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Document Title: **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

Project: **CHANGE OF USE**

Site Address: **8 BATH ROAD, READING, RG1 6ND**

Client: **TURNER ESTATES / MICHAEL BISSELL**



Fig.1: Street view of 8 Bath Road

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1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access statement is written as support for the full planning application with Reading Borough Council for the change of use to 8 Bath Road in Reading. This application follows receipt of a Pre-Application enquiry response from Ralph Chakadya (Reading Borough Council planning officer) on the 7th October 2016, reference 161618 PREAPP.

The application is submitted on behalf of joint applicants, Mr Michael Bissell (current owner) and Turner Estates (potential owner).

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the following information:

- Weston & Co Architects drawings: 16009-PL-01, 16009-PL-02, 16009-PL-03, 16009-PL-04, 16009-PL-05, 16009-PL-06, 16009-PL-07, 16009-PL-08, 16009-PL-09, 16009-PL-10, 16009-PL-11, 16009-PL-12, 16009-PL-13, 16009-PL-14, 16009-PL-15, 16009-PL-16,
- Haslams property agents supporting letter dated 27th July 2016
- Turner Estates supporting letter dated 25th August 2016
- Ian Keen Limited's Tree Report reference AP/9362/WDC, Constraints Plan 9362/01 and Protection Plan 9362/02

2.0 The Site Location & Context

The application site is located 1 kilometer west of Reading's town centre on the corner of Janson Court and Bath Road, one of Reading's main arterial roads.

Local context surrounding the site is predominantly residential in use with a mix of single family houses and flats as well as houses in multiple occupation. In addition, there is a significant amount of private healthcare facilities, as well as some religious institutions and the Berkshire Records office.

The Bath Road in this area of Reading is generally characterised as a tree-lined street with the stretch adjacent to the application site unusually lacking in trees.

8 Bath road was originally named 'St Kilda' and built in 1886 as a substantial family home. The property is located within the Russell Street / Castle Hill conservation area and could be considered a building of townscape merit given the boundary of the conservation area was extended to contain the property following recommendations within the April 2004 conservation area appraisal.



Fig.2: Aerial view of site context, 8 Bath Road application site highlighted by red line, copyright Getmapping plc 2017.

The application site is located next door to the grade II listed 4 and 6 Bath Road which were originally constructed as two semi-detached houses in the early 19th century. Both of these properties were subsequently sub-divided and currently in use as residential flats.

3.0 Use

The current use of number 8 Bath Road is as a private residential care home (C2 residential institution use). In addition there is a one bedroom self-contained flat (C3 use) located on the second floor serving as Mr Michael Bissell's home.

It is proposed for the use of 8 Bath Road to be changed to a 12 bedroom HMO (sui generis use) for rent to young graduates and professionals not yet able to join the property ladder. The single-storey element to the western end of the existing building is proposed as a self-contained one bedroom flat (C3 use). Please refer to Turner Estates supporting letter dated 25th August 2016 for additional detail on their

approach to providing high quality residential accommodation which enhances the built environment.

It is understood that Reading Borough Council's Core Strategy policy CS31 may apply to the proposed change of use on this site. Please refer to Haslams property agents supporting letter dated 27th July 2016 which explains the current operating context of the care home and its viability issues for your information.

The proposed development seeks to contribute to a mixed and sustainable community by providing housing for individuals contributing to the local economy, on a street where much of the original housing stock has been put to other uses such as private healthcare accommodation.

In accordance with policy DM4, safeguarding amenity, there is no intensification of activity proposed. The number of residents is proposed to decrease and there will be no staff permanently working on-site.

4.0 Amount

The area of the application site is 1088 square metres (11711 square feet), the existing care home building has a gross internal area of 502 square metres (5403 square feet) and is located towards the site's Bath Road frontage. The care home is licensed for 17 residents, however this relies on double occupancy within rooms. The actual occupancy of the care home is a maximum of 12 individual residents when single occupancy within rooms.

The site's forecourt is currently paved with tarmac and is used for car parking, it is possible to accommodate 4-5 cars in this area although this involves cars being blocked-in not in accordance with current parking standards. The forecourt area is not well suited as a car park and presents significant highway safety issues which are at odds with the council's policy DM12. Cars leaving the site are generally forced to reverse into the footway and highway of a major arterial road.

It is proposed to change the use of the building in order to become a 12 bedroom house in multiple occupation (sui generis use) with generous shared communal facilities. Each bedroom is served by an en suite shower room and has the use of spacious Kitchen and dining rooms, Laundry room and shared external amenity space on the raised terrace and garden. The size and standard of the accommodation proposed is well above the standards set within Reading Borough Council's HMO Management Pack. A self-contained one bedroom flat is also to be accommodated within the single-storey element to the western end of the existing building.

