

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: PL/25/1506 Full planning permission

Address: 6-8 Stanshawe Rd, Reading, RG1 1PB

Proposal: Proposed change of use of the building to a 10 bedrooms HMO and proposed erection of a rear dormer extension.

Applicant: Mr A Varban

Received date: 21/10/2025

Target Decision date: 02/02/2026

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

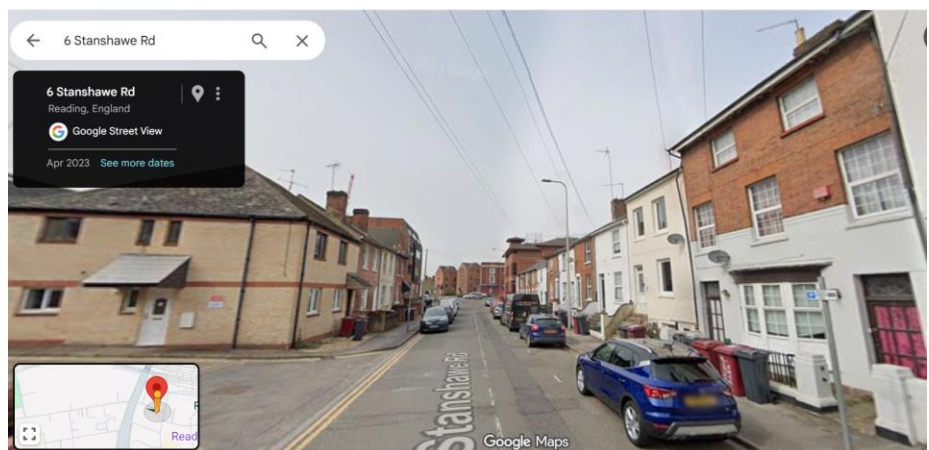
1. SITE DESCRIPTION

6–8 Stanshawe Road is a three-storey terraced property with a right sided pitched roof at the end of the residential terrace within a defined area of traditional town-centre terraced housing covered by Policy CR9e of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The building is currently undergoing refurbishment; however, the lawful planning status of the existing internal layout has not been demonstrated. Historic floor plans on public record¹ indicate the building was last used as two family-sized maisonettes (2-bedroom at ground floor and 3-bedroom above on the first and second floor). Access to the rear garden was not possible during the site visit ; however, aerial images and upper-floor photographs confirm the presence of trees not shown on submitted plans.

Existing plans show that the property was split into two maisonettes, a two bedroom ground floor and a three bedroom first and second floor maisonette. There are two separate entrances to each flat either side of a ground floor bay window, with three windows at the first floor and two windows at the second floor. The roof is stepped up in height from 10 Stanshawe Road and is hipped towards an existing office building at Scottish Mutual House 35-43 Greyfriars Road. Surrounding roads are comprised of residential accommodation, businesses and offices.

The site lies within the Reading Central Area (Policy CR1-10), in the office core, an air quality management area and Flood Zone 2 (Standing Advice applies). The property is not in an Article 4 area.

Front elevation – Streetmap April 2023²



¹ <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/property-history/6-stanshawe-road/reading/rg1-1pb/68614387/>

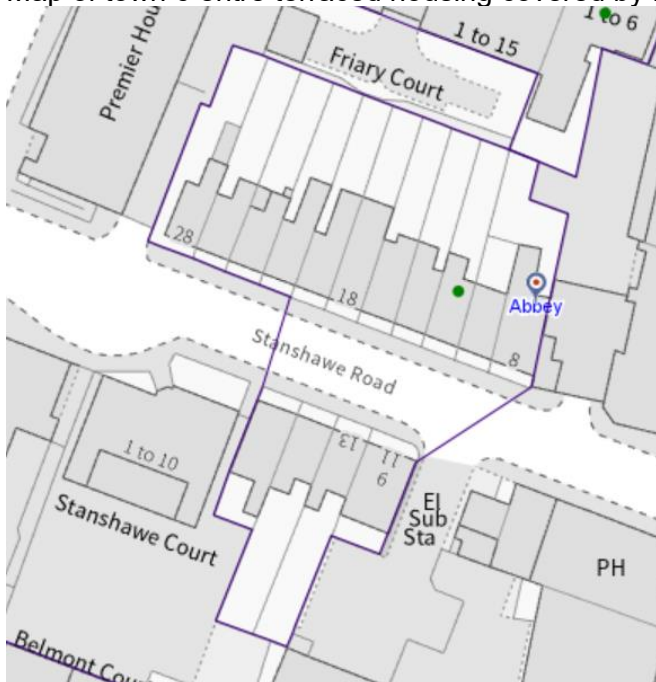
² <https://www.google.com/maps>

Site visit 6 January 2026

It was not possible to access the ground floor to confirm the layout of the existing plans due to the presence of asbestos or the former use of the building due to the scale of refurbishment work being undertaken.



