

PLANNING STATEMENT

Dukesbridge Court

Duke Street

Reading Town Centre

RG1 4SA

**Conversion of existing two-storey 1-bedroom
maisonette into two self-contained flats**

Proposal:

Conversion of existing two-storey 1-bedroom maisonette into two self-contained flats:

- One studio flat (53.5 sqm) with balcony on the second floor
- One 1-bedroom, 2-person flat (53.5 sqm) on the third floor

Introduction:

This planning application relates to the subdivision of an existing two-storey maisonette within Dukesbridge Court—an established residential block comprising 16 flats in Reading town centre. The maisonette is located on the second and third floors and is currently accessed by two separate doors from the communal staircase—one per floor.

The proposal involves reconfiguring the internal layout to create two self-contained residential flats, each with its own dedicated entrance, in line with national and local housing policy that encourages the efficient use of the existing housing stock.

Description of the Proposal:

- The second floor will be converted into a studio flat (53.5 sqm), which will retain the existing private balcony for sole use by this unit.

- The third floor will be converted into a 1-bedroom, 2-person flat (53.5 sqm), taking up the entire top floor of the maisonette.

No external alterations are proposed, and the work is restricted to internal reconfiguration. Each flat will be independently accessed using the two existing entrances off the communal stairwell, meaning no changes to the external envelope or circulation core are required.

Planning Policy Compliance:

The proposal supports key objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), including:

- Making effective use of land and buildings (Chapter 11)
- Supporting sustainable development in well-connected urban areas (Chapter 2)
- Delivering a range of housing types and tenures (Chapter 5)

Locally, the scheme complies with the Reading Borough Local Plan, particularly:

- Policy H2: Securing the efficient use of housing land
- Policy H5: Housing standards (both flats exceed minimum space standards of 37 sqm for studios and 50 sqm for 1-bed, 2-person units)
- Policy CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy CC3: Adaptation to climate change and accessibility

Conclusion:

The subdivision of the existing maisonette into two high-quality, policy-compliant flats will make a positive contribution to local housing supply without increasing the building's footprint or negatively affecting residential amenity. The building has the capacity to accommodate an additional two residents, and the proposed flats offer viable, comfortable living environments in a highly sustainable town centre location.

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Dukesbridge Court

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maisonette into two self-contained flats**

1. Use

The building is in residential use (Class C3), and this will remain unchanged. The proposal seeks to subdivide an existing maisonette to provide two self-contained residential flats.

2. Layout

- The second-floor flat will be a studio layout with open-plan kitchen/living/sleeping space, a separate bathroom, and direct access to the existing balcony.
- The third-floor flat will be a 1-bedroom unit with a separate bedroom, bathroom, and open-plan living/kitchen/dining area.

Both flats meet the Nationally Described Space Standards and provide well-proportioned, usable internal spaces suitable for modern urban living.

3. Scale

There will be no change to the building's external scale or height. The proposal involves internal alterations only.

4. Access

Each flat will have its own independent entrance:

- The existing second-floor entrance becomes the studio's front door.
- The existing third-floor entrance becomes the 1-bedroom flat's front door.

This arrangement avoids the need for new openings or alterations to the communal stairwell and ensures secure and private access for both units.

5. Landscaping

There are no changes to the landscaping. The existing communal amenity areas and refuse storage remain unaffected and accessible.

6. Transport and Sustainability

Located in Reading town centre, the site offers excellent access to public transport, including Reading train station and multiple bus routes. This central location supports car-free living, consistent with local policy. Secure cycle storage is available and will continue to be used by occupants.

7. Community Impact

The existing building is an established, purpose-built block of 16 flats and is well-equipped to accommodate two additional residents without undue impact on services or amenities. The proposal makes better use of underutilised internal space to improve housing availability within the town centre.

8. Affordable Housing Statement

As the proposed scheme increases the residential unit count by one (from one to two), it falls below the threshold requiring an affordable housing contribution, in accordance with Reading Borough Local Plan policies and national guidance. Therefore, no affordable housing contribution is applicable or proposed.

9. Air Quality Statement

The proposal involves only internal alterations and does not include any increase in vehicular parking provision. Its town centre location and proximity to sustainable transport options encourage low-emission lifestyles. As such, the development is not expected to have any negative impact on local air quality and supports the Borough's wider environmental goals.

10. Heritage Statement

Dukesbridge Court is not located within a conservation area and is not a listed building. The proposal entails no external changes to the building or its façade. There is no anticipated impact on heritage assets or the character of the surrounding area.

11. Sustainability Statement – Energy Efficiency

The scheme aligns with the principles outlined in the **Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document** through:

- Reuse of the existing building structure, which retains embodied energy
- Increased efficiency in land use by creating an additional dwelling within the existing footprint
- Potential inclusion of modern fittings and improved insulation during refurbishment, reducing energy consumption
- Promotion of low-carbon lifestyles through car-free accessibility and cycle parking provision

Overall, the scheme enhances the building's functional sustainability while maintaining architectural integrity.

12. Conclusion

This proposal reflects a careful and policy-compliant approach to intensifying residential use in a sustainable, high-accessibility location. It preserves the character and functionality of the host building while delivering two high-quality new homes with no external impact.