



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2025

by K Reeves BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/25/3363446

Honey & Ghee, 232 Shinfield Road, Reading RG2 8EX

- The appeal is made under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Nish Rajmohan of Honey & Ghee against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/24/1612.
 - The development proposed is erection of canopy in car park area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of canopy in car park area at Honey & Ghee, 232 Shinfield Road, Reading, RG2 8EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/24/1612, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos 01 Rev. V1, 03 Rev. V1, 05 Rev. V1 and 07 Rev. V1.

Preliminary Matter

2. When I visited the site, the extension had already been constructed. However, I am determining the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans, not what has been constructed on site.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host building and area; and
 - the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties, having regard to noise, light disturbance and vermin.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site comprises a large white rendered building that is understood to date from the Victorian period. It occupies a prominent position on the street and is currently used as a food shop, but historically it was a public house. Residential properties can be seen in the background of the shop's car park, but the area around the site is predominantly commercial.
5. The extension that is the subject of the appeal has been constructed on the side of the host building, and this has provided additional retail space for the shop. It is a

lightweight structure that is flat roofed with a projecting canopy over the open front. The external wall finish is flat green sheeting, and the canopy is clad in corrugated green sheeting.

6. The front elevation of the host building is the part of the existing built form that has retained the historical form and interest of the former public house. The extension's position on the side of the building and its shallow depth means that it is not easily seen in relation to the historic core of the building from most of the public viewpoints around the site. However, the extension is more visually apparent when stood in the car park or looking northwards towards the site due to it sitting in the foreground of the host building.
7. The external walls and roof being clad in sheeting gives the extension a lightweight appearance and means that it is a potentially reversible addition. The walls and roof of the extension contrast with the host building but more because of their colour than their form and material finish. However, due to the subservient scale of the extension, its contrasting nature is not jarring. Furthermore, together with its scale, the contrasting nature helps the extension to be seen as a secondary or ancillary structure that does not visually compete with the character and appearance of the host building.
8. The flat roof element of the extension reflects, and responds to, the adjoining flat roof section of the host building, which is a prominent feature of the building. The flat roof has also helped to keep the height of the extension lower in relation to the host building. This has had the benefit of allowing the built form of the building to still be easily read and prevented the extension becoming a visually dominant addition.
9. The surrounding commercial buildings do not share a prevailing character and appearance. There is a variance in the building styles and palette of materials in the local area, from the traditional former public house to a petrol station and a block of commercial units with a box profile sheet roof and partial elevations. As such, the form and material finish of the extension do not appear out of place within the context of the street scene. Together with its subservient scale, the extension is not incongruent with the character and appearance of the area.
10. For these reasons, the development does not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the host building and area. Consequently, the development does not conflict with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 (LP), which expects, in part, that development maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Living conditions

11. Food products are on display under the extension's projecting canopy. This means that customers perusing those products will be stood outside the confines of the shop and the extension itself. However, I cannot envisage large crowds of people gathering outside the shop to look at the food on offer given the relatively short length of the elevation that is being used to display food. Having regard to this and that noise generated by customers stood inside the extension would be largely contained within the body of the structure, I am not convinced that the noise created by customers would be materially harmful to the occupiers of the nearby residential properties.

12. The extension has LED strip lighting, but most of the lighting is set back into the main body of the extension, and they are positioned facing towards the ground. There appears to be further LED lighting under the canopy, but they are angled towards the food products that are on display. The open front of the extension faces towards the car park and the gable end of a building beyond, which has no windows within it. The lighting would therefore not shine directly towards residential properties, and it would not result in nearby residents being disturbed by intrusive artificial light.
13. I have no supporting evidence before me to suggest that the display and storage of food in the extension results in a particular vermin problem in the area. That aside, issues over vermin are a matter for the appellant and/or the site operators, and there is not a particular reason why this would not be ably managed.
14. For these reasons, the development does not cause material harm to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties, having regard to noise, light disturbance and vermin. Consequently, the development does not conflict with Policies CC8 and EN16 of the LP, insofar as they seek to prevent detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties.
15. The Council have included Policy EN17 of the LP in their second reason for refusal, which relates to noise generating equipment. Given that there is no mention in the officer report or the decision notice of such equipment causing harm to living conditions, Policy EN17 is not determinative in my consideration of the appeal.

Conditions

16. Given that the extension has already been constructed, it would not be necessary to impose the standard time limit condition. However, a condition listing the approved plans is necessary for the purposes of clarity.
17. The appellant has confirmed that they are willing to accept a planning condition requiring pest-proofing measures. However, rat and other vermin control measures are covered by non-planning legislation, and it would therefore not be necessary or reasonable to impose such a condition.
18. The appellant is also willing to accept a condition that requires the written approval and implementation of a waste management plan. Given that the proposal relates only to an extension to an existing shop, the imposition of such a condition would not be necessary or reasonable in this case.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

K Reeves

INSPECTOR