

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Church Ward

App Ref: PL/26/1114 Householder planning permission

Address: 85 NORTHCOURT AVENUE, READING, RG2 7HG

Proposal: Single-storey rear extension

Applicant: Mrs Sarah Gosling

Received date: 19/08/2026

Target Decision date: 20/10/2026 (agreed extension)

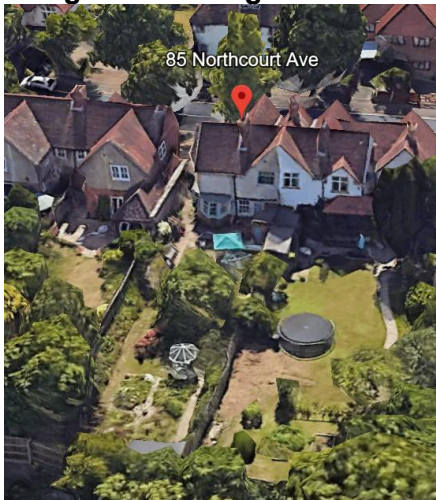
Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located on the east side of Northcourt Avenue in Church Ward in Reading. There is hard landscaping at the front of the site, and there is a garden at the rear. The application site is not listed, nor does it fall within a conservation area.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential. Both adjacent properties have existing single storey extensions along the shared boundaries.

Google earth image:



Site visit date: 1st September 2026

Site visit photos at the rear of the site:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a single storey rear extension. The proposed extension would extend beyond the rear wall of the main dwelling by approximately 4.5m. The proposed extension would have a flat roof with two roof windows and a maximum height of approximately 3.2m. The agent confirmed in an email dated 10/09/2026 that the proposed materials would match those of the existing house.



Plans/documents considered:

Drawing No. 26022.PP-08 – Proposed Block Plan
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-07 – Location Plan
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-06 – Proposed Elevations
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-05 – Proposed First Floor Plan
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-04 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-03 – Existing Elevations
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-02 – Existing Floor Plan
 Drawing No. 26022.PP-01 – Existing Floor Plan

Received 19th August 2026

3. CONSULTATIONS

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

One letter of representation has been received, pasted below:

No details shown for Soil Drainage, Soil pipes or Inspection Chambers. No details shown for Rainwater Drainage other than from existing structure. Neither the existing or proposed plans detail the low brick wall which extends along the boundary and supports the timber structure of a shed for 83 Northcourt Avenue. This wall also forms the perimeter of the concrete base for aforementioned shed. The proposal does not specify the type of flooring to be used or any requirements for ground level changes. In our opinion, existing ground levels at the rear of 85 Northcourt Avenue are already too high in relation to the dampproof course and since there is an existing solid brick boundary wall, careful construction is necessary to eliminate undesirable impacts for 83 Northcourt Avenue.

No details are included on requirements and methods for “making good” the disturbance to structures at 83 Northcourt Avenue on and adjacent to the boundary.

Officer note: only material planning consideration can be taken into consideration.

The agent provided an additional plan to indicate the likely location of a parapet gulley drain, however, the agent confirmed that the final drainage arrangements will be confirmed at the Building Control stage, along with other matters mentioned above.

Material considerations will be assessed in more depth below.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

Equality Act 2010: In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

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

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing

circumstances and national policy. The submission version of the Local Plan was submitted on 9th May 2025. 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 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 determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 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.

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

The proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of scale. The proposed extension would have a depth of approximately 4.5m. The guidance within the Design Guide to House Extensions SPD states that *rear extension proposals would likely not be supported if the rear extension extends more than 4m from the existing dwelling*, however, it also states that *the acceptability of a rear extension in terms of length and height will be derived from the circumstances of the application site and in some cases, an extension of more than 4m may be acceptable, but this needs to be justified*. The proposed extension is single storey only and it is considered that the property is set within a sizeable plot and it is capable of accommodating an extension of this size. Furthermore, the proposed extension would project only approximately 1.6 metres beyond the existing rear outrigger, which is to be demolished as part of the development to accommodate the proposed rear extension.

In terms of design, it is not considered that the proposal would detract from the original character of the host dwelling. The proposed extension would be built with materials to match the existing house to help aid its integration. The proposed extension would be located entirely to the rear of the property and as such, the proposal is not considered to have any impact on the character and appearance of the street scene. Other properties within the street have been altered and extended, therefore, the proposed development is not considered out of character for this location.

On balance, it is considered that the proposed development will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, neighbouring properties, or the wider area and the proposed development is in accordance with Policies H9 and CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and Policies DP3 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

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.

Due to the existing site context and the relationship of the application site with the neighbouring properties on either side, combined with the single storey nature of the proposed extension, there are no identified risks of the proposed development causing harm to amenity.

With regards to the neighbouring property at number 87 Northcourt Avenue, there is a sufficient distance between the proposed development and the shared boundary with this neighbour. Furthermore, number 87 also has a rear projection which extends to a similar depth.

The neighbouring property at number 83 Northcourt Avenue benefits from an existing rear outrigger (similar to that at the application site). The proposed rear extension would extend approximately 1.6m beyond the outrigger and, given the limited additional projection, would not result in any significantly harmful impacts in terms of overbearing effects or loss of light.

Owing to the flat roof nature of the rear extension proposed, it is considered necessary to include a condition stipulating that the flat roof area shall not be used as a roof terrace, and any access out onto this area shall be for maintenance/means of escape purposes only. This is in order to prevent any detrimental impacts of overlooking and/or noise and disturbance of the neighbouring premises.

For current and future occupiers of the host building, the proposed works will facilitate an improved standard of accommodation, via the additional space created, and the amount of remaining amenity space is considered acceptable.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION - GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

Time Limit

Materials

Approved Plans

Flat roof restriction