs against the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is therefore unable to conclude that the proposal would safeguard retained trees or adequately mitigate its environmental impacts.

Given the fundamental nature of the outstanding issues, these matters cannot reasonably be addressed through the use of planning conditions.

As such, the proposal fails to comply with Policies EN14 and EN15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Transport

Following the submission of the amended parking layout, the proposal is considered to adequately provide for off-street parking in accordance with the Council's current parking standards. The development is therefore not considered to result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or parking provision.

Planning Balance

While the proposal would provide additional domestic accommodation and is acceptable in design, these benefits are outweighed by the failure to adequately protect retained trees of amenity value and the unacceptable impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be unacceptable on that basis.

8. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for following reasons

1) The proposed development fails to demonstrate that existing trees of amenity value, would be adequately protected and retained. Insufficient Arboricultural information has been submitted, including the absence of a Tree Protection Plan, unclear foundation design within Root Protection Areas, inadequate detail regarding pruning works, lack of plotted service routes and insufficient landscaping and mitigation proposals. The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate that harm to trees would be avoided or mitigated and is contrary to Policy EN14 and EN15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and paragraphs 135, 136 and 187 of the NPPF 2024.

2) The proposed development, due to its combined depth, height and siting on the boundaries, combined with the elevated nature of the site, would result in a visually dominant and overbearing form of development with consequent harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019), the Design Guide to House Extensions (2021) and paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024.