

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: PL/26/0363 Householder planning permission

Address: 20A ELDON PLACE, READING, RG1 4ED

Proposal: Formation of habitable room in roofspace with cottage style dormers in rear facing roof slope and Velux rooflights in front facing roof slope.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Hurd & Priestnall

Received date: 17/03/2026

Target Decision date: 12/05/2026

Case Officer: Gary Miles

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The host property consists of a semi-detached dwellinghouse constructed circa mid 1980's located at the southern end of Eldon Place in central Reading. The street is characterised by the rear of the large, detached properties in Eldon Square, two storey terraced Victorian properties, later semi-detached and detached properties. Eldon Place is situated within the Eldon Square conservation area with the host property located just 50m west of Eldon Square itself. A few properties within the vicinity of the host property have cottage style dormers with traditional roof form in the rear facing roof slope. The property is not listed.

Site visit date: 9th April 2026



Existing rear elevation detached from neighbouring terraced properties



Site Layout Plan showing host semi-detached properties adjacent to terraced properties

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Formation of habitable room in roofspace with cottage style dormers in rear facing roof slope and Velux rooflights in front facing roof slope. To be constructed with materials to match the host property, timber for timber, windows for windows and vertical hanging tiles to match existing roof tiles.

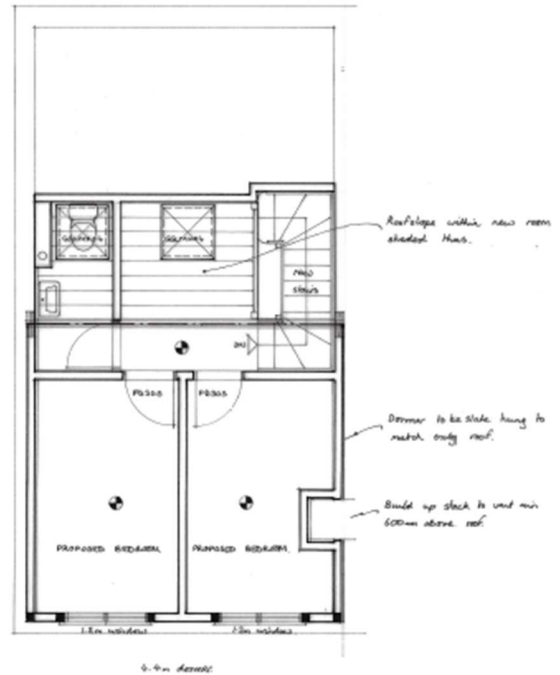
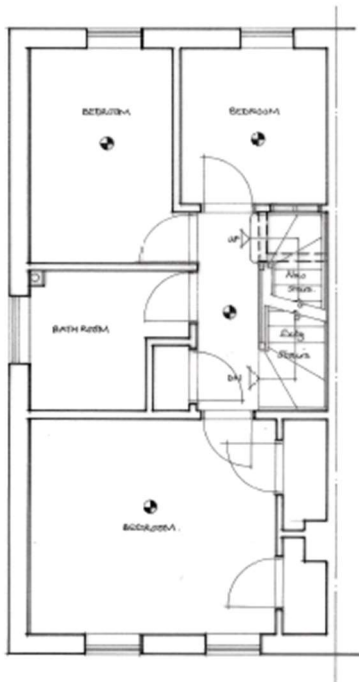
Plans and documents considered:

