

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: PL/25/1074 Full planning permission

Address: 147 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JR

Proposal: Erection of replacement dwelling (amended)

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Bhupinder and Tajinder Purewal

Received date: 29th July 2025

Target Decision date: 8th September 2026 (ext)

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

1. SITE DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

The site is the original site of a C3 chalet style bungalow in a residential area characterised by detached dwellings of varying character and style with large plots. A small section of the original dwelling remains (as can be seen in the righthand photo below). Although the address is 147 Upper Woodcote Road it's access fronts the edge of Blagrove Lane, which has a semi-rural verdant nature.



House pre-demolition



Photo taken 15/2/26 (149 to the left)



Google image (May 2025) along Blagrove Lane with the original 147 Upper Woodcote Road to the right

Almost complete demolition works were originally undertaken in the context of the implementation of an extensions' permission ref: PL/23/0726, which was for extensive extensions including the addition of a part first floor.

As more demolition than originally envisaged took place, two applications were subsequently submitted, one for the demolition (approved under PL/25/1284), and one for the replacement dwelling, which is this current application.

The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15) and an Area of Archaeological Potential (Policy EN2). It is not located within a Conservation Area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for a 2-storey house, which compared to the original house includes first floor side elements and a 2-storey rear extension. It is almost identical to the resulting house (from extensions) approved under ref: PL/23/0726/HOU, except for the following differences:

- No chimney proposed;
- Southern side elevation - one additional ground floor window has been added and the side door moved forwards;
- Internal changes to the layout include - removal of garage door and replacement with a front facing window, an enlarged utility room and smaller storage room, repositioning of the doors to the living/dining room/kitchen, enlargement of the ground floor shower room and reduction of cupboard space; and
- Revised access to the front to centralise the access point additional landscaping to the front, bin and cycle storage.
- Rear patio area extended.

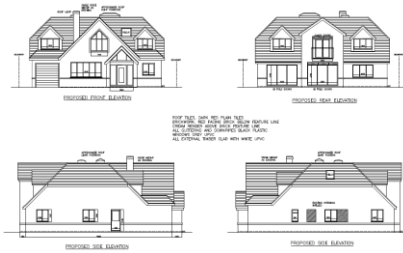
Plans and other information considered as received 29th July 2025, unless otherwise stated:

- Drawing no: WR.010 – Location Plan
- Drawing no: WR.001, dated 8/7/2025 - Existing Elevations [Prior to demolition]
- Drawing no: WR.002 Rev A, dated 8/7/25 – Proposed Elevations, received 19th February 2026
- Drawing no: WR.003, dated 8/7/2025 - Existing Ground Floor Plan [Prior to demolition]
- Drawing no: WR.004, dated 8/7/2025 - Existing First Floor Plan [Prior to demolition]
- Drawing no: WR.005 Rev A, dated 8/7/2025 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan, received 19th February 2026
- Drawing no: WR.006, dated 8/7/2025 – Proposed First Floor Plan
- Drawing no: WR.007, dated 8/7/2025 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan Showing Existing Ground Floor Layout [now demolished]
- Drawing no: WR.009 Rev A – Block Plan, received 8th June 2026
- Drawing no: WR.011 dated 3/12/25 – Existing Site Plan, received 3rd December 2025
- Drawing no: WR.012 dated 3/12/25 – Proposed Site Plan, received 3rd December 2025
- Drawing no: WR.017, dated 30/9/24 – Proposed Roof Plan, received 8th June 2026
- Drawing no: PL.004, dated 30/9/2024 – Proposed Drainage Plan
- Drawing no: 2533/SI, dated 2/6/2025 – Site Investigation Existing Details
- Drawing no: WR.016 Rev B – Proposed Landscape Drawing, received 8th June 2026
- Drawing no: 015 Rev A – CMS Site Plan, received 19th May 2026
- Drawing no: 2533/SI, dated Apr 2025 – Site Investigation Existing Details
- Tree Planting Specification V3, received 9th June 2026
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan, dated November 2025, received 24th November 2025
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural impact Assessment dated 20/11/25, ref: GHA/DS/128960:25, received 24th November 2025
- Tree Protection Plan, received 24th November 2025
- Tree Constraints Plan, received 24th November 2025
- Archaeological Watching Brief, dated June 2025, prepared by Thames Valley Archaeological Services
- Licence Return Form WML CL 21 – Bat Mitigation Class Licence Return
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan ref: R3135_BNG_a, dated April 2026, prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, received 16th April 2026
- Statutory Metric, received 16th April 2026
- Bat Emergence Survey, Document ref: R250_BES_a, dated August 2024, prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, received 10th September 2025
- Letter from John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Note on Bat mitigation works under Natural England Licence, dated 19th February 2026, received 20th February 2026
- Planning Statement, prepared by Inception Planning Ltd

