

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1079 Householder planning permission

Address: 39 BROOKLYN DRIVE, EMMER GREEN, READING, RG4 8SR

Proposal: Single storey front extension, front porch, two storey side extension with integral garage, and three storey rear extension

Applicant: Mr & Mrs J. Howes

Received date: 30/07/2025

Target Decision date (agreed extension): 21/01/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a detached property located on the north side of Brooklyn Drive in Emmer Green ward in Reading with a detached pitched roof garage adjacent and a large area of hardstanding at the front of the buildings. The road comprises large, detached dwellings varying in terms of scale and design. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The application site is not listed, nor does it fall within a conservation area. A strip of land beyond the rear of the site is covered by a TPO area.

Google earth image:



Site visit date: 02/10/2025

Site visit photos:





2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling consisting of a single storey front extension, a front porch, a two storey side extension with an integral garage, following the demolition of the existing detached garage, and a three storey rear extension with plant room at lower ground floor.

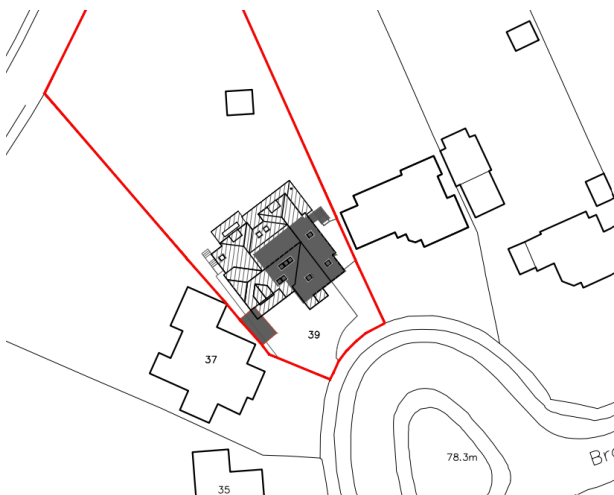
Existing Elevations:



Proposed Elevations:



Proposed Block Plan:



Plans considered:

Location Plan received 30th July 2025
Drawing No. 0000/201 rev A – Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan received 30th July 2025
Drawing No. Sheet 1 – Existing Site Levels Plan received 30th July 2025
Drawing No. Sheet 2 – Existing Floor Plans and Elevations received 30th July 2025
Drawing No. 0000/600 rev B – Green Roof Spec received 18th November 2025.
Planning Statement V4 received 18th November 2025
Drawing No. 0000/203 rev C – Proposed First Floor Plan received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/206 rev F – Proposed Site Plan received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/202 rev A – Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/207 rev A – CIL Calculations received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/200 rev B – Block and Location Plan received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/208 rev A – Street Scene received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/209 – Rear elevations of houses on Brooklyn Drive received 6th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/205 rev D – Proposed Elevations 2 of 2 received 19th January 2026
Drawing No. 0000/204 rev D – Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 received 19th January 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

4. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed by the case officer on 2nd October 2025 for a period of 21-days. No letters of representation have been received.

RBC Transport

This application removes the existing detached garage but includes a new integral garage. The recommended dimension for a single garage as detailed in the Councils current Parking Standards and Design SPD are 7m x 3m whilst the width conforms the length of the garage does not, however aerial images show there is additional parking on the front driveway served via an existing shared vehicle crossing. Therefore, there are no Transport objections to this application.

RBC Natural Environment

No objections, subject to a condition requiring tree protection measures in accordance with those shown on Proposed Site Plan (drawing no. 0000/206 C).

I note that there is a green roof proposed somewhere but there does not appear to be any roof plans so it would be prudent to request these to secure the extent of this roof – if details of the green roof are submitted with this then it would save a pre-commencement condition for details, which will otherwise be required.

Ecology

It is considered that the findings of the bat report are accurate and that the house is unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, there are no bat related objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Further clarity is required for the proposed green roof. We would also need details of how the green roof will be maintained.

Officer note: Further to the above comments, revised plans and further information was submitted in relation to the green roofs.

Discussions with agent

Planning officers had concerns with regards to the whether the proposed development would exceed what can be classified as extensions/alterations to the existing dwelling and whether the proposal could be

assessed under a Householder Planning Application. This is because due to the scale and design of the proposed development - it essentially looks like a new house. The agent was advised that if the application proceeds under a householder planning application (instead of a full planning application), we need to be sure that the scale of the proposal at first floor can be supported by the existing walls identified as being retained (black on the proposed ground floor plan). Therefore, a statement was requested to justify that the current structure can support the upstairs proposed, and that the development would be extensions and not demolition/rebuild.

