

DESIGN AND STATEMENT

PROPOSED CONVERSION - SINGLE DWELLING TO APARTMENTS



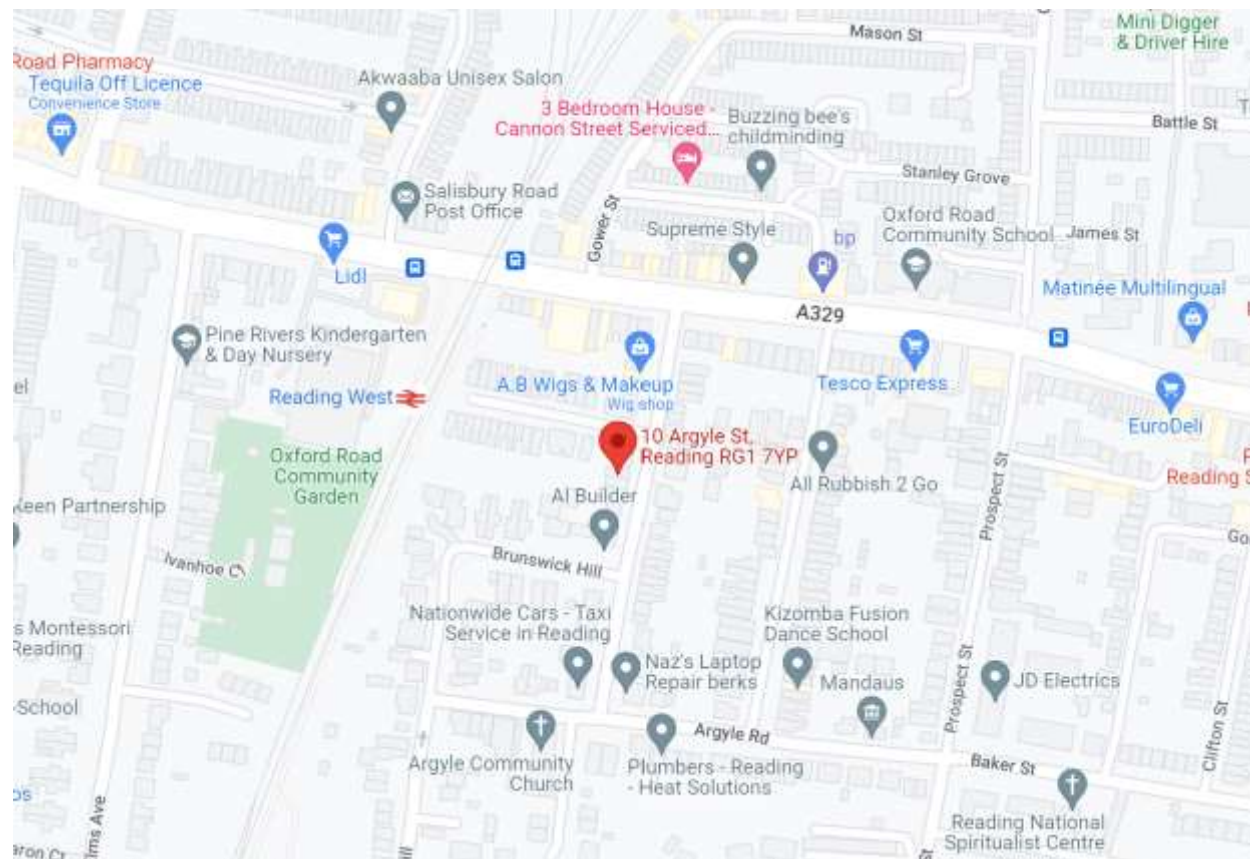
SITE LOCATION

The property is located on Argyle Street, RG1. A residential street off the busier Oxford Road, which has many retail amenities and is the main route into Reading centre which lies approx. 1 mile to the east, as well as being as providing access west to the Chilterns. Reading West station is a 3 minute walk from the property.

Currently the property is a single dwelling split over 3 floors, including a rear yard with access to a shared alley way and a small front yard. The area of the property is approximately 145m2 and consists of 5 bedrooms, separate kitchen, living room, dining room and 2 bathrooms.

The area is well served by public transport with Reading West train station and two bus stops within 200m. Reading central station is within a 15 minute walk, lying 1 mile to the east. The location is also within walking distance to many local amenities including supermarkets, restaurants, post office and parks.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor close or adjacent to a Listed Building, and is not located within an area of any specific planning designation.



