

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove

App Ref: 240354/FUL

Address: 73 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF

Proposals: Intensification of existing 4-bedroom HMO (C4) to 5-bedroom HMO (C4) and loft conversion to habitable room. No external changes. (amended description)

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

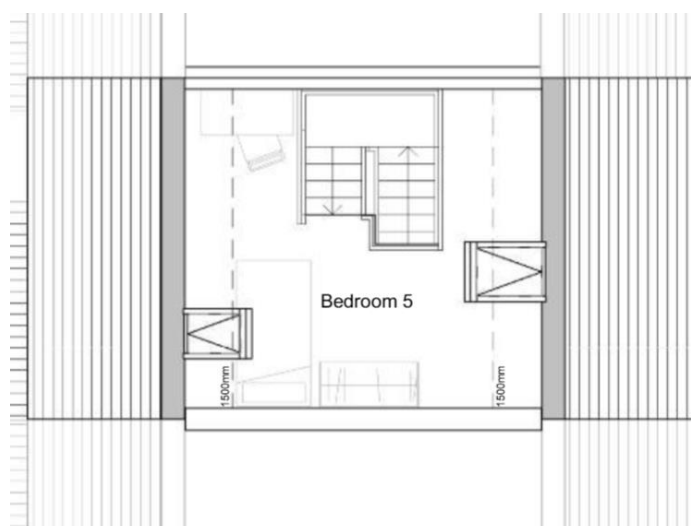
Date received (valid from): 27 March 2024 Target Decision date: 5 June 2024 (ext.)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a mid-terrace, two-storey dwelling on the east side of Mount Pleasant. The site is within an Article 4 Direction area which removes permitted development rights for change of use from C3 to C4. The use of the property as a small HMO is established. The property has a recently permitted and implemented single storey rear extension to establish a communal room. The surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to intensify the use of an existing 4-bedroom HMO (Class C4) to use the loft room as a 5th bedroom. The use class would be unaffected. The loft room is currently used as a communal room for tenants to use for storage and as a living space. The proposal does not require any external works as the loft already has two roof lights, one on each side of the roof slope. The loft room measures approx. 10m², measured in accordance with the nationally described minimum space standards.



Plans considered:

Planning Design and Access Statement, dated March 2024

1930-PROP 6-PL13-001 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan

1930-PROP 6-PL13-002 - Proposed First Floor Plan

1930-PL03-PL13-102A - Proposed North Elevation

1930-PL03-PL13-101B - Proposed South Elevation

1930-PL03-PL10-002B - Proposed Site Plan
1930-PL01-EX10-001 - Location Plan
1930-PL01-EX13-003 - Existing Roof Plan
1930-PL01-EX13-002 - Existing First Floor Plan
1930-PL01-EX13-001 - Existing Ground Floor Plan
1930-PL01-EX13-102 - Existing North Elevation
1930-PL01-EX13-101 - Existing South Elevations
1930-PL01-EX13-100 - Existing East and West Elevations
1930-PL01-EX10-002 - Site Plan

Received 21 March 2024

1930-PL02-Sheet-PL13-100B - Proposed Elevations
1930-PL02-Sheet-PL13-200B - Proposed Section 1
1930-PL02-Sheet-PL13-003B - Proposed Second Floor Plan

Received 16 May 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

220045 - Change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to 4 bedroom HMO (Class C4), including a single storey rear extension (amended description) - Application permitted and works completed

221143 - Application for variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission
220045 - Application returned, proposed works outside the scope of s.73

221905 - Change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to 5 bedroom small HMO (Class C4) including a single storey rear extension - Application refused based on the size of bedroom 5 (loft) and dismissed at appeal. *NB. Planning Inspectorate decided the appeal based on incorrect assessment of the appeal as a s.73 application and, therefore, the appeal decision is not considered to have any bearing on this application.*

4. CONSULTATIONS

Non-statutory:

RBC Transport - Conditions recommended to secure details of bin storage and cycle storage, and no automatic entitlement to parking permit.

RBC Environmental Health - Concern raised regarding noise arising from use of communal area.

Public:

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

71 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF
75 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF
Flat Gnd Flr, 75 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF
Flat 1st Flr, 75 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF
Ro Flat, 75 Mount Pleasant, Reading, RG1 2TF

1 objection received relating to the principle of the use of the property as a HMO.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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 Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

H8: RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPD

Residential Conversions (2023)

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.

APPRAISAL

Design and character

Policy H8 (Residential Conversions) is most relevant as no external alterations are proposed. Policy H8 states *"Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:*

- The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;*
- The proposal 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 residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- There is no 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; and*
- The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents."*

The proposal is for the intensification of a recently created small HMO from four bedrooms to five bedrooms. The proposal is assessed on the suitability of the loft space to be used as a bedroom, and the subsequent effect on the property to function as a HMO. The proposal for a 5th bedroom in the loft was previously refused planning permission due to concerns regarding lack of adequate headroom in the room. This decision was appealed by the applicant and concerns were raised at appeal regarding whether the drawings provided by the applicant were accurate. During the course of this re-submission, the case officer carried out a site visit and requested that revised drawings be submitted to reflect the actual size of the room. Revised drawings were submitted by the agent which show that the bedroom has an area in excess of 10m², when excluding any areas with headroom of less than 1.5m, as per the nationally described minimum space standards. As the plans now accurately represent the room in the loft, and the size of the room is adequate, the proposal is now accepted for a 5th bedroom in the loft.

The intensification of one additional resident is not likely to create any additional pressures on the communal areas of the property. Two bedrooms are considerably in excess of minimum space standards, and therefore one communal room, as per the existing arrangement, is considered sufficient.

Residential amenity

Policy CC8 states that *“Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:*

- *Privacy and overlooking;*
- *Access to sunlight and daylight;*
- *Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;*
- *Harm to outlook;*
- *Noise and disturbance”*

The addition of one resident to the existing HMO is not considered to create any additional concerns with regards to noise and disturbance to the neighbouring properties. The rooflights on either slope of the roof are existing and there is no concern raised with regards to access to natural light. Limited outlook is allowed through these windows.

Other matters

The existing HMO was recently converted under permission, and this included conditions that residents may not be entitled to parking permits on the surrounding roads. The application site is within walking distance of the Reading town centre, and therefore, it is not considered that the addition of one resident would create any additional pressure. Conditions are recommended prior to first use of the 5th bedroom to ensure that adequate refuse storage and cycle parking is available at the property to meet the needs of all occupants.

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the adopted policies as outlined above and is considered in accordance with those properties.

RECOMMENDATION
GRANT PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit Standard
2. Approved Plans
3. HMO Refuse and Recycling
4. HMO Cycle Storage
5. HMO Parking permits (Notification to LPA)
6. HMO Parking permits (Notification to occupiers)