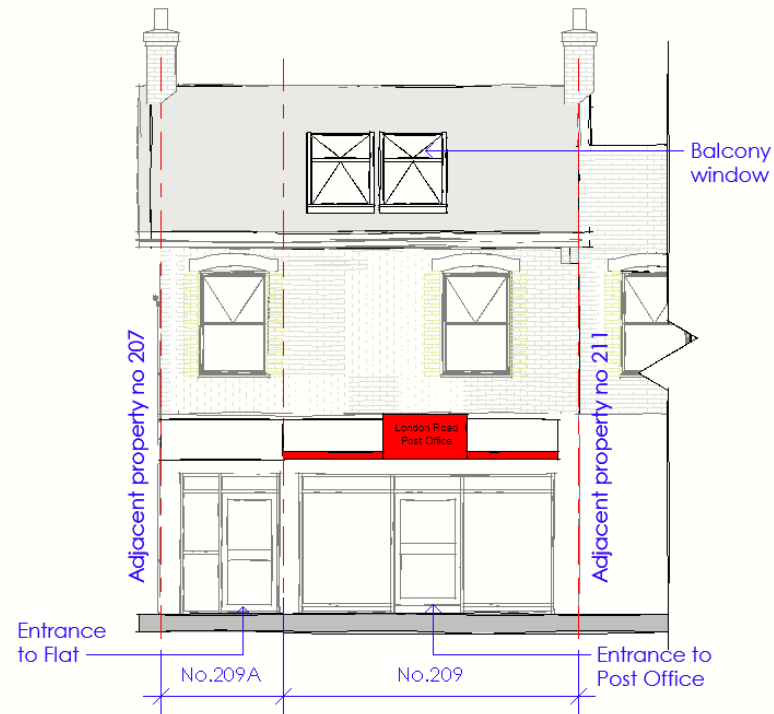




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Proposed development attic
 conversion to habitable space
 Planning Design & Access Statement
 June 2025

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1.0 Introduction

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the attic conversion to habitable space at 209A London Road, Reading, and the provision of bin storage and cycle storage. The proposal aims to bring a currently underutilised space into productive residential use, supporting local housing supply in accordance with Reading Borough Council's Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.0 Site Description

The application site is located at 209A London Road, Reading, comprising a two-storey, mid-terrace property with commercial use on the ground floor and residential flat at first floor. The surrounding area is mixed-use in character, featuring ground-floor commercial premises with residential accommodation above, consistent with the wider streetscape along London Road.

The ground floor is split into the retail area with the main entrance to the postoffice and then a separate door/entrance next this which leads to the upstairs flat.

The site benefits from excellent connectivity to sustainable modes of transport. Reading railway station is approximately 1.2 miles away, providing direct services to London and other key destinations. Royal Berkshire Hospital is 0.6 miles from the site, while the University of Reading is approximately 1.1 miles away (around a 20-minute journey by public transport).

The site is not located within a conservation area, nor is it a listed building. It is also not identified as being at high risk of surface water flooding.