PP-14788940v1 – Location Plan, dated Mar 26

Existing Plans (ground, first floor and roof) dated Mar 26

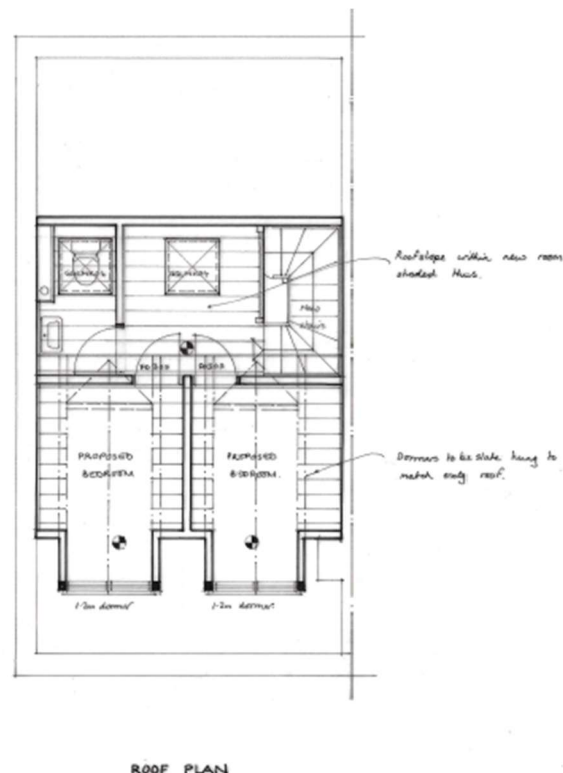
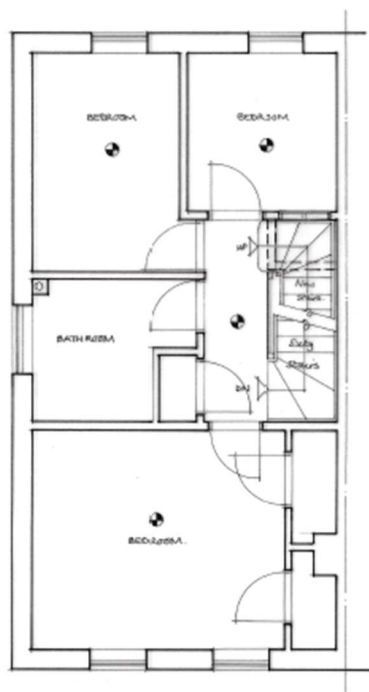
Proposed Plans (ground, first floor and roof) with original box dormer and 2 bedrooms, dated Mar 26

Received by the LPA on 17 March 2026

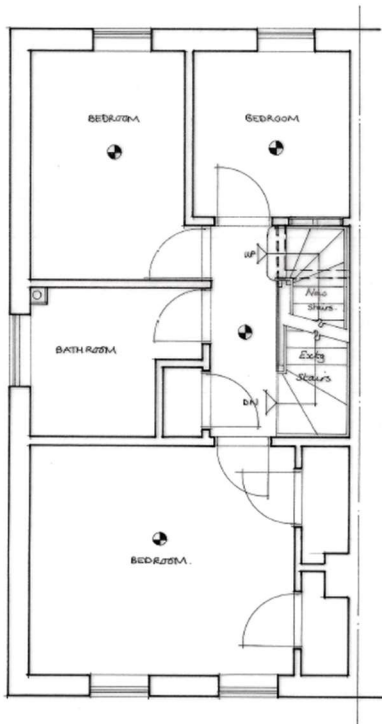


Proposed Plans (ground, first floor and roof) revised – box dormer changed to cottage style dormers, dated Mar 26

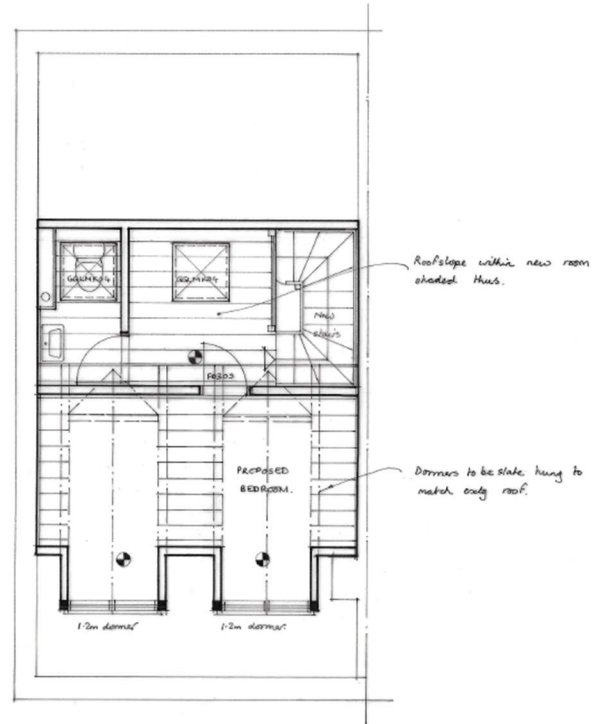
Received by the LPA on 22 April 2026



Proposed Plans (ground, first floor and roof) revised – cottage style dormers with one bedroom in loft space, dated Mar 26
Received by the LPA on 30 April 2026