Map of town c-entre terraced housing covered by Policy CR9e



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for change of use of the building to a large sui generis 10 bedroom HMO and the following associated works:

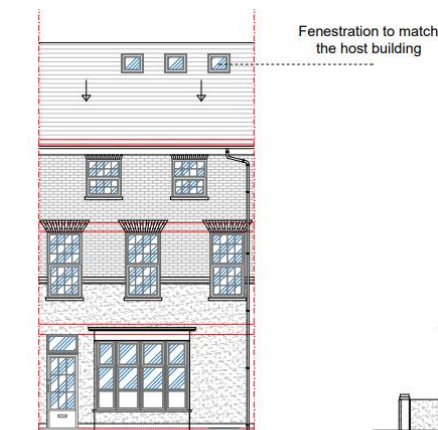
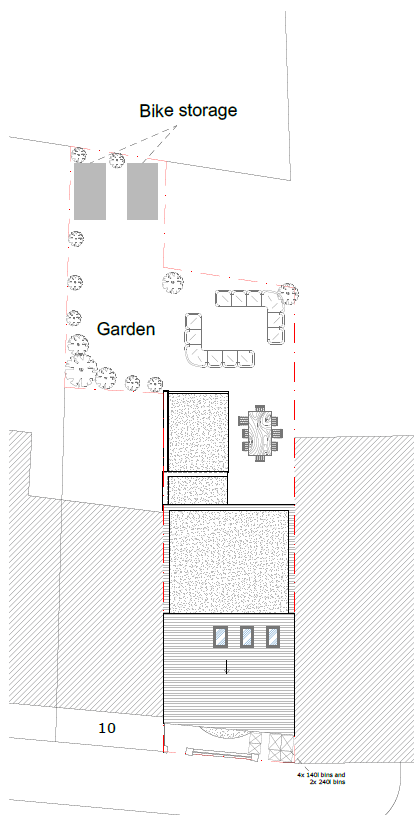
- The loss of one family sized unit of accommodation
- A roof extension is proposed to raise the roof ridge across the property and increase the roof height with a large box-form rear dormer extension to create an additional storey of residential accommodation including 2 ensuite bedrooms and a kitchen
- Removal of chimney stack
- Internal reconfiguration across all levels, from 5 bedroom accommodation (comprising 2 maisonettes) to a 10 bedroom sui generis HMO
- Removal of the right side front door on the ground floor front elevation
- Addition of 2 Velux windows in the front roof elevation
- Provision of cycle parking in the rear garden and bin storage at the front of the building.
- No changes are proposed to the building footprint.

