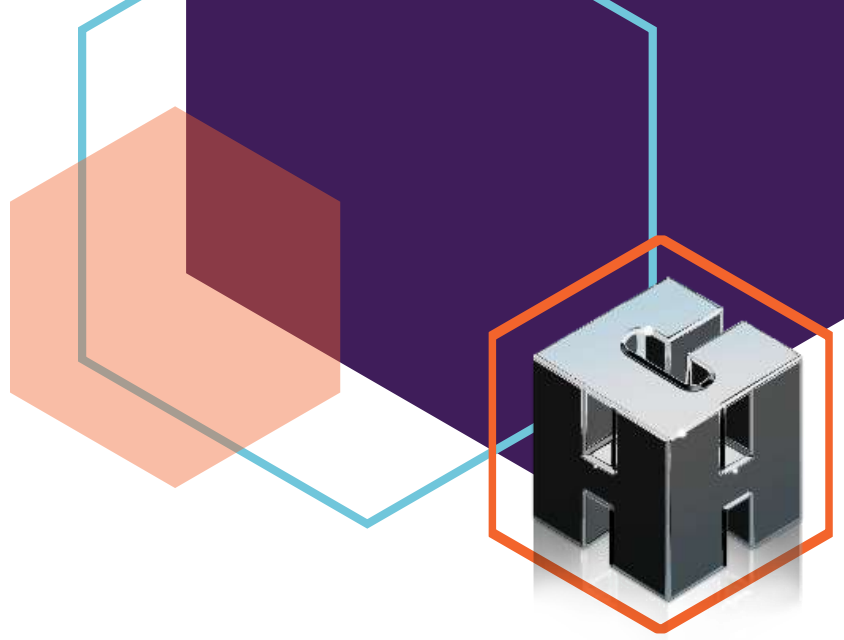




PLANNING STATEMENT

Roof alterations and external elevation works to facilitate
the conversion of roofspace and part ground and first
floor from Office use Class B1(a) to
Residential use Class C3.

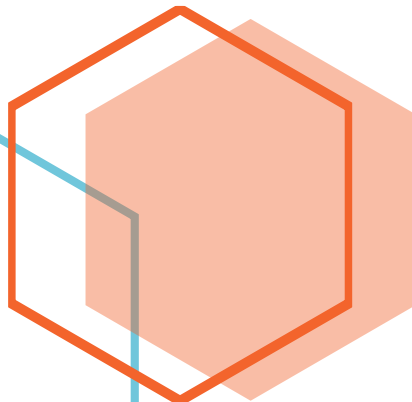
Alexander House, 205-207 King's Road, Reading RG1 4LS

Submitted on behalf of BURLEIGH ESTATES LTD.

PREPARED BY

Mike Hooper, Partner (MRTPI)

HOOPER CURRY HAMILTON (HCH) LLP





1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Hooper Curry Hamilton (HCH) LLP on behalf of the Applicant, Burleigh Estates Ltd. It accompanies an application for planning permission for roof alteration and external elevation works to facilitate conversion of roof space and part of ground and first floor from office use Class B1(a) to residential use Class C3 at Alexander House, 205-207 King's Road, Reading RG1 4LS.
- 1.2 This statement will take the following form: a brief description of the Site and Surrounding Area in Section 2; Description of the Development in Section 3, Planning History in Section 4, Planning Policy is referenced in Section 5. Planning Consideration is provided in Section 6 and the Conclusion in Section 7.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 Alexander House 205-207 King's Road, Reading RG1 4LS lies to the north of the King's Road adjacent to its junction with Rupert Street in Reading town centre. It is a short 10-minute walk from the main retail and leisure offering in the town centre at Broad Street and the Oracle shopping centre. Reading is a strategic regional town in the Thames Valley/ M4 corridor with a population of circa 200,000 people.
- 2.2 The town is located approximately 67km (42 miles) west of London, 44km (27.5 miles) south of Oxford and 27km (17 miles) east of Newbury and lies within an 8-minute drive of the M4. The property is situated approximately 1.6km (1.0 mile) to the east of Reading Railway Station which provides excellent links to the south-west of England, with regular fast services to London Paddington taking just 25 minutes and offering up to 16 trains per hour.
- 2.3 The roofspace of the building is within a pitched roof that internally houses storage areas and plant equipment associated with the Office (B1) lawful use of the building. This area is a full height space that is accessible and regularly entered by users of the building.



3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 An application for planning permission is made to Reading Borough Council (RBC) for the following proposed physical works.

Roof alterations and external elevation works to facilitate the conversion of roof space and part of ground and first floor from office use Class B1(a) to residential use Class C3 under permitted development.

