

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Battle Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0066 Householder planning permission

Address: 116 ELM PARK, READING, RG30 2HX

Proposal: Single storey rear extension (Part retrospective)

Applicant: MR KARAM GURUNG

Received date: 21/01/2026

Target Decision date: 18/03/2026

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey end-terrace dwellinghouse located within a short terrace of three properties. There is a narrow L-shaped path to the west of the application site, which leads to the outside end of the rear garden. Quinn Court is situated to the west, adjacent to this path.

The application site previously formed part of the Reading Football Club land, which was redeveloped under planning permission 98/0073/FD. Permitted development rights for the enlargement, improvement, or other alteration of the dwellinghouse have not been removed.

The property is not a listed building and does not fall within a Conservation Area. There is also no Article 4 Direction in place in this area.



Figures 1 & 2: Front and side views of 116 Elm Park, taken 27/02/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

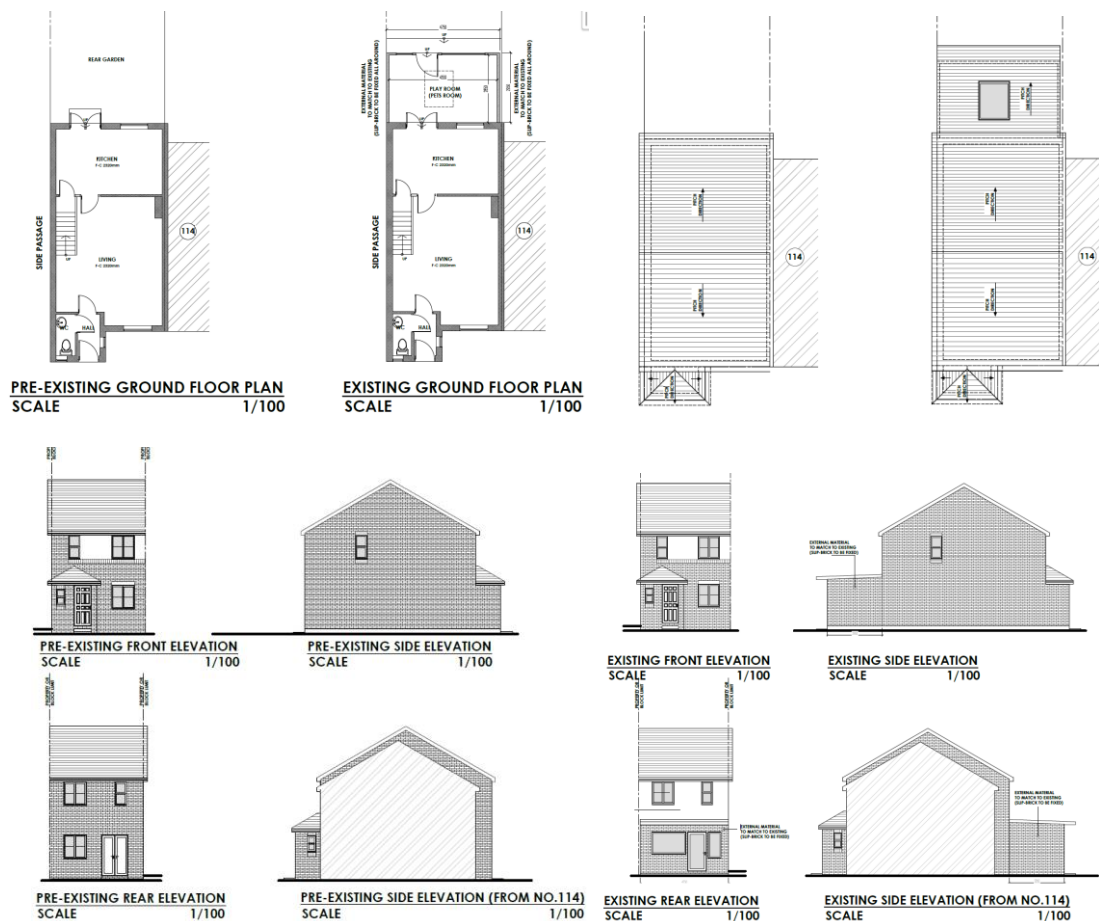
The retrospective application is for an existing single-storey rear extension constructed with a timber frame and finished externally with white cladding. The extension is not currently in use. It projects approximately 3 m from the rear elevation of the main dwelling. According to the submitted drawing no. 2595/PL/04, the eaves height is approximately 2.9 m and the total height is approximately 3 m. The structure has a sloped roof and would be used as a playroom or pet room upon completion. The existing single-storey rear extension includes an overhang projecting 60 cm in depth and a rooflight. The structure is set off

approximately 7.6 cm from the boundary with no. 114, while it follows the boundary line on the opposite side.

