

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0278 Full planning permission

Address: FLAT A, 25 GEORGE STREET, READING, RG1 7NP

Proposal: Construction of a dormer window for a loft conversion (a bedroom)

Applicant: Mr E Dishani

Received date: 02/03/2026

Target Decision date: 20/05/2026 (EXT)

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

25 George Street is a mid-terrace property comprising two flats. Flat A is currently a two-bedroom unit located above the ground floor, which sits significantly higher than the adjacent highway level. Reading railway and Victoria Park Recreation Ground are situated to the north of the site. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).



Front View of 25 George Street, taken 10/04/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for the construction of a dormer window to facilitate a loft conversion, along with the installation of two skylights to the front roof slope. It would create an additional bedroom with an ensuite for Flat A. The proposed rear dormer would be set within the main roof of the host dwelling, set back from the eaves by approximately 0.37m and set down from the ridgeline by approximately 0.18m. It would broadly align in height with the existing rear dormer at No. 27 George Street. As stated in the submitted application form, the proposed tile hanging would match the existing roof, and the proposed windows would also match the existing.



Existing and Proposed Plans and Elevations (the scale for the proposed plans/elevations is 1:100)

Plans/documents considered:

- Location Plan, dated and received 02/03/2026.

- Drawing No. PL.9326-A-103 – Block Plan, dated 01/2026, received 02/03/2026.
- Drawing No. PL.9326-A-101 (rev A) – Existing Plans and Elevations, dated 01/2026 and received 01/05/2026.
- Drawing No. PL.9326-A-102 (rev A) – Proposed Plans and Elevations, dated 01/2026 and received 01/05/2026.

3. PLANNING HISTORIES

- PL/02/1109 - Rear extension, dormer window and conversion of existing house into 3 flat units. Refused 29/01/2003.
- PL/03/0731 - Amended Description: Certificate of Established Use as House in Multiple Occupation. Refused 24/07/2003.
- PL/04/1049 - Conversion from 1 dwelling (four bedroom house) into 1, 1-bedroomed flat and 1, 2-bedroomed maisonette with small single storey extension to rear. Refused 24/06/2004, and appeal allowed 10/03/2005. A condition attached to the appeal APP/EO345/A/04/1161372 remains undischarged.

2) A noise attenuation scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme before the flats hereby permitted are occupied.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- RBC Transport Development Control – No objection.

There is no Transport objection to this application; there is no on-site parking associated with this property and the proposed works do not impact the highway. The street is controlled and regulated via extensive parking restrictions.

- RBC Environmental Protection Consultations – No objection. Summarise as follows:

It is acknowledged that there is one undischarged noise-related condition imposed under Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/A/04/1161372. Application Ref: PL/04/1049 was refused but subsequently allowed on appeal (see Planning History section). The proposed rear dormer under this application is not considered to raise any noise concerns.

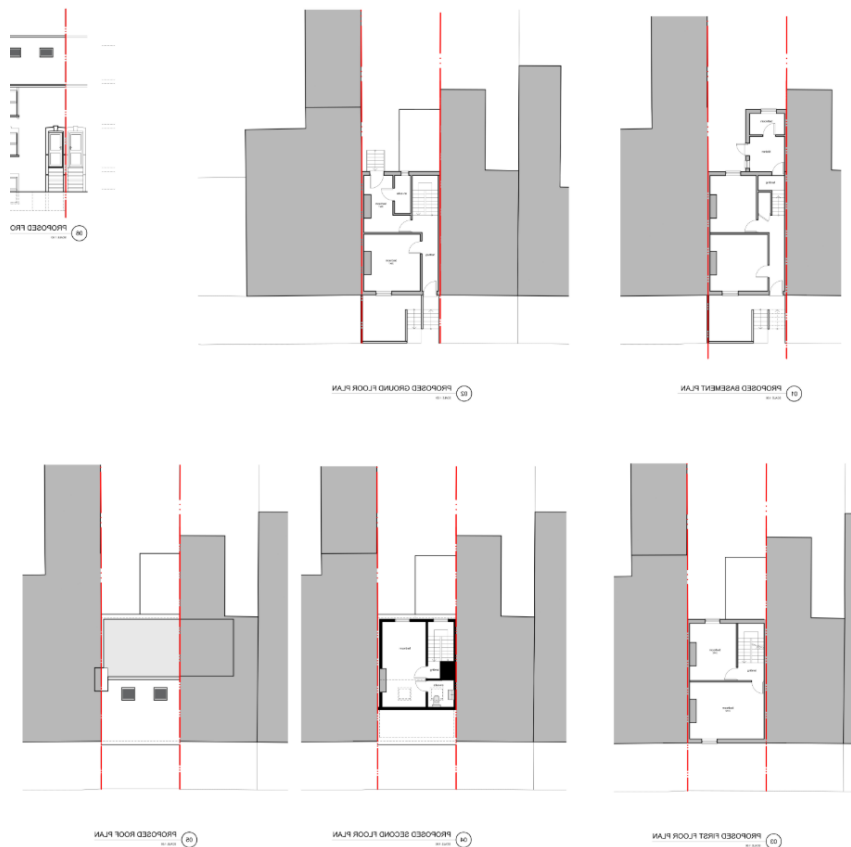
- A site notice was displayed in close proximity to the application site and runs from 02/04/2026 – 23/04/2026. No letters of representation have been received.



