

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley

App Ref: PL/26/0270 Lawful development: Proposed use

Address: 6 COLEY AVENUE, READING, RG1 6LQ

Proposal: Replacing one window on both the front and rear elevations at second floor level with two no. windows (amended)

Applicant: Caroline Wharton

Received date: 27/02/2026

Target Decision date (agreed extension): 11/05/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

INTRODUCTION

The application site is a part two storey; part three storey building located on the western side of Coley Avenue in Reading. The building falls within use Class C2a. There is a large area of hard standing at the front of the site for parking, and an enclosed garden space at the rear. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The application building is linked to 6a Coley Avenue. The application site is not listed, and it falls outside of the nearby conservation area (Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road conservation area).

The applicant has submitted an application for a lawful development certificate to confirm that the proposals would constitute permitted development and, therefore, would not require planning permission.

PROPOSAL

The proposed works consist of replacing one window on both the front and rear elevations at second floor level with two windows. The agent confirmed in an email dated 5th May 2026 that all new windows would match the material and style of the existing they would replace.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

The following plans/documents were submitted to the local planning authority:

Drawing No. 2533-P104 – Location Plan received 27th February 2026

Drawing No. 2533-P102 rev A – Existing and Proposed Second Floor Plan received 30th April 2026

Drawing No. 2533-P103 rev A – Existing and Proposed Front and Rear Elevations received 30th April 2026

PLANNING HISTORY

PL/99/2170 - Extension to hostel to form a first floor link with annexe. APPROVED 09/02/2000

PL/04/0108 - Renewal of application 99/01190/FUL (extension to hostel to form a first floor link with annexe) and relaxation of Condition 1 (the development to which 99/01190/FUL relates must be begun not later than the expiration of five years beginning with the date on which the permission was granted). APPROVED 24/01/2005

PL/09/1733 - Extension to hostel to form a first floor link with annexe without complying with Condition 1 of Planning Permission 04/01160/FUL. EXTENSION OF TIME AGREED 22/03/2010

PL/10/1532 - Side porch, single storey rear extension, demolition of existing chimneys and roofs, altered external fire escape and rebuild second floor gable brick front and back walls. APPROVED 18/06/2010

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Practice Guidance
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

CONSULTATIONS

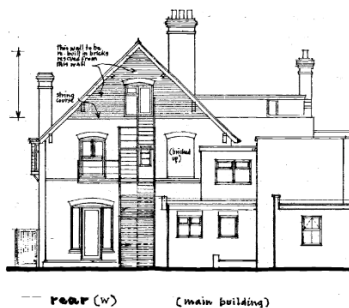
Consultations are not required for an application of this type.

Discussions with applicant/agent

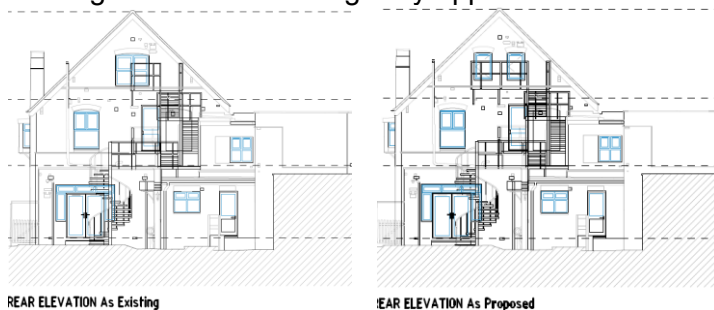
The proposal originally also included extending the external means of escape structure on the rear elevation to encapsulate the new windows (Means of Escape) at second floor level. However, the agent was advised that this would require an application for planning permission.

A previously approved planning application ref PL/10/1532 included an altered fire escape access on the rear elevation.

Approved plan below:



Although the originally plans submitted with this application only showed a relatively minor change to the fire escape structure, as a whole, the structure would materially affect the external appearance of the dwelling from what was originally approved.



Furthermore, there are no permitted development rights under the GPDO 2015 which apply to the installation of such a structure on a building in Use Class C2A.

Subsequently, this part of the proposal was removed from the scheme and revised plans were submitted.

Planning Officers originally had concerns with regards to the proposed window alterations as they are associated with internal changes to provide additional bedrooms and it wasn't clear if the additional bedrooms would result in an intensification of the use of the site.

However, the applicant explained that the internal reconfigurations proposed are to reduce the need for double occupancy in bedrooms. There is currently capacity for 25 residents to reside in the property. This consists of three double occupancy bedrooms (6) and 19 single occupancy rooms. One double occupancy room is being retained as is however will only be used to accommodate a single person. The remaining two will be split internally with no increase in occupancy. Therefore, there is no intensification of the use of the site.

ASSESSMENT

Section 55(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that building operations which do not materially affect the external appearance of a building do not amount to 'development' and do not require planning permission. The term 'materially affect' has no statutory definition, but is linked to the significance of the change which is made to a building's external appearance.

It is not considered that **replacing one window on both the front and rear elevations at second floor level with two no. windows** would constitute a material change to the external appearance of the building in this instance.



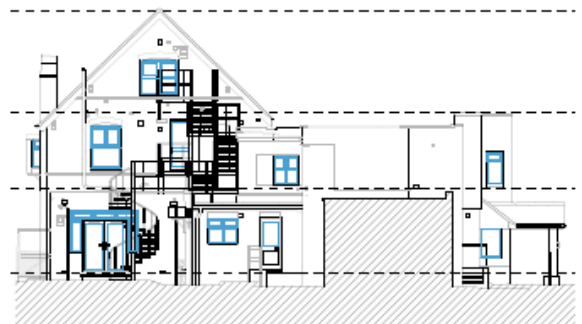
FRONT ELEVATION As Proposed
Scale 1:100



REAR ELEVATION As Proposed
Scale 1:100



FRONT ELEVATION As Existing
Scale 1:100



REAR ELEVATION As Existing
Scale 1:100

The proposed alteration is considered minor in scale with only a limited amendment to the fenestration arrangement. The replacement windows would match the existing style/design and material, and the height of the windows would be the same as the existing, but the individual windows would have a reduced width. As a result, the overall external appearance of the building would remain largely unchanged. The works would not give rise to any additional amenity impacts.

CONCLUSION



The proposed replacement of one window on both the front and rear elevations of the building at second floor level with two windows is not considered to be development in this instance, and it can be confirmed that planning permission would not be required for the proposed works. Therefore, the Local Planning Authority can issue the applicant with a Certificate of Lawfulness.

DECISION

Grant