3.0 The Proposal

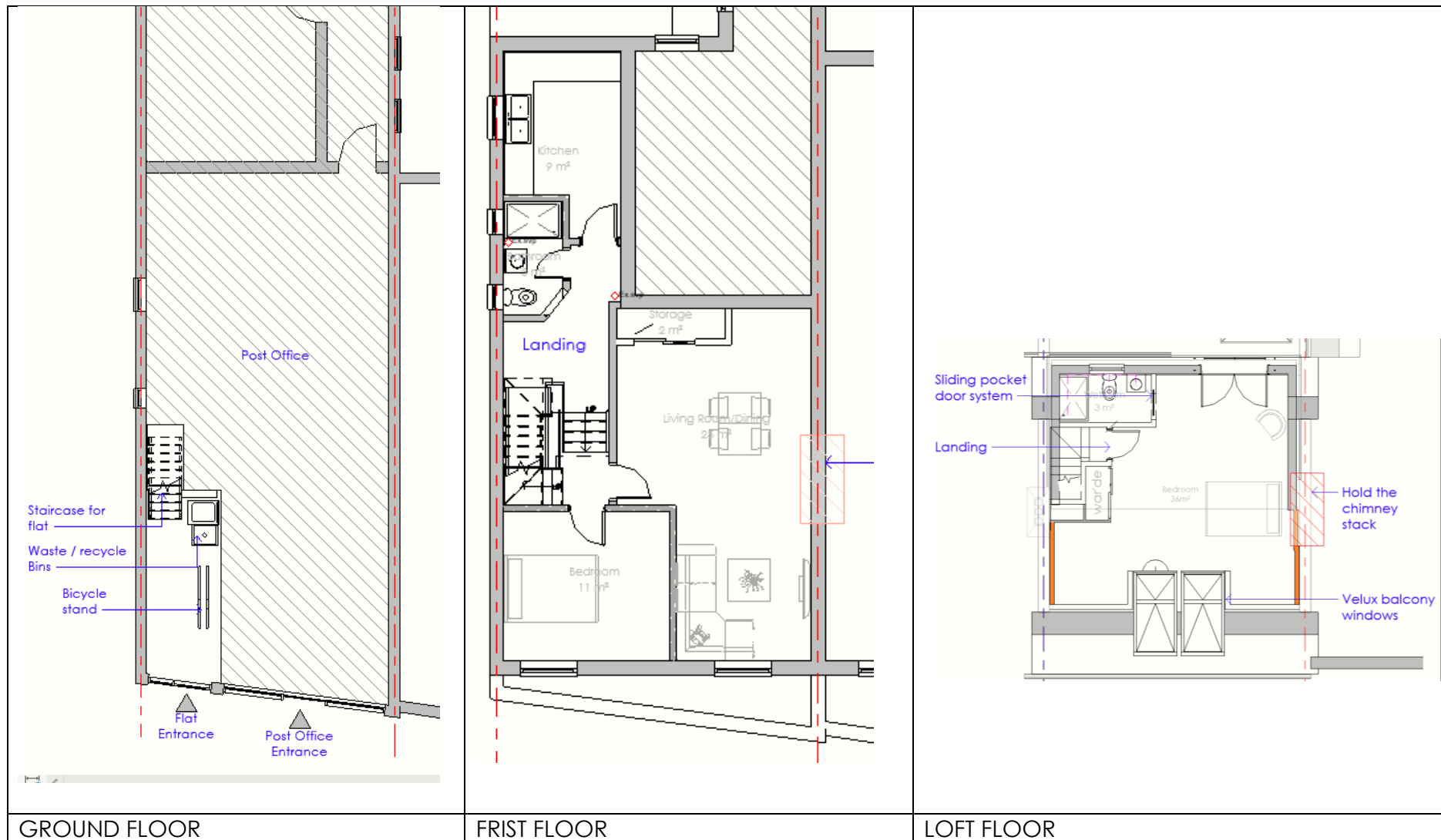
3.1 Proposal Description

The proposal seeks to convert the attic space into a residential (Class C3).

The design features a reconfigured internal layout that complies with Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), providing a high-quality two-bedroom (2B–2P) unit. The layout includes two bedrooms, living room, kitchen, two bathroom, and dedicated storage areas, to optimise the internal arrangement, the existing chimney will be removed from first and attic. New windows will be installed to match the existing style and alignment, ensuring visual continuity with the rest of the building.

Secure bin and cycle storage facilities will be provided on the ground floor, adjacent to the staircase leading to the upper floors.

At Attic level, additional bedroom is created by extending into the roof, incorporating a skylight to ensure adequate natural light and ventilation. The design respects the existing fenestration by carefully matching the style and alignment, maintaining the building's external appearance and ensuring coherence with its surroundings.



4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Planning history

There have been multiple applications made for this site in relation to post office advertisements.

[PL/O3/1170](#) “**Permission was refused**” in 2003 Second floor flat extension and attic conversion with added terrace space.

[PL/O3/1320](#) “**Permission was granted**” in 2004 First floor flat extension and attic conversion.

4.2 Permitted Development

Under prior approval, the client can convert the existing units to residential. There is no limit to the floor space that can be converted under Class MA and there is no requirement for the building to be vacant for 3 months (as previously adopted)

The local authority will assess the application against transport and highways, contaminated, flood risk and noise from commercial units affecting residential, natural light to all habitable rooms and in the conversion the effect on business or similar area.

The above means that in some situation-based constraints and wider contexts), the prior approval requires.

