

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0804 Householder planning permission

Address: 2 LANCASTER CLOSE, READING, RG1 5HB

Proposal: Proposed single-storey rear / 2 Storey side & a garage conversion.

Applicant: Mr Abbas Raza Ali

Received date: 18/06/2026

Target Decision date: 13/08/2026

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey detached dwelling located on Lancaster Close, near the entrance of the cul-de-sac. It has a projecting two-storey front gable feature and a single-storey detached garage adjacent to the boundary with 1 Lancaster Close, sharing the same building line as the main part of the house. Lancaster Close has a strong and consistent streetscape pattern, characterised by detached properties and, for the most part, attached single-storey garages. These properties are generally set back from the roadside, feature open front gardens with driveways, and lack front boundary enclosures. The property is not a listed building, nor is it located within a conservation area.

Tree Preservation Order 154/001 relates to trees within several properties at Lancaster Close. Trees T4 and T5 (Yew & Pine) are within the garden of no. 2 Lancaster Close. T3 (Pine) within the neighbouring property at 1 Lancaster Close to the west has a canopy which extends over this property's boundary.



Views from the front of the property (09/07/26)



Image from Google Map (28/07/26) Image from Council's GIS database showing TPO' positions

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Firstly, the proposed description of development does not accurately reflect the works shown on the submitted plans. Second, it is noted that the submitted plans contain drafting issues, which are detailed in the Annex to this report (below). There may be additional errors that have not been identified; however, it remains the responsibility of the agent/applicant to ensure the accuracy of the submitted plans. Whilst these errors would ordinarily be required to be corrected prior to the determination of an application recommended for approval, this is not considered necessary in this instance given the recommendation for refusal. Notwithstanding these drafting issues, the nature and extent of the proposed development can be reasonably understood from the information submitted and is described below.

This application is for a first-floor side extension positioned directly above the existing garage, along with single-storey side and rear extensions to the front and rear. The proposal also involves a garage conversion.

The proposed first-floor side extension would be situated above the existing garage, attached to the main house and aligned with the existing stepped-back front elevation. The proposed depth and width would be approximately 5.31m and 5.36m, respectively. It would feature a gable end roof, measuring approximately 6.6m in total height. It is intended to be used as Bedroom 4.

The proposed single-storey side and rear extension would incorporate a stepped rear projection, extending to depths of approximately 2.5m and 3.5m across the full width of the dwelling. This proposed rear extension would measure approximately 11.2m and 3m respectively in width and would have a flat roof with an overall height of approximately 3.1m. The remainder of the proposed single-storey side extension would be situated to the front of the existing garage, aligning with the front building line of the dwelling's forward projection. It would measure approximately 1.3m in depth and 6.7m in width and would incorporate a mono-pitched roof with an eaves height of approximately 2.2m and a maximum height of approximately 3.3m.

The proposal also involves a garage conversion. As a result, the proposed ground-floor side and rear extensions, combined with the existing garage conversion, are intended to be used as a family lounge and a conservatory.

With regard to the fenestration on the front elevation, the proposed single-storey side extension would incorporate two large windows and a door. At first-floor level, two windows of differing sizes are proposed. During the site visit, the officer observed that the existing detached garage and the main dwelling had already been connected following the submission of application ref. PL/25/0233. This arrangement is not accurately reflected on the submitted existing plans accompanying the current application.

A small window is proposed on the west elevation at ground-floor level. To the rear, two new windows and doors would be installed at ground-floor level to serve the proposed conservatory. A further window would be provided on the rear elevation of the proposed first-floor extension.

A raised patio, approximately 0.52m in height, would extend across the full width of the proposed conservatory. Whilst the rear elevation of the conservatory would be stepped, the patio would have a straight rear edge, resulting in projections of approximately 1.2m and 3.7m in depth. Steps would lead down to the rear garden. The front garden would be removed to facilitate the installation of three car parking spaces. All new proposed brickwork and roofing materials would match those of the existing dwelling.

The scale of the proposed development is broadly similar to the previously submitted application; a brief summary is provided in Section 3: Relevant Planning History for comparison.