Proposed plans

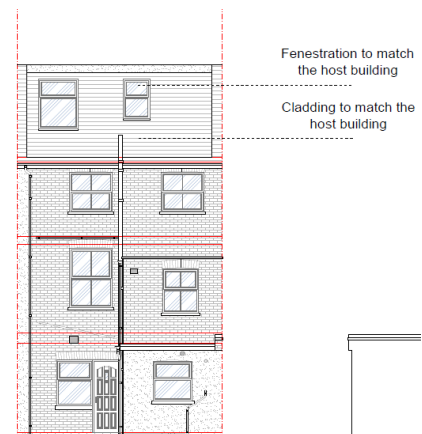
16 Proposed block plan

14 Proposed front elevation

15 Proposed rear elevation



Proposed Front Elevation

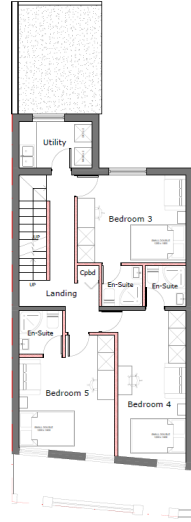


Proposed Rear Elevation

11 Proposed Ground and first floor

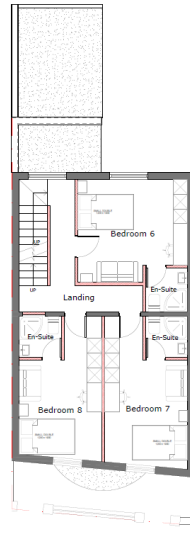


Proposed Ground Floor

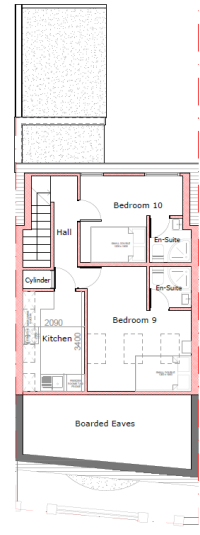


Proposed First Floor

12 Proposed second and loft floor



Proposed Second Floor



Proposed Loft Floor

Relevant Planning history

None

Plans/documents submitted

0 Location plan

1 ground and first Floor Plan – Existing

2 second floor and loft Plan - Existing

3 Roof Plan - Existing

4 Elevation (Front & side) - Existing

5 Elevation (Rear & side) - Existing

6 Site/Block Plan - Existing

11 Proposed ground and first Floor plan

12 Proposed second and loft Floor plan

13 Roof Plan – Proposed

14 Elevation (Front & side) - Proposed

15 Elevation (Rear) – Proposed

16 Proposed Block plan of the site

HMO Management statement, 1 Right plan

Sustainability and air quality statement, 1 Right plan

~~Flood risk assessment, 1 Right plan~~

Planning statement, 1 Right plan

Noise impact assessment, 1 Right plan

CIL form

As received 21 October 2025

764 FRA-v1 6-8 Stanshawe Road Flood risk assessment, Urban water, Dec 25

As received 28 January 2026

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- **RBC Transport** – In principle there are no transport objections to the proposed change of use as the proposed change of use is unlikely to have a significant impact on the number of trips and parking demand generated by the new use, however clarification regarding cycle and Bins storage and collection is required. These can be dealt with by way of condition:

HM3 HMO REFUSE AND RECYCLING (TO BE SUBMITTED)
 HM4 HMO CYCLE STORAGE (TO BE SUBMITTED)
 HM5 HMO PARKING PERMITS (NOTIFICATION TO LPA)
 HM6 HMO PARKING PERMITS (NOTIFICATION TO OCCUPANTS)
 C2 CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)

It is noted that there are a number of trees on site, the Natural environment officer will need to be consulted.

- **RBC Planning Natural Environment** – Objection, there is a failure to demonstrate that trees will be protected on site. The application form and submitted plans incorrectly state that there are no trees.



Trees at the rear are visible on aerial photography (googlemaps) and in the applicant's own planning statement photos. Tree survey, RPAs, and protection measures are required to assess any conflict between tree locations, building works, materials storage and proposed cycle store. A commentary is required on the bike store specification and how that will be installed, and without impacting trees. Also how the trees will be protected during the building refurbishment.

- **RBC Environmental protection** – Failure to demonstrate - The noise statement is insufficient as it is unclear whether insulation applies to existing party walls. Clarification is required as to

whether the proposed bin store is rat-proof bin store (additional information would be required). No information has been provided regarding asbestos found on site and how any potential residual contamination would impact future residents.

- **RBC Private sector housing team (HMO)** – There would be no objection subject to accordance with current planning requirements, building regulations, water byelaws, any other associated regulations Concerns raised: The means of escape for Bedroom 2 is inadequate. There is no fire strategy shown and there is no record of any existing HMO licence despite claims in the applicant's statement.
 - The proposed plans show adequate showering/bathing, cooking facilities and food preparation areas.
 - Bedroom 2 (ground floor rear) – Has an inadequate means of escape. In the event of a fire the occupant would have to escape through the kitchen which is considered a high-risk room. This will need to be reviewed to ensure the occupant can escape in the opposite direction to where a fire is likely to be.
 - The plans do not identify the fire safety measures with regards to the means of escape, self-closing fire doors or automatic fire detection. All of which will need to be installed in accordance with LACORs Fire Safety guidance ([link below](#)).

[guidance-on-fire-safety-provisions-for-certain-types-of-existing-housing.pdf](#)

- I would suggest the landlord visit Reading Borough Council website HMO management pack ([link below](#)) concerning size rooms, to ensure that all bedrooms are of an adequate size.

