

COMBINED DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove ward

App Ref: PL/25/1265 Lbc & PL/25/1263 Full

Address: 146 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, READING, RG1 2RD

Proposal: Refurbishment to bring property back into use as a single family dwelling (C3) including repair and renew existing roof like for like, renew leadwork to parapet and rainwater goods, proposed single storey rear extension with rooflights and solar panels, removal of existing terracing and well at the rear, restoration of existing greenhouse in the rear garden, retention and rebuild of existing projection to the side with a new roof over, proposed first floor extension and roof to match existing. Proposed front and rear dormers. Proposed garden office outbuilding measuring 6m x 3m x 2.5m with flat roof. Landscaping to front garden with new paved driveway area and repairs to existing brick boundary wall.

Applicant: Chike Ezechukwu

Received date: 05/09/2025

Target Decision date: 03/11/2025

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwerska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a mid-terrace dwelling on the west side of Southampton Street. It has an unusual appearance and layout, likely as a result of historical layout of the site as two separate units. The official listing entry (number 1113587):

SOUTHAMPTON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 142 to 146 (even) SU 7172 NE 4/250 II GV 2. Mid C19. 2 storeys, Nos 144 and 146 with attic. Stucco cornice. Parapets. Slate roofs, part hipped. Long front gardens to street. No 142, 2 modern casements, former datestone removed, lower extension to right. Nos 144 and 146 a 3 window pair, grey brick headers with red dressings and paired doors in centre. No 144 has glazing bar sashes. 2 course band over first floor. 1 window wing to left with chequered parapet and a 2 arch loggia with rubbed brick arches on ground floor and set back door to left, round headed window to right.

The site has a long front garden which is characteristic of this listed terrace. This feature contributes positively to the view from the top of Southampton Street towards St Giles Church, which is identified as a “significant view with heritage interest” under local policy EN5. There is currently no vehicular access to the site and there are a number of trees at the front and rear of the site, of which the mature Beech nearest to the public footpath at the front is protected by a TPO.

Internally, the property has been stripped of the floorboards at the ground level and is otherwise in poor and inhabitable condition. It appears that someone has started internal works previously but has not completed these works. Despite this, there are some features of historical and architectural interest that are worth repairing and preserving (discussed within the later sections of this report). Within the rear garden there is a disused greenhouse in a state of disrepair, and a historic outhouse and well. The ground slopes upwards gently. It is evident from the condition of the rear elevation that there may have been a previous rear extension or lean to at the ground level.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for refurbishment works to bring the property back into viable use as a single-family dwelling, including a single storey rear extension and first floor and roof extensions to the side of the property. Vehicular access is also proposed to serve the applicant due to the accessibility needs of their child. This proposed driveway has been redesigned over the course of the application to allow the retention of the TPO Beech tree.

Refurbishment comprises extensive works throughout the property, including switching of the existing front door and window, internal layout changes on all floors. A loft/first floor extension is proposed to

extend the existing roof form to create additional internal space for ensembles and walk-in wardrobes. New rooflights are also proposed.

Full details of the proposed works are contained within the submitted Heritage Statement and demonstrated on the proposed plans and drawings.

2.1. Information submitted:

- 2138 Heritage Statement
- 2138 Design and Access Statement
- 2138 E01 Location Plan
- 2138 E02 Existing Site Plan
- 2138 E03 Existing GF and FF Plan
- 2138 E04 Existing SF and Roof Plan
- 2138 E05 Existing Front and Side Elevation
- 2138 E06 Existing Rear Elevation
- 2138 E07 Existing Section Side Elevation
- 2138 P101 Proposed GF and FF Plans
- 2138 P102 Proposed SF and Roof Plans
- 2138 P103 Proposed Front and Side Elevation
- 2138 P104 Proposed Rear Elevation
- 2138 P105 Proposed Sections
- 2138 P107 Proposed Garden Rm Elevations
- 2138 P109 Proposed Bike and Bin Store Plans
- 2138 P113 Bin and Bike Store Elevations
- 146 Southampton Street Topographical Survey A1
- BERS 41609954 V10 12082025 Protected species survey
- TN01 CS Access and Parking 2025 07 21
- Condition Report 146 Southampton Street v2
- PEA PRA V1 050525 Baseline onsite habitat survey report (Pre-development)