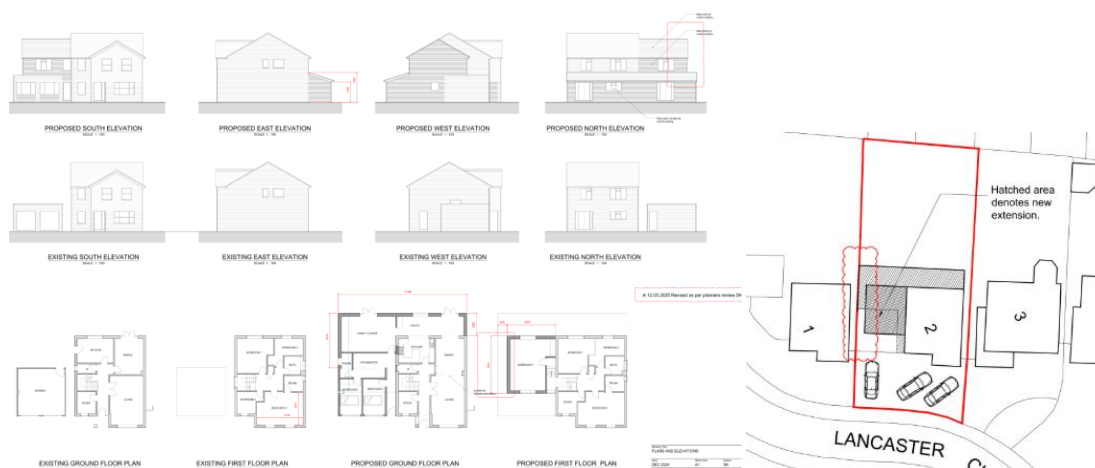
Plans/Documents Submitted:

- Drawing No: P1595-01 – Location and block plan, dated May 2026
 - Drawing No: P1595-01B – Block plan, dated May 2026
 - Drawing No: P1595-02 – Existing and proposed plans and elevations, dated May 2026
 - Tree Survey, ref: MW.2501.LCR.AIA.RevA, prepared by MARK WELBY CONSULTING ARBORISTS, dated 13th May 2025.
- All received 18th June 2026.



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2 Lancaster Close
PL/25/0233 – Proposed single-storey rear / two-storey side and garage conversion. Refused 30/05/2025. The proposal was assessed, and the refused reasons are concluded as follows:



The proposal failed to demonstrate that it would not harm nearby TPO trees, particularly due to excavation within root protection areas and potential future pressure to prune or remove protected trees. The combined size and design of the proposed extensions were considered overbearing and

poorly integrated with the host dwelling, resulting in a visually dominant and harmful impact on both the property and the wider streetscene. The loss of open garden space at the front was considered harmful to the green character and established pattern of the streetscene. The proposal was, therefore, considered contrary to the Policies CC7, CC8, H9 and EN14 of Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

- PL/25/0938 – Pre-application advice for proposed single-storey rear and two-storey side extensions, including a garage conversion. The proposal was assessed, and the advice provided is as follows:



The advice provided was that the proposal still failed to adequately address key concerns relating to the impact on protected trees (TPO), the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, and the loss of soft landscaping to the front garden. No significant issues were identified in terms of privacy, loss of light, or overbearing impacts, and the potential risk of the proposed extensions being used as ancillary accommodation could have been controlled through an appropriately worded planning condition.

- 1 Lancaster Close
PL/21/0059 – Single storey rear extension with 3 glazed rooflights. Approved 04/08/2021.
- 3 Lancaster Close
PL/24/0706 – Proposed part first floor front extension. Approved 26/07/2024.
PL/02/0001 – Garage extension with bedroom and bathroom above. Refused 03/04/2002.
PL/01/0885 – Garage extension with bedroom and bathroom above. Refused 23/01/2002.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Transport Development Control – No objection.

Application will result in the loss of the garage and, therefore, a loss of parking. The submitted block plan illustrates re-provision of 3 vehicle parking spaces within the curtilage of the site, which is in excess of the Council's current standards.

The parking area will continue to be served via an existing vehicle crossing; no alteration is proposed to the existing vehicular access.

The Natural Environment Officer should be consulted regarding any trees that may be impacted by the rear extension.

Transport does not have any objections to this application subject to the conditions and informatives stated below.