Original House Elevations



Approved under ref: PL/23/0726



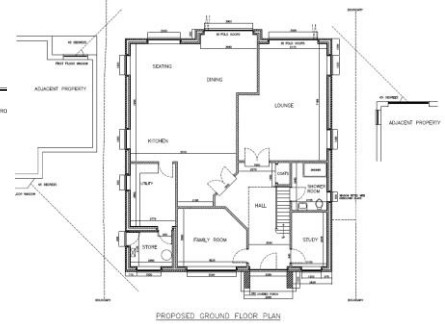
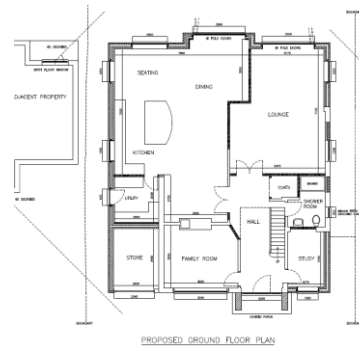
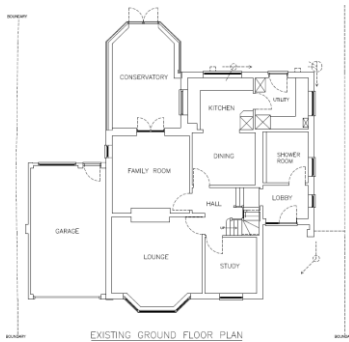
Proposed



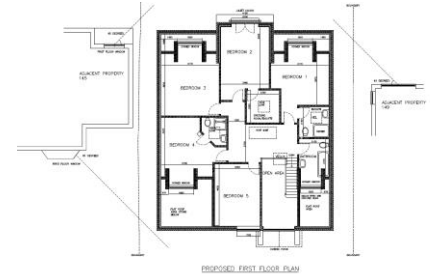
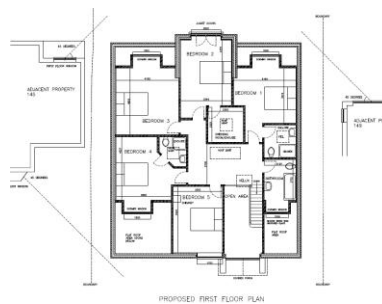
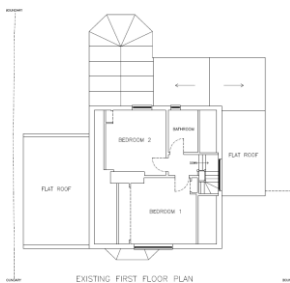
Block Plan



