

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0659 Full planning permission

Address: 196, Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0HE

Proposal: Installation of a brickwork encased steel column in the centre of the roller shutter opening to raise the left hand opening to 3.25m clear height.

Applicant: Mr Martin Sawyer

Received date: 18/05/2026

Target Decision date: 11/09/2026 (EXT)

Case Officer: Chukwudi Onwudinanti

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises an existing vehicle repair and MOT centre located at 196 Basingstoke Road, Reading. The premises comprise a ground-floor workshop with a partial first-floor/mezzanine area and associated reception, offices, staff facilities, storage and vehicle servicing areas.

The site is located on the west side of Basingstoke Road, immediately south of its junction with Cradock Road. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial and industrial in character and includes factories, depots, warehouses and other employment uses. The submitted location plan identifies the application site at the corner of Basingstoke Road and Cradock Road.

The principal elevation faces Basingstoke Road and is characterised by a broad commercial workshop frontage incorporating a series of roller shutter openings beneath horizontal fascia cladding.



Site Photos Taken 08/07/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for alterations to the front elevation to install a new steel column within the centre of an existing roller shutter opening, with the column to be encased in brickwork. The left-hand section of the roller shutter opening would be increased to provide a minimum clear height of 3.25m. The existing fascia cladding and roller shutter would be adjusted accordingly.

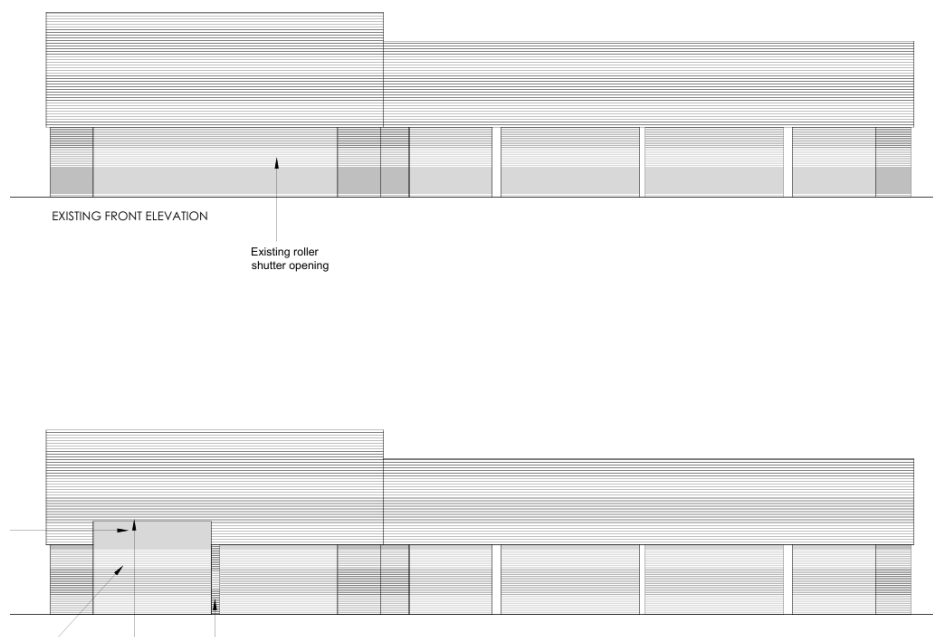
The proposed works are required to facilitate the installation of a new Class 7 MOT testing lane within the existing workshop, which requires an increased opening height.

The existing roller shutters are proposed to be painted anthracite grey and the existing cladding on the front elevation would be painted dark grey.

There would be no alteration to the existing access arrangements from the highway.

2.1. Information submitted received 18/05/2026:

Drawing 2217 PD70 – Existing Floor Plans
 Drawing 2217 PD71 – Proposed Floor Plans
 Drawing 2217 PD72 – Existing & Proposed Front Elevation
 Drawing 2217 PD73 – Site Location Plan
 Drawing 2217 PD74 – Block Plan
 Design and Access Statement



Existing and Proposed Elevations

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App Ref: PL/91/0843
 Description: Illuminated gantry sign.
 Decision: Granted
 Decision Date: 14/01/1992

App Ref: PL/95/0347
 Description: Advertisement hoarding. (Retrospective).
 Decision Date: 14/07/1995
 App Ref: PL/96/0029
 Description: Provision of two jetwash machines and screen fencing.
 Decision Date: 30/05/1996

App Ref: PL/99/1756

Description: Erection of a free-standing advertisement gantry to the front at the front of the premises

Decision: Granted

Decision Date: 03/11/1999

4. CONSULTATIONS

Site notice was put up on 08/07/2026. No letters of representation have been received.

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'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

National Policy and Guidance

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (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)

Policy CC1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC7 – Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity

Policy TR3 – Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters

Policy TR5 – Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

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. The submission draft of the Local Plan Partial Update was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9th May 2025 and examined during 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 and that the objectives of those policies remain similar in the

draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be 'out of date'.

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The application relates to an established vehicle repair and MOT centre. The existing commercial use of the premises would remain unchanged, and the application does not propose any additional commercial floorspace or expansion of the existing building.

The proposed works would, therefore, support the continued operation and adaptation of an established commercial premises without materially changing the nature of the existing use.

There is consequently no objection to the principle of the development, subject to consideration of the impact of the proposal upon character and appearance, amenity and highway matters below.

Character and Design

Policy DP3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 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 CC7 requires development to be of high quality and to maintain and enhance the appearance of the area in which it is located. The various components of development form include layout, scale, architectural detail and materials.

The proposed works would be confined to part of the front elevation and the alteration would retain the overall form and appearance of the commercial frontage.

The proposed works would not result in an increase in the overall height, footprint or mass of the existing building.

The brickwork encasing the proposed steel column would match the existing building, which would assist in integrating the alteration into the existing frontage. The proposed anthracite grey finish to the roller shutters and dark grey finish to the existing fascia cladding are considered appropriate within the context of the commercial character of the building.

Given the relatively limited nature of the alteration and the established commercial and industrial character of the surrounding area, the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding street scene.

The proposal is, therefore, considered compliant with Policy CC7.

Amenity

Policy P3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 also states that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are

on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.

Policy CC8 requires all development to have no significant detrimental impact upon the amenity of existing or future occupiers.

Whilst the proposed alterations would facilitate the testing of Class 7 vehicles, there is no information submitted with the application to indicate that this would result in a material intensification of the established vehicle repair and MOT use.

Furthermore, having regard to the predominantly commercial and industrial character of the surrounding area, the proposal is not considered likely to result in a significant increase in noise, disturbance or other adverse effects upon neighbouring occupiers.

The proposal is, therefore, considered compliant with Policy CC8.

Highway-related Matters

Policy TR3 states that development will only be permitted where accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority, the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network and the proposal would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Policy TR5 requires development to provide car and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of the location within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

The proposal would not alter the existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements serving the site. The Design and Access Statement expressly confirms that no change to the existing access arrangement with the highway is proposed.

The application does not propose the addition or removal of existing vehicle or cycle parking spaces.

The proposal is therefore not considered to result in a material detrimental impact upon the operation or safety of the highway network and is considered compliant with Policies TR3 and TR5.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable.

The principle of the development is acceptable as the proposal would facilitate the continued operation and adaptation of an established vehicle repair and MOT premises without resulting in a change of use or increase in commercial floorspace.

The proposed alterations to the front elevation are limited in scale and would integrate satisfactorily with the existing commercial building. The development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the building or surrounding area.

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

8. RECOMMENDATION

Grant

Recommended Conditions:

Approved Plans

Time Limit Standard

Materials As Specified