

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green

App Ref: PL/25/1571 Householder planning permission

Address: 21 LOWFIELD ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 6NL

Proposal: Two storey side extension to existing dwelling

Applicant: Mrs Annamaria Fox

Received date: 03/11/2025

Target Decision date (agreed extension): 06/03/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey, end of terrace dwellinghouse located on Lowfield Road, in Caversham. There is a brick boundary wall surrounding the amenity space at the front, side and rear of the property. There are trees on site, none of which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The application building is not listed, nor is it located in a conservation area.

Extract of the Location Plan:



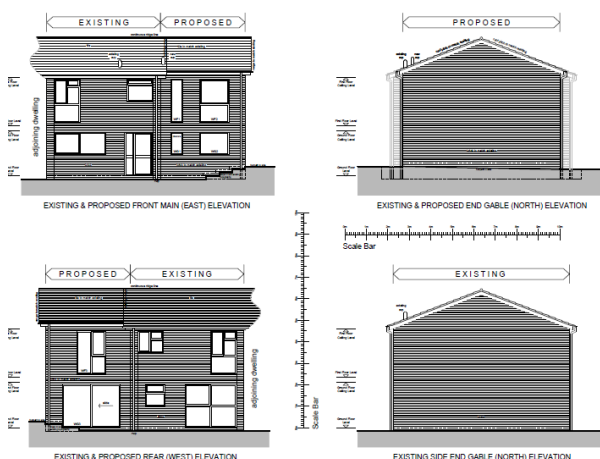
Google earth image:



Site visit date: 02/12/2025

PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a two-storey side extension with an approximate width of 3.9m and depth of 7.3m. The materials proposed will match those of the existing dwelling.



CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 2nd December 2025 for a period of 21-days.

No letters of representation have been received.



Discussions with applicant/agent

During the course of the application process, revised plans were received to amend the roof over the proposed extension to be set back to align with the extension itself (rather than overhanging in line with the existing roof), so that the new extension is clearly distinguishable.

RBC Natural Environment

The site of 21 Lowfield Road is located in Caversham, a naturally verdant area of the Borough which trees and soft landscaping contribute to its character. The site consists of soft and hard landscaping, including three Apple trees. There is a large, mature Council Oak tree adjacent to the rear of the property.

With reference to the TREE REPORT, 19th December 2025, I note no tree removals or pruning are required to facilitate the development. No RPAs are impacted by the proposal either which is positive. Having said that, no Tree Protection Plan has been provided which is required to demonstrate and ensure that the trees will be protected from construction related activities. I note that tree protection has been mentioned in the report, however a plan is required to show the positioning of fencing and ground protection. The TPP must also state that the protective fencing and ground protection will be installed prior to construction starting, remain in place throughout the construction and only be removed once construction is complete, which is mentioned in the '*Tree Protection Plan and Method Statement*' section of the report. This section of the report also only specifies protection to the Oak – the Apple trees should also be protected.

The Tree Report recommends works to the adjacent Council owned Oak tree. As the tree is Council owned, concerns regarding this should be discussed with Street Scene – I will forward them a copy of the report for their information.

The report also states in relation to the Oak '*the proposed extension and therefore is unlikely to impact the building or result in damage to the tree's root system, as long as the tree is maintained at an approximate height that it is now*' – I am slightly unclear on this statement and clarity would be welcome. It would appear they are suggesting confining the Oak to a lesser size to prevent damage to the extension in the future. If this is the suggestion, then the proposal would seem to increase the pressure to prune or remove this tree in the future, as I note several references to future damage within the report. The Oak is a large, mature, Council owned tree and pressure to prune or remove it due to development should be resisted. Caversham Park Village is a well-known area for subsidence due to the predominantly clay soil, whether or not trees are present; trees just potentially exacerbate the problem. All extensions therefore need to be carefully

considered to ensure that foundations, and specifically the marrying of the old with the new, avoids subsidence, including differential movement, in the future. They need to be designed to take future tree growth into account instead of suggesting existing trees be managed to avoid potential damage in the future.

The extension is proposed to be built on an area of existing soft landscaping with no suggested mitigation. With any proposal, where there is an increase in development which results in a loss of soft landscaping, it is expected that this loss is mitigated. An aerial from Google shows some soft landscaping that will have to be removed to facilitate the development.