Site notice photo

- Communication with the agent:

The originally submitted floor plans did not clearly indicate all space functions. Therefore, the Officer requested revised plans showing full details of all internal spaces. The agent has also confirmed that the existing property comprises two flats and will remain as such.



Original submitted floor plans

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 Extension and Ancillary Accommodation

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 and the Examination held in February 2026.

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 remain 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

Design and Appearance

Policy H9 relates specifically to extensions to houses but is considered equally applicable to considerations with respect to C3 flats. This policy 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 proposed rear dormer and two front skylights are considered proportionate to the main roof in terms of size and scale, given that the skylights are modest in size and the rear dormer would be set within the roof of the host dwelling. The proposed tile hanging would match the existing. One of the two new rear windows would align with the existing first-floor window. In addition, the adjoining property at No. 27 features a rear dormer of a similar size to that proposed at No. 25.

Therefore, the proposal is not considered to detract from the host property or the wider environment. It would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene, as it would not be visible from the street. The proposal overall is considered to comply with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.



Rear view of 25 George Street, taken 10/04/2026

Residential Amenity

As above although Policy H9 is specifically related to extensions to houses, the principles are equally applicable to residential flats. The Policy states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy CC8 states that *“Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties”*. This includes, but is not limited to, with respect to visual dominance and overbearing effects; privacy and overlooking; access to sunlight and daylight; harm to outlook; and noise and disturbance.

There are no identified risks in terms of loss of light, overbearing impact, or overlooking, owing to the nature of the dormer. Flat A and Flat B share the same rear garden. While it is acknowledged that the creation of an additional bedroom would increase pressure on the use of the garden amenity space, this is not considered unacceptable, as there would be a total of four bedrooms at No. 25, which is deemed acceptable. A condition is recommended to ensure that the flat is not used as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). This is to avoid intensified use of the site, which could result in harm to residential amenity.

Other matters – undischarged noise-related condition

It is noted that 25 George Street was granted permission in 2005 for the conversion of one dwelling (a four-bedroom house) into one one-bedroom flat (Flat B) and one two-bedroom maisonette (Flat A), together with a small single-storey rear extension. A noise-related condition was attached to the appeal decision (Ref: APP/E0345/A/04/1161372), requiring the submission and approval of a noise attenuation scheme.

Based on the appeal decision, with reference to SPG Checklist 7, and given that the proposal related to the conversion of a single dwelling into two flats, it is reasonable to interpret the condition as intended to ensure appropriate sound insulation between the proposed units and neighbouring properties prior to occupation.

Since the imposition of this condition, the property has been occupied for at least 20 years, during which time any significant noise issues would likely have arisen if present. The introduction of the rear dormer is not considered to materially alter this situation or give rise to additional noise concerns. Furthermore, the Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed that they raise no objection to the proposal, notwithstanding the absence of a formally discharged condition.

Conditions

8. The Council has suggested 4 conditions and I have tested these against the advice in Circular 11/95 'The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions'. The first is the standard 5-year commencement condition, which is a requirement of the 1990 Act. The second requires a noise attenuation scheme and that seems eminently reasonable in the light of the SPG (checklist 7) in the interests of delivering a good standard of living conditions for neighbouring and prospective occupiers. The third requires implementation of the bin and cycle stores, and I have already given reasons for this approach. Finally a condition is sought in order to control hours of working during construction phase. However I consider that this should properly be dealt with under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. In these circumstances it seems to me that this condition is unnecessary because it duplicates other statutory provisions, contrary to advice in paragraph 22 of the Annex to the Circular.

Extract of Ref: APP/EO345/A/04/1161372

Given that the condition was imposed in 2005, approximately 21 years ago, and that the property is not listed, it is considered, with reference to *Paragraph 004 (Reference ID: 17b-004-20180222) of the Planning Practice Guidance on Enforcement and post-permission matters*, that the matter is now immune from enforcement action.

Therefore, this application can be determined without requiring the applicant to discharge the condition.

7. 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.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

Time Limit
Approved Plans
Materials (To Match)
Hours of Construction
No New Opening
No C4 HMO