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



ROOF PLAN

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal:

- RBC Conservation Officer

Relevant policies and legislation

From the point of view of the historic environment, the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

Section 66 of the Act also requires that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. **Chapter 16** of the NPPF (2024) 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development.

Paragraph 207 states, "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting." And Paragraph 208 says, "Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any

necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF requires that *'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation....'* And **paragraph 213** says, *'any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification'.*

Paragraph 215 requires that *'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...'*

National Planning Practice Guidance on Historic Environment provides context to the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy and Guidance

Policy EN1 'Protection and enhancement of the historic environment' of the Reading Borough Local Plan sets out the Council's aspirations for the historic environment. The policy requires that all proposals to protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and *their settings*, historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. It echoes the NPPF by stating, *"Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits"*.

Policy EN3 'Enhancement of conservation areas' of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires that development proposals within Conservation Areas contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness. This policy states, *"Development proposals within Conservation Areas **must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness**. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas."*

Policy EN6 'New development in a historic context' also requires *"New development will **make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities** and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development. When determining planning applications for new development, the following factors will be taken into consideration:*

a. The positive contribution of the development to the existing historic townscape (scale, height, mass, proportion, plot size, street form, materials, significant vistas and views, and open space);

b. Sensitivity to historic context;

c. Reflection of borough-wide major heritage themes that contribute to local distinctiveness (e.g. patterned brickwork or former worker terraced housing);

d. Whether development promotes and/or improves access to previously undiscovered or neglected historic significance."

Eldon Square Area Appraisal (March 2026) is also a material consideration in determining applications for development.