CONDITIONS:

DC1 VEHICLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)

IF3 Highways

- RBC Planning Natural Environment – Object. The conclusion regarding this application is as follows:

To conclude, the development is unacceptable on tree grounds as the Arboricultural Impact Assessment is not reflective of the proposal and thus the impact and mitigation to the health of protected trees have not been accurately demonstrated to ensure they are at an acceptable level. We have advised on several occasions that tree related concerns are significant, yet they have not been adequately addressed. The development will no doubt have a detrimental impact on the health of the protected Pine tree T5. There will also be an incursion of the root protection area of the protected T3 Pine in the neighbouring property due to the rear extension and patio construction, which may also negatively impact its health. We currently have no details of how the patio (and steps) will be constructed; the foundation design is unclear and remains unacceptable, and concerns regarding the future pressure to prune/remove the tree still stand and are more significant compared to the previous proposals due to the patio.

I recommend the application is refused on tree grounds, with a recommended reason for refusal as follows:

The proposal fails to demonstrate no harm to protected trees of high amenity value and is likely to lead to future pressure to prune or fell protected trees. As such the proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy EN14 and to the aims of Reading Borough Council adopted Tree Strategy (2021).

- Site Notice:

A site notice was displayed on 9th July 2026 in front of the application site. The 21-day consultation period ended on 30th July 2026.



Site notice image

One observation letter was received. The comments are summarised as follows:

- The proposed side window within the existing garage elevation would directly face the side passage of their house, which is used for bicycle storage. The occupier considered that users of the passage and the proposed family lounge would overlook one another and that the window could obstruct movement within the passage when open.
- The proposed first-floor side extension was considered likely to adversely affect light to their property's en-suite bathroom window and part of the main bathroom window due to its proximity to the shared boundary.
- The occupier expressed a preference for the previously submitted set-back first-floor design.
- The occupier queried why the proposed foundation design within No. 2 Lancaster Close was considered unacceptable when a similar-depth single-storey rear extension exists at their property.

Officer's Note: These matters have been considered and are addressed in the assessment section of this report.

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 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

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)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

Others

Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy 2021

BS5837:2012

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

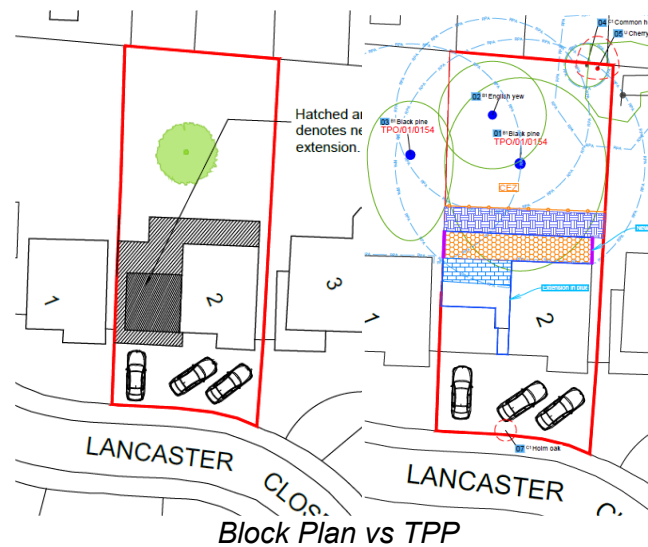
- a) Trees
- b) Character and Appearance
- c) Residential Amenity

a) Trees

Policy EN14 requires that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended. New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.

The application site at 2 Lancaster Close contains two protected trees: a Pine (T5) and a Yew (T4), both covered by TPO 154/001. Additionally, the Root Protection Area (RPA) of a neighbouring Pine (T3) at 1 Lancaster Close extends into the rear garden of the application site. The Council’s Natural Environment team has raised significant concerns regarding the impact of the proposed development on these protected trees since the first application submission (ref: PL/25/0233). Relevant advice was provided for that application, and such concerns remain under this application.

Currently, the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (see extract of the TPP below) does not relate to the current proposal (see extract of the block plan below) and instead appears to be the report previously submitted under application ref. PL/25/0233. An updated AIA and Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) are required, and it was identified within the pre-application advice (ref: PL/25/0938), but it was not submitted under this application



With regard to this proposal, the proposed single-storey rear extension would be located within the root protection area (RPA) of the protected T5 Pine, as well as the protected T3 Pine situated on the neighbouring property. In addition, the proposed garage conversion/side extension would also fall within the RPA of the protected T5 Pine.

