

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1375 Householder planning permission

Address: 21 HIGHMOOR ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7BL

Proposal: Proposed hip to gable loft conversion with 3 rear pitched dormers and 3 front roof lights

Applicant: Mr KENWARD

Received date: 29/09/2025

Target Decision date: 05/03/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site consists of an extended, two-storey, bay fronted semi-detached dwellinghouse located on the southern side of Highmoor Road. The property is constructed from red brick and red tiled pitched roofs. The property has a large frontage offering off-street parking for several cars, as well as a large south facing rear private garden. Highmore Road is made up of detached, and semi-detached properties with large gaps between properties. Various properties have been subject to rear extensions, side extensions and loft conversions of differing scale and design. The property is not listed nor within a conservation area.

Google earth image:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to alter the existing roof form from a hipped roof to a gable roof, with the addition of 3 pitched roof dormers in the rearward roof slope.

Plans/documents considered:

Location Plan received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. E.01 – Existing Elevations received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. E.02 – Existing Floor Plans received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. E.03 – Existing Loft and Roof Plan received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. E.03 – Existing Sections received 29 September 2025

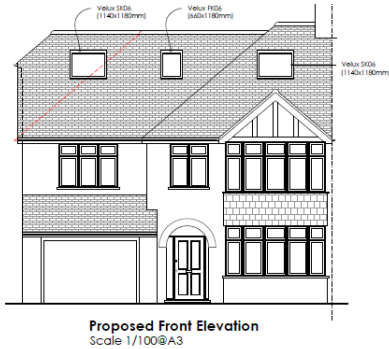
Drawing No. P.01 – Proposed Elevations received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. P.02 – Proposed Floor Plans received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. P.02 – Proposed Second Floor and Roof Plans received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. P.03 – Proposed Sections received 29 September 2025

Drawing No. P.04 – Proposed First Floor Plan received 29 September 2025
Drawing No. P.05 – Proposed Second Floor Plan received 29 September 2025
Bat survey received 8 January 2026
Block Plan received 11 February 2026



3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed on the fence at the front of the property by the case officer on 27th January 2026 for a period of 21 days. No letters of representation have been received at the time of writing this report.



Ecology

The application site comprises a semi-detached house in a residential area of Caversham where it is proposed to convert the loft and add windows to the roof space. The submitted bat survey report (Arbtech, December 2025) concludes that whilst the building has low potential to host roosting bats, the proposed

works will not impact any of the features suitable for roosting bats. As such since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/98/0621 – Two storey and single storey rear extension – Approved – 1999

PL/18/1215 – Ground and first floor rear extension – Approved – 2018

PL/13/1575 – Two storey rear extensions – Approved – 2014

PL/25/0591 - Proposed loft conversion with rear cottage style dormers and skylights in front roof slope – Approved – 11/06/2025

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)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

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.

Two proposed pitched roof dormer windows and 3 front rooflights were previously approved under reference number PL/25/0591, on 11/06/2025, and there have been no changes in policy or circumstances at the site since that time. This is material to the current proposal, and this element of the proposal is considered to be acceptable on this basis.

The surrounding area is characterised by properties varying in terms of scale and design. Therefore, it is considered that altering the roof form of the application dwelling from a hipped roof to a gable roof (with a small return hip) would not be significantly harmful to the varied street scene.

The three pitched roof dormers are considered acceptable in terms of size, scale and placement. The proposed development has been carefully designed to respect the character of the existing dwelling and would be constructed from materials to match those of the existing dwelling.

Overall, the current proposal is not considered significantly different to the previously approved application, and the proposals are not considered to cause significant harm to the character of the existing dwelling or the wider area and, therefore, complies with policies H9 and CC7.

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 host dwelling has a long rear garden, and, therefore, no properties would be affected beyond the rear of the application site. Windows are already present at 1st floor level-overlooking the rear gardens of both neighbouring properties. Two cottage dormers have already been approved at second floor level under the previous application, and it is not considered that one further dormer would cause significant detrimental harm. The proposed cottage style dormers are considered less overbearing than a rear box dormer, the latter sometimes possible to achieve under permitted development rights. It is not considered that the proposal would cause harm to neighbouring residential amenity.

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:

Time Limit

Materials

Approved Plans