Received 5 September 2025

- BNG - 146 Southampton Street, RG1 2RD - V1 - 30.06.25

Received 23 October 2025

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- 2138 P108 P4 Proposed Front Garden
- 2138 P106 P3 Proposed Rear Garden Plan

Received 26 March 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/25/0133 – Pre-application advice for extension and refurbishment of an existing house. New off-street parking and external landscaping. Advice was provided to the applicant which did not support the plans submitted at this stage, stating that a re-design would be required to achieve heritage benefits.

No other recent or relevant planning history.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- **RBC Conservation Officer** - The proposed extensions, including the roof extension, new dormers and rooflights, because of their size, location, detailed design, impact on plan form and loss of historic roof form, would cause harm (at a “less than substantial” level in terms of para 215

of the NPPF) to the architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building at 146 Southampton Street, and the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings at 148 – 150 Southampton Street. The natural character of the front garden, would be significantly diminished by the size and design of the driveway and associated car parking space, resulting in less than substantial harm to the setting of the subject listed building and listed terrace. This would not meet Policies EN1 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Where less than substantial harm is found, Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In terms of public benefits, the additional spaces and roof extension would provide a private benefit to the applicant and not a public benefit. Bearing in mind the great weight that must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, a matter that has statutory force given the workings of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, benefit from the external improvement works would be limited to be anywhere near sufficient to justify the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset that would be caused. As such, the proposals fall contrary to the NPPF.

The proposed internal layout and associated works for the first and second floors, because of their detrimental impact on the historic plan form, loss of historic fabric, unsympathetic design, and harm to the retained fabric, would adversely affect the character and special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, causing less than substantial harm. Whilst the proposed works would bring residential use into line with modern living requirements, the proposed internal layout would conflict with single-family dwelling use by providing an excessive number and size of bathrooms, dressing rooms, and en-suites. As such, the proposal fails to meet Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the provisions of Chapter 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework. It is not considered that there is a clearly defined sufficient public benefit to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

- **RBC Transport Development Control** – No major objections but tracking diagrams and visibility splays required to be demonstrated. Although not required for this development as it is an existing house, it is noted that the applicant is providing an electric vehicle charging point which is in line with the Council's Local Strategy Plan TR5. There appears to be a gradient down to the footway and therefore any proposal would be required to ensure that surface water is contained on the site either by way of a permeable parking surface i.e. permeable paving or a drainage channel would be required just within the property boundary. In accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a 3+ bedroom dwelling should be provided with 2 secure cycle storage spaces. In a development of this nature this can be provided within a garage or a secure garden shed. Bin storage should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. As this is a replacement dwelling an assumption has been made that the bin collection and storage will be as current existing arrangements.
- **RBC Natural Environment** - The revised documents have improved this proposals acceptability on tree and landscaping grounds. I do still have concerns that the hard surfacing on the frontage is significant, particularly compared to that approved at no. 144 and I encourage a similar layout to that at 144's is considered for the reasons I have explained above. The hard surfacing does limit space for mitigation replanting on the frontage and leads to the proposed trees being planted close to structures which may make their retention undesirable and there isn't sufficient space for them to grow to their ultimate size. Once the amendments and clarity requested above has been provided, reviewed and confirmed acceptable, tree replanting can be dealt with as part of a landscaping condition. However, if the reduction of the footprint of the driveway isn't reconsidered given the issues I have raised with proximity to structures, it would be wise that the applicant employs a landscape architect to provide appropriate advice on species and locations when it comes to discharging conditions if this application is approved. As six tree removals are proposed within the AIA (three on the frontage and three in the rear garden), it is expected that three trees

will be replaced on the frontage and three in the rear garden. We will expect a variety of species being broadleaf, native/naturalised or wildlife friendly.