The submitted 'Foundation Details' indicate the use of a piled foundation. However, this comprises an isolated and indicative foundation section drawing that lacks sufficient context, including existing and proposed ground levels and its relationship to the existing ground floor level. As such, it fails to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposed foundation design or that the proposed single-storey side and rear extension could be constructed without excavation that would adversely affect the protected trees' health.

The proposed elevations submitted show the introduction of a patio and steps following the construction of the proposed single-storey side and rear extension in the rear garden. Although it is not included within the block plan or floor plans, it is understood that the proposed rear extension would bring the dwelling ca 2.5m closer to the T5 Pine, and the new patio would encroach a further 2m towards the tree. The dimensions of the proposed patio have not been indicated on the submitted proposed block plan and floor plans. For the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that the patio would extend across the full width of the proposed single-storey rear extension, as shown on the submitted elevations.

The patio would be raised and would cover an even more significant proportion of both T5 & T3 Pines' RPAs. Whilst excavation for the patio would have a direct impact, its construction would also require concrete, which could leach into the soil and lead to a degree of soil compaction. Placing a large patio beneath the canopy of the trees would also significantly increase future pressure to prune or fell them.

The increased development would result in excessive shade, tree-related nuisance and limited remaining usable garden and the rear garden would be significantly covered by the canopies of the protected T5 Pine and the protected T4 Yew. The potential impacts cannot be appropriately assessed without a tree constraints plan.

There is part of the proposed rear extension which is unlabelled and, therefore, the use of the space is unknown and for which there could be service route requirements, which could pose a harmful impact on tree health.

Furthermore, 1.7 of the AIA states ‘a tree’s root protection area (RPA) represents a minimum area in m² that shall be left undisturbed around it’. The condition of T5 Pine is suboptimal, and it is a ‘B’ category, protected tree of high amenity value. An RPA is considered the minimal amount of undisturbed rooting

area the tree requires to maintain its condition. However, the AIA also states that this level of incursion from the proposed development (though it is not updated) would be acceptable, which contradicts the statement in para 1.7 of the AIA. It is considered that the proposed development under this application would have a significant impact on the health of protected trees.

Consequently, the submitted AIA/AMS, without update, fail to demonstrate a lack of detrimental impact to the health of the protected trees, and there is a lack of an appropriate construction methodology to minimise excavation and harm within the RPAs of the protected trees. The proposal is, therefore, unacceptable on tree grounds, contrary to the Policy EN14 of Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

The single-storey rear extension at No. 1 Lancaster Close submitted under application ref: PL/21/0059, granted permission in 2021, has been taken into account. These two applications are not considered comparable, as the proposed development under this application is of a significantly larger scale, impacts a larger portion of RPA, does not demonstrate minimal excavation, and brings the dwelling and hard surfacing significantly closer to the tree and thus the future pressure to prune/remove the Pine tree is considered substantial.

To conclude, the development is unacceptable on tree grounds as the AIA is not reflective of the proposal and thus the impact and mitigation to the health of protected trees have not been accurately set out, and the acceptability of the proposal, therefore, not demonstrated. The development will no doubt have a detrimental impact on the health of the protected Pine tree T5. There will also be an incursion of the RPA of the protected T3 Pine in the neighbouring property due to the rear extension and patio construction, which may also negatively impact its health. There are no details of the construction method of the patio and steps; the foundation design is unclear and remains unacceptable, and concerns regarding the future pressure to prune/remove the tree still stand and are more significant compared to the previous proposals due to the patio.

b) 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 proposal has positioned the proposed first floor side extension above the existing garage; it would be set back from the western wall of the existing garage by approximately 1m, which would be 2m away from 1 Lancaster Close. The proposal would also be significantly set down from the existing ridgeline of the main house. However, it would align with the stepped-back frontage of the host dwelling and is more than half the width of the main house, which would make it visually dominant.

