

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT - Application No.: 190071 Target Expiry: 15/3/19

Address: 18 Goldsmid Road, Reading

Proposal: Change of use from dwellinghouse (C3) to 7-bed HMO (Sui Generis) facilitated by a hip-to-gable roof enlargement and rear dormer for loft conversion, front rooflights, and erection of single storey rear extension

Case officer: Anthony Scholes

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site contains a two-storey detached dwelling fenestrated with a full height circular bay window. The site is to the Northern side of Goldsmid Road, opposite the Grade II listed Reading Synagogue. The site is located within the Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation area, which primarily contains residential uses.

Proposal:

The proposal includes the change of use of the dwellinghouse (C3 use) to that of a Sui Generis house of multiple occupation (HMO) for 7 persons. To facilitate the change of use, the applicant is seeking to make a number of internal changes, which are currently underway. Along with utilising the recently approved (ref: 181540) single storey side and rear extension as a kitchen/dining room. The external alterations proposed include a loft conversion including a hip to gable extension, 4 no. front facing roof lights, and a flat roof rear dormer. The roof extension would also result in the removal of two existing chimney stacks.

Plans considered:

Dwg No. 259-A1-00 Rev B - Existing

Dwg No. 259-A1-04 Rev D - Proposal (loft conversion)

As received 16 January 2019

Dwg No. 259-A1-04 Rev E - Proposal (loft conversion)

As received 12 February 2019

Dwg No. 259-A3-05 - Bike Store

Dwg No. 259-A1-04 Rev F - Proposal (loft conversion)

As received 13 February 2019

Other documents:

Planning Statement, prepared by ET Planning

18 Goldsmid Road, Reading - Preliminary Bat Survey

Heritage Statement

CIL form

Summary of correspondence with agent

Relevant Planning History:

181540/HOU - Single storey side and rear extension APPROVED 12/11/18 Implemented

Consultation Responses:

A site notice was displayed for 21 days, and all adjoining properties have been notified by letter. The following responses have been received:

Address	Summary of concern(s)
No 42 Goldsmid Road	Concerns over the number of HMO's within the area.
No 10 Clifton Street	Concerns over the number of HMO's within the area. Concerns over provision of parking for the development Bin storage not provided
No 8 Clifton Street	Overdevelopment of the site, due to no external amenity space Scale of the roof extensions detracting from the area Concerns about carparking
Reading Civic Society	The massing of the resultant building over-development The quality of design and rooflights The effect on the conservation area
No 26 Clifton Street Baker Street Neighbourhood Association	Internal works have commenced Roof extension damaging to the character of typical 1930's dwelling Front facing roof lights are detrimental to dwelling

RBC Ecology

The bat survey report (4 Acre Ecology Ltd, January 2019) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the building has not potential to support roosting bats. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Environmental Protection and Nuisance (standing advice)

The property will be classed as a HMO and must meet the requirements of the Housing Act 2004.

From 1st October 2018 in Reading Borough Council area properties containing 5 or more persons within an HMO required a mandatory HMO licence.

Further information on fire safety standards in HMOs is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>

Adequate facilities are required in all dwellings for personal washing, sanitary conveniences and for the storage, preparation and cooking of food.

If adequate facilities are not provided this could result in the need for enforcement action under the HHSRS.

Mandatory licensable HMOs have a set of national minimum standards relating to:

- Sanitary conveniences and
- Personal washing facilities

For amenity standards in HMOs visit our website: <http://www.reading.gov.uk/hmo>

There is no prescribed space standard for HMOs and the property will be assessed under the HHSRS. However, the Council has provided guidance to meet an optimum standard, which is intended to prevent, avoid or minimise any related hazard. For licensable HMOs, numbers of persons permitted per room, and an overall maximum number of persons permitted per property, will be detailed on the HMO licence.

Where cooking facilities are provided in a separate room, each bedroom must be minimum:

- 6.5 m² if occupied by one person;
- 10.5 m² if occupied by two persons.

For rooms with cooking facilities within the room, the following minimum room sizes shall apply:

- 10.5 m² if occupied by one person;
- 14.5 m² if occupied by two persons.

Transport

This application seeks to extend a small HMO to a 7 bed HMO. In accordance with the Council's current standards 7 bedroom HMO room would require 0.25 car parking spaces per room, therefore requiring a minimum of 2 off road parking spaces. The Design and Access statement states that there is no off road parking associated with this property.