- **RBC Ecology Consultant** - The proposals do not comply with Policy EN12 of the Reading Local Plan which is intended to prevent biodiversity loss and ensure development contributes positively to the Green Network. The loss of much of the garden space and the trees in such an urban area would represent a significant negative impact on local biodiversity which is contrary to local planning policy.

A site notice was also erected at the front of the site on 1 October 2025 in the public interest. One objection was received from a member of the public, citing concerns relating to the loss of Category B trees and the impact on the biodiversity of the site and significant historic views/the setting of the listed building. The application was subsequently called in to Planning Applications Committee if being recommended for approval.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

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'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance, Historic England 2008

HEAG125 Listed Buildings and Curtilage

HEAG304 Listed Building Consent

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC7: Design and the public realm

CC8: Safeguarding amenity

EN1: Protection and enhancement of the historic environment

EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

EN12: Biodiversity and the green network

EN14: Trees, hedges and woodland

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

H10: Private and communal outdoor space

TR3: Access, traffic and highway-related matters

TR5: Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

Other documents

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

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 draft submission version of the Local Plan Partial Update was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9th 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’.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. 7.25 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It has been discussed in this report that due to disability there is a strong need for a car parking space within the site. This does not form a reason for refusal.

6. APPRAISAL

6.1. Design and heritage implications

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to ensure that new development enhances and preserves the local character. Policies EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) and EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) seek to conserve, protect and enhance designated heritage assets.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 details that decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 2024 details that development that is not well designed should be refused. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF 2024 states “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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

The proposed works have been assessed by the case officer and Conservation Officer. Most of the ground floor works are considered justified and necessary to allow the property to be brought back into habitable condition and its optimal use as a single-family dwelling. The ground floor rear extension is considered acceptable, although should the application have been recommended for approval, a condition would be recommended to secure additional details for the material finishes and a schedule of works to ensure that there would be no harm to the historic fabric of the property. There are a few surviving features internally which are of interest, including timber panelling below windows and the door between the proposed snug and study which should be preserved. There would be minimal harm as a result of the widening of the door opening, infill of the window, creation of new doorways and locating new wood burner stoves in existing fireplace openings on the ground floor, however, given the current condition of the building, these can be considered acceptable.

However, on the first and second floors, the proposed extensions to the roof and first floor extension are considered excessive and intrusive. The rationale of providing walk-in wardrobes and ensembles to the proposed bedrooms is not considered sufficiently justified given the extent of alteration and removal of historic fabric required to achieve these facilities. The proposed new front roof slope would include two

rooflights and two dormers would be added to the existing front roof slope, while the rear would include two dormers and one rooflight and this is considered excessive and unnecessary alterations which would disrupt the existing historic roof form which form an important part of the building's significance. The number of new features, the mass and bulk added to the front façade would disrupt and harm the character of the property and its appearance in the wider context of the listed terrace. The impact on plan form and the resulting loss of historic roof form, would cause less than substantial harm to the architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Overall, while some of the proposed works to the ground floor are considered acceptable. By contrast the proposed first floor and roof extensions, in addition to the proposed dormers and rooflights and front garden alterations are considered unsympathetic and excessive. The front garden works will impact the setting negatively through loss of vegetation and garden setting, but on balance, taking into account the specific needs of the applicant, are not considered sufficiently harmful to be included as a reason for refusal.

Where less than substantial harm is found, Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In terms of public benefits, the additional internal spaces and roof extension would provide a private benefit to the applicant (walk-in wardrobes and ensembles) and not a public benefit which would enhance the significance of the listed building. Bearing in mind the great weight that must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, a matter that has statutory force given the workings of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, benefit from the external improvement works would fall significantly short of justifying the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset that would be caused. A viable use of the building can be achieved without the degree of harm proposed. As such, the proposals fall contrary to the provisions within Chapter 16 of the NPPF (2024).

The stated purpose is not considered sufficiently justified and therefore is not considered to outweigh the harm identified. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies CC7, EN1 and EN6.

