

28 May 2025



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Kentwood Ward
Planning Application Reference:	PL/25/0108 Full planning permission
Site Address:	Addresses At Lyndhurst Road, Ringwood Road, Oxford Road, Ripley Road, Cranbourne Gardens and Bramshaw Road Tilehurst
Proposed Development	Part-retrospective estate improvement works, including installation of triple-glazed UPVc windows; Renewal of flat roof covering; External structural repairs; renewal of pitched roof tiles; and installation of external wall insulation
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Anthony Scholes
Deadline:	4 June 2025
Recommendations	Grant subject to conditions
Conditions	1. Approved Plans 2. Materials – As specified
Informatives	1. Positive and proactive 2. Building Control – separate approvals required 3. Highways 4. Terms

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The proposal seeks part-retrospective permission for the external alterations to 40 Council owned properties within the Old Norcot Estate. The proposal is partly retrospective, with works expected to be completed in late May. The proposal is stated to be 'stage 4' of the estate regeneration program which was preceded by three applications for similar works from 2021-2022. The proposal would alter the external appearance of all buildings through the various works. Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its effect upon the character and appearance of the area, and neighbouring amenity.
- 1.2. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The proposed works are exterior alterations, and repair works to various Council owned dwellings along Oxford Road, Lyndhurst Road, Ringwood Road, Ripley Road, Cranbourne Gardens, and Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst. All properties are located on the Old Norcot Estate, which has a mix of similarly designed terraced rows and semi-detached residential dwellings, constructed in the mid-1920s.

- 2.2. This project seeks to improve the thermal efficiency of the properties as well as perform replacement works. The external wall insulation (EWI) system proposed is a key component of this project and aims to improve thermal efficiency through conserving fuel and power, enabling Reading Borough Council to work towards its Zero Carbon target by 2030.
- 2.3. At the time of writing this report, the works proposed within this application are nearing completion, with an expected completion around the end of May. Therefore, part-retrospective planning permission is sought for the works as outlined within this planning application. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being for works to Council owned (Regulation 3) property. It is noted that the applicant has decided to proceed 'at risk' without first obtaining Planning Permission. The reason given is *"Due to budget restrictions and timeframes that the works have commenced. The works are due to finish at the end of May"*



Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

NOTE: The three areas outlined in red on the above plan are where the groups of dwellings, which are the subject of this planning application, are located. The multiple blue lines in the area indicate the extent of Council ownerships in the area.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The development proposes alterations to:

Nos. 32, 38, 40, 48, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 68, 75, 81, 83, 85, 89, 95, 99, 103, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119 Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6UG.
 Nos. 21, 23, 25, 27, 44, 46, 50 Ringwood Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6UG.
 Nos 841 and 843 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 6TR.
 Nos 14 and 30 Ripley Road, Reading RG30 6UD.
 No 12 Cranbourne Gardens, Reading RG30 6TS.
 No 40 Bramshaw Road, Reading RG30 6AT.

- 3.2. The following works are confirmed by the planning case officer to be within the criteria for being permitted development:
- Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
 - Renewal of flat roof coverings
 - Structural repairs (External)

- Renewal of pitched roof tiles

3.3. Notwithstanding the above, the following works have been confirmed to require planning permission:

- External Wall Insulation (EWI) Systems
- Extension of roof overhangs to gable ends or dormer style roofs to allow for EWI to be fitted under new soffit.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

4.1. The following plans and documents were submitted to support the application:

- Location Plan
- Block Plan
- Design and Access Statement
- Cover letter
- CIL form
- Application form
As received 22 January 2025
- Drawing No 24/019/01C General Arrangement Rev C
- Drawing No 24/019/02C General Arrangement Rev C
- Drawing No 24/019/03C General Arrangement Rev C
- Drawing No 24/019/04C General Arrangement Rev C
- Drawing No 24/019/05C General Arrangement Rev C
As received 7 March 2025

5. Planning history

5.1. A number of previous applications for similar improvements across the Old Norcot Estate have been previously considered by Planning Applications Committee:

- PL/21/0904 (REG3) - Works consist of property improvements and upgrades of Thermal efficiency measures to dwellings detailed below. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Phase 1 addresses to include:- 35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road RG30 6AT 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AS 377 & 379 Norcot Road, RG30 6AB. Works will see the existing render overclad with a new external wall insulation system, replacement of new triple glazed windows, minor roof adaptations and associated works (Part Retrospective) (Amended Description). Approved 24 June 2021
- PL/22/0190 (REG3) - Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 31 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptations, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road. 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens. 158 Thirlmere Ave. 13 Ringwood Road. 61 Lyndhurst Road. 67 Lyndhurst Road. (Part Retrospective). Approved 11 February 2022
- PL/22/1800 (REG3) - Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 22 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptations, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include:- 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 13 Rockbourne Gardens, RG30 6AU. 2, 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11 Cranbourne Gardens, RG30 6TS. 6, 11, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26 Ripley Road, RG30 6UD. (Part retrospective) (Amended description). Approved 29 June 2023

