

Planning Applications Committee

03 December 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPEALS
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Inclusive Economy
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To note the report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To advise Committee on notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on planning appeals registered with them or decision made and to provide summary reports on appeal decisions of interest the Planning Applications Committee.

2. Information provided

- 2.1. Please see Appendix 1 of this report for new appeals lodged since the last committee.
- 2.2. Please see Appendix 2 of this report for appeals decided since the last committee with summary reports provided.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 3.1. The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
- Promote more equal communities in Reading
 - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
 - Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 3.2. In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
- Putting residents first
 - Building on strong foundations
 - Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
 - Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 - Being proudly ambitious for Reading

- 3.3. Defending planning appeals made against planning decisions contributes to creating a sustainable and healthy environment with supported communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the priorities within the Council Plan.

4. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 4.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 4.2. The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods

5. Community Engagement

- 5.1. Planning decisions are made in accordance with adopted local development plan policies, which have been adopted by the Council following public consultation. Statutory consultation also takes place on planning applications and appeals, and this can have bearing on the decision reached by the Secretary of State and his Inspectors. Copies of appeal decisions are held on the public Planning Register.

6. Equality Implications

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. It is considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to the decision on whether sites need to be visited by Planning Application Committee. The decision will not have a differential impact on people with the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. Public Inquiries are normally the only types of appeal that involve the use of legal representation. Only applicants have the right to appeal against refusal or non-determination and there is no right for a third party to appeal a planning decision.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. Public Inquiries and Informal Hearings are more expensive in terms of officer and appellant time than the Written Representations method. Either party can be liable to awards of costs. Guidance is provided in Circular 03/2009 “Cost Awards in Appeals and other Planning Proceedings”.

9. Timetable for Implementation

- 9.1. Not applicable.

10. Background Papers

- 10.1. There are none.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals Lodged:

None Lodged

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: Thames
APPEAL NO: APP/TRN/E0345/10197
CASE NO: TPO 3/22
ADDRESS: Land adjacent to 24 George Street, Caversham
PROPOSAL: Tree Replacement Notice to replant 4 trees
CASE OFFICER: Sarah Hanson
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 30 October 2025

On 30 August 2022 consent was granted under application 221187/TPO for three Poplar trees to be felled that were the subject of TPO 3/22, subject to a condition requiring the replacement planting of three trees. On 21 November 2022, the Council agreed that another Poplar was exempt from requiring consent under the 'dangerous' exemption. When a tree is felled under such an exemption it is the duty of the owner of the land to plant another tree of an appropriate size and species at the same place as soon as they reasonably can. The landowner failed to replant, hence a Tree Replacement Notice (TRN) was served on 13 June 2024 and an appeal was subsequently lodged. Immediately following this, the owner submitted a planning application (PI/25/0900) which was subsequently refused and an appeal lodged (see below). Consideration of both appeals in tandem was appropriate as planning approval would have meant the TRN could not be complied with. Following the dismissal of the planning appeal, the appeal against the TRN was then dismissed. Whilst not explicit in the appellant's submission, the Inspector took the grounds of appeal against the TRN to be that *'the place on which the tree is/trees are required to be planted is unsuitable for that purpose'* given the submission of the planning application. As the planning application was dismissed, the Inspector found *'that the locations of the replacement trees set out on the plan attached to the TRN are suitable and the appeal fails'*.

WARD: Thames
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/25/3364774
CASE NO: PL/24/0900
ADDRESS: Land adjacent to 24 George Street, Caversham
PROPOSAL: Construction of 5 no. 3-bedroom town houses
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 28 October 2025

Officer note: The Inspector agreed with the key concerns raised by Officers including inappropriate siting of proposals within Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) resulting in unacceptable risk of flooding, harm to the character and appearance of the area through the introduction of a discordant development and loss of undesignated open space, poor quality of accommodation due to inadequate garden sizes and restricted outlook to first floor bedrooms and failure to provide meaningful and required tree planting and mandatory biodiversity net gain. The Inspector considered that any benefits (policy compliant affordable housing contribution, provision of new

housing and some economic benefits) would not outweigh the totality of the harm. The dismissal is a pleasing and clear-cut outcome.

WARD: THAMES
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/24/3351980
CASE NO: PL/24/0015
ADDRESS: 70-78 Wokingham Road RG6 1JL
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing building and construction of 6no 3 bed flats and 6no 2 bed flats over 3 storeys including parking, landscaping, bin and cycle stores.
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys; Anthony Scholes
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
Award of Costs to Council Refused
DATE DETERMINED: 28 October 2025

This application was refused for nine (9) reasons including: design and appearance and failure to enhance the character and appearance of the area; inappropriate design, scale, bulk, and massing; amenity for neighbours; amenity for future occupants; lack of suitable space for landscaping; failure to demonstrate no biodiversity net loss; failure to contribute to affordable housing (s106); failure to secure an ESP (s106); and failure to secure zero-carbon homes offsetting (s106). Overall, the Inspector agreed with all reasons for refusal. Notably, the Inspector concluded that whilst back-to-back distances exceeded 20m, there would remain to be unacceptable overlooking due to the scale of the proposal (height). This is a very pleasing decision that further justifies the Officers stance in relation to the proposal.