With regard to the proposed single-storey side and rear extension, it would extend across the full width of the existing rear elevation of the host dwelling and the detached garage, incorporating a stepped rear building line. The proposed staggered rear building line, wraparound form, and substantial footprint are considered to constitute poor-quality design, resulting in a dominant and disproportionate addition that would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling

The proposed side extension, positioned to the front of the existing garage, would align with the forward building line of the dwelling and would disrupt the established pattern of stepped front building lines that characterise Lancaster Close. Due to its excessive size, projection, and mono-pitched roof form, the extension would appear unduly prominent and would compete with the principal elevation of the host dwelling. Furthermore, the arrangement of the proposed windows and door on the front elevation would create a visually cluttered appearance that would fail to integrate satisfactorily with the host dwelling. The Design Guide to House Extension 2021 has outlined that the Council will not normally grant planning permission for front extensions that are excessive in size, height and depth relative to the dwelling on the

site and neighbouring buildings, and proposals are refused if windows and doors are featured in the design that are inappropriate in terms of size and placement.

Furthermore, the proposed three car parking spaces would result in the loss of the front green area, which would have a detrimental effect on the overall 'green' character and appearance of the streetscene. Lancaster Close is characterised by open front gardens with a reasonable amount of green space.

Overall, the proposal is, therefore, considered contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and para. 135 of the NPPF.

It is worth noting that most of the harmful impacts on the character and appearance identified under the previous applications remain applicable to the current application and have been outlined above.

c) Residential 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. Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours, and that ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, will be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately. Policy H10 states that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space.

The proposed elevations indicate the provision of a raised patio with a height of approximately 0.5m. It is not shown on the proposed floor plans or block plan. Consequently, this assessment is based solely on the information presented within the submitted elevations, assuming that the patio would extend across the full width of the proposed rear extension, projecting approximately 1.2m from the wider section and approximately 3.7m from the narrower section, resulting in a straight rear edge. A drafting image, indicating the projection from the proposed rear extension, has been provided below to illustrate the approximate depth of the proposed patio and its relationship to both neighbouring properties.



Drafting by the case officer for reference

It is noted that No. 1 Lancaster Close includes a single-storey extension that extends to a broadly similar rear building line as the proposed patio. As such, the patio is not considered likely to result in a significant loss of privacy to the occupants of No. 1 Lancaster Close.

However, the introduction of the raised patio would provide direct views towards the habitable room windows serving No. 3 Lancaster Close. Given that the boundary treatment is approximately 1.8m in height, the effective screening height would be reduced to approximately 1.3m when viewed from the patio level. Consequently, the proposal would increase opportunities for overlooking and result in an unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupants of No. 3 Lancaster Close.

The proposed side window on the new family lounge would directly face the side passage of No. 1 Lancaster Close. This would create an unacceptable arrangement, whereby there would be direct overlooking from the proposed lounge of the application site to No. 1's private outside space and vice versa.

No new side-facing windows are proposed at first-floor level. As such, no concerns have been identified in respect of overlooking or loss of privacy. While the proposal would bring development closer to No. 1 Lancaster Close, it is considered that the proposed first-floor side extension would be positioned further forward and the affected side-facing windows in No. 1 serve non-habitable rooms (bathrooms). Therefore, any resulting loss of light is not considered to have such a detrimental effect as to justify a reason for refusal on this basis.

It should be noted that access to the proposed family lounge would only be available via the new front door or through the proposed rear conservatory. The proposal, therefore, appears to be able to easily function as a separate dwelling, because it has its own front door and has all the internal and external facilities required for an independent dwelling, including the removal of the front garden to accommodate three parking spaces. The Transport Officer noted that the number of parking spaces exceeds the requirements set out in the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD for a single dwelling.

Policy H9 requires extensions/ annexes to function as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling, as the impacts of a separate dwelling would not have been formally considered and assessed. The supporting text to Policy H9 states at paragraph 4.4.76:

“ancillary accommodation should not be a way of introducing new dwellings by stealth. Therefore, planning conditions and, where necessary, obligations will ensure that extra accommodation remains ancillary to the main dwelling. Ancillary accommodation could be considered a separate dwelling where it:

- Is self-sufficient in terms of facilities e.g. kitchens and bathrooms;*
- Has its own front door without internal links to the main house; and/or*
- Has its own external facilities, e.g. access, drive, garden; or has scope for these external facilities to be easily created”.*

Had the scheme been acceptable overall, a condition would have been attached regarding maintaining the extension as ancillary to the main dwelling.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposal poses too high a risk to the health of protected trees, contrary to Policy EN14.

