

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Park Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0787 Householder planning permission

Address: 5 SCHOOL TERRACE, READING, RG1 3LS

Proposal: Single storey rear elevation with flat roof and rooflight to form larger kitchen and living space and new utility and WC.

Applicant: Ms Dawn Bennett

Received date: 15/06/2026

Target Decision date: 10/08/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site relates to a mid-terrace property located on the south-east side of School Terrace. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. New Town Primary School is located opposite the application site. The property is not listed and does not fall within a conservation area. However, the property is within an Article 4 Direction Area which removes householder permitted development rights for all improvements, extensions and alterations.



Extract of the location plan

Site visit date: 01/07/2026

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a single-storey rear extension with a flat roof which would include one roof lantern. The proposed extension would wrap-around and replace the existing single storey rear projection. It would have a maximum depth of 6.5m and a maximum height of 3m.

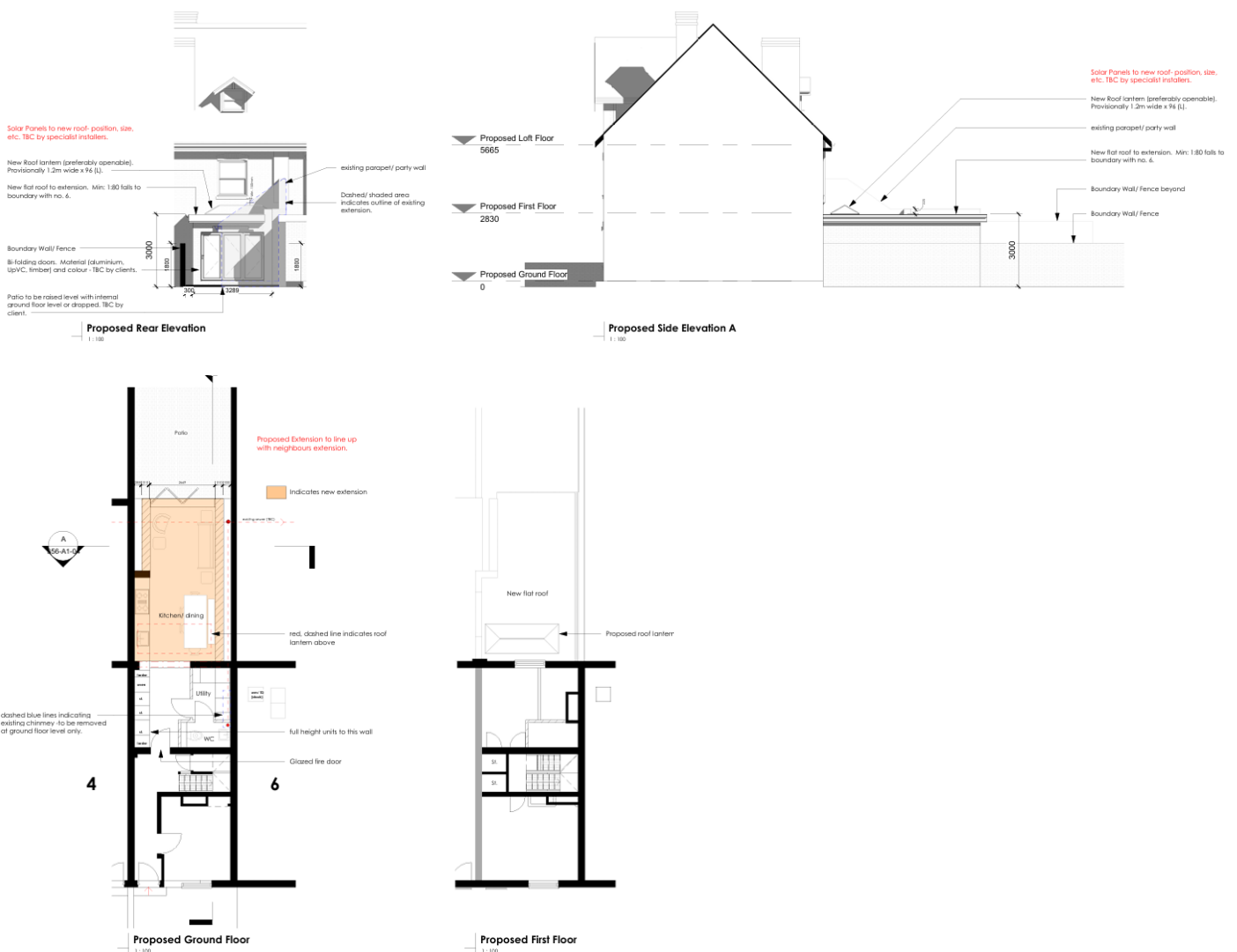
Plans considered:

Drawing No. 356-A1-00 – Existing Floor Plans and Elevations, and Existing Location and Block Plan

Drawing No. 356-A1-04 – Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations, and Proposed Location and Block Plan

Received 15th June 2026

Proposed Plans:



3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 1st July 2026 for a period of 21 days.

