



Planning statement

81, Hamilton Road, Reading,
RG1 5RB

Planning Statement (Enhanced)

Site Address: 81 Hamilton Road, Reading, RG1 5RB

Proposal: Erection of two-storey side and rear extensions and conversion of existing 7-bedroom HMO (Use Class C4) to a 12-bedroom large HMO (Sui Generis) with associated cycle parking, refuse storage, and provision for 6 off-street car parking spaces.

Prepared by: LHP

Date: 19/06/2025

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the enlargement and reconfiguration of an existing small-scale House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) at 81 Hamilton Road. The development seeks to extend the current two-storey building to facilitate a sustainable increase from a 7-bedroom HMO (Use Class C4) to a 12-bedroom large HMO (Sui Generis use), alongside improvements to parking, refuse management, and internal living standards.

The proposal aligns with the Council's strategic aims to optimise land use, provide high-quality shared accommodation, and maintain a balanced housing mix in sustainable urban locations. The enhanced design ensures that the development respects the amenity of neighbouring occupiers while improving the quality of accommodation for future residents.

2. Site Context and Existing Use

2.1 Site Description

81 Hamilton Road comprises a two-storey semi-detached property set within a residential street of Reading. The existing building has a lawful use as a 7-bedroom HMO. The plot benefits from a generously wide frontage, with existing vehicular access, off-street parking, and side access to the rear garden.

2.2 Existing Use

The property is in active use as a licensed HMO for up to seven unrelated individuals sharing kitchen and bathroom facilities. The current footprint is approximately 166 sqm (gross internal area), with bedrooms of varying sizes, a shared kitchen, and limited communal space.

3. Proposed Development

3.1 Description of Proposals

- Construction of a **two-storey side and rear extension** to increase gross internal floor area from approx. 166 sqm to 296 sqm.
- Internal reconfiguration to create **12 generously sized bedrooms**, each meeting or exceeding minimum national space standards.
- Inclusion of a **dedicated shared kitchen/living/dining area**, laundry area, and sanitary facilities proportionate to occupancy.
- Provision of **6 off-street car parking spaces** on the rear.
- Installation of **secure and covered cycle storage** for a minimum of 12 bicycles.
- Introduction of a **dedicated bin storage enclosure** in accordance with Reading Borough Council standards.

3.2 HMO Management

The proposed HMO will be professionally managed, with 24/7 contact arrangements, house rules, and periodic inspections in line with licensing conditions. Fire safety and refuse protocols will be updated to meet statutory HMO licensing obligations.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) promotes the efficient use of land (Para 119), supports well-designed places (Chapter 12), and encourages the provision of a mix of housing types and tenures to meet diverse needs (Para 62). The proposal complies with these objectives by reusing urban land for intensified, yet high-quality, shared housing.

4.2 Local Policy

Relevant policies from the **Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted 2019)** include:

- **H11 (Houses in Multiple Occupation):** Supports HMOs where they do not result in overconcentration or harm to the character and amenity of the area.
- **CC7 (Design and the Public Realm):** Requires high-quality design that respects existing character.
- **TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters):** Requires safe and sustainable access arrangements.

- **TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking):** Ensures parking standards are met and promotes sustainable transport modes.
- **H5 (Standards for New Housing):** Applies internal and external space standards.
- **OU1 (New and Improved Community Infrastructure):** Ensures developments contribute to infrastructure as needed.

4.3 Supplementary Planning Documents

- **Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD (2012):** Provides guidance on acceptable intensification, room sizes, amenity standards, and bin/cycle storage.
 - **Residential Conversions SPD:** Offers design principles for extensions, respecting character and amenity.
 - **Parking Standards (Appendix 2):** Outlines HMO car and cycle parking thresholds.
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5. Assessment Against Key Planning Considerations

5.1 Principle of Intensification

The proposal is compliant with Policy H11 as it enhances an existing HMO without contributing to an overconcentration. The site lies in a sustainable area with good access to local amenities and public transport. The increase from 7 to 12 residents represents a logical and proportionate intensification that helps address housing need in a managed and policy-consistent manner.

5.2 Design, Layout and Appearance

The extensions are sensitively designed to mirror the scale and massing of the existing dwelling, avoiding visual overdominance. The use of matching materials and window alignment ensures architectural continuity. The layout provides spacious bedrooms, adequate shared space, and circulation in line with best practice.

5.3 Residential Amenity

The proposed layout avoids harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties by maintaining appropriate separation distances, avoiding overshadowing, and limiting new window placement to non-sensitive boundaries. A private rear garden area is retained, contributing to both residential amenity and policy compliance.

5.4 Internal Space Standards

All bedrooms exceed the national minimum room sizes (generally ≥ 6.5 sqm for single occupancy). Shared facilities, including kitchen/living/dining areas, are sized to accommodate 12 individuals comfortably. Bathroom and WC ratios exceed licensing minimums.

5.5 Parking and Cycle Storage

6 off-street parking spaces are proposed in line with Reading's standards for large HMOs. Secure, covered cycle storage for at least 12 bicycles will be provided to encourage sustainable travel, alongside provision for EV charging if required by condition.

5.6 Refuse and Recycling

An enclosed and accessible waste storage area will be provided, with capacity for:

- **2 × 240L general waste bins**
- **2 × 240L mixed recycling bins**
- **1–2 × 140L food waste bins**

The design complies with RBC's Waste Management Guidance for HMOs.

6. Conclusion

This application presents a high-quality, policy-compliant proposal for the enlargement and enhancement of an existing HMO to meet modern housing demands. The scheme makes best use of an urban site, contributes to Reading's housing mix, and does so without compromising design quality, local character, or amenity.

Accordingly, the development complies with the provisions of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the NPPF, and relevant supplementary guidance, and **should be approved without delay** in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.