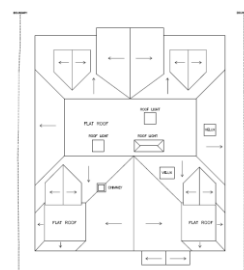
Ground Floor



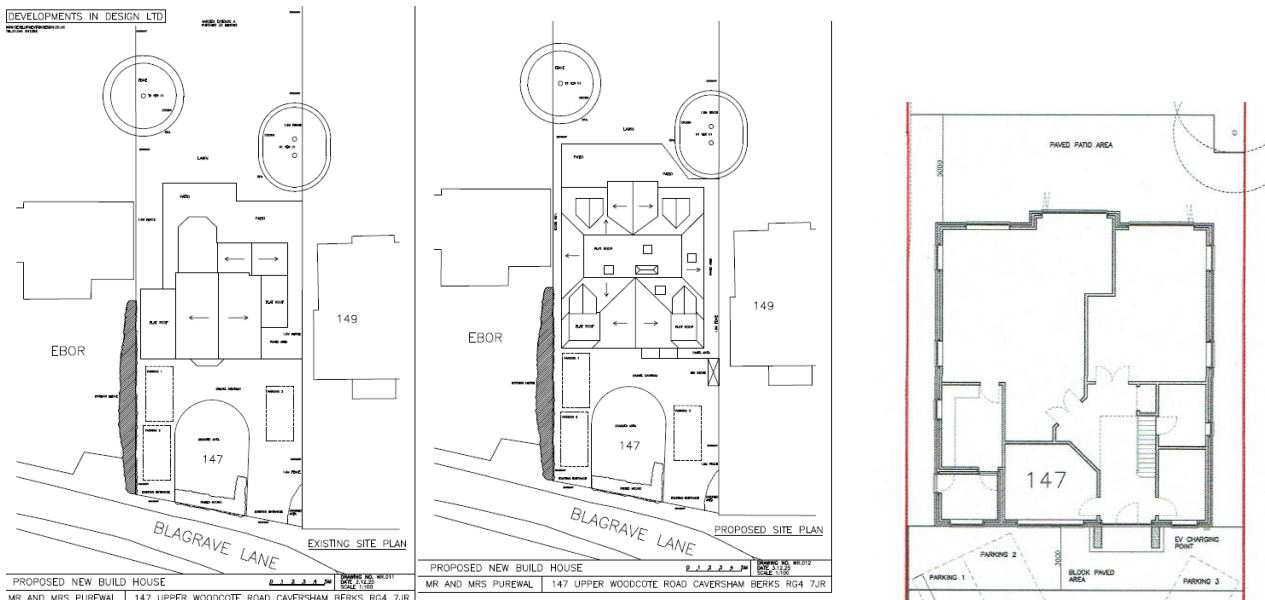
First Floor



Roof



No change



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

90/00122/FUL (New ref: PL/90/1194) - Single storey pitched roof extension to side and rear – Approved 21/3/1990

07/00392/FUL (New ref: PL/07/0449) - Conservatory to rear of property – Approved 22/5/2007

PL/23/0726/HOU - Front, side and rear extensions, front porch addition and part first floor extension - Approved 24/9/2024.

PL/25/0604 - Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 4 (Archaeology) of application PL/23/0726 – Approved (part discharge) – 29/5/25

PL/25/0700 - Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 5 (Confirmation that licence has been applied for) of application PL/23/0726 – Approved 30/5/2025

PL/25/0972 – Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 4 (Archaeology) of application PL/23/0726 - closed no decision.

PL/25/1284 - Part retrospective demolition of house (amended) – Approved 12th March 2026

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Ecology – The site is surrounded by habitat of good suitability for use by foraging and commuting bats including large, connected gardens with trees, and open space associated with Caversham Golf Course to the rear of the garden.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

From 12 February 2024, it is a legal requirement under the Environment Act 2021 that all developments (unless exempt) must demonstrate a net gain of at least 10%. The application form states that the new house will be a 'self build' construction and as such is exempt from this requirement.

The applicant will need to provide evidence confirming that this is a 'self build' development as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.

Regardless of any exemption from the statutory BNG requirement, the plans remain subject to local planning policy EN12. This reads:

“On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity”

[...]

“In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is “no net loss” of biodiversity. Provision of off-site compensation shall be calculated in accordance with nationally or locally recognised guidance and metrics. It should not replace existing alternative habitats, and should be provided prior to development.”

While the baseline habitats (predominantly garden and hardstanding) are of relatively low ecological value, they will be lost to accommodate an increase in hardstanding and building associated with a larger house, new patio and parking and access areas. Given the relatively large increase in hardstanding, the applicant is asked to submit a biodiversity metric calculation to demonstrate that the development will not result in a “net loss of biodiversity” in accordance with EN12. At present, this has not been demonstrated and as such, the proposals do not comply with policy EN12.

Photos of the site appear to show that a large tree in the front garden has been removed. In accordance with the NPPG, the baseline for the biodiversity calculation should reflect the site condition prior to any tree and vegetation clearance. The removed tree (and any other such vegetation) should therefore be included within the baseline habitat assessment. The NPPG reads:

“It may also be relevant to consider whether any deliberate harm to this biodiversity value has taken place in the recent past, and if so whether there are grounds for this to be discounted in assessing the underlying value of the site (and so whether a proposal would achieve a genuine gain).”