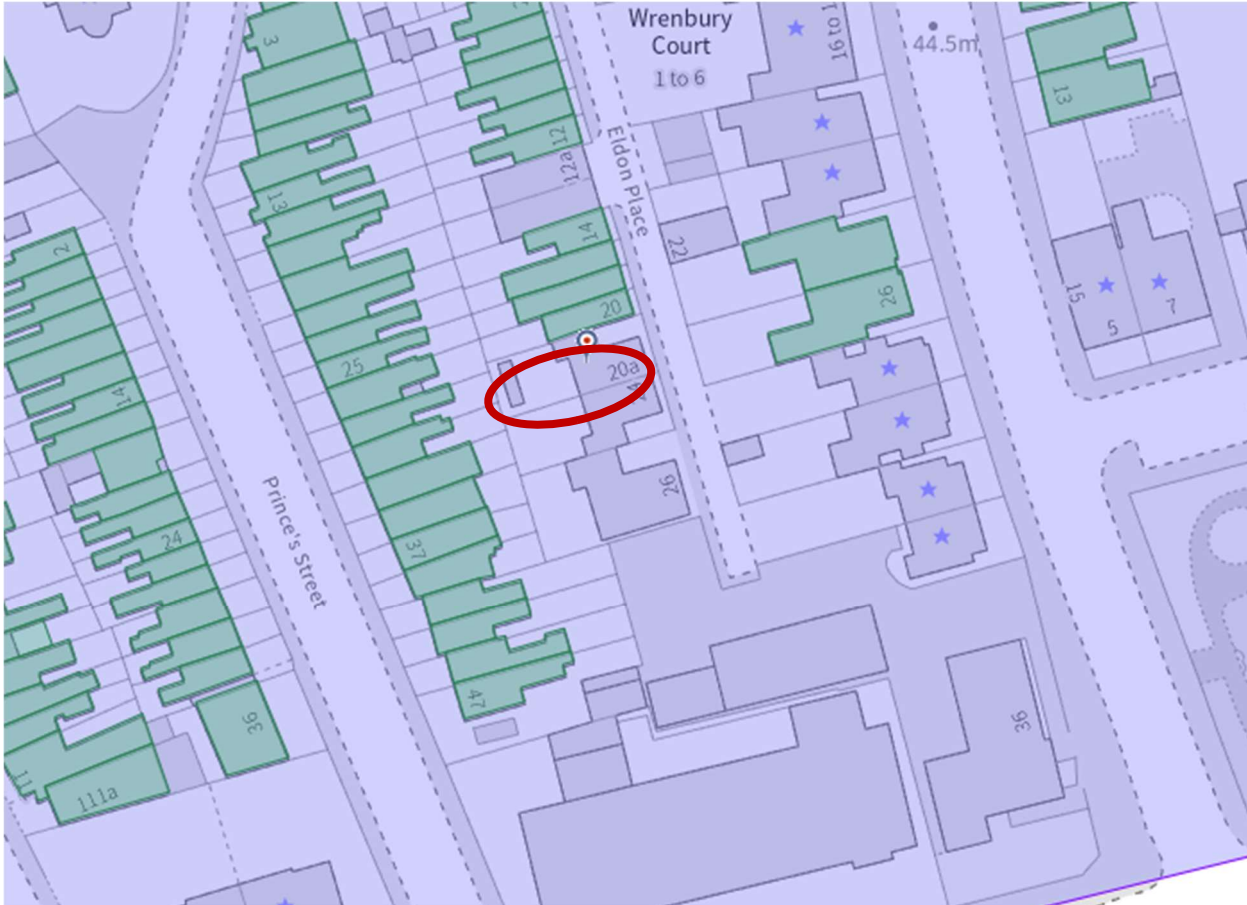
Other

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

English Heritage's "Conservation Principles" provides policy and guidance for the "sustainable management of the historic environment".

Relevant heritage assets

The application relates to a semi-detached, two-storey, modern, unlisted building located within the Eldon Square Conservation Area. As illustrated below, 28 and 30 Eldon Road, 20 and 22 Eldon Road, face their rear boundaries, and buildings of townscape merit (BTMs) No. 20 Eldon Place, adjacent to the site to the north and the rear boundary of 26 and 24 Eldon Road.



The application site (circled in red) within the Eldon Square Conservation Area (light purple), the buildings of townscape merit are shown in green, and the listed buildings have stars on them

Significance of heritage assets

The NPPF defines significance as the “*value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest.*”

The interest may be architectural or historic, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 1.

“Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”
(NPPF, 2023)

Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

The application site is situated in the Character Area 2 – Terraced streets west of Eldon Road of the conservation area. About the Eldon Place, the Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal States:

*“The other side-streets in this area are narrower and have a more intimate feel than Watlington Street and two storeys is the norm. St Johns Street, St Johns Road, St Johns Hill, Princes Street and **Eldon Place** are characterized by **short rows of modest two-storey** terraced housing built to accommodate Reading’s expansion in the mid/late nineteenth century.”*

*“**Eldon Place** is accessible from St Johns Road and is a service road for Eldon Road properties. There are **five modern infill properties**, three built on the rear gardens of Princes Street and two in the middle where there was a large property which was last used as a warehouse but had had previous light industrial uses.”*



The OS Maps of 1931 to 1932 (Published in 1934, Left) and 1971 (Right) with the application site circled in red



The application site in the 1990s (from the Council's Historic Mapping Tool, Left) and on Aerial Photograph of 2002 (from the Council's Historic Mapping Tool, Right)

