

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

86 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT TO SUPPORT PLANNING APPLICATION

Change of Use from Office (Class E) to Residential (Class C3)



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Proposal: Change of Use from Office (E/B1(a)) to Residential (C3) at 86 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client **Mr. Philip Lee**, to support planning application for Change of Use from Office (Class E) to Residential (Class C3). The proposed development includes internal alterations to ensure the property meets modern residential living standards while preserving its historic character.

2. Site and Context

86 London Street is a Grade II listed building located in central Reading and lies within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. It is a mid-terrace three-storey building with a basement. The building retains many original architectural features and contributes to the local character. Historically, the building functioned as offices, the building currently functions as a letting agency. It is also known as Albion House.

The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential uses, making the proposed change of use appropriate and in keeping with the evolving urban landscape. The site is situated in a sustainable location with accessible links to multiple forms of public transport. A bus stop is located near 86 London Street and serves a number of bus routes. The main Reading train station is located within 0.6 miles.

The site is also located in Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest risk of flooding.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks to convert the existing vacant office space into a high-quality residential dwelling, incorporating the following works:

- Conversion from office (E) to residential (C3) use.
- ~~Addition of en-suite bathrooms on the first and second floors.~~
- ~~Installation of non-load bearing timber stud walls to form the new en-suite bathrooms.~~
- Internal alterations in the basement, including removal and installation of some internal non load bearing walls to create more functional residential spaces.
- Replacement of flooring throughout the property where necessary.
- Repainting of walls and surfaces using materials and finishes that respect the building's historical character.
- Provision of an outside cycle storage area at ground floor level.
- Inclusion of a waste and recycling storage facility within the existing rear yard.
- Refuse storage for the dwelling will be located within the existing rear yard, with refuse to be placed adjacent to the property on collection days.
- **Additionally, with regards the asbestos, the proposal is to strip out the modern flooring and the asbestos tiles which are beneath. (it seems most of the Basement rooms and the utility room, and the main reception room at the ground floor)**

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4. Design Justification

The internal alterations have been carefully designed to ensure minimal impact on the building's historic fabric while allowing for practical residential use. ~~The installation of non-load bearing timber stud walls for the en-suite bathrooms ensures reversibility if needed in the future.~~ Repainting and flooring replacements will be undertaken with sensitivity to the existing materials and finishes. There will be no alterations to the external structure of the building. Building was vacant since 18.03.2025.

5. Access Considerations

The proposed development maintains existing access arrangements, with no alterations to the external structure of the building. Access to the residential unit will remain via the existing main entrance, ensuring compliance with accessibility requirements where possible.

6. Heritage Impact

As a Grade II listed building, the proposed alterations have been designed to preserve and enhance the historical and architectural significance of 86 London Street. The works have been planned to ensure minimal disruption to original features, with all interventions being reversible where possible. The proposal aligns with local and national heritage conservation policies.

7. Planning Policy Compliance

The proposed development aligns with relevant local and national planning policies, including:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** Supporting the sustainable conversion of historic buildings to residential use where appropriate.
- **Reading Borough Local Plan:** Encouraging mixed-use developments and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings to meet housing needs.
- **Heritage Protection Guidelines:** Ensuring that the works respect and preserve the character of listed buildings while allowing for appropriate modern use.

8. Planning History

PL/05/1277- Advertising banners

PL/05/1311- Advertising banners on first floor level (0.68m X 1.5m)

PL/06/0090- Formation of a walkway between 86 and 88 London Street

PL/06/0095- Formation of hardstanding for use as a car park at rear

PL/06/0262- Retrospective application: Installation of 3 CCTV cameras to the front of the building

PL/07/1269- Alterations to boundaries and current access to rear of 86 and 88 London Street

PL/07/1302- Landscaping proposal to rear of properties: including hardstanding for parking, new access arrangements, additional foliage and alterations to boundaries.

PL/10/0073- Projecting sign on front elevation of building (resubmission of 10/00584/ADV)

PL/10/1572- Projecting sign on front elevation of building

PL/13/1561- Blocking up of interconnecting door between premises.

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PL/89/0151- Single storey rear extension for office space

PL/89/0199- Single storey rear extension

PL/91/0892- Demolition of existing outbuilding and single storey rear extension to provide additional office accommodation.

PL/91/0893- Single storey rear extension to be used as a Boardroom. Materials - slates to roof and brickwork to walls to match existing.

9. Conclusion

The proposed change of use and internal alterations at 86 London Street, Reading, represent a sensitive and sustainable approach to repurposing a historic building for residential use. The design respects the architectural integrity of the property while providing modern, functional living spaces. The inclusion of cycle storage, waste, and recycling facilities further enhances the sustainability and practicality of the development. We believe this proposal contributes positively to the local area and respectfully enhances the building's long-term viability.