And the Statutory Biodiversity Metric user guide (DEFRA) which reads:

“If a habitat has been cleared, destroyed or degraded previously, and you should use an earlier baseline, you must:

- use the pre-degradation habitat type as the site’s baseline
- evidence how this habitat type and condition has been determined in the user comments
- record the habitat as lost within the biodiversity metric tool
- account for the time between the habitat loss and compensation using the ‘delay in starting habitat creation or enhancement’ function”

At present we have insufficient information to conclude that the proposals will result in a net gain in habitat units which is contrary to policy EN12

Biodiversity Enhancements

Policy EN12 further states:

[...] On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should:

Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and

Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable.[...]

In accordance with EN12, it is recommended that the applicant is asked to submit plans showing ecological enhancements for wildlife (such as integral bird and bat boxes and wildlife friendly landscaping) within the development. These can either be supplied on plans (which should show locations, specifications and elevations) prior to determination or secured by condition –

Lighting

Artificial light at night can significantly and adversely affect wildlife. It disrupts the life cycle and behaviour of invertebrates, bats, and other wildlife.

No lighting plans have been provided with the application. Given the site's location and its proximity to numerous bat roosts, it is recommended that a condition is put in place to ensure that no further external lighting is installed within the new development without prior approval by the council.

Planning Officer Note:

Birds and Bats

The original approved extensions scheme submission included a preliminary bat survey and bat emergence survey, and these concluded that the original dwelling was in use by one common pipistrelle bat. The permission included a condition (5) requiring a licence to be obtained from Natural England. This was approved under ref: PL/25/0700.

In the context of the complete demolition application (ref: PL/ 25/1284) further detail was sought by Ecology to confirm that the licence obtained was sufficient for the works undertaken as it would have specifically been obtained for extensions. A further statement was received from the applicant's ecological consultant (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy) and Ecology were satisfied that *"works were carried out in accordance with the licence. The subsequent demolition [of the majority] ... of the house has already taken place and there is no indication that additional potential bat roosting features were present on the house beyond those identified and addressed through the licence. On that basis there are no objections and no further comments from us needed re bat matters."* This was specifically regarding the demolition proposal.

In terms of bat mitigation measures identified within the licence, John Wenman confirmed that a tree-mounted bat box was erected in the rear garden on the day of the original demolition. A further bat mitigation measure was included as a recommendation within the submitted Bat Emergence Survey, which was for an integrated bat tube to be implemented as part of the replacement dwelling. A condition is included requiring retention of the existing bat box and the implementation of the integrated bat tube in accordance with the detail within the Bat Emergence Survey and details to be submitted to confirm their installation.

With regard to birds a condition will be included to implement three bird boxes as set out within the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan and details to be submitted to confirm their installation.

BNG

Further to Ecology's comments above, with regard to the replacement dwelling, the applicant submitted further ecological information as follows:

- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan ref: R3135_BNG_a, dated April 2026, prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, received 16th April 2026
- Statutory Metric, received 16th April 2026

Ecology advised that 2 no. trees have been removed from within the site and although 8 no. new trees are proposed, which would achieve ecological enhancement and mitigation for the loss of trees to the front, as the proposed trees are within a private garden they do not count towards BNG and, therefore, additional biodiversity units would need to be purchased (off-site).

This is addressed further below.

RBC Transport – The following are the original comments dated 15/9/25 based on the original block plan, which did not include the revised centralised access and bin and cycle storage to the front:

This application is for the construction of a replacement 5-bedroom dwelling. The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.

In accordance with the Council's current adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, parking provision of 2.0 on-site parking spaces is required. Submitted block plan illustrates 3 parking spaces which is in excess of the current standards. No changes to the existing vehicle access are proposed.



Water run-off from a private property onto the public highway is not permitted, an appropriate method of drainage needs to be provided within the property curtilage including the use of suitable permeable surfacing materials. The proposed parking provision is deemed acceptable.

If gates are proposed these will need to be set back into the site 5m. Confirmation required so that a condition can be applied if appropriate.

