



# PLANNING BY DESIGN

FROM CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

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**Change of use to C4 HMO at: 48 Cardigan  
Road, Reading, RG1 5QL**

## **Planning Statement**

**Written and prepared by Planning by Design  
on Behalf of Mrs Yuentung Chiu**

## Introduction

Planning by Design has been instructed to act on behalf of the applicant, to submit a planning application for the change of the subject site to a HMO to accommodate up to 4no. tenants.

This statement provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme in the context of relevant planning policies / guidance and material considerations.

For reasons identified in this statement, it is considered that based on planning policy and material considerations, the application proposals represent appropriate development and that permission ought to be granted.

## Site Location

The application site is a 3 bedroom terrace property located on the eastern side of Cardigan Road.

The property is located in close proximity to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. It is also located within an Article 4 area preventing unrestricted changes of use from C3 to C4 use.

## The Proposed Development

The applicant seeks a change of use to a 4 bed House of Multiple Occupation (C4). The applicant considers that this would be an appropriate use for the property, providing well maintained, professionally managed private rented accommodation in a sustainable location.

The applicant intends to offer fully furnished residential accommodation of a high specification. This type of all-inclusive accommodation is becoming increasingly popular within the private rented sector as it allows tenants to accurately budget for all their accommodation costs.

It is the applicant's intention to advertise accommodation primarily to medical professionals, given the proximity of the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

The bedrooms will be well sized, complying with the minimum standards, and will be newly refurbished to a high standard throughout. No external alterations are proposed.

## Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The following policy and guidance documents are recognised as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location:

### Reading Borough Local Plan [RBLP] (adopted December 2020)

The RBLP was adopted on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019. This document sets out our planning policies for development in Reading up to 2036, and is the main consideration in deciding planning applications. Policies relevant to this application include:

- CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- H8: Residential conversions

### National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]

The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achieving sustainable development and that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way. Whilst the NPPF is not part of the statutory development plan it is a material consideration of significant weight in the planning balance.

## **Assessment**

### Sustainable Development

RBLP Policy CC1 mirrors paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which advises that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development in accordance with the development plan should be granted without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is necessary to consider the relevant issues and any material considerations before making a recommendation as to whether the proposal should be granted permission or refused.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- i) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- ii) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- iii) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

For the reasons set out below, it is considered that the proposed change of use would achieve the above objectives.

## Principle of Development

The key policy in the determination of this application is RBLP Policy H8, which states that 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;*

- **No external changes to the property are proposed. The current premises is currently in a poor condition and the proposed development would result in a significant improvement to the physical character of the area.**

- *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;*

- *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;*

- **Reading Borough have a 6.96 supply of housing land and have exceeded their housing delivery targets. Accordingly, it is unlikely that the proposal would have an impact on the number of available family homes. Moreover, as mentioned above, the premises will be advertised to professionals who will be vetted and identity checked prior to acceptance, and their tenancy agreements will contain clauses to discourage excessive noise and other forms of anti-social behaviour.**

- *There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*

- **The bedrooms will be well sized, complying with the minimum standards, and will be newly refurbished to a high standard throughout.**

- *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; and*

- **The proposed development includes appropriate storage for refuse and cycles. The property will be professionally managed with regular inspections, cleaning of the communal areas and ensuring bins are regularly put out for refuse collection.**

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

- **The bedrooms will be well sized, complying with the minimum standards.**

*Additionally, in areas covered by an Article 4 direction that restricts changes of use from Class C3 to Class C4:*

• *Planning permission will not normally be granted where the proportion of HMOs (either C4 or sui generis) will result in HMOs representing 25% or more of the residential properties within a circle of 50m radius measured from the application site.*

- **The applicant obtained a public register of licenced HMO's, which demonstrates that less than 25% of residential properties within a circle of 50m radius measured from the application site are licenced HMOs.**

## **Conclusion**

NPPF paragraph 2 confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is considered that the proposed development satisfies the relevant policies of the development plan. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted without delay.