

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0528 Householder planning permission

Address: 29 HERON ISLAND, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 8DQ

Proposal: Creation of 2 new window openings in south-west side elevation of property.

Applicant: Mr Kenneth Perrett

Received date: 20/04/2026

Target Decision date: 08/10/2026 (EXT)

Case Officer: Chukwudi Onwudinanti

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises an end-of-terrace dwelling situated within the established Heron Island residential development in Lower Caversham. The surrounding area is characterised by dwellings of a consistent architectural style, scale and appearance, constructed predominantly of brick beneath pitched tiled roofs with regular fenestration patterns and decorative brick detailing.

The application property occupies a prominent end position within the terrace and features a largely blank south-west side elevation, containing a single existing bathroom window at second-floor level. The property lies within an established residential area. The site is readily visible from the public highway.

The adjacent townhouse (no.30) includes side facing windows at ground, first and second floors serving a utility, breakfast room and toilet respectively.

The application site is sited further back from the highway than the neighbouring property.

The site is designated within a Major Landscape Feature (Policy EN13).

Permitted development rights were removed under the original permission for the estate.



Site visit photos dated 29/06/2026. View towards no. 30 from inside front bay

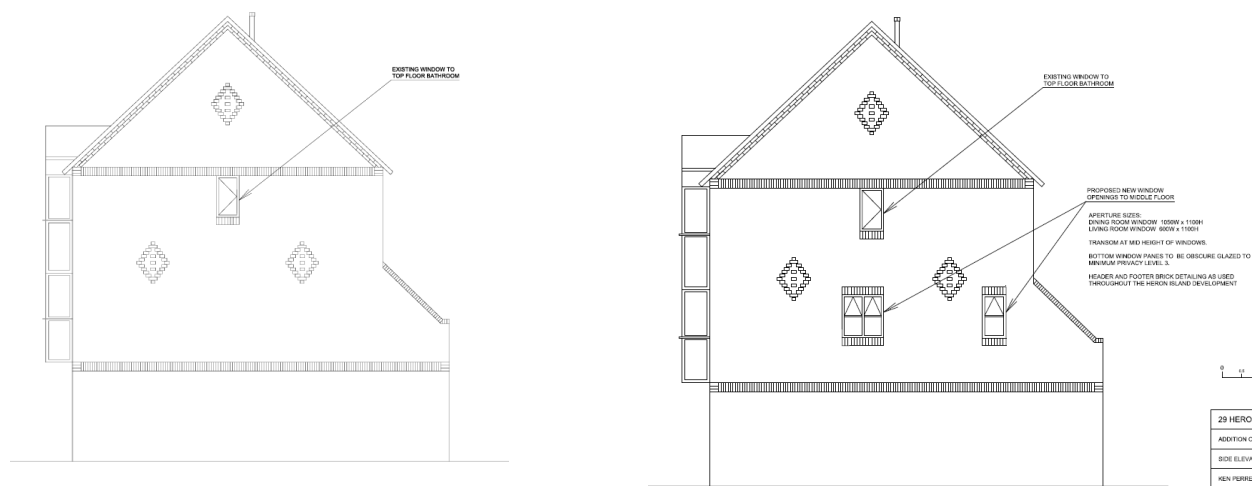
2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The amended scheme is for the creation of two new window openings within the south-west side elevation at first floor level.

The proposed windows would serve the existing living room and dining room at first-floor level. They would be constructed using brown uPVC frames to match the existing dwelling and incorporate soldier-course brick detailing above and below the openings.

Plans and Documents received 06/09/2026

Location Plan
Block Plan
Existing Side Elevation
Proposed Side Elevation
Planning Statement



Existing and Proposed Side Elevations

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Heron Island development

85/TP/531 - Residential development of 32 (3 bedroom) houses and 15 (4 bedroom) houses at Caversham Hill, Caversham, Reading – Approved 10th October 1985 – included condition 4 restricting permitted development rights:

4. CONSULTATIONS

Ecology – No objections. The windows on the side are unlikely to lead to any adverse ecological impacts. The windows are on the side so are not facing the river which is approx. 20metres away. There also appears to be a large tree between the windows and the river so there would be very little light spill from the windows onto the watercourse so any ecological impact would be minimal.

A Site Notice was put up on 08/05/2026

No letters of representation have been received.

Discussion with the Applicant

The initial submission includes wholly clear glass opening windows. It was considered that this had the potential for overlooking and loss of privacy to the private amenity space of no. 30 and some overlooking towards no. 30s existing side facing windows. Amendments were sought and submitted.

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.

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

Chapter 14: Achieving Well-Designed Places - Policy DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places

Chapter 17: Pollution, Public Protection and Security - Policy P3 - Living Conditions and Pollution

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)

EN13 (Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (2021)

Local Plan Partial Update

The current version of the Local Plan turned five years old on 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 the submission draft submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 9th May 2025, and the Examination was in February 2026.

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 is that they remain in accordance with national policy. The objectives of the policies listed above remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan, and although at present they have some weight in the decision-making

process the current policies 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 DP3 of NPPF requires that 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.

Policy H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires alterations to dwellings to respect the character of the host dwelling and surrounding area in terms of scale, design, materials and detailing.

Policy CC7 similarly requires development to be of high-quality design and to respond positively to local character. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks development that is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and maintains a strong sense of place.

The proposal would introduce two modestly proportioned window openings within the existing south-west side elevation. The submitted drawings demonstrate that the proposed windows would match the existing fenestration in terms of proportions, materials and appearance. Matching brown uPVC window frames and soldier-course brick detailing are proposed, reflecting the established architectural detailing throughout the Heron Island development. The existing decorative diamond brickwork features would be retained and remain legible within the elevation.

Although the side elevation is visible from the public realm, the proposed alterations are limited in scale and would integrate successfully with the existing dwelling. The proposal would not appear visually intrusive within the streetscene and would preserve the established character and appearance of the surrounding development.

The proposal, therefore, complies with Policy CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

Policy P3 of the NPPF requires that development proposals should not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site.

Policy CC8 seeks to ensure that development does not result in significant detrimental impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

The principal consideration relates to the potential for overlooking arising from the proposed side-facing windows. The application property is staggered relative to the neighbouring building, and the proposed windows would not directly face neighbouring habitable room windows. A separation distance of approximately 6 metres is maintained between the properties, thereby reducing opportunities for direct overlooking, albeit there would be some oblique views to the existing windows of no. 30 and the potential, if the windows were clear glass and opening, for some loss of privacy for no. 30 as well as the reverse being true. In addition, the proposed windows would introduce new direct views across no. 30's rear amenity space.

To mitigate any overlooking or privacy concerns, the design of the windows has been revised with the bottom pane to be obscured and not openable.

Having regard to the relationship between the buildings, the orientation of the proposed windows and the established pattern of development, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or other adverse impacts upon neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposal, therefore, complies with Policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents a modest and sympathetic alteration to the existing dwelling. The additional window openings would improve the internal living conditions of the dwelling whilst preserving the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

The proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring residential amenity and raises no highway or other material planning concerns, subject to the conditions attached to ensure that the side windows are not openable above 1.7m and obscured at the lower panes.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the Policies DP3 and P3 of the NPPF (2026) and Policies CC7, CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

8. RECOMMENDATION

Grant

Recommended Conditions:

Time Limit

Approved Plans

Materials to Match

Fixed pane non opening and obscure glazed windows below 1.7m