Three letters of representation have been received. The main concerns relate to the following material considerations:

- overbearing
- loss of light
- overshadowing
- harm to outlook
- proximity to boundary

These will be explored in more depth below within the appraisal.

Discussions with applicant/agent

The agent was advised that, following the site visit and review of plans, Planning Officers had concerns with the proposed scheme submitted. The concerns related to the overall scale, depth and height of the proposed extension combined with its proximity to the boundary and the impact this would have on the neighbouring property. The agent was also advised that, on this occasion, officers did not see a way in which the application could be revised to address the concerns raised, so we were not seeking amendments and, therefore, if the application were not withdrawn it would need to be refused. On this occasion the agent confirmed that determination of the application should proceed.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

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
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

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 pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of 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 remain 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’.

6. 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 application site comprises a mid-terrace dwelling and it is considered that the proposed development would not be subservient to the host dwelling and in particular in the context of the property being a narrow plot. Furthermore, the 6.5m depth of the proposed extension would exceed the 4m guidance for rear extensions within the Design Guide to House Extensions SPD. In some cases, an extension of more than 4m may be acceptable, but this needs to be justified. Due to the existing site context, it cannot be justified in this instance.

The combination of the overall depth and height would create a visually dominant addition to the dwelling, failing to respect the character of the existing building, with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the wider area. Whilst the slight set off to the boundary is acknowledged, this would be insufficient to mitigate the harm caused by the overall scale of the development.

As the proposed development would be contained at the rear of the site, it would not have a negative impact on the street scene.

Overall, the proposal is considered harmful and fails to comply with policies H9 and CC7 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.

The narrow width of the terrace property results in a close relationship with the adjoining neighbours. The existing space between the rear outriggers and shared boundaries of the terraces is important for amenity purposes.

Given the existing site context at the adjoining neighbouring property at No. 4 School Terrace, which has a rear extension already present, and the fact that the proposed extension at No. 5 would not extend beyond this neighbour's existing rear extension, together with the stepped rear elevation of the host property which creates a reduced depth adjacent to the boundary with this neighbour, the proposal is not considered to result in any detrimental impact on the amenity of No. 4 School Terrace.

However, with regard to No. 6 School Terrace, it is considered that by virtue of the volume of proposed development (the 6.5m depth combined with the 3m height) along with the proximity to the boundary, the loss of light, overshadowing and overbearingness would severely impact neighbouring residential amenity for the occupiers of this neighbouring property. The proposed extension would contribute to a tunnelling effect and create a sense of enclosure for No. 6 School Terrace and would be overbearing, and cause harm in terms of outlook, visual dominance, and access to daylight/ sunlight provision. The 300mm off set from the shared boundary is not considered sufficient to overcome the adverse impacts.

For these reasons, the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at No. 6, School Terrace having regard to outlook, light, and overbearingness would be unacceptably harmed by the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would fail to comply with policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed and is considered unacceptable as it is excessive in scale and creates a visually dominant addition which fails to integrate with or respect the character of the existing building. The proposal is considered harmful to residential amenity in terms of loss of light, harm to outlook, and overbearing effects. The proposal is contrary to policies CC7, CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide to House Extensions (2021) and Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

Refusal reasons:

1. The proposed single storey rear extension, by reason of its depth, height and siting within the terrace garden, would result in an obtrusive and incongruous addition to the site which fails to respect the character and appearance of the host building, with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the wider area. Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) and H9 (House Extension and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council's Design Guide to House Extension Supplementary Planning Document (2021).

2. The proposed single storey rear extension, by reason of its inappropriate scale and siting would result in a visually dominant and overbearing development, and would have a cumulative impact on the access to daylight and sunlight and outlook. The proposal would, therefore, be harmful to the residential amenity of the occupiers of No. 6 School Terrace. Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) and H9 (House Extension and Ancillary Accommodation) of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Council's Design Guide to House Extension Supplementary Planning Document (2021).

Informatives:

1. Consideration was given to the following information received by the Local Planning Authority: Drawing No. 356-A1-00 – Existing Floor Plans and Elevations, and Existing Location and Block Plan received 15th June 2026. Drawing No. 356-A1-04 – Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations, and Proposed Location and Block Plan received 15th June 2026

2. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the agent to advise the agent of the shortcomings of the proposal and provide an opportunity for the application to be withdrawn prior to a decision being made. However, the agent did not wish to withdraw the application and, therefore, the decision to refuse the application has been taken.