6.2. Residential amenity

Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of existing surrounding and future occupiers.

There are no concerns identified, either for the future occupants nor the neighbouring residents resulting from the proposed development. While there may be some short-term effects from the construction process, these would ordinarily be controlled by conditions and provisions within the Environmental Health Act.

6.3. Ecology and biodiversity

Trees are a material planning consideration whether or not they are protected. Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act states 'it shall be the duty of the LPA to ensure, whenever it is appropriate, that in granting planning permission for any development adequate provision is made, by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees'.

Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) seeks to extend the Borough's vegetation cover and that development should make provision for tree planting whilst Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks proposals should include appropriate landscaping.

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF 2024 details that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The proposal initially comprised the removal of the TPO Beech tree at the front of the site, in addition to a number of other existing trees to facilitate the development. Due to the objections raised, this has now been redesigned by the applicant to allow the creation of a vehicular access and parking space which allows the TPO tree to be retained. Significant areas of vegetation are still proposed to be removed but this is mainly to the centre of the garden area and significant areas of planting would be maintained to the frontage.

The revised proposals at the front of the site are considered acceptable in relation to their impact on existing trees and proposed landscaping. The loss of vegetation is regrettable and there are concerns that the hard surfacing on the frontage is excessive due to the large turning area (as it has been confirmed by Transport Development Control that on this occasion no turning area would be necessary if acceptable visibility splays could be achieved) and the impact of this excessive area of hardstanding having a negative impact on the feasibility of the proposed planting. The Natural Environment team have commented that this large turning area results in the proposed planting being placed in constrained areas next to structures which may make their retention undesirable as there isn't sufficient space for them to grow to their ultimate size. However, this could have been resolved by a re-evaluation of the species proposed to be planted to ensure that it is feasible. This information could have been secured by condition and therefore does not form a reason for refusal.

6.4. Transport and highways

Policies TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy), TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR4 (Cycle Routes and Facilities) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking related matters for new development.

Southampton Street is a one way (south to north) main transport corridor and is located within Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of Zone 1, the central core area, which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The site is well connected with a high level of public transport accessibility and access to public car parks. There are extensive parking restrictions in place preventing unauthorised on-street parking including the operation of the Council's Residential Parking Permit Scheme.

Due to the proximity of the site to Reading town centre, it would be expected that the development would not be required to provide any new parking space, where it is considered that it would have detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building. The applicant has explained that their child's accessibility needs require a car parking space within 50m of the front entrance. This can only be achieved by providing a car parking space within the site. This requires a balanced judgement.

Construction Matters

The construction phase of the proposed development would be likely to impact the surrounding highway network given the prominent location. Should the application be considered supportable, a condition would be attached to secure submission, approval and implementation of a detailed Demolition and Construction Method Statement.

7. CONCLUSION

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF 2024 states "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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

The harm has been identified as less than substantial from the proposed first floor and roof extensions and alterations proposed together with the harmful works to the front garden and front boundary wall. The benefits identified would include bringing the property back into its optimal use as a single-family dwelling but are otherwise limited as it is considered that the property's optimal use can be secured

without such harmful intrusions, which have not been sufficiently or reasonably justified. On balance, the benefits do not outweigh the harm to the special historic character of the listed building and its setting, including the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

8. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION

For the following reason:

1. The proposed first and second floor extensions, including the roof extension, new dormers and rooflights due to their mass, location, design, impact on plan form and loss of historic roof form, , would cause harm (at a less than substantial level) to the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building at 146 Southampton Street, and the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings at 148 – 150 Southampton Street. As such the proposals are contrary to Policies EN1 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and Paragraphs 212, 214, 215 of the NPPF 2024.

REFUSE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

1. The proposed first and second floor extensions, including the roof extension, new dormers and rooflights due to their mass, location, design, impact on plan form and loss of historic roof form and unjustified and excessive loss historic fabric would be harmful (less than substantial level) to the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building at 146 Southampton Street. As such the proposals are contrary to Policies EN1 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and Paragraphs 212, 214, 215 of the NPPF 2024.