The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 – 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. The Council's Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and this includes a requirement at Policy TR5 for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. This has not been illustrated on plans however this can be dealt with by way of condition.

In accordance with the Council's current standards a minimum of 2 cycle spaces would be required, in a development of this nature this can be in the form of a garden shed or within a garage. This has not been illustrated on plans but can be dealt with by way of condition.

A bin storage area has been illustrated at the rear of the site, it is assumed that the bins will be moved to the property boundary for collection. Residents are expected to present the bins at the boundary of the property/public highway on collection day and the bins returned to the property after collection.

It is recommended that the Natural Environment Officer is consulted to ascertain potential impact or loss of any trees on site.

A CMS will be required for this development.

Suggested conditions - CMS, Vehicle Parking (as specified), Vehicle Access (as specified), Cycle Parking (to be approved), Refuse and Recycling (as specified), Refuse Collection (to be approved), EV Charging Points. Informatives - highways and not damaging the verge.

Planning Officer Note: Further to the submission of an amended block plan with the revised access and location of bin and cycle storage to the front, and the submission of a CMS, Transport confirmed that the proposal was acceptable subject to conditions, but did recommend that cycle storage would be better to the rear for added security, but that the proposed provision was deemed acceptable.

Berkshire Archaeology – In the context of the demolition application Berkshire Archaeology confirmed that the Architectural Watching Brief, dated June 2025, prepared by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, received 10th September 2025] was prepared as new footings were being dug and that the original footprint of the house would have damaged any archaeology when the house was built. Assuming that the replacement dwelling would be, placed over the space of the original house, using the already watched new footings, then no further archaeological work would be required. They went on to advise that if the plans were to change and the siting of the new dwelling moved, or the footprint be extended significantly beyond that already monitored then new mitigation might then be required.

Planning Officer Note: An informative is included.

Natural Environment – Trees – The following are the original comments based on the original block plan: The site is located in Caversham, a naturally verdant area of the Borough where trees and soft landscaping contribute to its appearance and character. Behind the rear garden is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (EN13) and it is also located within an AQMA (EN15).

With reference to the TREE SURVEY AND ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, 20th November 2025, Reference: GHA/DS/128960:25, I note the trees on the frontage have not been surveyed and included in the tree protection plan. It is a requirement that all trees that could be impacted as a result of the proposal are considered and protected from harm. The survey therefore requires amendment to include the trees on the frontage. The trees on the frontage can be seen in your site visit photographs and from Google Street view. The application form (for PL/25/1074) states there are alterations to the parking spaces, and we require clarity on this as new hard surfacing may be proposed within the RPA of nearby trees. Also, due to lack of an existing block plan (or any plan showing existing parking spaces), I cannot determine where the existing parking spaces are hence clarity is required.

With reference to the Block Plan (undated), Drawing No. WR.009, I note the proposed bin store is in close proximity to the trees, the bin store has not been mentioned within the AIA. It is a requirement that all trees within 15m of any part of the proposal are considered and protected from harm. The drawings used in the TPP and TCP are not of the block plan which is why this has not been considered. However, it is still required as the bin storage would appear to be in direct conflict with G1 Yew trees and thus the AIA requires amendment to provide further clarity on this.

The existing vegetation and proposed landscaping have not been shown on any of the plans, making it difficult to assess the proposal's impact on the landscaping. A landscape principles plan would help us understand any changes. I cannot currently assess any changes to the driveway (I note a grassed area in the centre that hasn't been shown on the plans) and the associated impact on the street scene.

I also expect that there would be changes to the landscaping in the rear garden, given that a new dwelling is proposed and would appear to be built on existing hard surfacing, this should be demonstrated and considered. To the rear of the site is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and thus landscaping should be considered to ensure it does not detract from the character, such as including excessive amounts of hard surfacing. It is also expected that where developments are of an increased size and there is a loss of soft landscaping that efforts to mitigate this impact are demonstrated, which has not been shown. The site is within an AQMA and has a large rear garden which could host an opportunity for tree planting.

To conclude, currently application PL/25/1074 (erection of a dwelling) is not supported as the tree information submitted does not fully demonstrate and mitigate the impact to the trees. The existing and proposed landscaping is also unclear and not even the basic principles are demonstrated, which they should be given a new dwelling is proposed.

