

Ward: Norcot
App No.: 201727/FUL
Address: 27 St Georges Terrace
Proposal: Single storey extensions
Applicant: Mrs Jeyanthini Anathasothy
Deadline: 28/01/21

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

Conditions

1. Time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Materials
4. Obscure-glazing

Informatives

1. Terms
2. Building Control
3. Complaints about construction
4. Encroachment

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 27 St Georges Terrace comprises a two storey end-of-terrace building, located at the junction with Shaftesbury Road. It has a two storey rear 'outrigger', single storey side and rear extensions and an outbuilding, formerly a garage, in the rear yard. A lean-to/canopy is located to the side of the outrigger, adjacent to No. 29. The site slopes down in a northerly direction (from the front to the back of the site), such that existing rear entrances to the building have stepped access into the yard.
- 1.2 The ground floor of the building is partly in use as a commercial shop (Use Class E). The rear part of the ground floor and the entirety of the first floor comprise a single dwelling. The surrounding area is residential in character, predominantly comprised of terraced rows of housing of similar design.



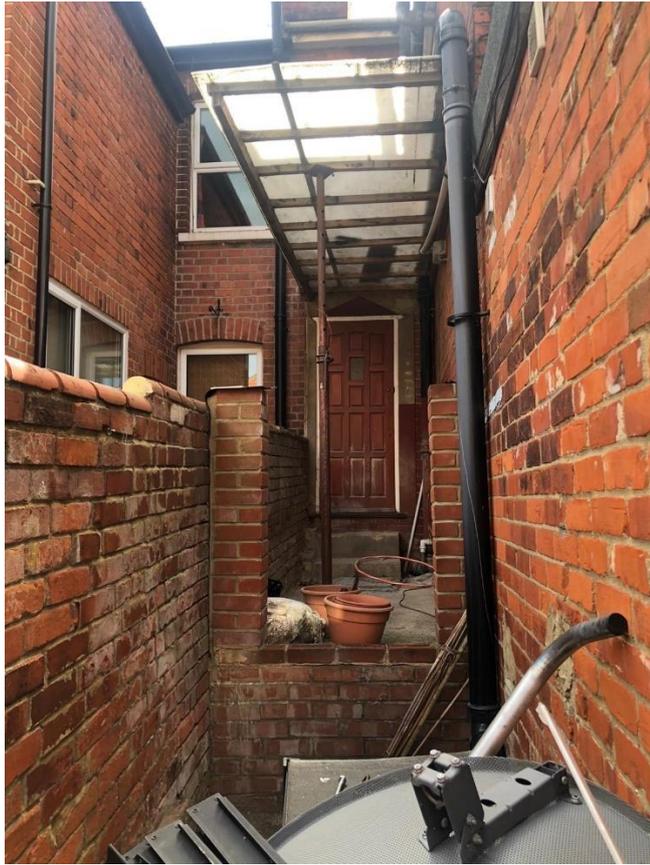
Site Location Plan



Aerial view of site



Site viewed from junction of St Georges Terrace and Shaftesbury Road



View towards rear elevation, aside outrigger



View from rear, to demonstrate sloping topography

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for a single storey front and rear extensions to enlarge the existing shop. The front extension would square off the existing recessed and tapered entrance to the building, with a projection of approximately 1m. The rear extension would extend to the side of the outrigger to the boundary with No. 29, projecting to a depth of 2m. The rear extension would be set lower than the existing ground floor level, and would have obscure-glazed windows and a glazed roof. The rear extension would have a hipped roof form with a maximum height of 2.6m, with a lower eaves height to the boundary with No. 29. During the course of the application, the agent has confirmed that the rear extension would be used for shop storage and staff access only. The proposals do not result in any change to the floorspace of the existing dwelling.
- 2.2 The following plans were received on 04/12/20:
Drawing No: SGT/01/01 - Site Location
Drawing No: SGT/01/02 - Existing and Proposed Block Plans
Drawing No: SGT/01/02 - Existing Floor Plans
Drawing No: SGT/01/02 - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: SGT/01/03 - Existing and Proposed Elevations
- 2.3 The originally submitted application proposal included a larger rear extension of 3.75m depth, at ground floor level. Clear glazing was proposed to the side and rear elevations.
- 2.4 The applicant was advised of concerns held with the rear extension. Due to its proximity, height and depth along the boundary with no. 29, the extent of clear glazing to the side elevation and the ground level, significant harm would be caused to the residential amenities of No. 29 in terms of loss of privacy through overlooking, visual dominance and overbearing effects.
- 2.5 Subsequently the agent supplied the following, received on 22/02/21:
Drawing No: SGT/01/03 Rev. B - Existing and Proposed Elevations
- 2.6 The amendment set the rear extension down from the existing ground floor level, altered the roof form of the extension with a reduced eaves height along the boundary with no. 29, and replaced the clear glazing with frosted glass.
- 2.7 The was advised on 22/07/21 that while the degree of harm had been lessened by the amendments, significant harm would still be caused to the residential amenities of no. 29 by virtue of the extension's depth and height.
- 2.8 Subsequently the agent supplied the following, received on 01/08/21:
Drawing No: SGT/01/02 Rev. C - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: SGT/01/03 Rev. C - Existing and Proposed Elevations
- 2.9 These amendments are described in para. 2.1.
- 2.10 The application was called in to PAC for determination by Cllr Lovelock due to neighbour objections with the proposal.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

