

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

ARCHITECTURAL & PLANNING SERVICES

**Certificate of Lawfulness application for the Existing use of the top floor as
2No self-contained apartments
at
237 Oxford Road, Reading RG1 7PX
REVISION 1- 02/07/2025**

For GVA Properties Limited

Planning statement

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

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Location, Access, description and use of Buildings

The property has been used as a rented residence of 8No rooms as a “Home in Multiple Occupation” prior to the applicant’s taking ownership in the last four years.

The building is located on the main Oxford Road and being close and to the West of the Reading Town centre, and in close proximity to the Reading West Railway station.

The property is well served by busy bus routes both towards the town centre and towards the West of Reading on routes 15 and 17 with stopping points within 100m.

The Reading West rail station is a 5minute walk with good links to Reading Central Station, and routes to London and the West of England

The property is an easy walking distance to many local amenities, including banks, schools and the major Reading Town shopping centre.

The building is set over four floors with a basement and with three floors at the upper levels accessed via steps to the raised front feature entrance to the property.

There is a single staircase leading from the ground floor to the upper floors, and then a stair down to the basement from the ground floor common corridor.

The ground floor front room has been in use as a studio apartment, with its own shower room and open plan living, but is not the subject of this application.

The top floor has been subdivided into two self-contained 1bedroom apartments, with their own wash rooms and kitchen facilities.

The remaining rooms at the ground floor rear and first floor front and rear rooms have been used in an adhoc manner as “rooms for rent” with shared washrooms. These are not the subject of this application.

The applicants have provided evidence by way of statements from current occupiers who have been long term tenants of the top floor apartments, to confirm the status of occupancies over several years.



Block plan

Heritage (for information only)

The property is an existing mid terrace unit that has a Grade II listing known as Prospect Terrace described as follows:

GRADE: II

DATE LISTED: 14 December 1978

List Entry Number: 1113548

Statutory Address: PROSPECT TERRACE, 237-247, OXFORD ROAD

OS GRID REFERENCE: SU 70424 73420

The listing description is noted as:

OXFORD ROAD (South Side) Nos 237 to 247 (odd) (Prospect Terrace)
Including No 2 Lorne Street. Early-mid C19 altered. 3 storeys and basement. Red brick. Hipped slate roof with ridge chimneys, Nos 141-147 with flat eaves. 2 ranges of glazing bar sash windows each, some altered, No 141 has early C20 square bay to basement and 1st 2 floors. Nos 237-243 retain elegant segmental arched doorways with radiating and wreathed fanlights, Greek key fret lintels supported on fluted Doric columns; 6 panel doors. No 145 has modern doorway. No 147 a 6-panel door in single storey extension to right which has square marginally glazed fanlight flanked by brackets on narrow panelled pilasters. Lorne Street door (No 2) has lost its gate and retains only its contemporary footscrapers

The main features of the building are as noted being the “elegant segmental arched doorways with radiating and wreathed fanlights, Greek key fret lintels supported on fluted Doric columns and the 6 panel doors.

There are no internal features that merit a note. There are no fire places or ornate skirtings or covings/cornices/architraves, although the building has chimneys running from the ground level to the top floor and can be seen above roof level, with some structure at basement level

The internal doors again are of modern design and do not merit retention, and there are dividing partitions that are seen to be later additions to provide the accommodation akin to the use of the building as an HMO and then as the self-contained apartments as described above.

There is a covered area with steps to the rear of the building, which is somewhat unique to the application property as it does not appear in the same format to the adjacent properties.



Front views and entrance feature

The building has had some works undertaken to it over the years, where in the main they relate to replacement windows to the front and rear elevations and internal alterations.





Rear of building



Rear entrance and garden



Internal stair and
basement



The basement is dry and accessed currently by a stair from the ground floor corridor. There is a well with a window to the front elevation, and has a direct access to the garden with windows to the rear, again with a sunken and stepped access from the upper garden level to the basement.



The site



Birds Eye Views



Aerial Eye View

The site

Planning History

Planning reference	Date	Description	Outcome
091384	12/02/2010	Replacement windows	Permitted
141573	27/11/2014	Replace existing UPVC windows and rear french doors with painted timber, double glazed windows and doors	Permitted – (un-implemented)
160521	28/03/2017	Change of use of from house in multiple occupancy to self contained flats of 8 no. units	Application withdrawn due to delayed supply of information
160520	28/03/2017	Change of use of from house in multiple occupancy to self contained flats of 8 no. units	Application withdrawn due to delayed supply of information

Pre-application advice

The applicants had sought pre-application advice to see if there are merits to formally convert the whole building to 4No self contained apartments with the three existing flats already in place. - Application reference 211938/PREAPP response dated 28th January 2022.

The advice suggested to first seek to establish the lawfulness of the existing use and then follow up with the conversion of the remainder of the building to additional self contained units, stating:

“There is no record of the single dwelling being subdivided via a planning application and therefore as it stands the current situation holds little weight in the assessment of the proposal. It is noted in the supporting statement that a Certificate of Lawfulness could be applied for, and this should be explored”

The Planning application

As suggested by way of the pre-application advice, and as there are historically in place the two top floor self-contained apartments, as explained above, and it is intended to formalize their use by presenting the evidence and statements from occupiers to seek a “Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing use”.

4 years of evidence is provided as follows:

Tenancy agreements	
Mr Neil Harris	Dated 01 February 2015
Sworn Affidavit	
Mr Neil Harris	Dated 25 th February 2025 Confirms residence of flat 6 since 2007
Mr Patrick Daniels	Dated 19 th May 2022 Confirms residence of flat 5 since 2017
Email Correspondence	
Reading Borough Council Rent Guarantee officer dated 10 th May 2022	
Electrical Installation certificate	Dated 23 rd March 2021

Conclusion

The applicants are seeking a certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of the two top floor apartments and have provided evidence to confirm that the use has been in place for in excess of 10 years, albeit can categorically confirm evidence for the duration of their own ownership of the building, and hence are applying under the **4 year rule** where apartments can be accepted with evidence provided for this 4 year period.

Floor plans