Goldsmid Road is included in the Council's Residential Permit Parking scheme whereby only permit holders can only park in the bays. Double yellow lines preventing on street parking are also present outside and around the property. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore, the applicant should be advised that if the application is approved, the appropriate parking informative should be applied to prevent any future occupants of the development from obtaining a residents parking permit for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

In accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, cycle storage for a HMO should be provided at a ratio of 0.5 secure cycle storage spaces per room in the form of a Sheffield type stand within a lockable store. Based on this, 4 cycle spaces would be required for the HMO.

Plans submitted illustrate a cycle storage area at the rear of the property with 4 Sheffield type stands illustrated. It is not clear how the storage area would be accessed as there is only a 200mm gap along the side of the property which is of insufficient width. Transporting cycles through the property to reach the proposed storage area, would not be appropriate.

In addition to this, a clearance of 1.8m is required for a covered storage area which has not been demonstrated on submitted plans. An option would be to re provide a smaller storage unit with 2 stands at the front of the property. A wider opening to the storage unit would be required.

Revised plans were required illustrating the size and position of the cycle storage unit in relation to the refuse storage and collection area in the front garden. The amended layout is considered acceptable from a transport perspective.

In the circumstances, Transport do not have any objections to this application subject to conditions securing:

- Bicycle parking space maintained in accordance with approved plans
- Bin storage maintained in accordance with approved plans
- Parking permits - advising Council (prior to occupation)
- Parking permits - advising occupiers

Waste

This property would be able to have one 240 general waste bin (normally 240litre in size, but can be 360L bin for houses with a large number of residents permanently residing there) will be collected by the Council. Households can have as many recycling 240ltr bins as needed, but this will be subject to review and contaminated recycling will not be collected.

As the manager of a HMO, they are legally required to ensure that tenants have adequate storage facilities for their waste and that adequate provision is made for disposal of the waste. A manager cannot avoid this responsibility by encouraging his tenants to apply for extra Council bins. The local authority will only provide extra bins and collections on receipt of extra payments for that service.

A manager cannot raise any expectations, on the part of his tenants, that they should be held responsible for the disposal of their excess waste. Adequate storage **MUST** be provided by the manager of the HMO and the disposal of excess waste is the sole responsibility of the manager.

If any extra waste is produced due to the large amount of residents; the manager of the HMO can;

- Remove the waste yourself. You can do this, but you must apply for a Waste Carriers Certificate from the Environment Agency and keep waste transfer notes for a minimum of 2 years. Without this, you will be committing an offence.
- Make arrangements for a registered waste carrier to collect the additional waste. This can be through a private contractor or the Council (this will be chargeable). You must obtain waste transfer notes and keep these for a minimum of 2 years.
- Occupiers of the property may take their waste to the Civic Amenity site, however, the duty remains with the manager to have made adequate provision for disposal.

The bins will need to be presented at kerbside of the property on collection day, and then taken back into the front of the property after collection day.

RBC Heritage Consultant

The proposal is objected to on the grounds it would not enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as required by Section 69 of the Act or preserve the setting of the Conservation Area as required by Section 66(1) of the Act and would have an adverse impact on these historic assets and their settings contrary to Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from

consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document, 2008 (altered 2015)

Policy CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design

Policy CS2: Waste Minimisation

Policy CS18: Residential Conversions

Policy CS24: Car/Cycle Parking

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, altered 2015)

Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy DM8: Residential Conversions

Policy DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Residential Conversions (2013)

APPRAISAL

For conversions to residential the main policies are: Policy CS18, which states that *“Proposals to convert properties 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.”*

Policy DM8 provides further detail and states:

“Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation under Core Strategy Policy CS18 will only be acceptable where:

- The proposal respects the physical character of the area and additionally 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 other residential properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- *There is appropriate sound insulation between proposed and neighbouring units and layouts avoid inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*
- *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.*

Along with these adopted local planning policies any appraisal for a change of use to a sui generis large HMO is assessed against the Council's 'Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document SPD (2013)'. Section A of the SPD, deals with the 'General Assessment of all Conversions' (i.e from C3 dwellinghouses to flats or HMOs (both small C4 use and sui generis HMOs). In addition para 4.2 refers to the requirement to assess large HMOs under the threshold guidance set out in Section B. The SPD sets out a number of checklist items.