940308/FUL - Dining room/kitchen extension and shop store - Permitted
08/08/94

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory

4.1 None undertaken.

Non-statutory

4.2 None undertaken.

Public

4.3 A site notice was displayed. Neighbouring properties at 25 & 29 St Georges Terrace and 61 Shaftesbury Road were consulted by letter. One representation was received raising the following issues

- Loss of light to habitable ground floor rooms at 29 St Georges Terrace
- Loss of privacy through overlooking to 29 St Georges Terrace
- Increase in sense of enclosure to the rear of 29 St Georges Terrace
- Increase in noise and disturbance resulting from the use of the additional floorspace

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 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) which also states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

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

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

Supplementary Planning Documents

Draft Design Guide to Shopfronts (2021)

6. APPRAISAL

Main issues:

Principle of development

Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

Impact on neighbouring residential amenity

Principle of development

- 6.1 The principle of development is acceptable as it would enable an existing commercial shop to be improved, suitable for modern use and occupation.

Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

- 6.2 Policy CC7 requires that all development be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The building is not listed, nor is it located within a conservation area. The surrounding area is residential in character, comprised of terraced rows of housing. The pattern of development is consistent, with each property characterised by a two storey rear outrigger, with short single storey projections beyond. There are several examples in the vicinity of the application site of properties which have been enlarged by single storey extensions.
- 6.3 At this corner location, 27 St Georges Terrace occupies a larger plot than its neighbours. A single storey extension has already enlarged the building to the side and rear. The entrance to the commercial shop is recessed and tapered back, with an existing roof structure above. The proposed front extension would infill this small area, squaring off the building. A new entrance and glazing would be located to the front elevation. This would replace the current high-level window and side door, which do not currently appear to be reflective of the shop use. The LPA has produced a consultation draft Shopfronts policy and this has yet to be formally adopted. This document promotes a more traditional shopfront design strategy for the Borough. Whilst the contemporary approach in this application, featuring a large, plate-glass window, would not reflect this policy document, it would represent an improvement on the present situation, where the present extension does not reflect its function. The proposed front extension is considered to be modest in scale and would not significantly detract from the existing building's appearance or that of the surrounding area. Overall, officers find no conflict with Policy CC7 or the draft guide.
- 6.4 The rearward element of the proposal also constitutes an infill extension, to the side of the original outrigger to the boundary with no. 29, within the 'tunnelback'. This element would have the appearance of a conservatory, and through two amendments has been substantially reduced in scale during the course of the application. The depth, roof form and overall height of the extension have all been amended, with the resultant proposal achieving a suitable degree of subservience to the original building. The rear extension would replace a pre-existing lean-to/canopy which is of little design merit. It is accepted that a conservatory would have a different appearance in terms of external materials than the original building, and no significant harm to the building's appearance is deemed to be caused. This element would not be clearly visible from public areas, and poses no harm to the character of the surrounding area. On this basis, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy CC7.

Impact on neighbouring residential amenity

- 6.5 The original proposal, and first amendment, were deemed to cause harm to the residential amenities of no. 29 in terms of loss of privacy through overlooking, visual dominance and overbearing effects. The impact of the rearward element on the residential amenities of no. 29 is exacerbated by the sloping site topography, with the application site at a slightly higher

ground level. Windows serving ground floor habitable rooms at no. 29 are located in close proximity the proposed extension. Through amendments the depth, height and roof form of the rearward element have been reduced, with the intention to mitigate the identified harm caused to no. 29.