Planning Officer Note: There was further dialogue between officers and the applicant and subsequently a landscaping scheme was presented to include new trees in the rear garden and an amended layout to the front including trees and hedgerow with a single centralised point of access and bin and cycle storage to the front. To avoid a pre-commencement condition, a detailed landscaping plan with accompanying plant schedule was submitted, which the Natural Environment Officer confirmed was acceptable. This is referenced in the assessment below.

Public Consultation

A site notice was erected on 5th October 2025. No letters of representation have been received.

Discussions with the agent

Further detail was sought and provided in terms of landscaping and a construction method statement as set out above, and in the assessment below.

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 (August 2026)

12. Making Effective Use of Land

14. Achieving Well-Designed Places

17. Pollution, Public protection and Security

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

CC9: Securing Infrastructure

H1: Provision of Housing

H2: Density and Mix

H5: Standards for New Housing

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance.

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking

SPD

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Local Plan Partial 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 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'.

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle
- b) Design and Character
- c) Housing Density and Mix
- d) Amenity
- e) Access/Transport/ Parking
- f) Trees, Landscaping & Ecology
- g) Sustainability
- h) S106 & Community Infrastructure Levy
- i) Other – Archaeology, bin and cycle storage

a) Principle

The proposal is a replacement dwelling on the same footprint and siting as the approved scheme, which was for large extensions to the original dwelling. The principle of replacing the property, set back from the public realm is accepted, subject to the following considerations.

b) Design and Character

NPPF Policy DP3 states “1. *Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets.*”

At the local level RBLP Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a “*high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.*”

The surrounding area is residential in character containing dwellings of a variety of scale and appearance.

The proposed replacement dwelling is considered to be of suitable appearance presenting appropriate architectural details including pitched and hipped roofs, gable features and pitched roof dormers. Whilst it would be a larger two storey dwelling than the original chalet bungalow, the surrounding area contains dwellings of a variety of range of sizes, and the scale of the original house was smaller than the majority in the immediate and wider areas. The proposed replacement dwelling continues to be set back within the plot with an element of separation to either side boundary, with a slightly larger set off to the southern boundary than originally. The ridge height would remain as the original dwelling, albeit with additional roof form. It is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to the mixed character and appearance of the surrounding area and the existing permission (for extensions) is a significant material consideration.

The proposed materials include a mix of red facing brick and render with some elements of cladding. The materials proposed are considered acceptable; there is a variety of cladding within the street.

The revised layout of the frontage would introduce a centralised access with hedge and tree planting and solid wooden gates. This would be a change to the current appearance, but would continue to provide a suitable level of soft landscaping to the street and solid gates are not uncommon in the area.

The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of design, quality and scale and thus comply with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019.

c) Housing Density and Mix

With regard to mix, policy H2 states that: “*Wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6, in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms.*” The proposed scheme would be a 5-bedroom family-sized house, which would accord with Policy H2.

d) Residential Amenity/ Environmental

Policy CC8 requires development to 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.

The ground and first floor elements of the proposed dwelling have been designed to ensure that they do not breach the lines of light from the windows of both the adjacent neighbouring properties. Although new views would be created at the rear from the additional first floor windows, it is not considered that these would result in detrimental overlooking issues.

The ground floor would extend beyond the rear wall of no. 149 Upper Woodcote Road by ca 4m. This depth combined with the gap either side of the boundary fence is considered acceptable and would not be considered overbearing.

The neighbouring property to the south of the application site, Ebor, is set back from the front elevation of the application property, however, an attached side garage projection sits between the main property and the application site, furthermore, the first floor element of the proposal closest to Ebor is set back, thereby reducing any overbearing impacts to the front elevation of this neighbour. It is also worth noting that there are no windows in the existing side elevation of Ebor closest to the application property. At the rear, the proposed development would not project beyond the main rear building line of this neighbouring dwelling, and any harm is further reduced at first floor level due to the proposed roof design.

Policy H5 requires that proposed dwellings meet the nationally described space standards for the type of dwelling. The internal floor area would exceed national space requirements for a five bed dwelling.

Policy H10 states that *“The design of outdoor spaces will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity”*. The plot is very large and, therefore, a significant level of amenity space would be retained.