Main considerations:

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Whether the conversion of the property results in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community
 - b) Design considerations
 - c) Is the property of the appropriate size for conversion?
 - d) Amenity of future residents and those of existing neighbouring properties
 - e) Car/ cycle parking
- a) Does the conversion of the property result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community?

Policy DM8 requires conversions to large Sui Generis HMOs to not result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community. To assess whether a property is suitable for conversion the 'tipping point' calculation is used (threshold), which is defined in the Residential Conversions SPD as "*planning permission will not normally be granted where the proportion of HMOs will result in HMOs representing 25% or more or the residential properties within a circle of 50m radius measured from the application site*" (para. 5.43).

The house has been in use as a dwellinghouse (C3) previously, and in accordance with the Residential Conversion SPD the conversion should be assessed against the threshold guidance. Using the Council's records for HMO's within the borough, in accordance with the methodology outlined in section 2 of the Residential conversions supplementary planning document (SPD) (2013), the mix of uses should the proposal be approved would be 37.9%, well in excess of the 25% threshold guideline.

Of the applicable properties which fall within the search area, 58% remain as single dwellinghouses and these contribute to the overriding residential character of this particular street. This change of use would further weaken the existing composition and mix of residential uses along the street and as such, the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the existing residential character and composition of the immediate area.

Therefore it is considered that the approval would unduly harm and dilute the mix of residential uses within the area. The principle of the conversion of the application property to a 7 person large Sui Generis HMO is therefore considered unacceptable.

b) Design considerations

The proposed development includes substantial changes to the existing dwelling. These include the provision of a hip to gable roof extension, a rear flat roof dormer, and 4x velux roof lights to the front elevation. The applicant has submitted a supporting Conservation Statement prepared by Get Planning and Architecture Ltd (GPA). The dwelling is not listed within the conservation area appraisal as a building of townscape significance, and may have originally formed part of the back garden of the listed buildings along Oxford Road. The dwelling itself appear to be constructed in 1930s and contains elements of architectural interest, including the two storey circular bay window, a front porch with an archway, and two chimneys. There are three elements to the roof alterations; the hip to gable extension, the rear dormer, and the proposed roof lights.

Firstly, the hip to gable extension would have a significant negative impact on the scale and architectural detail of the existing dwelling. The change in roof form would fundamentally alter the roof structure and result in the loss of the original chimneys which are a feature of the dwelling. The Northern side of Goldsmid Road does not have a particularly uniform streetscene, or a consistent dwelling type. The hip to gable roof extension would be highly visible from the public realm, and would change the character of the dwelling. The applicant's supporting statement outlines that the character of the area is predominantly gabled, with an emphasis on terraced housing. A detached dwelling is of a differing scale and appearance, and its incongruous form is a feature that adds to the visual interest of the conservation area.

Secondly, the rear flat roofed dormer would extend the full depth of the rear roof pitch, and be almost the full height of the roof. Although not visible from the street due to the additional roof changes, would be overly large in the scale of the dwelling and would result in an overly convoluted roof form as viewed from the rear of adjoining premises.

Furthermore, the inclusion of 4 no. front facing roof lights would add visual clutter to the streetscene and further detract from the overall appearance of the area. The hip to gable roof extension, rear flat roof dormer, and 4 no. roof lights, individually and cumulatively have a negative impact on the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area.

In addition to the above, the roof alterations fail to produce a significant increase in useable roof space due to the relatively shallow roof form as existing. The resultant space is only able to create a 2.15m head height area for a small portion of the overall roof, with the balance being between 2.1 and 1.8 where the extension is, with a significant amount of space within the loft room being less than 1.5m of head height. As such, the 'useable' space (that being those areas which allow ease of movement) within the flat roofed dormer portion (6.8m²), is considered to result in a poor design. Furthermore, the significant harm identified above would only translate into a modest benefit in floor space through usable head height within the loft area.

c) Is the property of the appropriate size for conversion

Policy DM8 'Residential Conversions' states that proposal properties to be converted to HMOs, would have four or more bedrooms, or measure more than 120m² gross, based on the external dimensions as at 1st July 1948 or when built (which ever is the later). The plans submitted provide dimensions and notes that show the dimensions to

be 120.72m², whereas measurements based on the plans submitted show 119.5m². Evidenced by the most recent sales information, the property was originally a three-bedroom dwelling. Therefore, the conversion would not meet the requirements for a conversion under the policies. Notwithstanding the above, the 0.5m² shortfall in floor area would not itself constitute harm to future residents and will not be relied upon as a reason for refusal.