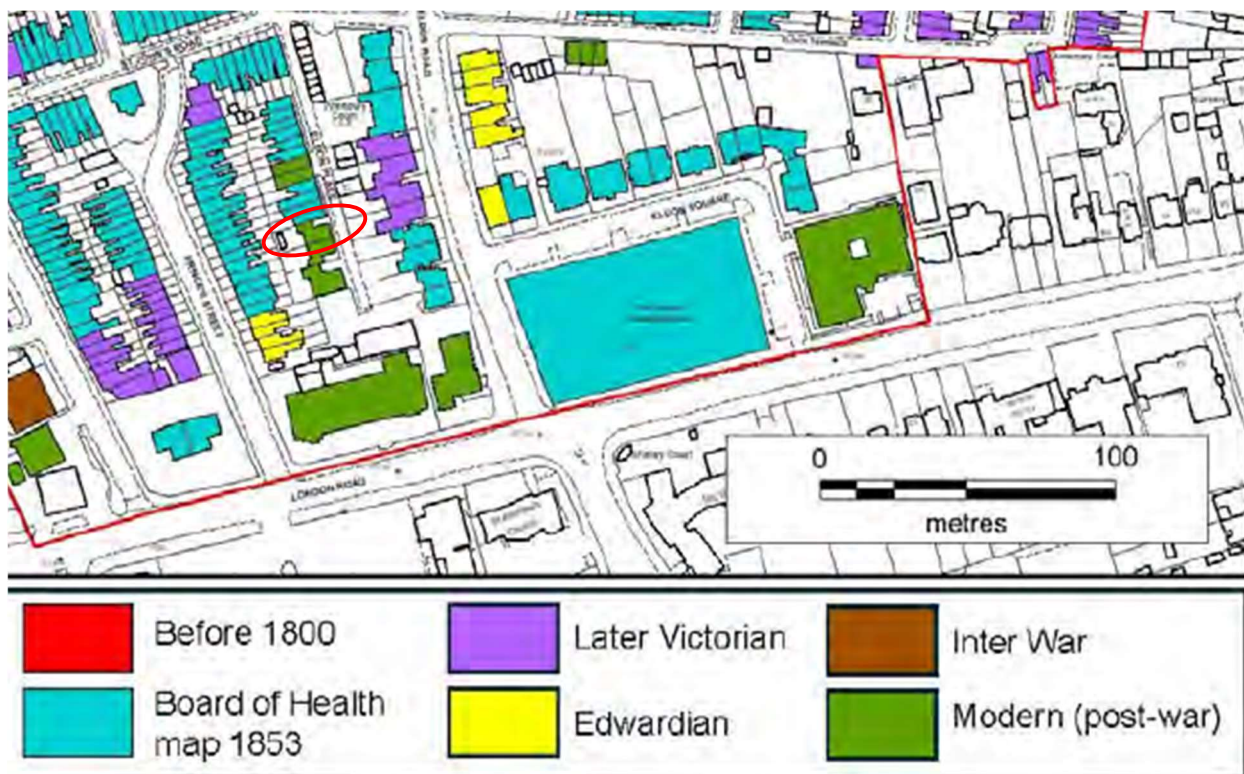


Figure 8: Buildings by age

Period of buildings in Eldon Square Conservation Area with the application site circled in red (from the Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal, page 20)

Whilst the subject building is modern, it has a width, height, scale, design, façade organisation and materials that are in harmony with the characteristics of the conservation area, not detracting from the significance of the area or the settings of listed buildings and BTMs.

Impact of proposal upon heritage asset(s)

The proposal is for a loft conversion with a rear dormer that would have a flat roof in line with the ridge level, occupying 4.4m in width, almost the same as the main building, a little set back from the eaves, and two rooflights on the front roof slope.

Whilst the building is modern and a loft conversion could be acceptable in principle, given the modest scale of the building and the character of the conservation area with a roofscape of small dormers, traditional roof forms and generally one rooflight, the proposed box dormer would not be a suitable addition to the area or a subordinate or subservient element to the host building (see the aerial view below).

In terms of proposed dormer windows, they are not in proportionate with the existing openings of the main building. Although the proposed materials would match the existing ones, the design of the rear dormer would differ from the rest of the building.

Therefore, the proposed rear box dormer would be bulky and boxy, adversely affecting the character of the conservation area. Due to its height, scale and massing, the proposed dormer would be a dominating addition to the host building, failing to comply with policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and would be recommended for refusal, whilst the proposed rooflights could be acceptable and dormer with traditional roof form to the rear.