To the rear of the site it is proposed to provide 6no. car spaces within a new car park accessed from Janson Court. This is a reduction from the previously proposed 8no. car spaces within the Pre-Application enquiry. Reading Borough Council's standard for parking associated with HMO use is 0.25 per bedroom resulting in a requirement for 4no. car spaces. We suggest that it is more appropriate to provide a total of 6no. spaces as the proposals are not typical HMO accommodation. This proposed car parking area to the rear of the property is approximately 2 metres below the level of the external terrace and ground floor level, minimising any detrimental effect to the setting of the building and views out from the rear windows.

There is no standard for HMO cycle parking within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, it is proposed for 10no. secure and sheltered cycle spaces to be

provided to meet the requirements of the potential residents of the HMO and one bedroom flat.

Bin storage for 2no. 1100 litre wheelie bins is proposed within an enclosure at the south eastern corner of the building adjacent to the cycle store which is within 10 metres of the public highway. The two bins will provide for the storage and collection of separated general refuse and mixed dry recyclables.

Suitable shared external amenity space is proposed to be provided on the external rear terrace and also the rear garden in accordance with policy DM10.



Fig.3: Proposed site plan extract from drawing number 16008-PL-09

5.0 Layout

The proposed layout of 8 Bath Road aims to make best use of the existing building and removes certain partitions in order to return the floor plan back closer to its original form, exposing original architectural features in the process.

The proposed basement accommodates one en suite bedroom with new light wells and windows, along with a plant room. The proposed ground floor accommodates: 2no. en suite rooms, spacious kitchen /dining / lounge room, WC, and cycle store. A self-contained one bedroom flat is also to be accommodated on the ground floor accessed from the western end of the building. The proposed first floor accommodates 6no. en suite rooms. The proposed second floor plan provides 3no. en suite rooms along with an additional kitchen, a laundry room as well as an additional boiler / plant room.

6.0 Scale

There is no alteration in building scale proposed as part of this Planning Application.

7.0 Landscaping

Relocating the car parking to the rear of the site presents the opportunity to incorporate soft landscaping into the front of the site.

The introduction of tree planting is proposed adjacent to the Bath Road boundary in accordance with policy DM18. The proposals aim to enhance the character and appearance of the site and wider conservation area, as well as the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings at 4 and 6 Bath Road.

It is requested that the requirement of any detailed hard and soft landscaping design be reserved by condition to a potential approval.

8.0 Appearance

There are minimal alterations proposed to the external appearance of 8 Bath Road.



Fig.4: Proposed west elevation extract from drawing number 16008-PL-15

Changes to the west elevation involve the addition of a window to match existing at the first floor and re-configuring the door and windows on the ground floor. Light wells serving windows to Bedroom 1 and en suite are proposed which will have black painted steel balustrades to the sides acting as guard rails.

The existing laundry and boiler room proposed to be converted into the cycle store are to have black painted steel railings enclosing the store visible on the north and south elevations.

It is proposed to replace the existing brickwork and steel railings boundary treatment to the Bath Road / southern boundary as they are not original and of poor quality in comparison to the 8 Bath Road building. The proposed replacement brickwork wall and piers are to have Bath stone colour copings all to match the existing building and have some more robust black painted steel railings more suited to the quality of the existing building.

9.0 Access

It is proposed to re-locate the car parking to the rear of the site with a new pedestrian crossover type vehicular access from Janson Court to provide functional and safe car parking provision. Ian Keen Limited's Tree Report confirms there are no arboricultural concerns in relation to these proposals. Reading Borough Council's Transport Planning team have confirmed Janson Court's highway and footway in this location is adopted by the Highway Authority. In order to accommodate the new vehicular access, alterations are proposed to the boundary wall to create appropriate visibility splays for drivers and pedestrians. Splayed black painted steel posts and railings, with security gates are proposed which will have minimal intrusion into any root protection area.

There is no material change to access into the proposed HMO at 8 Bath Road. It is proposed to provide access to the self-contained one bedroom ground floor flat from the side access passage to the west of the building.

10.0 Relevant Local Planning Case Studies

1 Brownlow Road, Reading, RG1 6NP (Planning Application Ref: 141214)

Change of use from Residential Institution (C2 use) to 3no. large HMOs (sui generis)

27 Hamilton Road, Reading, RG1 5RA (Planning Application Ref: 121733)

Change of use from Residential Institution (C2 use) to large HMO (sui generis)