- 6.6 The combination of the lowered ground floor level, reduced depth and altered roof form serve to ensure that no significant visual dominance or overbearing effects would be caused to no. 29 by the rearward element. The height to eaves would be approximately the same as the height of the existing boundary wall (which can be seen in the image above) and the depth of the extension would be very modest in scale. While clearly noticeable by the occupants of no. 29, any visual dominance or overbearing effects caused are considered to be less than substantial and would not materially harm the outlook from the approximate ground floor habitable rooms at no. 29.
- 6.7 In addition to the above, the provision of obscure-glazing would limit the extent of direct overlooking that would be caused to no. 29. It is accepted that despite the provision of obscure-glazing, the occupants of no. 29 may still experience a perception of overlooking. The agent has confirmed that the use of the rear extension would be for storage purposes and staff access only. It is therefore expected that the space would have only occasional occupation, with minimal lingering time by staff and given the limited overall floorspace, it is unlikely to be used otherwise. The concerns raised by the occupant of No. 29 are acknowledged, but officers do not consider that a level of harm sufficient to warrant a reason for refusal of the application would be reached. Subject to a condition requiring the installation and ongoing provision of obscure-glazing, officers find the proposal to be in accordance with Policy CC8.

Other matters

- 6.8 The proposed plans indicate internal alterations to the property, including alterations to internal walls, the staircase and knocking through the storage area to the side to provide more shop floorspace. These aspects appear to have a neutral or positive effect on the operation of the shop/dwelling and do not appear to raise any particular planning issues. Separate Building Regulations approval will be required. The rear extension does not appear to be able to drain to the side without affixing guttering which would encroach onto the neighbouring property, however, none is shown on the plans and an informative can remind the applicant that any planning permission does not confer the right to build on, over or under neighbouring land without that landowner's permission.

Equalities Impact

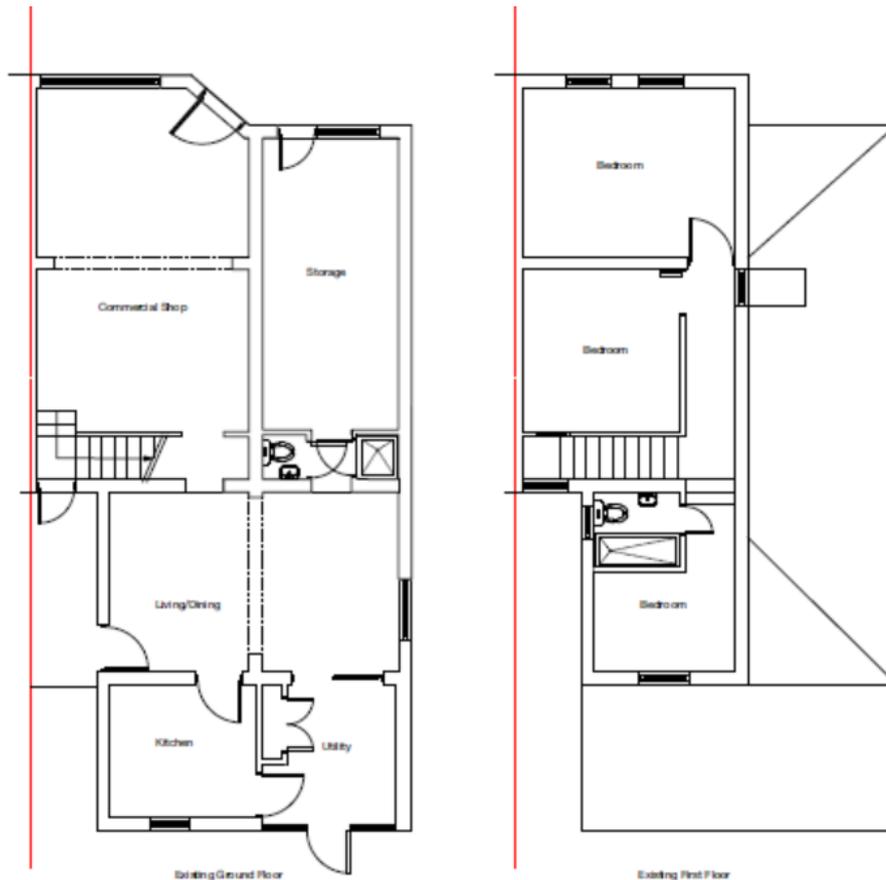
- 6.9 It is noted that the floorspace within the rear extension would have stepped access down, which causes a minor issues in accessibility terms, but given the small area of floorspace affected, officers do not consider that this would lead to any appreciable detrimental impact on equality of access and conflict with Policy CC7.
- 6.10 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the 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.