An application for costs was sought by officers to cover part of the expense; however the Inspector did not consider that the Appellant acted unreasonably, despite lodging an appeal which had no prospect of succeeding. This is unfortunate and the LPA will have to cover the costs of the viability review in this case.

WARD: Park
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/24/3354103
CASE NO: Enforcement Appeal
ADDRESS: 11 Whiteknights Road, RG6 7BY
PROPOSAL: Rear extension not in accordance
CASE OFFICER: Stephen Hammond
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 12th November 2025

The appeal is dismissed; the enforcement notice is corrected and varied then upheld and planning permission is refused.

WARD: Park
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/24/3354104
CASE NO: Enforcement Appeal
ADDRESS: 11 Whiteknights Road, RG6 7BY
PROPOSAL: Boundary wall scheme
CASE OFFICER: Stephen Hammond
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 12th November 2025

The appeal is dismissed; the enforcement notice is corrected and varied then upheld. This has been a prolonged case so it is gratifying to have our concerns upheld for both appeals by the Inspector and the owner is encouraged to comply.

WARD: Redlands
APPEAL NO: APP /E0345/W/25/3366304
CASE NO: PL/25/0590
ADDRESS: St Jospeh's College, 64 Upper Redlands Road
PROPOSAL: Replacement windows, replacement roofing and the provision of PV panels to South facing roof slope
CASE OFFICER: Marcelina Rejwerska
METHOD Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 13th November 2025

This application related to a wholesale replacement of timber windows with uPVC double glazing. The applicant did not provide sufficient information regarding the existing windows, whether they are original and what condition they are in. The Inspector agreed that uPVC was inappropriate for this property, and its somewhat limited views from Upper Redlands Road are not a relevant consideration, as the character of the building would be impacted regardless of public views. This is a positive outcome and highlights the need for applicants to submit sufficient heritage statements carried out by appropriately qualified heritage professionals.

WARD: Redlands
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/25/3363140 & APP/E0345/Y/25/3363142
CASE NO: PL/24/1148 & PL/24/1111
ADDRESS: 97 London Road, Reading RG1 5BY
PROPOSAL: Proposed restoration of brick boundary wall and paving of frontage and new bin store
CASE OFFICER: Matthew Harding
METHOD Written Representation
DECISION: Both Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 17th November 2025

This application proposed paving of the entire green frontage and erection of a brick boundary wall – for which there was little basis in the history of the site. The Inspector agreed that this would have been harmful to the setting and appearance of the Listed Building. It is a positive decision which highlights the importance of considering the setting of Listed Buildings.

WARD: Caversham Heights Ward
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/D/25/3373169
CASE NO: PL/25/0574
ADDRESS: 1 Gravel Hill Cottages, Blagrove Lane, RG4 LDY
PROPOSAL: Two storey and single storey rear and side extensions
CASE OFFICER: Huimin Chen
METHOD Written Representation
DECISION: Dismissed
DATE DETERMINED: 17th November 2025

The main issue for the Inspector was the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area, including the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)). He found the overall

scale and mass of the proposed extensions would not respond positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the appeal property and would be a dominant and incongruous feature to both the rear and side of the building. Along with the loss of a substantial portion of the rear projecting wing, and the rear wall and eaves of the main building, this would result in harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies CC7, H9 and EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019, which seek to ensure that development maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area and that extensions respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

WARD: Caversham Heights Ward
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/25/3365613
CASE NO: PL/23/1023
ADDRESS: The Heights Primary School, 129 Upper Woodcote Road, Reading RG4 7LB
PROPOSAL: Use of existing 2FE primary school for up to 420 pupils
CASE OFFICER: Matthew Harding
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Allowed
DATE DETERMINED: 18th November 2025

The main issue in the appeal was the effect of increasing the school capacity 350-420 pupils and the impact of this on educational choice in the North Reading School catchment area (ie. Caversham). Whilst the Inspector noted there was capacity in North Reading generally, the four nearest Primary schools in the north-west of the catchment nearest The Heights School are already at capacity. The Inspector therefore found that even if increasing the capacity of The Heights did adversely affect undersubscribed schools and reduce choice in North Reading, the proposal would allow parents within The Heights' catchment to have their first choice of school; thus finding that at best, the effect of the proposal would be neutral, having regard to the NPPF's aim to widen choice in education. The second reason for refusal concerned the lack of a s106 agreement for highway improvements on the A4074 Upper Woodcote Road, but the Inspector decided that given the scale of the works, this could be covered by a 'Grampian'-style (off-site) restrictive condition, simply requiring the works in the plans to be implemented before the increase in pupil numbers could take place. The effect of additional noise disturbance on neighbours would be adequately mitigated by an acoustic fence condition. Other intensification issues cited by objectors were not accepted by the Inspector.

WARD: Abbey
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/25/3367585
CASE NO: PL/24/1353
ADDRESS: 7 Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1PJ
PROPOSAL: Demolition of the existing building (façade retained) and erection of a five-storey building with a café, bed and breakfast, and ancillary spaces
CASE OFFICER: Marcelina Rejwerska
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Allowed
DATE DETERMINED: 25th November 2025