The internal floorspace of each bedroom exceeds the minimum standards (6.5m²) as set out in Appendix 1 of the SPD and are therefore generally acceptable in this regard, based on single occupancy (as confirmed in e-mail 04/03/2019) and would accord with National guidance.

Due to the shape of each of the rooms, the usable space is more accurately:

Bed 1 - 11.7m²
Bed 2 - 8.1m²
Bed 3 - 8.3m²
Bed 4 - 11.8m²
Bed 5 - 8.2m²
Bed 6 - 8.1m²
Bed 7 - 6.8m²

Where rooms are at the minimum size the SPD seeks a provision of 1 communal area per 4-6 rooms, not including a kitchen. However, in this case the rooms are over the minimum size and the communal area, which includes the lounge, dining and kitchen in one, at approximately 25sqm (16m² not including the kitchen area). The size of the communal area may be suitable for the sitting of all 7-residents, however it represents a thoroughfare between the bedrooms and the kitchen. Additionally, the provision of roof lights within the approved scheme (181540), would give sufficient access to daylight and sunlight to the communal area. However, the proposed communal area would be predominantly enclosed and only have outlook from the small door onto the outdoor area, as such is not considered to have sufficient outlook.

d) Amenity of proposed residents and existing residents of nearby properties

The Residential Conversions SPD sets out a number of checklist items which provide further detail related to adopted policies DM4, DM8, DM9 and DM10 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. These are addressed as follows:

Sound Insulation - HMOs do not require sound insulation under building regulation requirements.

Noise and Disturbance - The level of noise and disturbance from seven people is likely to differ to its use for a dwelling house. A condition would be recommended requiring the submission and approval of a management agreement, which among other matters includes the requirement to set out how noise within and outside the property will be managed.

External windows - All habitable rooms benefit from an external window. The proposed loft conversion to contain bedroom 7 would include four front facing roof lights, and a large window within the rear flat roof dormer, it is considered that light to the loft bedroom would be sufficient.

Amenity Space - There is a small rear garden which provides an appropriate level of amenity space in accordance with DM10. The SPD for residential conversion requires the useable private outdoor space to be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling to which it relates. Due to the size of the plot, its central location, and the accessibility to nearby open space, it is considered that in this instance, the provision of a small communal outdoor space for sitting out is appropriate.

Layout/Stacking of Rooms - The Council's SPD seeks to avoid layouts which locate living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens, next to, above, or below, proposed or neighbouring bedrooms. The layout achieves this and is considered acceptable.

Bin storage - Sufficient refuse containers are provided and although located to the front of the property are set well back from the road frontage and close to the boundary fence. A condition is recommended requiring the retention of this bin storage area.

e) Car/ cycle parking

Transport has confirmed that the cycle storage is also adequate to meet standards. In addition, as the site is located within a permit parking area, there will be no adverse impacts on the surrounding roads.

The plans as originally submitted included cycle storage to the rear of the property. The cycle store did not meet the Council's standards, nor was it in an easily accessible location. The agent submitted amended plans with cycle storage to the front of the property. The cycle store has been designed to be commensurate of the area, and respects the local setting. The cycle store would be mostly hidden by the existing boundary walls, and boundary treatments.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE

- 1) The conversion of the property from a C3 dwelling to Sui Generis HMO (7 person) would have a detrimental effect on the character of the area by exacerbating the number of HMOs in the area and reduce the number of single dwellinghouses. The percentage of applicable properties in HMO use within 50m of the property (including the site) is 38%, in excess of the target threshold of under 25% as defined in Reading Borough Council's adopted Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (2013). This has a negative impact on the mixed and sustainable community and is contrary to policy DM8: Residential Conversions, of Reading Borough Council's Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted 2012, altered 2015).
- 2) Due to the size of the dwelling, its respective plot, the internal arrangement of the proposed 7-person HMO and the lack of sufficient outlook from the communal area, the proposal would fail to provide a suitable level of amenity for future occupants contrary to Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Core Strategy of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework (2008) and the Residential Conversions SPD.
- 3) The alterations to the roof, individually and cumulatively represent a harmful design and appearance in context to immediate area, do not complement the existing property and detracts from the property's original character. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) Policy CS35 (Protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment), Policy DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions.

Informative:

- 1) Plans considered:
- 2) Positive and proactive