

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0588 Full planning permission

Address: 65A BEDFORD ROAD, READING, RG1 7EX

Proposal: Rear elevation dormer extension and internal alterations

Applicant: Mr Chris Tong

Received date: 01/05/2026

Target Decision date: 16/07/2026

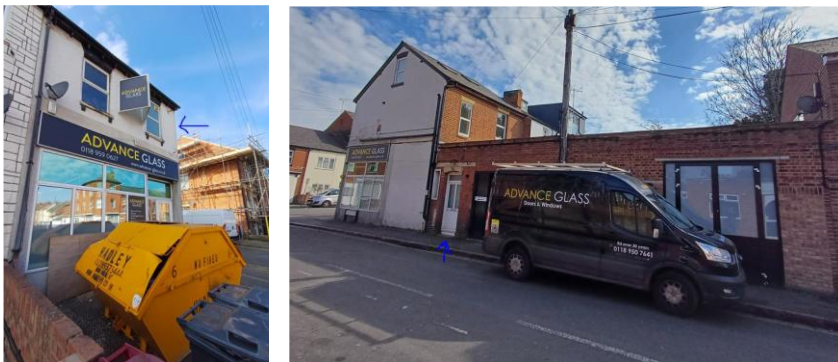
Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is on the corner of Bedford Road and Stanley Street and comprises three different addresses. On the ground floor at 65 Bedford Road is Advance Windows, a window fitting company with an office at the front of the building on Bedford Road. A separate self-contained one bedroom flat is located with an entrance at the side of the retail premises and residential accommodation above the shop unit known as 65A Bedford Road. 65A was being refurbished having been damaged by a previous tenant. To the rear of the 65 Bedford Road, located above the retail unit workshop, is a second flat at 1 Stanley Street.

The premises is located in an air quality management area.

Photos taken at a previous case officer site visit



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for a rear dormer window, three front rooflights and internal alterations. The proposal would facilitate 2 bedrooms to be accommodated within the roof space. The dormer would be constructed with tiles to match the existing roof and EPDM for the dormer roof, horizontal cladding to the dormer and UPVC windows to match the existing windows.

Plans and documents considered

25070.PD-10 location plan

25070.PD-11 Block plan

CIL

As received 1 May 2026

25070.PD-02 Existing Ground Floor Plan
25070.PD-03 Existing First Floor Plan
25070.PD-04 Existing Second Floor Plan
25070.PD-05 Existing Elevations
25070.PD-06 Proposed Ground Floor plan
25070.PD-07 Proposed First Floor plan
25070.PD-08 Proposed Second Floor plan
25070.PD-09 Proposed Elevations
As received 21 May 2026

Planning history

65 Bedford Road

1994 - PL940007/CLE Certificate of lawfulness for existing use as retail and B1 light industrial workshop on basement, ground floor and first floor

65a Bedford Road

PL17/0303/FUL Rear dormer window and front rooflights – *Refused*.

PL23/1411/FUL Internal alterations for a second dormer to be added - *application closed*

PL24/0901/CLP Change of use from B1 to Residential – *withdrawn* – *Certificate of lawfulness for proposed use – rather than existing use*

PL24/1407/FUL Full application for Change of Use for the part ground floor (Class F.2) and the remainder of the ground floor, basement, and ancillary offices on the first floor (Class E g (iii) use) to create a one bedroom flat – *Withdrawn 15/09/2025*

PL25/0709 Existing use of 65A Bedford Road as a one-bedroom flat (use class C3) on the ground, first and second floor above the 65 Bedford Road retail unit, for more than 4 years. – *Granted 15/09/2025*

PL/26/0152 Lawful development: Proposed use – *Refused 27/03/2026*

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Transport - This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a rear dormer extension at second floor level to facilitate the formation of a self-contained two-bedroom flat arranged across the first and second floors.

The ground floor will remain in its existing commercial use, with no change proposed to the use, layout, or frontage at this level.

There is no parking associated with site. Bedford Road and the surrounding road network are located within an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Zone. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. If this application is approved, there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the units will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits which should be covered by

condition and informative. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on-street parking in the area.

