

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Norcot Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1809 Householder planning permission

Address: 132 COCKNEY HILL, TILEHURST, READING, RG30 4EX

Proposal: Alterations to existing rear dormers and addition of rear dormer extensions

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Ian and Jo Brown

Received date: 17/12/2025

Target Decision date: Originally 11/02/2026; EOT agreed until 23/03/2026

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys / Mishga Marshall

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a detached chalet bungalow located on the southern side of Cockney Hill. The property has previously been extended. There is a single storey rear addition, however, that does not appear to have planning permission – it may be permitted development.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential, comprising a mix of two storey dwellings and chalet bungalows. The building is not listed, nor is it within a conservation area. The site is close to Prospect Park Local Wildlife Site.



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This application seeks planning permission to increase the size of the existing rear dormer windows and introduce a new dormer on the west facing roof slope.

The materials would match those of the host property.

Plans Considered:

Drawing No: Location and Block Plan 3394/200 Rev B dated August 2025

Drawing No: Proposed Floor Plans 3394/201 Rev F dated August 2025

Drawing No: Proposed Elevations 3394/202 Rev F dated August 2025

Received 12th March 2026

Drawing No: Existing Elevations 3394/102 dated August 2025

Drawing No: Existing Floor Plans 3394/101 dated August 2025

Received 17th December 2025

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Urban Tree Experts Ref. SPH/NP/PEA-25/07.10

Received 17th December 2025

3. CONSULTATIONS

Ecology: No objection, discussed below.

Natural Environment: Query in respect of impact on existing vegetation. Trees in rear garden but given nature of proposal no tree protection plan necessary. Discussed below.

A site notice was displayed. No neighbour letters of representation received.

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.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

20/1742 Demolition of existing garage, proposed porch extension with extended roof area above including 2 new dormer windows. One and a half storey side extension with 2 new dormer windows above. Associated internal alterations. Permitted and implemented.

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)
EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)

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. A submission draft 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.

The flat roof dormer windows as originally submitted were not considered to satisfactorily integrate with the host property, and the overall scale was considered to exacerbate the unattractive ‘box dormer’ appearance. Revised plans were received amending the proposals from flat roof to a crown roof.

Due to the nature of the proposals, there would be no increase in the actual footprint of the property. It is noted that there is a single storey rear addition that does not appear to have planning permission – this may have been permitted development. The proposals subject of this application are not considered to result in a cramped form of development.

The dormer windows would, in combination, be large additions. However, they would be set below the main roof ridge and given their location at the rear of the property would not be readily visible from the wider public domain. Whilst somewhat dominant in appearance, in part due to the depth of the dormer on the western roof slope and the large amount of blank façade (to protect neighbour amenity, discussed below), they are not considered to be so obtrusive or materially harmful to warrant a refusal on this basis. There are many examples of large dormer window extensions within the locality.

In compliance with Policies H9 and CC7.

Neighbour 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. Policy H10 also requires that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space.

The neighbouring properties potentially most affected by the proposals are No's 134 and 130 Cockney Hill located to the east and west of the site respectively.

With regard to No.134, the dormer window on the eastern roof slope closest to this property would be set in from the side elevation and the roof would be hipped away to minimise the impact. Given this, combined with distance to the common boundary and No.134 itself, no material loss of light, privacy or overbearing effects are considered to arise.

With regard to No.130, this property is oriented at angle towards the boundary with No.132. As such, the dormer window on the western roof slope will clearly be visible. However, no windows are proposed on this dormer and as such there would be no loss of privacy. A condition will be attached to state no new openings on this elevation. The proposed block plan illustrates that the dormer would not breach a 45 degree line to the nearest habitable room window. Whilst visible, the roof would be hipped away to further minimise the impact. Given this, combined with distance to the common boundary and No.130 itself, no material loss of light, privacy or overbearing effects are considered to arise.

As above, there is an existing single storey rear addition. This may have been constructed under permitted development, however, this is not clear (no history for it). The proposals also include a new first floor window on the rear elevation, which could potentially access the large flat roof rear addition. A condition will be attached to prevent use of this roof as a balcony, terrace area or roof garden, to protect neighbour amenity from overlooking.

In compliance with Policies H9 and CC8 in particular.

Natural Environment – Trees, Landscaping and Ecology

Policy EN14 requires trees, hedges and woodlands to be protected from damage and for Reading's vegetation cover to be extended. Policy EN12 requires proposals to not result in a net loss of biodiversity and protect and wherever possible enhances features of biodiversity interest.

The Council's Natural Environment Officer raised a query in respect of vegetation adjacent the western boundary, whether this would be affected by/removed as a consequence of the proposals. The agent advised that they do not consider any vegetation would need to be removed and may only require some trimming. The vegetation in question is not considered to be of such merit to raise significant concern.

Given the distance to trees in the rear garden, no concern; however, an informative is recommended to advise not to use soft ground in rear garden for construction related activities to protect the trees.

Due to the works to the roof, an ecological appraisal was submitted with the application. This has been reviewed by the Council's Ecologist who considers it to have been undertaken to an appropriate standard and agrees with the conclusion the building is unlikely to host roosting bats.

In compliance with Policies EN12 and 14.

7. CONCLUSION

Overall, 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

Approve, with Conditions

Time Limit

Materials as Stated

Approved Plans

No New Openings

No Use of Flat Roof