As mentioned in my initial paragraph above, this is a verdant area and CPV is characterised by scattered green spaces and often setback buildings from the street.

To conclude, whilst I have no objections to the application in principle, a Tree Protection Plan is required to demonstrate how the trees will be protected throughout the construction of the development. Comment on the foundations should be sought. Once a TPP has been submitted, reviewed and confirmed it adequately protects the trees, I will suggest conditions and informatives.

Officer note: Further to the above comments, the agent was unable to resolve these matters prior to a decision being issued and therefore agreed to a pre-commencement condition for the submission of an arboricultural method statement.

The block plan and the plan provided within the tree report illustrates that a good level of landscaping would be retained and there would still be a good separation to the side boundary. Due to the boundary planting combined with the separation, it is not considered that the development would have a significant detrimental impact on the character from the streetscene.

RBC Ecology

The application site is an end of terrace house located in a residential area of Caversham, Reading where it is proposed to add a large two storey side extension.

The loft space would remain largely unaffected by the proposals, and given the relatively good condition of the roof as viewed on Google Streetview as well as the relatively modern construction and roof tile type, it is considered unlikely that the property possesses features suitable for roosting bats.

As such, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will impact bats or other protected species and there are therefore no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

RBC Transport

The application site is located at the end of a terrace row of houses. The parking provision for the application site is provided within an allocated garage and shared parking area.

The application consists of a two-storey side extension on land which is currently used as a private garden.

The proposal will not impact on the existing parking provision for the site. Therefore, there are no transport objections to the proposal as the developments retains an acceptable level of parking.

Plans/documents considered:

Location Plan received 3rd November 2025

Drawing No. P0002 C – Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 3rd November 2025

Drawing No. P0003 C – Proposed First Floor Plan received 3rd November 2025

Drawing No. P0004 B – Proposed Roof Plan received 16th February 2026

Drawing No. P0005 B – Proposed Elevations received 16th February 2026

Drawing No. P0006 E – Proposed Block Plan received 23rd February 2026

Tree Report received 23rd February 2026

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

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.

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)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (2021)

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. A pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025 and is currently at examination.

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 appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

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.

It is considered that the proposed side extension is subservient to the host dwelling and the plot is capable of taking an extension of this size. In terms of design, the proposed side extension is considered acceptable, the extension would be slightly set back from the front and rear elevations of the existing dwelling to ensure the extension reads as an addition, rather than dominating the original terrace house. The fenestration is considered acceptable (although modern in appearance), and the materials proposed would match those of the existing. Overall, in terms of scale and design, it is not considered that the proposed extension would cause significant detrimental harm to the character and appearance of host dwelling, neighbouring properties, or wider area.

The proposed development would respect and continue the character of the terrace dwelling. A sufficient separation would be retained between the extension and the existing side garden wall (which would partially screen some of the development from the street view). As such, the proposed development is not considered to result in significant harm to the streetscape.

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 proposed extension will have no adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. The application site occupies an end-of-terrace position, and the proposed extension would be built on the outer side wall, away from the rest of the terraced dwellings. As a result, the development will not result in any loss of daylight/sunlight, or outlook to neighbouring dwellings. Due to its siting and design, there are no identified risks in terms of overbearing effects, and the proposed extension will not give rise to any overlooking concerns.

Trees

Due to the trees on site, and the large oak tree beyond the rear garden wall, the Natural Environment Team were consulted on the proposed development. After reviewing the submitted tree report, the Natural Environment Officer confirmed that no tree removals or pruning are required to facilitate the development, and no Root Protection Areas would be impacted. However, a Tree Protection Plan is required to demonstrate how the trees will be protected throughout the construction of the development, and this will be secured via condition.

Subject to a condition, the proposal is considered compliant with policies EN12, EN14 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Other Matters

The recommendation proposes a pre-commencement planning condition therefore in accordance with section 100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, the Local Planning Authority served notice upon the applicant to seek agreement to the imposition of such a condition. Notice was served in writing on 27/02/2026 and agreed by the agent on the same day.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

Time Limits

Approved Plans

Materials

Arboricultural Method Statement