From a transport perspective, the proposed dormer extension would not have an impact on the highway network. However, secure cycle storage and adequate storage for waste should be provided which should be covered by condition.

Suggested conditions

DC7 REFUSE AND RECYCLING (TO BE APPROVED)

DC6 CYCLE PARKING (TO BE APPROVED)

DC20 PARKING PERMITS 1

DC21 PARKING PERMITS 2

113 Parking Permits

- RBC Environmental Protection – The application site is located above a window manufacturing business and workshop. Additional information is required to assess an intensification of use and increase in bedrooms above the workshop. The proposed residence is likely to be impacted by noise from the glass manufacturer situated on the ground floor. I request a standard BS8233 noise assessment be submitted covering noise transfer within the building and noise from any outdoor activities. I recommend that this is information submitted up front.

A site notice was displayed at the site on 10 June 2026 for the required period. No letters of representation have been received.



Communication with the agent

Plans were amended to show the residential internal layout on the first and second floor as granted by approved Certificate for lawful existing use. The agent was advised that the application was attracting a recommendation of refusal due to its overly bulky design, which

would dominate the roof space in such a visible prominent corner plot position. The agent was given the option to withdraw the application; however, requested that a decision be issued.

No formal pre-application advice was sought prior to the submission of this specific application.

Equality Act

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. 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:

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 consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024 and a submission version submitted in 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 listed above 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 advice given below and are not considered to be 'out of date'. Policies CC2 and CC3 are being updated to reflect developments in climate change and sustainability construction which should be a consideration in the Local Plan review. Policy CC7 reiterates that all development must be of high quality design, to maintain and enhance physical character and context.

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (updated February 2025)

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES
EN17 NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT
H9: HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide to House Extensions March 2021

5. APPRAISAL

Design, Impact on the Character of the Area and Street Scene

Impact on amenity

Impact on Parking/Highways

Design, Impact on the Character of the Area and Street Scene

Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019 sets out relevant considerations for design and states 'All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including: -

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Density and mix;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials'

The Reading Design Guide to House Extensions SPD, March 2021 states 'Where permission is required, dormer extension proposals need to demonstrate compliance with policies CC7: Design and the Public Realm, CC8: Safeguarding Amenity and H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation relating to the character of the original house and adjacent properties and the protection of privacy. Unfortunately, Reading has a few examples of box style dormers on the front of houses or dormers of excessive size which demonstrate how harmful this type of extension can be if not designed with these key criteria in mind.' Examples of acceptable dormer styles are provided in para 7.3.5.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure that *developments "are visually attractive as a result of good architecture"* and paragraph 139 states that *"Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents"*

Due to the nature of the proposals, there would be no increase in the actual footprint of the dwelling. The proposed dormer window would be set slightly below the main roof ridge. However, the dormer would essentially occupy the full extent of the rear roof plane of the house. Due to its excessive width and overall bulk it would appear overly large and dominant within the roof slope, resulting in a disproportionate addition out of keeping with the host property. Typically,

fenestration detailing should be smaller within a dormer extension; however, the overall size of the window and position in relation to those below, together with the mass of the dormer would contribute to its incongruous and poor architectural composition.

To support the submission, the applicant has provided photos illustrating other dormer windows within the area. However, no addresses have been provided confirming locations. It is also recognised that there are other dormer windows within the wider area and along this side of Bedford Road. However, it would appear some of these may have been constructed under permitted development No's 35 and 37 Bedford Road benefit from separate certificate of lawful development applications which confirm the works were permitted at these sites (references 211493/CLP & 211937/CLP – relating to single dwellinghouses). This application is seeking full planning permission and is therefore considered on the basis of the relevant policies.

Notwithstanding, there are few dormer windows down this part of Bedford Road not comparable to this scale and bulk – which can be seen by the small scale dormer window at the adjoining No.63 Bedford Road and those located to the north. It is unclear from the evidence presented whether additions within the area have planning permission. Irrespective, the presence of other unsympathetic forms of development do not justify further harm to the street scene and nor do they justify permitted dormer windows that fail to relate well and appear subordinate to, the host property.