Policy EN15 seeks that any development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality. It is not considered that there would be any detrimental effect with regard to air quality.

e) Access/Transport/ Parking

Policy TR5 addresses car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points (EVCP). The Policy includes a requirement for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point.

The proposed access would be centralised, and existing openings would be closed. The newly configured front area would include the potential for at least three car parking spaces along with cycle storage and bin storage. The Transport Officer has confirmed that the overall arrangement would be acceptable subject to recommended conditions.

f) Trees, Landscaping & Ecology

The overarching design policy CC7 makes it clear that the *“quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping”* is a key component of development form, which contributes to maintaining and enhancing the character and appearance of an area.

Policy EN12 requires that development should provide a *“net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.... and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site... Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable.”*

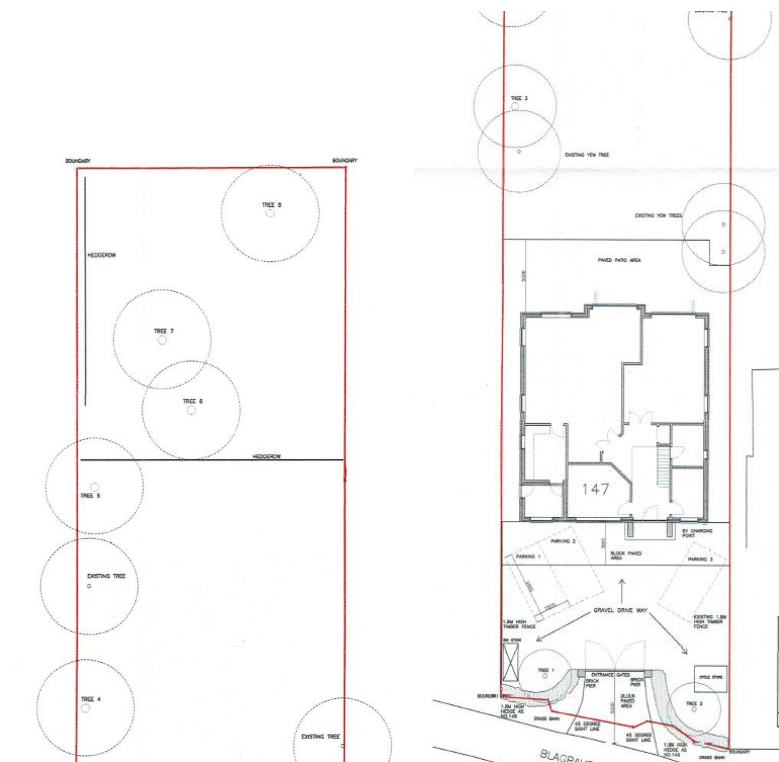
Policy EN14 of the RBLP states that *“Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended..... New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, ... to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance 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.....”*

Trees and Landscaping

On the basis that the site is within an AQMA and that the replacement dwelling is larger than the original dwelling and includes an increased area of hard landscaping, the proposal needed to include soft landscaping, including tree planting, to mitigate the impact.

During the course of the application an amended front layout proposal was submitted and, in addition to tree planting and hedgerows within the rear garden, further soft landscaping was sought to the front garden to enhance the site’s appearance and to re-provide areas of soft landscaping lost by the amended layout.

The amended scheme includes 8 new native trees of suitable stock size, including within the front and rear gardens along with further hedgerows. Details of the planting schedule and maintenance arrangements have been submitted to avoid the requirement for pre-commencement conditions. The Natural Environment Team confirmed the acceptability of the landscaping scheme, and it is considered to adequately meet the policy requirements of Policies EN12 and EN14 subject to conditions to accord with the landscaping plan and works to be in accordance with the protective measures within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.



Proposed Landscaping scheme

Ecology

As a replacement dwelling, with the removal of trees and a greater area of hardstanding, this meant a reconsideration of the scheme compared to the original extensions’ permission (approved under ref: PL/23/0726).

In terms of biodiversity enhancements Ecology confirmed that the proposed landscaping scheme and the bird and bat measures are suitable in meeting relevant policy subject to conditions.