- 3.2 The application for planning permission is made simultaneously with an application for prior approval change of use from office use Class B1(a) in the roofspace and part of Ground and 1st floors to residential use Class C3 comprising 13 residential units at Alexander House.
- 3.3 The enclosed plans propose the operation works to enable the conversion of the roofspace to residential use. The proposal is to build up the from the existing 1st floor walls to provide vertical walls for the new 2nd floor accommodation, including the introduction of windows to the new residential units. The commencement of the residential C3 use will be subject to the completion of the operational development detailed on the enclosed plans.
- 3.4 The proposals will consist of the following works.
- 3.4.1 Roof alteration works to amend the form of the top storey of Alexander House and introduce windows.
- 3.4.2 Creation 2,195 sq ft of additional “volume”, rather than new residential dwellings, proposed to be used as residential use Class C3. The footprint of the residential dwellings are within the roofspace footprint, but additional volume is created by building the walls up vertically.
- 3.4.3 External works to Alexander House including the introduction of additional windows on the existing façade and additional balconies.
- 3.5 As stated above, the residential use of the internal area of the roofspace and parts of the Ground and 1st floor of Alexander House, which is subject to a Prior Approval submission, will not commence until the operation development enclosed in this planning application is complete.



- 3.6 This is an entirely lawful approach to the delivery and implementation of permitted development against Class O. To assist the determination of the enclosed proposal, attached at Appendix 1 to this report is an Opinion from Richard Harwood OBE QC, which confirms that the combination of permitted development and operational development is acceptable.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 The enclosed proposals have been considered against the following relevant planning policies.

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

H1: Provision of Housing

H2: Density and Mix

H3: Affordable Housing

H5: Standards for New Housing

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

RBC Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Affordable Housing SPD (2013) / Draft Affordable Housing SPD (October 2020)

Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015)



5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 The relevant planning history of the building is as follows.

5.2 *Planning Application No. 210536*

Site Address: Alexander House 205-207 Kings Road Reading RG1 4LS

Description: Change of use from office use Class B1(a) to use Class C3 to comprise 24 residential units. Prior Notification under Class 0, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Under determination.

5.5 *Planning Application Number: 190160*

Site Address: Alexander House 205-207 Kings Road Reading RG1 4LS

Description: Demolition of existing office building and construction of new 182 bed student accommodation development, over 7 storeys of accommodation plus lower ground floor, together with ancillary landscaping, parking and amenity space. 17 July 19/ Appeal dismissed.

5.6 *Planning Application No. 162057*

Site Address: Alexander House 205-207 Kings Road Reading RG1 4LS

Description: Demolition of the existing building and erection of a 4-7 storey building comprising 56 (30 x 1 bed, 18 x 2 bed, 8 x 3 bed) new residential units (Class C3) with associated parking and landscaping. Approved 2017.

5.7 *Planning Application Number: 901103*

Site Address: Alexander House 205-207 Kings Road Reading RG1 4LS

Description: Erection of two storey office block with semi-basement car park for 50-cars and two storey block of 7 flats with associated parking. Approved 1990.



6 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

Principle of Development

- 6.5 The proposed physical works in this application will facilitate the conversion of the existing office roofspace of Alexander House to a residential use under Class O under Part 3 of the GDPO (2015) and allow the created dwellings to meet the criteria set out therein. The use of residential through created the conversion of the roof space is dealt with in a simultaneous Prior Approval submission and will be considered against those criteria, it does not need to be considered here.
- 6.6 The NPPF states that LPAs should “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”. These works would allow the effective use of this existing site and should therefore be considered acceptable.

Design, Impact on the Character of the Area and Street Scene

- 6.7 Policy CC7: Design requires all development to be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 6.8 The two nearby developments, No. 209-211 King’s Road and No. 201-203 King’s Road, set up the character of the street scene which consists of contemporary fenestration, presence of balconies and non-gable roofs. This proposed scheme seeks to follow and enhance the street scene character at King’s Road. To achieve this, the scheme proposes to substitute the existing fenestration with contemporary standards and to include balconies to match its nearby developments.
- 6.9 The proposed building extension has taken design cues from the street scene and the building itself, where appropriate, and it is not considered that the design makes the proposals so conspicuous so as to cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposals would not be overly excessive in scale. Indeed, the proposal is considered to strike an appropriate balance between maximising the potential of the site for residential development whilst not representing an overdevelopment of the site.



- 6.10 The proposals would not adversely harm the character of the surrounding streetscape or give rise to an overly dominant or incongruous addition to the immediate area such to warrant a refusal and is compliant with Policies CC8, H10 and H11.

Affordable Housing

- 6.11 In accordance with Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) the proposed development would not be liable for affordable housing. The proposed physical works do not themselves create residential use; they only facilitate a use created under Prior Approval permitted development.
- 6.12 The floorspace of the proposed residential dwellings are entirely within the existing footprint of Alexander House roofspace and any space created by this application is only volume created above this by building up the walls vertically.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed building extension and external works have taken design cues from the street scene and the building itself and, therefore, it is not considered that the design makes the proposals so conspicuous so as to cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposals would not be overly excessive in scale and would strike a balance between maximising the potential of the site for development whilst not representing an overdevelopment of the site.
- 7.2 The proposals would not adversely harm the character of the surrounding streetscape or give rise to an overly dominant or incongruous addition to the immediate area such to warrant a refusal. It is compliant with Policies CC8, H10 and H11, and should granted planning permission.