Given the above, the proposed dormer window, which, due its prominent corner plot location would be highly visible from the public domain, is considered to be an incongruous feature out of keeping with the character of the host building and wider street scene. Given its excessive scale, it would overwhelm and dominate the host property.

Whilst there is no objection to the three front rooflights, it is considered that they could be positioned better within the roofslope, to align with existing windows below. Additional material specifications are also required to ensure that the materials would match the existing building. This is not, however, in isolation, considered to be a reason for refusal.

It is not clear whether sufficient headroom will be provided in bedroom 2 in accordance with national space standards. A 150cm head height has been indicated on the 25070.PP-08 Proposed Second Floor plan but the velux windows appear to be positioned in a lower position on the 25070.PP-09 Proposed Elevations plan. The development would be required to meet building standards regulations and space standard requirements to be a habitable room should the development have been considered acceptable and this in itself does not form a reason for refusal.



[Google earth view of 65 Bedford Road](#)



Impact on amenity

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 and that ‘Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety; or
- Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.’

Policy EN16 and EN17 set out relevant considerations for proposals for ‘development that are sensitive to the effects of noise pollution... unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution.’

The proposed dormer would be situated above the workroom for the windows business and there has been a failure to demonstrate that the intensification of use of the top floor flat and additional bedroom would not result in a detrimental impact in relation to noise from the business on the ground floor level. The agent was asked to submit a noise assessment by the RBC Environmental team to evidence that any noise disturbance could be mitigated. No noise assessment was provided during consideration of the application. Should the design of the development have been considered acceptable, a pre-commencement noise assessment would have been recommended, and noting there is existing residential use between the ground floor and second floor. It is not considered relevant that the current owner is also the owner of the shop as property ownership can change over time. The proposed development should not result in a detrimental noise impact for existing or future residents.

The proposed dormer window would clearly be visible to neighbouring properties. However, whilst it is considered unacceptable in design terms, it is not considered to result in any material

loss of amenity to any neighbouring property in terms of loss of light or overbearing impact. Similarly, given the existence of first floor windows on the front and rear elevations, the proposed dormer window and rooflights are not considered to result in any significant material loss of privacy over and above the existing situation.

Impact on Parking/Highways

Policies TR3 and TR5 seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking related matters to development.

The site is located within Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of 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 proposed changes to the property do not change or impact on the existing parking arrangements where a Residents Parking Scheme operates and parking is regulated and monitored through the scheme.

Transport Officer have confirmed they have no objections to this application subject to a condition for cycle storage provision and informatives. Should the application have otherwise been supportable, this could have been dealt with by way of condition.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposed rear dormer window, by reason of its excessive bulk, mass and prominent corner plot location, would result in an incongruous and visually intrusive form of development, that would overwhelm and dominate the host property adversely impacting on the appearance of the host property and wider street scene. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019, The Design Guide to House Extensions March 2021 and paragraphs 129, 131 and 135 of the NPPF 2024.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Recommended Conditions:
Design

INFORMATIVES

1. In reaching its decision, the Local Planning Authority received and assessed the following information submitted:
25070.PD-10 location plan
25070.PD-11 Block plan
CIL

As received 1 May 2026

25070.PD-02 Existing Ground Floor Plan
25070.PD-03 Existing First Floor Plan
25070.PD-04 Existing Second Floor Plan
25070.PD-05 Existing Elevations
25070.PD-06 Proposed Ground Floor plan
25070.PD-07 Proposed First Floor plan
25070.PD-08 Proposed Second Floor plan
25070.PD-09 Proposed Elevations
As received 21 May 2026

2. This planning application was submitted without the benefit of first seeking pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority, which can often result in the avoidance of refusal of planning permission. Please see the following link to the Council's pre-application service here: <https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/before-making-a-planning-application/pre-application-planning-advice/>
3. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to see if relevant concerns could be resolved to allow permission to be granted. However, that has not been possible within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale and therefore the decision to refuse planning permission has been taken.