PLANNING HISTORY

PP-11571129 - Certificate of Lawfulness (proposed) for an L-shaped dormer roof extension within the confines of the permitted development rights, submitted on 26/09/2022. – Confirmed on 21/11/2022

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is for the conversion of the property into 3 self-contained flats. The proposal offers a variety of apartment sizes, ranging from 2 to 3 bedroom flats, therefore making the property suitable for a wide range of occupiers.

The building will not be altered from the front elevation, bar the installation of a velux style roof light on the 2nd floor, submitted as part of the certificate of lawfulness referenced above. To the rear an l-shaped dormer extension is proposed using materials to match the existing roof.

Internally there are numerous changes involved in converting the property into 3 flats. The internal layout is pragmatic and offers comfortable accommodation for the future residents. The flats are well proportioned and offer good standard of accommodation, above the minimum 39m² in the national housing standards.

The rear yard will be for use of the ground floor apartment, which has an existing outhouse which can be used for storage. The ground floor apartment bins will be located in the rear yard. There is ample space in the small front yard for refuse bins for the two upper flats.

The design will adhere to all required building regulations and design input will be sought from a qualified acoustician to minimise the sound transfer between floors.

PROPOSED AREAS

The proposed self-contained flats will have the following gross internal areas:

GROUND FLOOR - 3 Bed flat, 55.5m²

FIRST FLOOR - 2 Bed flat, 45.5m²

SECOND FLOOR - 2 Bed flat, 44.6m²

ACCESS

Due to the existing building levels, level access will not be immediately available, however should this be required, the ground floor flat could have level access via the rear yard.

PLANNING POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) seeks to promote a wide choice of house types and home ownership. Para. 50 states that local planning authorities:

“To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- *plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);*
- *identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and....”*

The proposed development would enhance the range of house types and house tenures available in the area. With affordability for first time and single person households beyond reach for single houses, offering more affordable apartment units mixed alongside housing, at appropriate locations, close to transport nodes, local amenities and employment will be vital to enable government housing targets to be reached.

READING LOCAL PLAN – H8 RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS

With reference to Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted Nov 2019) and the specific note therein regarding residential conversions, seen below, please see below responses to each of the specific requirements.

‘H8: RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS

Proposals to convert buildings into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas and other related servicing.

Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:

The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;’

Response: The street is of mixed scale overall, however the subject property is located at the end of the street at the junction with the busy commercial Oxford Road. This row of half a dozen properties on each side of the street are taller in scale to the more residential side which meets Argyll Road, with many already successfully converted into multiple apartments. The proposed sub-division into 3 apartments will not visually impact the street and will align with the current density.

‘The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;’

Response: The property is situated close to the junction with Oxford Road, which is largely commercial. It is also less than a five minute walk to the nearest train, bus stop and large super market (Lidl), making it ideal for apartment living. The street generally becomes more residential in scale and density the further away from Oxford Road it gets, again suggesting the property is suitably located for a conversion into multiple units.

‘There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;’

Response: The proposed scheme minimises the location of living rooms in locations where there would be adjacent bedrooms, with the majority of the bedrooms located to the rear of the property. This is in line with the layouts of the neighbouring properties which have already been converted.

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‘There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;’

Response: As above, the layouts have been sympathetically design to avoid placing bedrooms above busy communal areas of living spaces.

‘Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access;’

Response: Appropriate off street, discreet space has been identified for bin storage for each unit, noted on the submitted plans.

‘The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floor space and headroom for residents.’

Response: All habitable rooms will maintain a minimum 2.4m head height, with the smallest unit (44.6 m²) well above the minimum 39m² set-out in the Government’s Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard.

‘Additionally, in the case of conversions of houses to self-contained flats:

- *The property to be converted measures more than 120 square metres gross;*
- *At least 25% of the units formed and, where there are 4 or fewer units at least one unit of accommodation, should be suitable for family occupation with a minimum of two bedrooms.’*

Response: All units in the proposal have a minimum of two beds, which matches the majority of the needed housing identified in page 74 of the Local Plan.

SUMMARY

For the future residents of this proposed development it is our intention to create a sustainable scheme that provides a very attractive development that is accommodating to modern day living, with ample spaced units, and a location that has many transport, amenities and employment opportunities within walking distance. Due regard has been given to all the relevant policies and the scheme complies with these policies. It is considered that the proposal does not detract from the appearance of the building or lead to over-development of the site.