6. Consultations

6.1. Ten (10) site notices were placed at various points around the area:



Figure 2 - Approximate location of site notices

6.2. No comments were received during the consultation period.

7. Legal context

7.1 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) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

7.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3 Adaption to Climate Change

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

H9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (Adopted March 2021)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (Adopted December 2019)

8. Appraisal

8.1. The main issues are considered to be:

- I. Design and appearance
- II. Amenity

I) Design and appearance

- 8.2 The proposed works seek to refurbish and improve the thermal performance of these properties for the benefit of the occupiers. The proposed finished insulation system would have a depth of 115mm from the existing cement render. This will alter the character and appearance of the buildings beyond simply a change in render colour. The depth of the proposed render has the potential to alter the external appearance of window openings, doorframes, and result in the loss of eaves.



Figure 3 - Side-by-side recent photo and original elevation showing difference in depth

- 8.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that “plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”. For decision making, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 8.4 As referred to in the Planning Statement submitted for this application, Reading Borough Council is committed to working towards achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030. As per paragraph 4.7 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019), heat loss can be prevented by applying high levels of insulation to the roof, walls and floors. Heat loss from windows can be further reduced through double or triple glazing. The works proposed by this application aim to maximise energy efficiency by reducing heat loss from the building envelope. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with the principles of policy CC3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which seeks existing development to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through building improvements.
- 8.5 The properties subject to this application are two storey terraced rows of houses, or semi-detached dwellings. The appearance of these properties previously was the same as others in the area being pebble-dash render, brown roof tiles, PVC windows, and brick porch arches.
- 8.6 The external wall insulation has been selected to improve energy efficiency at the respective properties. The colour of the render finish is different from the predominantly pebble-dash render character of the surrounding area, however it is considered that the new render coating and natural white colour selected is not harmful to the appearance of the application properties or the surrounding area and is consistent with previously approved schemes within the estate.
- 8.7 The render and finish at the depth that has been proposed/implemented has altered the appearance of openings and eaves to the affected properties, resulting in extended eaves and deep window reveals when compared to unaltered neighbouring properties. The adapted roofline is not considered a significant change or harmful to the character and appearance of the proposal sites or the surrounding area.
- 8.8 The proposed replacement of the existing uPVC windows with triple glazed uPVC windows are considered like for like, whilst again positively improving energy efficiency

to these dwellings. The roof adaptations proposed are for the eaves to be extended to accommodate the depth of the render.

- 8.9 It is noted that there is a loss in the detailing of some of the properties (see Appendix 1); these include the loss of red brick archways, along with a change from red brick to render at ground floor level. The loss of such features is not considered harmful in this instance due to the inherent benefits of the proposed works and varying character of the surrounding area.
- 8.10 With regards to the long-term care and maintenance of the external wall insulation; information has been provided detailing procedures for ongoing inspections and maintenance. This includes instructions for cleaning the render, as well as attaching fixtures and fittings to the render.
- 8.11 Overall, in terms of the appearance of the refurbished and altered properties, the changes are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies CC7 and H9.

II) Amenity

- 8.12 The proposed works are not considered to harm the living conditions of neighbours within the surrounding area. This is largely due to the nature and scale of the works proposed. The works are not considered to harm the outlook from neighbouring properties, appear visually dominant or harmful when assessed against the criteria listed under policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.
- 8.13 The development is considered to result in a betterment for existing and future occupiers at the dwellings subject to the works proposed within this application. It is noted that reveals of windows at the proposal sites are deeper as a result of the external wall insulation, however, the additional depth is not considered to result in a harmful loss of light or harm to outlook for occupiers.
- 8.14 Therefore, the proposed works are considered in accordance with policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

9. Equality implications

- 9.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular application.

10. Conclusion

- 9.1 In addition to being in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the development is considered to suitably improve the thermal efficiency of the respective Council owned properties, whilst not harming the character and appearance of the properties or the area. It can be concluded that the inherent benefits of the proposal by improving energy efficiency at these properties, as part of the

Council's commitment to its Climate Emergency declaration, is considered to weigh heavily in favour of this development.

Case Officer: Anthony Scholes

Plans & Appendices

Site photos of a number of properties where works are completed or underway:



Figure 4 - Site Photos



Figure 7 - Existing and Proposed Plans 3