Aerial Photograph, present time (from the Council's Historic Mapping Tool, Right) – Existing Roofscape

External:

- A planning notice was attached to a streetlamp column in Eldon Place and a streetlamp column in Princes Street on 31st March 2026 and left in place for the statutory 21-day consultation period.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. 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.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)

EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas)

EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context)

7. 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 host property is very different compared to the rest of the properties in Eldon Place which are largely Victorian terraced. The host property is modern in appearance, with different roof form than that of the neighbouring terraced properties. The host property is attached to the neighbouring semi-detached property and both properties are separated from the adjacent terraced properties by approximately 2m. The originally proposed full width box dormer on the rear roof slope was considered ugly, boxy and incongruous, unsympathetic to the Eldon Square conservation area and unsympathetic to the host property itself. Officers worked with the agent and applicant to suggest alternatives in the form of cottage style dormers with traditional roof form i.e. pitched roof, dormers set further up the roof slope, but lower than existing ridge line so they are not visible from the front of the property. The proposed cottage style dormers are smaller in scale, less bulky and boxy in terms of appearance. The dormers will be constructed from materials to match the host property including roof tiles and vertical hanging tiles to match the existing roof tiles of the host property.

In terms of scale, location, materials and design it is considered compliant with policy CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Residential Amenity

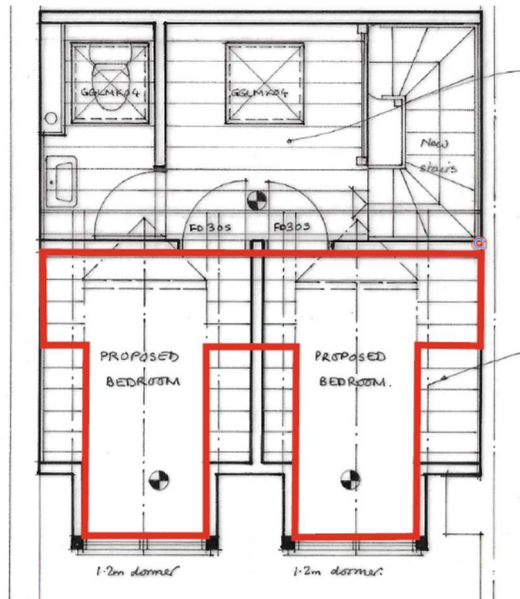
Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

Whilst the cottage style dormers introduce new rear facing windows, rear facing windows are already present at first floor level, the harm is mitigated by the distance of 20m between the host property and the properties positioned in Princes Street. The new dormers windows are not considered harmful to residential amenity. The proposed dormers have been changed to cottage style dormers which are more in keeping with the surrounding area and less visually dominant than a full width box dormer and therefore not considered harmful to visual amenity.

However, it was noted by the planning officer that converting the loft space into 2 bedrooms resulted in the minimum floorspace requirements not being met as set out in the Technical Housing Standards by virtue of the narrowness of the property.

Technical Housing Standards 10.c states in order to provide 1 bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m² and is at least 2.15m wide. And any floor space with 1.5m or less of headspace must be discounted. [Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - GOV.UK](#)

The floorspace of the submitted plan with 1.5m or more of headspace (i.e. useable space) was calculated, the total floorspace is equal to 8.92m² sufficient for a 1 bed bedroom, but not 2 single bed bedrooms.



The applicant and agent submitted revised plans showing one bedroom within the loft space for planning purposes. In terms of residential amenity, the proposal is considered acceptable.

The proposal is considered compliant with policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019,

Conservation matters

Whilst the host building is modern in appearance compared to the neighbouring Victorian terraced properties, the property is located within the Eldon Square conservation area, nonetheless. The original proposed development was boxy, bulky and incongruous and harmful to the host property and wider conservation area. The applicant and agent have worked with officers and taken on board comments from the conservation officer. The proposed development has been amended to something more in keeping with the Eldon Square conservation area. Smaller dormers with a more traditional roof form.

The reduced scale and more appropriate form of the revised proposal is now not considered harmful to the public realm or character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposal is considered acceptable with policy EN1, EN3 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. 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.

9. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

TL1
AP1
M1