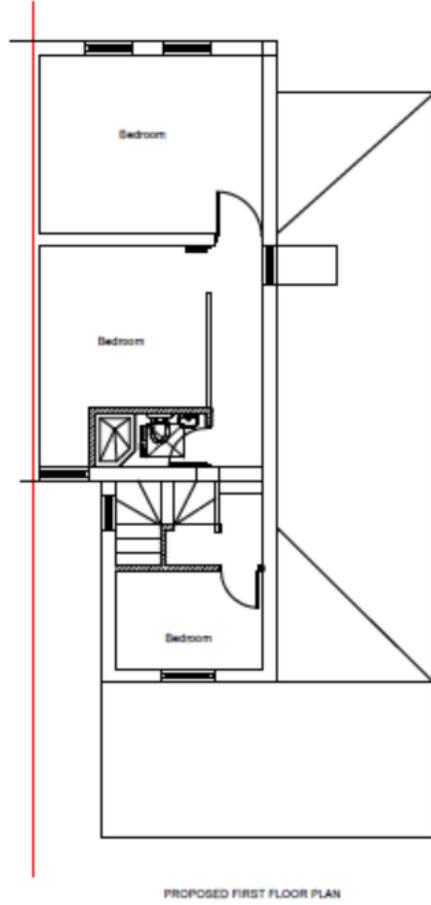
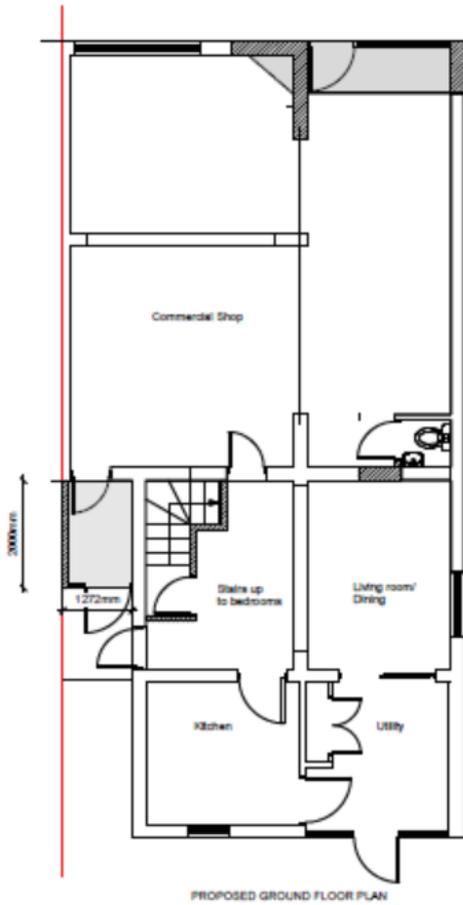
7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Harm was identified with the original proposal in terms of its impact on the residential amenities of 29 St Georges Terrace. Through amendments, this harm has been adequately mitigated, such that officers find no direct conflict with the identified policy. Subject to conditions, the proposal is recommended for approval on this basis.

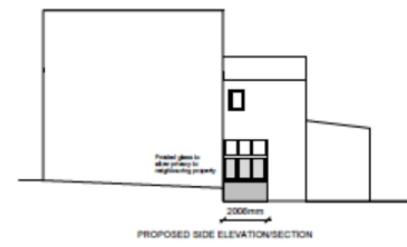
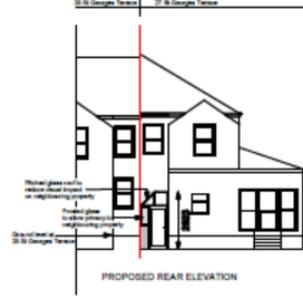
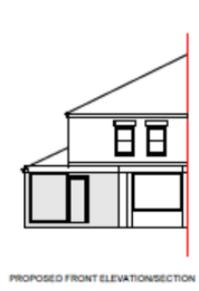
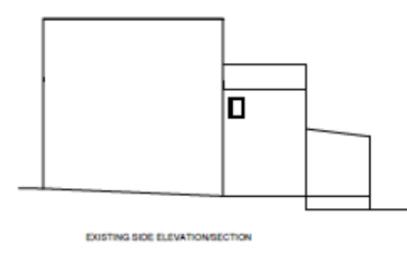
Case Officer: Tom Hughes



Existing Floor Plans



Proposed Floor Plans



Existing and Proposed Elevations