The Planning Officer has not been able to gain access to the rear garden of the application site. However, based on site-visit images from the enforcement record and adjoining property, there is decking beneath the existing rear extension.

Plans considered:

- Drawing No. 2595/PL/01 – Ground Floor Plan (pre-existing and existing), dated 16/01/2026
 - Drawing No. 2595/PL/02 – Roof Plan (pre-existing and existing), dated 16/01/2026
 - Drawing No. 2595/PL/03 – Pre-existing Elevations, dated 16/01/2026
 - Drawing No. 2595/PL/04 – Existing Elevations, dated 16/01/2026
 - Drawing No. 2595/PL/05 – Block Plan (pre-existing and existing), dated 16/01/2026
- Received 21/01/2026.



Figures 3 – 6: Pre-existing and Existing Floor Plans and Elevations

3. PLANNING HISTORIES

- 98/0073/FD – Construction of 149 dwellings, garage, footpaths, drives, highway, drainage and associated works. Granted 02/12/1998.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- Site Notice: A site notice was displayed near the application site. The 21-day consultation period was from 12 February 2026 to 5 March 2026. Three letters of representation have been received, with two objections from the same address.



Fig 7: Site Notice photo

The original objection comments are summarised below for a brief review. The detailed comments are available on the public website:

Objection 1:

- **Loss of light to the adjoining property's garden:** The extension, which appears to exceed 3.5 m in height and is approximately 4 m in overall length including the roof, further restricts sunlight reaching my garden—particularly during the spring and summer months when sunlight is most important for the enjoyment and use of the space. This significantly reduces daylight and sunlight during periods when the garden would otherwise be usable. In addition, our kitchen has become noticeably darker, and we have lost much of our view of the sky. The size and height of the structure feel overwhelming and have caused our home and garden to feel enclosed. Our garden already faces north and receives limited sunlight, and this development has made the situation considerably worse, especially during the months when we would normally enjoy using the space.
- **Overbearing and dominant impact:** Due to its excessive height, bulk, and scale in close proximity to the boundary, the development appears overbearing and visually dominant when viewed from my garden. The structure creates an oppressive presence and results in an unacceptable outlook from my property.
- **Sense of enclosure:** The scale, massing, and position of the extension create a pronounced sense of enclosure, making my garden feel boxed in and overwhelmed by development. This level of enclosure is harmful to residential amenity.
- **Overdevelopment and poor relationship to neighbouring property:** The extension represents overdevelopment of the site and fails to respect the relationship with neighbouring properties. Its size, height, and massing are not in keeping with the surrounding area and do not reflect good design principles.
- **Retrospective nature of the proposal:** Although this is a retrospective application, it should be assessed against the same planning policies and standards as any proposal submitted prior to construction.

Objection 2:

I object to the extension at 116 Elm Park. It is too tall, visually intrusive, and resembles a poorly built wooden shed. The application claims it is finished and clad with slip bricks, but it is actually covered with white boards and remains incomplete. The mature palm tree has been heavily pruned to make space for the structure, which sits directly against its trunk. Given the small size of the gardens, the extension is out of scale with the houses and raises environmental concerns.

- Communications with the agent:

The Planning Officer requested a site visit twice through the agent, but neither visit could be arranged because the applicant could not be contacted. The Officer also visited the site on two occasions and attempted to make contact by knocking on the door both times, but there was no response.

An email was sent to the agent on 04/03/2026 advising that if a site visit could not be arranged by 11/03/2026, the application would be assessed based on the submitted information and the details held by the Enforcement Team.