Subsequently, the agent submitted a letter from the structural engineering consultant, along with a site plan showing the location of the trial holes, which have now been excavated. The letter states: The foundations as existing consisted of a stepped brick footing onto a concrete strip foundation which measured some 300mm in depth. The total depth of the excavation to the base of the concrete being 700mm. The projection of the concrete foundation from the face of the external wall being 250mm. This would equate to a footing of 750mm in width. The ground condition being gravel with traces of clay (firm). There are trees on the site but far enough away to not influence the existing foundations. Any new foundations will be constructed at a depth in accordance with the NHBC guidelines building near trees. We consider the existing foundations suitable to support the new loads as anticipated.

In terms of the overall design, planning officers also had concerns regarding the impact of the proposals at the rear of the site. It was originally considered that the original character of the dwelling had been lost. The balance between the roof form and the projecting elements had shifted, resulting in a level of bulk that appeared overly dominant in relation to the original house. In response to these concerns, revised plans were submitted that reduced some of this bulk and incorporated a greater proportion of roof into the design.

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)

CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change)
CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)
EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
TR (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)

SPD

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

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.

Although this is technically a householder planning application, it is recognised that the proposed development would, in effect, result in the appearance of a new dwelling, given the difference in appearance and scale from the existing house. A large amount of the original ground floor walls would be retained (as shown on the proposed upper ground floor plan), and justification has been provided to demonstrate that the scale of the proposal at first floor level can be supported by the existing walls identified as being retained.

The proposed works when viewed in combination represent substantial works to the existing dwelling. Nevertheless, the surrounding area is made up of a number of large detached dwellings (most of which are larger than the host dwelling), set back from the road, varying in terms of design. Whilst the properties immediately surrounding the application site largely retain a traditional character, there are some more modern dwellings located elsewhere along Brooklyn Drive. As such, the character of the wider area is varied and the proposed development would not be considered completely out of context, it would add to the variety. Furthermore, as the site is located on a bend, and not prominently positioned within a continuous row of dwellings, its impact is not considered to be as critical.

The overall scale of the proposed development is considered appropriate given the size of the plot and the context of the surrounding area. Many of the dwellings in Brooklyn Drive include footprints of development across the full widths of the plot, with little relief between the properties.

The existing detached garage would be demolished to accommodate the extensions to the main dwelling. The maximum height of the proposed roof ridge would match the maximum current chimney height, which is approximately 1.1m higher than the existing roof ridge. Therefore, when viewed from the front of the site, it is not considered that the development would result in a significantly detrimental amount of additional massing. The bulk of the development is at the rear of the site due to the 3-storey nature of the proposed rear extension.

In terms of design, the principle front building line would be retained, and the front elevation would still incorporate a front-facing gable with a large amount of roofscape to maintain the original arrangement. As a result, the property is considered to maintain an element of its character within the street scene when viewed from the front.

At the rear of the site, following the officer concerns outlined earlier in the report, the revised scheme is considered an improvement on the original plans and retains more of the character of the existing dwelling. Hipping the two main gable features at the rear, along with the removal of the flat roofed element in between them, reduces some of the development's bulk and results in more roofscape being included within the overall design.

The materials proposed are considered acceptable. These include plain clay roof tiles to match the existing property, facing brickwork to match the existing property, and elements of horizontal feature timber boarding. Due to the variety of designs and materials within the street, particularly at the other corresponding horseshoe part of Brooklyn Drive, the proposals are not considered out of keeping with the established character of the area.

The area of the ground floor flat roof extension at the rear of the property would be covered by a green roof. The proposed green roof is considered a positive addition to the scheme, as green roofs support climate change adaption, enhance biodiversity, and help slow the rate of rainwater runoff.

The size, scale and placement of the proposed windows and doors are considered suitable. The proposed porch within the front elevation would be subservient to the dwelling.

For the aforementioned reasons it is considered that the proposed development would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, neighbouring properties, or surrounding area and is in accordance with Policies H9 and CC7 and the advice contained within the NPPF.

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.

It is considered that the proposals are appropriate in terms of scale and there is an adequate level of separation between the properties. Since the existing single storey side projection and the detached garage will be demolished, the proposed dwelling would be positioned further from the side boundaries than the current structures. Due to the combination of the distance, and the proposed roof form of the application dwelling sloping away from both side boundaries, the proposed development would not appear overbearing to either neighbouring property. It is also not considered that the proposals would result in adverse harmful overshadowing effects or cause significant loss of daylight to the windows of either property or their rear private amenity space. Although the proposed development would be more noticeable to the residents of the neighbouring properties, it is not considered that it would be visually dominant. In relation to privacy and overlooking concerns, it is noted that no windows are proposed within the first-floor side elevations. Whilst rooflights are included on the side-facing roof slopes, their limited size

and positioning ensure they would not result in any unacceptable loss of privacy or harmful overlooking. A condition is attached to this permission to ensure that no further openings are inserted into the side elevations of the dwelling without a further application for planning permission.

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 and parking space is considered acceptable.

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:

TL1 – Time limit

M1 – Materials

AP1 – Approved plans

L7A – Tree Protection

L4A – Green Roof

PD2 – No new side openings