- Transport
- Land contamination
- Flood risk assessment
- Noise impact assessment
- Daylight and sunlight assessment

4.1.1 Transport

The site is located in a sustainable location, with bus stops and local facilities within walking distance. While the site is constrained by a lack of dedicated parking spaces, it is also within walking distance of Reading railway station and the town centre, providing access to sustainable transport modes that support the use of local amenities.

To further promote sustainable travel, secure bicycle storage could be incorporated into the proposal, subject to the overall site layout. Given the site's sustainable location, it is considered that the conversion of the building to residential use would not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding highway infrastructure.

4.1.2 Contamination

The site is not known to be contaminated and is not located within an area at risk of contamination. Furthermore, the site's previous uses do not pose a significant contamination risk. As only internal conversion works are proposed to enable the change of use, it is not considered necessary to require further investigation into potential contamination.

4.1.3 Flood risk assessment

The site is located within a designated Flood Zone 1 area, meaning the property is at the lowest risk of flooding. As the proposal involves only internal conversion works, it is not considered that the development would increase flood risk to the property itself or to the surrounding area.

4.1.4 Noise impact assessment

The surrounding area features a mix of uses, including various residential units on the upper floors of buildings along the street and a range of commercial premises at ground level, such as pubs, takeaways, and convenience stores.

Given this mixed-use character, it is considered that the potential noise impact from existing commercial uses on the intended residential occupiers would be consistent with the established local context. The proposed conversion would therefore not introduce a new or intensified use that would be sensitive to existing noise levels, as similar residential uses are already coexisting successfully within the immediate area.

Moreover, any potential noise from nearby commercial units would be consistent with the ambient urban environment and would not be expected to pose an unacceptable impact on residential amenity. Nonetheless, appropriate measures (such as enhanced glazing or acoustic insulation) could be incorporated if necessary to ensure acceptable internal noise levels are achieved in line with latest building regulations.

4.1.5 Daylight / Sunlight

The proposed conversion will utilise all existing windows and door openings to ensure that natural light is provided to all habitable rooms within the proposed flats. This approach maximises the use of the building's current layout and features, ensuring that each flat benefits from adequate daylight and a pleasant living environment.

By retaining and making full use of the existing window and door openings, the conversion aligns with national and local policy requirements for natural light in residential development. This design approach will also help create a sense of openness and enhance the overall quality of life for future occupants

4.1.6 Impact Assessment

This is not required as the ground floor retail will be retained

4.2 Planning Policies

The following section evaluates the proposal in accordance with the relevant planning policies and supplementary design guidance of the Council, demonstrating why the scheme should be considered acceptable in principle and consistent with the Council's development criteria.

The planning policies and guidance documents outlined below are recognised as material considerations in the assessment of this application.

National planning policy framework

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5- Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Section 7 - Ensuring Good Design
- Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change
- Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Reading borough council

- Reading borough council Local Plan 2019
- Residential conversion supplementary planning document 2023
- Housing strategy Reading 2020-2025

4.2.1 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The Council's Housing Strategy (2023) identifies the delivery of new homes within town centres as a key priority. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also supports the identification of suitable sites for housing growth, prioritising the use of previously developed land.

The proposal responds to this by converting existing floorspace within previously developed land to meet modern housing needs. As new homes remain expensive, adapting and upgrading existing housing stock offers a sustainable way to provide additional and contemporary residential accommodation.

This proposal not only meets identified housing needs but does so in a sustainable way, making efficient use of existing buildings and land.

Policies H3 and H4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan reinforce the need for new housing provision, confirming that the urban area including Reading town centre will be the primary focus for residential development. Policy H5 ensures that all residential development is designed to provide high-quality, sustainable living environments.

Furthermore, locating housing within walking distance to town centre gives future residents excellent access to employment, retail, community, and social facilities, as well as excellent local

and national public transport links. Policy H6 encourages higher-density housing in sustainable locations, supporting the efficient use of land and services.

Additionally, Policy RL5 notes that within primary shopping areas, non-retail uses are generally supported on upper floors where they contribute to the overall viability and vitality of the parade. Therefore, in principle, the use of the upper floors for residential development aligns with the Reading Borough Local Plan and the Council's overall strategy for sustainable urban growth.

4.2.2 Residential Amenity

In considering the suitability of the scheme under Policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the key consideration is the impact on neighbouring land uses, particularly in relation to noise, air quality, disturbance, and visual intrusion.