However, in terms of meeting statutory requirements for BNG the proposed landscaping scheme does not fully achieve a net gain, because BNG calculations cannot include proposed trees within a private garden and, therefore, to strictly adhere, additional biodiversity units would need to be purchased (off-site). However, in this instance because of the level of additional tree planting and other soft landscaping measures it is considered that these are adequate in terms of biodiversity for this proposal for one replacement house.

g) Sustainability

The overarching sustainability policy CC2 requires proposals for new development to be designed and have site layouts which “*use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.*”

Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) requires that all new build housing integrate additional measures for sustainability.

Conditions are recommended to ensure the development meets the following requirements:

- *Higher water efficiency standards of 110 litres per person per day; and*
- *A 19% improvement over building regulations energy requirements*

Although secured by planning condition, these new requirements would be administered through the Building Regulations, with confirmation of compliance submitted to the LPA to discharge the condition.

h) S106 & Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

S106

Policy CC9, supported by the Planning Obligations SPD (2015), is the overarching policy on securing infrastructure, and makes it clear that developments will not be permitted unless “*infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided through direct provision or financial contributions at the appropriate time.*” It states that “*In determining appropriate provision or contribution, the highest priority will be given to the following:.... Open space, green infrastructure and other measures to improve or enhance biodiversity;..*”

During the course of the application period, Officers became aware that a street tree had been removed by the applicant, who believed that it was on land within their ownership. However, the Council believes, having referenced relevant mapping information held by the Council, that it is within land outside of the applicant's ownership boundary.

In order to mitigate the loss of this tree and trees within the site the applicant has confirmed agreement to the provision of 8 no. on-site trees, which form part of the landscaping plan, and also a financial contribution towards street trees in the locality of £5,300. This is considered to comply with Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations 2010 as it would be: (a)necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b)directly related to the development; and (c)fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

As a replacement dwelling there is an exemption from the terms of Policy H3: Affordable Housing.

CIL

The development would be liable for CIL, but the applicant has indicated that this would be a self-build dwelling, which could benefit from self-build CIL relief. The applicant has been advised that they would only be able to benefit from self-build CIL relief where an application for relief has been submitted in line with the CIL Regulations and granted prior to commencement of development. An informative is included.

i) **Other**

Archaeology

Berkshire Archaeology has confirmed that the submitted '*Architectural Watching Brief, dated June 2025, prepared by Thames Valley Archaeological Services*' (originally prepared to full discharge condition 4 of the extensions' permission PL/23/0726), as recently approved under the demolition permission (ref: PL/25/1284), would be sufficient in terms of the replacement dwelling and that no new archaeological mitigation would be required. This is on the assumption that the replacement dwelling would be in the location placed over the already 'watched' footings, and the footprint would not extend significantly beyond that already monitored. An informative is included to that effect.

Bin and cycle storage

This is shown on the proposed plan and conditions included requiring their provision and retention.

7. CONCLUSION

The principle of development of this site for residential use is considered acceptable subject to conditions set out below and S106 obligations as set out above.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Application Permitted

Recommended Conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Materials (as specified)
4. CMS (as specified)
5. Construction Hours
6. No Bonfires
7. Vehicle Parking (as specified)
8. Vehicle Access (as specified)
9. Cycle Parking (as specified)
10. Refuse and Recycling (as specified)
11. EV Charging Points (as specified)
12. Landscaping (as specified)
13. AMS and Tree Protection (as specified)
14. Biodiversity Enhancements (prior to occupation) and submission of a letter report to confirm that measures have been installed
15. SAP Design Stage
16. SAP Final
17. No New Openings
18. Removal of PD Rights for Class A (rear extension) and Class B (roof)

Informatives:

- Terms and Conditions
- Complaints about Construction
- Building Control
- Highways
- Archaeology - *The proposed replacement dwelling is being built in an area of archaeological potential, particularly related to Roman and possible Later Prehistoric occupation. While previous archaeological monitoring did not reveal significant archaeology, this took place in an extremely limited fashion and in close proximity to the previous dwelling's footprint. As such it may not be representative of the archaeological potential of the whole site. In view of this, any finds should be immediately reported to the archaeological officer and should any archaeology be suspected work should cease and professional advice sought from the archaeology officer.'*
- Encroachment
- CIL
- Positive and Proactive