

*Change of use of existing dwelling user
class C3a
to Home in Multiple Occupation user
class C4*

*at 17 Upper Crown Street,
Reading RG1 2SS*

Design & Access Statement

R A M M U R T I D E S I G N L T D

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Introduction, Site Location, and Description

This design & access statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of an existing property which was a single family dwelling user class C3a and is proposed to being used as a Home in Multiple Occupation user class C4 for a small HMO with currently up to 4No rooms being let out to professionals or students attending Reading University.

The application is a first application for the use of the building for multiple occupancy and where planning permission is only required for such a change of use due to the Article 4 Directive in the University area of Reading.

There are plans to extend or alter the footprint of the property to allow improved accommodation at ground floor, and works have commenced to extend the existing loft to the building. The floor plans however are those presented as per the existing arrangement.

The use of the rooms is as follows:

Ground floor has a room to the front used as a bedroom, a hallway leading to a middle room used as the lounge and also to a WC and shower under the stairs from the hallway. The middle living area then leads on to the kitchen to the rear.

The first floor has a landing with two rooms both of which are used as bedrooms, and then an independent stair access to the loft, which has a single room within the roof void used as the 4th bedroom. The loft is being extended with a new flat roof which will then provide an additional shower room once complete.

Access is available to all occupiers to the rear garden of the property.

The property meets the requirements for room sizes and amount of living and washrooms for the level of accommodation being undertaken as there is sufficient washroom and kitchen facility to enable compliance with the council's HMO departments requirements for the minimum number of each facility.

The property will be required to be licensed with the council's HMO department upon this application being accepted.

Access

The property lies approximately at the middle of the street within walking distance to the variety of facilities available on Whitley Street along Southampton Street, or north to Crown Street and leading on to the Town Centre.

The Shops located on Whitley Street are a major local Centre identified within the Reading Borough Council adopted Core Strategy.

The house is therefore very close to the shops; restaurants; hot food takeaways; chemists and the post office on the Whitley Street, and a short walk to the main Reading Town Centre and to the University Campus.

Parkland is similarly a short walk away, via Elizabeth walk, and a little further to Cintra Park.

There is a very good bus service with routes 5 and 6 to the town centre and to the nearby shopping centre off Basingstoke Road to the South. The routes are operated by Reading Transport with journeys to the Reading Town Centre and the railway station.

Upper Crown Street is not as extensively populated street, and is a semi cul-de-sac as is a one way route for vehicles at the junction of Newark Street, thereby providing a quiet setting without a continuous flow of traffic as per the other streets, and in respect of density and closeness of plots.

There is no off-street parking available and the on street has a Permit Parking control without any facility for short term parking other than for the residents of the street.

The properties have limited hardstandings to their front gardens so cannot provide off street parking.

To encourage fewer vehicle movements, cycling is intended to be encouraged wherever possible. There is space to accommodate bins and a two cycles to the front of the property.

Hard and Soft Landscaping

The existing boundaries to the rear garden are a mix of 1800mm high and lower 1.0m high close boarded fences which achieve a coherent appearance and achieve a good sense of enclosure. The garden consists in the main of hard surfaces but allowing good amenity for the property and its occupiers.

The front is hard landscaped providing space for bins and cycles in an open arrangement.

Unit Calculations

Reading Borough Council Article 4 use the rule of a maximum of 25% of properties being allowed to be HMO's within a 50.0m radius of the application dwelling. Directive that came into force on 15th May 2013, that limits the change of use of family dwellings without first applying for formal planning permission to do so.

The requirement is not to exceed 25% of the properties within a 50m radius of any application dwelling.

The submitted Block Plan shows that 54 No properties including the application dwelling come within the 50.0m radius, therefore allowing ONLY a total of 13,5 that COULD be accepted as HMO's if they are not already.

The HMO register for 2017 available from the council's website currently has only 1 No registered property that come within the 50.0m radius of the front door of the application dwelling.

It is understood that the council has other checks that would need to be carried out to include properties that are not necessarily registered but are otherwise used as unregistered HMO's already.

The agents have undertaken a door to door survey of the 54 properties, and have found that currently and at the time of submitting the application, only 10 No can be counted as being in some form of multiple occupation, in the worst case. To include the application property would bring this to 11 No.

Therefore it is anticipated that there are 11 No in total that are either additional and non-registered dwellings which could be included, thereby the percentage would remain below the 25% threshold if the application dwelling is allowed.

Appearance and Scale

The existing building is not being extended further and will be retained without affecting the external appearance and will therefore not compromise the streetscene or the terrace run of properties in Essex Street.

Areas and Accommodation schedule

The application site has a site area of 110.91m², comprising a plot approximately 3.9m across and 27.3m deep
Gross internal areas are as follows:

- Ground floor 44.80m²
- First Floor 36.47m²
- Loft Floor 28.50m² (at 1.5m floor height and above)

Total floor area 109.77m²

Ground floor accommodation

- ☐ Reception room used as bedroom
- ☐ Communal living area
- ☐ Communal kitchen
- ☐ Under stairs shower room

First floor accommodation

- ☐ 2No bedrooms off landing area
- ☐ Bed 2 (14.25m²), bed 3 (13.25m²),

Loft Level Accommodation

- ☐ bed 4 (11.50m²)
- ☐ store room
- ☐ shower room

Policy DM:8 ~ Reading Borough Councils SITES AND DETAILED POLICIES DOCUMENT ADOPTED - OCTOBER 2012 (Revised January 2015)

Policy DM:8 for Residential conversions 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 neighboring 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.
- ☐ Individual units provide appropriate minimum internal floor standards and headroom in accordance with the Council's adopted minimum internal floor space standards

The use is consistent with policy DM:8 as the rooms are comfortably proportioned, and there is no contrived arrangement being made use of to achieve any of the requirements. Rooms are not being reallocated as part of the use of the building other than to convert the ground floor reception room to a bedroom, which lies directly below a bedroom at first floor.

The building form is not compromised, and the character remains unchanged.

Bins and cycle storage is to be provided at the front garden hardstanding of the property.

The proposal to have the property accepted as a Home in Multiple Occupation meets the requirements for a 4bedroom facility that provides a service to the local area and in close proximity to the Major Local Centre of Reading.

Application plans:

UCS:101 Site and Block Plan

UCS:102 Location Plan

UCS:103 Floor plans