The anticipated impact of the proposed development on surrounding properties is minimal. The parade already experiences some degree of noise and activity associated with existing shops, and the introduction of a single conversion to residential is unlikely to generate any significant increase in noise or nuisance.

The proposed unit would make use of the existing entrance, providing access to an internal staircase. Additionally, an area along the existing staircase will be designated for bin and bicycle storage. Consequently, the introduction of a single residential unit is not expected to create any issues for the operation of current or future ground-floor retail uses,

The design of the unit has been revised to comply with national space standards, ensuring a high-quality living

environment for future occupants. Furthermore, there are no habitable room windows in neighbouring properties that would be directly affected by the introduction of the proposed new windows. Therefore, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.

4.2.3 Design and historic Significance

The proposal seeks the development of a first-floor flat, making positive use of an underutilised part of the existing building. By reusing this space for residential purposes, the proposal would bring the building back at least in part into active use, supporting the building's longevity and contribution to the local area.

Although the property is located opposite the Cemetery Junction arch, it is important to note that there would be no significant alteration to the building's principal façade or overall character, ensuring that its contribution to the setting of Cemetery Junction is preserved.

5.0 Sustainability

Principle of Development: Better Use of Land

This site is located in an sub urban area. It follows that the site is suitable for development in accordance with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is preferable to make better use of land to deliver dwellings in such sustainable locations. It is essential such sites are developed to a reasonably high density rather than being under-utilised.

Proximity of Services

The site is very well located, being within easy walking distance of the Oracle shopping centre and many services, and facilities around the surrounding.

Excellent Transport Links

It is becoming increasingly acknowledged that one of the most important aspects of sustainability is the principle of connectedness and the degree of connectivity of a site. The site is extremely well connected, as demonstrated throughout this report, with excellent public transport throughout the Reading area.

Thermal Performance: Space Heating

The proposal would be constructed with very high standards of thermal insulation under the latest building regulation's part L and would perform well as regards thermal loss, being far better than buildings of even a few years ago.

Embodied Energy

The proposal would be of straightforward construction and has minimum wasteful construction materials or components. The proposal materials will be sustainable for construction which are more environmentally friendly.

Making the Most of Natural Light and Air

The building has been designed to utilise natural ventilation (via operable external windows which incorporated trickle vents) where possible to reduce energy consumption. The main living spaces are primarily dual aspect to encourage cross ventilation.

Amenity, Wellbeing and Healthy Lifestyle

The proximity to local amenities and excellent transport links also would encourage walking. The area benefits from beaches, parks, business park and many other facilities. In addition, the scheme incorporates bicycle storage, enabling occupants to maximise the use of cycling as well as walking. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle will further promote the well-being of occupants.

Household Waste

Having an allocated enclosed bin storage, the occupants have ample space for waste separation and storage provision, thereby encouraging recycling. This bin storage can be accessed direct from London Road

Build the Future (Energy saving)

- All building elements would be used in accordance with latest building regulation's part L
- A rated material will be used.
- Electric heating throughout the buildings
- All electric components such as fridges, freezer would be A** rated.
- Low energy LED throughout the building
- The landscaping and planting to be provided will use local and natural species to encourage local wildlife and insect habitat.

6.0 Conclusion

The proposal seeks a conversion additional bedroom flat with associated bin and bicycle storage facilities.

This development will make more efficient use of the site, delivering a high-quality design that remains subordinate to the existing dwelling and neighbouring properties.

The new residential unit will improve the site's living standards and capacity, providing better facilities and a high-quality environment for future residents. The proposal also includes well-designed, accessible amenity space that enhances usability.

The building has been carefully sited to minimise impact on the existing site and neighbouring properties, with no issues of overlooking or overshadowing anticipated.

In accordance with Reading Borough Council policies, this conversion will bring part of the building back into active use, providing additional housing to help meet local demand. The development will not detract from the vitality of the shopping area and may help to increase activity within the town centre.

Located within the town centre, the site benefits from excellent access to amenities and public transport, removing the need for dedicated car parking.

Overall, the proposal aligns with relevant policies in the Reading Borough Local Plan, supporting sustainable housing growth, protecting heritage assets, and promoting town centre vitality.

We therefore believe the proposals should be supported as a positive contribution to the neighbour