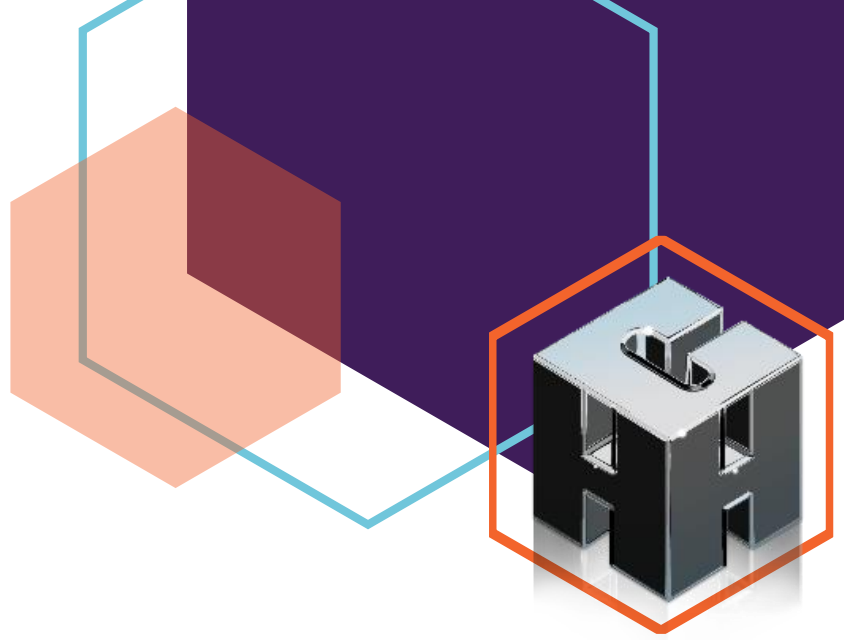




PLANNING STATEMENT

Class O Prior Approval

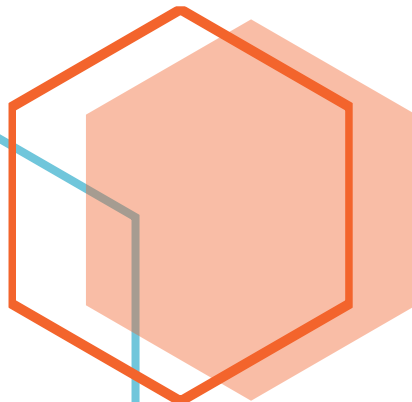
Alexander House, 205-207 King's Road, Reading RG1 4LS

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 a prior notification submission for a proposed change of use from Office Building (Class B1a) to Residential (Class C3) to create 24 new residential dwellings 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 The Prior Approval Class O is made for Alexander House 205-207 King's Road, Reading RG1 4LS. Alexander House lies to the north of the King's Road adjacent to its junction with Rupert Street in Reading town centre.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application is made to Reading Borough Council to determine whether prior approval of the authority is required for the change of use of the application building from B1 (Office) to C3 (Residential).
- 3.2 The proposal includes conversion of the existing building to created 24 residential dwellings with 47 rear car parking spaces remaining.



4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 This prior approval submission is made under Schedule 2 Part 2 Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, which states:

"Class O – Offices to Dwelling Houses

Permitted development

O. Development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class B1(a) (offices) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) of that Schedule.

Development not permitted

O.1 *Development is not permitted by Class O if—*

(b) the building was not used for a use falling within Class B1(a) (offices) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order —

(i) on 29th May 2013, or

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use;

(d) the site is, or forms part of, a safety hazard area;

(e) the site is, or forms part of, a military explosives storage area;

(f) the building is a listed building or is within the curtilage of a listed building; or

(g) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument.

Conditions

O.2. (1) Development under Class O is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

(a) transport and highways impacts of the development

(b) contamination risks on the site,

(c) flooding risks on the site, an

(d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development, and

(e) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwelling houses.



5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 The property was granted planning permission (Application No. 162057) in May 2017 for the 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"*.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The principle of development is considered below against types of development that is not permitted and the criteria set out under Part 3 of the GDPO. The criteria are transport and highways impact of the development, contamination risk of the site, flooding risks on the site, impact of commercial noise, and an adequate level of natural light to the proposed habitable rooms.

Development Not Permitted

- 6.2 Development is not permitted by Class O if any of the following are confirmed;

(a) the building was not used for a use falling within Class B1(a) (offices) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order —

(i) on 29th May 2013

(ii) in the case of a building which was in use before that date but was not in use on that date, when it was last in use;

Alexander House was in in use as B1 (office) on 29 May 2013.

(b) the use of the building falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) of that Schedule was begun after 30th May 2016;

Use of the building for B1 (office) commenced prior to 2016.



(c) the site is, or forms part of, a safety hazard area;

The building does not form part of a safety hazard area.

(d) the site is, or forms part of, a military explosives storage area;

The building does not form part of a military explosive storage area.

(e) the building is a listed building or is within the curtilage of a listed building; or

Alexander House is neither a listed building or within the curtilage of a listed building.

(f) the site is, or contains, a scheduled monument.

Site is not and does not contain a scheduled monument.

Transport and Highways impact of the development

- 6.3 The building is located within close proximity of Reading train station and near to bus stops and other public transport links. It is a highly sustainable location within Reading town centre and, therefore, the parking provision is considered acceptable in planning terms.
- 6.4 The existing building has 47 parking spaces to the rear of the building, which is more than sufficient to accommodate for the proposed 24 apartments and equates to 1.95 spaces per dwellings.
- 6.5 It is a material consideration that planning permission was granted in 2017 for 56 residential dwellings, therefore, a proposal to deliver 24 should be considered entirely acceptable.

Contamination Risks

- 6.6 Potential for site contamination is considered low given the town centre location and existing built form. If the Council were so minded, the Applicant would accept a planning condition requiring further investigations and assessments of the potential contamination on-site.



Flooding Risks

- 6.7 The site is not located in a flood zone and therefore flood risk is considered to be very low.

Impact of Noise from Commercial Premises

- 6.8 The building is located within a mixed-use commercial centre, which already accommodates existing residential uses nearby. Therefore, as an established residential location there is no unacceptable noise generated from the nearby office and retail uses.
- 6.9 In addition to the location being suitable for additional residential, any commencement of residential use would be accompanied by enhanced glazing appropriate for residential use. It is also a material consideration that planning permission was granted in 2017 for a residential development in this location, which indicates that noise levels are appropriate for residential use.

Provision of Adequate Natural Light to Habitable Rooms

- 6.10 As can be derived from the attached floor layouts and existing external elevations provided in support of this prior approval submission, all proposed residential dwellings and individual habitable rooms have access to an appropriate window opening which will ensure the provision of adequate natural light to habitable rooms.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 On the basis of the enclosed information, it is considered that the proposed development falls within the provisions set out within Class O of Part 3 of the GDPO (2015).
- 7.2 This conclusion is also in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and on this basis the Applicant believes that permitted development change of use from Office (B1) to Residential (C3) should be allowed. It is also material that planning permission has previously been granted for residential development in this location.