The proposed single-storey side and rear extensions are considered excessive in scale and disproportionate in relation to the host dwelling. The poor arrangement of the front windows/door, together with the loss of a significant proportion of the front garden, would result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene, contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Finally, the proposed raised patio would provide direct views into the rear windows of No. 3 Lancaster Close, resulting in an unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. RECOMMENDATION

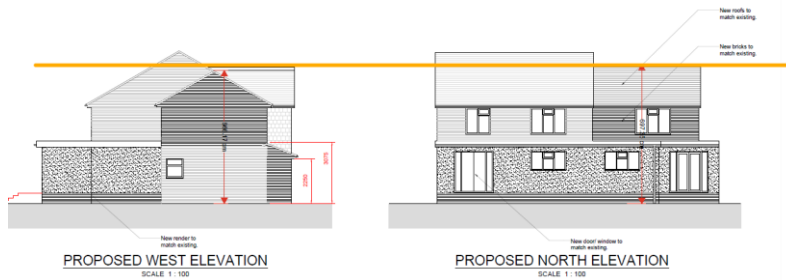
REFUSE

Due to the following reasons:

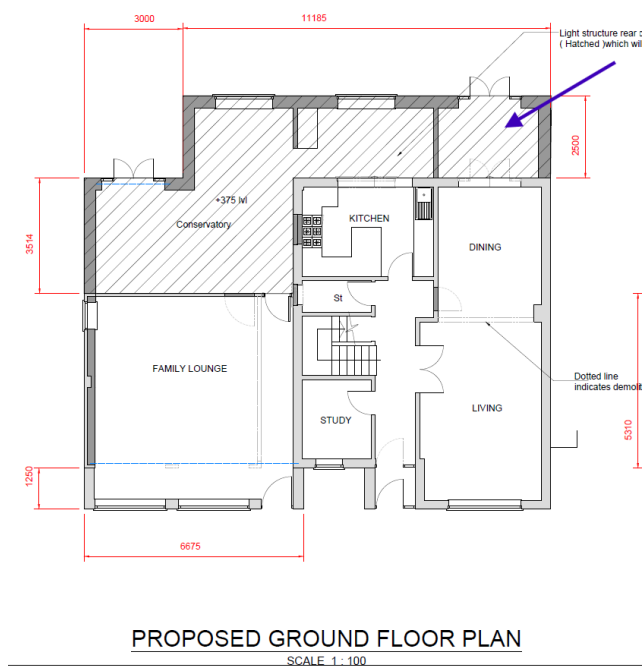
1. The proposal fails to demonstrate that it would not cause harm to protected trees of high amenity value due to the proximity of TPO trees to the development area, the potential future pressure to prune or remove the protected T5 of TPO no: 154/001, and the need to excavate within Root Protection Areas (RPAs), all of which pose too high a risk to the health of the protected trees. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the aims of Reading Borough Council's adopted Tree Strategy (2021).
2. The size of the proposed two storey and single storey extensions in combination, and the disproportionate scale of the proposal compared to the existing dwelling, including the size and placement of windows to the front elevation of the proposed extension, in relation to the original dwelling, would result in overbearing and poorly designed additions, which would be visually dominant both in terms of the dwelling but would also be a harmful addition to the streetscene, detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area. This would be contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and para. 135 of the NPPF.
3. The loss of the open garden to the front would have a detrimental effect on the overall 'green' character and appearance of the streetscene and pattern of frontage, contrary to Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and para. 135 of the NPPF.
4. The introduction of the raised patio would provide direct views into the rear windows of No. 3 Lancaster Close, resulting in an unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupiers of that property. Furthermore, the proposed side window serving the family lounge would directly overlook the side passage of No. 1 Lancaster Close, with opportunities for mutual overlooking between the two properties. The proposal would therefore result in an unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers, contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Annex:

1. The overall height of the proposed first-floor side extension is not consistent between the proposed west and north elevations.



2. Part of the function of the proposed space is not labelled.



3. Proposed patio information is not provided on the proposed floor plan and block plan.