



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/25/3359426

78 Basingstoke Road, Reading RG2 0EL

- 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 Mr Ameet Ghatahora of Royle Berkshire Developments Limited against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 240765.
 - The development proposed is roof enlargement to facilitate the insertion of 3 rear dormers, single storey rear extensions to the existing HMO and the erection of an outbuilding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the appeal building and area; and
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property having regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a mid-terraced two and a half storey building that is currently being used as a House in Multiple Occupancy. The area where the site is located is predominantly residential in character. The proposed development would be carried out at the rear of the site, which currently includes a two and a half storey projection that is similar in scale and form to the backs of the neighbouring properties. The rear garden is long and narrow and is in a row of gardens that share those same characteristics. At the back of the property is a path providing access from Clent Road to the rear gardens of the properties on Basingstoke Road.
4. The rear projection is clearly visible from Clent Road and the path leading to the back of the property. There are examples of dormer windows on the backs of the properties on Basingstoke Road of various forms and scale. However, they are predominantly positioned on the main roof of the property, not the rear projection. There is a large flat roof dormer on the rear projection of one of the adjoining neighbouring properties, but it is largely hidden from public view as it's on the roof slope facing away from Clent Road.

5. The three proposed dormer windows would be constructed on the rear projection, and they would be narrow with pitched roofs. It is also proposed to enlarge the roof space by constructing a flat roof addition in the area around the meeting of the main roof and the rear projection. Whilst the pitched dormer windows would be in keeping with the form of the dormers on the backs of the neighbouring properties, their position on the projection would not reflect, or respond to, the prevailing pattern of rear dormer windows in the immediate area around the site.
6. The proposed roof alterations, taken together, would result in a significant increase in built mass on the existing roof. The pitched dormers would have a prominent appearance in the street scene, and the resulting impact would be visually jarring and would detract from the existing simple form and character of the building's roof. Furthermore, the cumulative massing of the roof enlargements would be incongruent with the prevailing character of the surrounding roof forms. The roof enlargements would therefore result in harm to the character and appearance of the appeal building and the area.
7. Turning to the other proposed alterations to the appeal building, the proposal includes the erection of two ground floor extensions. The rear extensions would be flat roofed but there are prominent examples of similar extensions on the rear of neighbouring properties. The extensions would be subservient in scale to the host building, and the external walls would be finished with materials to match the building. As such, the rear extensions would not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the appeal building or the area.
8. The proposed outbuilding would also be a flat roofed building that would occupy the entire width of the rear garden. However, flat roofed outbuildings of various sizes are a prevalent feature at the rear of the properties on Basingstoke Road, and it would be largely screened from the public realm by the neighbouring outbuildings. On this basis, the outbuilding would also not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area.
9. Having regard to the above, although I have found the single storey rear extensions and outbuilding are acceptable, the roof enlargement to facilitate the insertion of three rear dormers would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the appeal building and the area. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 (LP), which sets out that development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.

Living conditions

10. The Council's second reason for refusal solely focuses on the rear extension that would be constructed adjacent to the boundary with 80 Basingstoke Road. The properties are separated by a boundary wall and parallel garden paths on both sides of the wall lead to the respective rear gardens of both properties.
11. The ground floor windows in the side elevation of No 80 face towards the appeal site. The outlook from those windows is on to the boundary wall and the side elevation of the appeal building at a slightly further distance. As such, the outlook from the windows is currently dominated by existing built form. However, the extension would increase the height of built form on the boundary in close proximity to the neighbouring property, thereby increasing the appeal building's

dominance and resulting in a significantly greater enclosing effect on people looking out of the ground floor side windows of No 80.

12. For these reasons, the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property, having regard to outlook, would be unacceptably harmed by the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policy CC8 of the LP, insofar as it seeks to prevent a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties, including as a result of visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development.

Other Matters

13. The proposal would result in improved living conditions for the existing occupiers of the appeal property. However, I have been provided with limited evidence to demonstrate that improved living conditions could not be delivered in a less harmful way. Therefore, this is not a matter that outweighs the harms identified.
14. I am also mindful of my statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as the site is in the settings of 64 to 70 Basingstoke Road, which are Grade II listed buildings.
15. The Council did not find any harm to the significance and settings of the listed buildings. Based on my site visit, where I noted the position of the appeal site in relation to the listed buildings and the limited intervisibility between the site and the listed buildings, I have no reason to disagree with the Council's conclusion. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the listed buildings' settings, and it would have a neutral impact on their significance and special interest.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

K Reeves

INSPECTOR