No response was received by the Planning Officer until 17/03/2026. Therefore, the case has been assessed based on the submitted information. The Planning Officer has not requested revised plans from the agent to seek a potentially positive outcome through feasible amendments, as this is a retrospective application and the single-storey rear extension is already in place. Revised plans are not applicable in this instance.

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 (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (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. 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’.

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 does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The retrospective single-storey rear extension is not considered acceptable in terms of character and appearance. Based on the site photographs provided by no. 114—both with and without the timber boundary fence—the extension presents a large blank façade to the rear garden of the adjoining property. Due to the difference in ground levels between the two gardens, the extension sits significantly higher than the boundary fence, which further increases its visual prominence. In combination, this results in an extension that appears overbearing and visually dominant when viewed from no. 114.



Figures 8-9: View from 114 Elm Park, provided by the adjoining property

In addition, the submitted existing elevations state that external materials would match the host dwelling. However, the side elevation has been constructed using white uPVC cladding (see Figure 2), which does not reflect the character or materiality of the original dwelling, which is constructed of light orange bricks. Although the construction is not fully complete, enforcement record confirms that the intended external finish is white uPVC cladding, which is not considered an appropriate or sympathetic material in this context. The design is further harmed by the excessively long roof overhang, which adds unnecessary bulk and contributes negatively to the appearance of the structure.



Fig 10: Rear view of 116 Elm Park, provided by Enforcement Team

Taking into account the height, form of the extension, its poor relationship with neighbouring properties, and the unsympathetic materials used, the structure appears out of scale with the modest size of the rear gardens in this short terrace. The resulting development is, therefore, visually dominant and not in keeping with the character of the host dwelling or the surrounding area.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring property and to fail to respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling in terms of materials and design, contrary to 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 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.

There is no identified risk to privacy or overlooking, as no side-facing windows are proposed. However, the retrospective single-storey rear extension extends beyond the 60-degree line taken from the midpoint of the closest opening (door) serving the habitable room at 114 Elm Park. As such, the development is considered to result in a loss of sunlight and daylight to the adjoining property.

In addition, the ground level of the rear garden at no. 114 sits lower than that of the application site. As a result, the overall height of the extension appears greater than indicated on the submitted existing elevations. When combined with the minimal set-off distance from the shared boundary, the structure has an overbearing impact on the neighbouring property. Owing to the recessed positioning of 114 Elm Park, the height and proximity of the extension also create a sense of enclosure.

Overall, the proposal is considered harmful to the residential amenity of no. 114.

Other matters: Tree and Permitted Development Rights

There is a mature palm tree located in the rear garden, positioned adjacent to the existing single-storey rear extension. Some harm to the palm tree has occurred. However, this tree is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order and is not a street tree. Therefore, it is not considered that this could be justified as a reason for refusal.

Although the permitted development rights for single-storey rear extensions have not been removed from the application site, the proposal would not comply with relevant restrictions and conditions, because of the materials used. Therefore, no permitted development fallback position could be applied in this case.

7. CONCLUSION

Overall, the application is not acceptable because the retrospective single-storey rear extension causes harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, due to its height, limited separation from 114 Elm Park, white uPVC cladding, and long roof overhang. It also results in material harm to the residential amenity of 114 Elm Park by breaching the 60-degree line, causing loss of sunlight and daylight, and creating a sense of enclosure and overbearing impact. The application is, therefore, recommended for refusal.

8. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSED

1. The overall height, combined with the limited separation from the shared boundary with 114 Elm Park, results in an overbearing and visually dominant form when viewed from the adjoining property. The use of white uPVC cladding, together with the disproportionately long roof overhang, fails to respect the character and appearance of the original property in terms of materials and design. Therefore, the retrospective single-storey rear extension is harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Design Guide to House Extensions 2021.
2. The extension extends beyond the 60-degree line when taken from the closest habitable room opening at no. 114 Elm Park, resulting in a loss of sunlight and daylight. The increased apparent height created by the higher ground level of the application site and the recessed position of 114 Elm Park further exacerbates the sense of enclosure and overbearing impact on the neighbouring property, to the detriment of its living conditions. Therefore, the proposal results in material harm to the residential amenity of 114 Elm Park which conflicts with Policies CC8 and H9 of Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Design Guide to House Extensions 2021.