[Houses in multiple occupation – management pack](#)

- I would suggest the landlord check and ensure an HMO licence is in place or is applied for prior to letting rooms. The property will be licensable once occupied by 3 or more people forming 2 or more households from March 2026 when additional licencing is rolled out throughout Reading.
 - I could find no record of the property being a HMO, licenced HMO or having a current licence, as stated by 1 Right Plan, in the HMO Management statement provided (below):
- **RBC Waste services** – A standard allocation is provided for a single HMO which is likely to be insufficient for a 10-bed HMO, any additional waste capacity will require a commercial waste contract. The Council's standard household waste collection service is for fortnightly recycling collections, fortnightly general waste collections and weekly food waste collections. For one HMO dwelling the Council would provide the below bins:
 - 1 x 240L general waste bin
 - 1 x 240L recycling bin
 - 1x 23L food waste caddy

The Council can provide additional recycling and food waste bins if needed, but this is the maximum amount that would be provided for general waste on the standard collection.

Developers must also take into consideration upcoming changes to residential waste collection services as per Simpler Recycling requirements in the future. These requirements will increase the amount of material recycled/collected at the kerbside (i.e. addition of glass & soft plastics) and so additional refuse space should be allocated to allow for this. Note: glass can currently only be recycled at local glass bottle banks or the tip.

Most homes will get a 55-litre box for glass but larger households may require a second box. This will be collected every two weeks. Space would need to be allocated for this within the site as well.

If tenants are producing more waste than what can be contained within the above bins, the property manager/HMO license holder would need to arrange for additional bins or more frequent collections of bins through a commercial waste contractor which would be a chargeable service. As this is a large HMO, I expect this will be necessary as soon as it is occupied. This is set out in 'The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006' sections 9 and 7 which states:

The manager must—

- (a) ensure that sufficient bins or other suitable receptacles are provided that are adequate for the requirements of each household occupying the HMO for the storage of refuse and litter pending their disposal; and
- (b) make such further arrangements for the disposal of refuse and litter from the HMO as may be necessary, having regard to any service for such disposal provided by the local authority.

All bins must be stored within the boundary of the private property as to not cause an obstruction to the pavement. The plans do not show that they have allowed space for bin storage within the private frontage. I am also concerned that quarterly inspections will not be frequent enough to keep on top of any issues relating to waste and recycling management at this large HMO.

- **RBC Conservation officer** – Objection – The proposed change in the height of the roofline and loft dormer extension are considered to result in a negative impact to the group of terraced houses. The hipped roof defines the character of the building at the end of the row of terraced houses and is attractive when compared to the buildings on the terraced row. The loss of the second front door harms the symmetry and appearance of the front elevation. In context of the area, it is considered in a similar regard to the conversation area. Although it would be partially visible within the public realm, Policy CR9 states that “The fact that it is the context of these areas that is the main reason for their significance makes a policy in the Local Plan a more appropriate mechanism than designation as conservation areas.” And that the terraced row makes “a unique contribution to the character of central Reading” and “it is the juxtaposition with the high-density, often modern, context in which these areas are found that marks them out and makes them most worthy of retention.” The proposed development for the addition of the dormer, increased ridge height, loss of second front entrance, intensification of occupancy of the building, associated bin storage at the building frontage and change of use has a detrimental effect on the character of this area.
- **Environment Agency EA** - Standing Advice applies. FRA reviewed but no bespoke comment provided. This planning application is for development we do not wish to be consulted on because Flood Risk Standing Advice applies. Please see the attached which was issued to your council to screen applications before sending to us.

For certain development types, e.g. development that falls within a Flood Risk area, we have supplied your authority with Flood Risk Standing Advice (FRSA). Please refer to this in accordance with the table below.

Please consult the Environment Agency for development not covered by FRSA.

Please note, this does not mean we support the application. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to apply Flood Risk Standing Advice to applications where appropriate. We have not assessed the elements of the proposal that fall within Flood Risk Standing Advice. You must view our standing advice in full before making a decision on this application, to ensure that flood risk is taken into account in your decision.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLOOD RISK STANDING ADVICE IS APPLICABLE FOR THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor development |

Flood Zone 3	Non-domestic extensions of 250 square metres or less
	- Change of use (except a change to more or highly vulnerable or a change from water compatible to less vulnerable) - Refer to Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification of the NPPF for vulnerability definitions National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Flood Zone 2	Minor development
	- Non-domestic extensions of 250 square metres or less - Water compatible (including essential accommodation within a water compatible development), more vulnerable (except landfill, a waste facility or a caravan or camping site), less vulnerable (except a waste treatment site, mineral processing site, water treatment plant, or sewage treatment plant) - Refer to Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification of the NPPF for vulnerability definitions National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Permitting and licencing advice for applicants:

Although we are not providing bespoke comments on this planning application, the applicant should be made aware that they may require an Environmental Permit or Licence from us for some types of development.

Environmental permits	- Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016, permits are needed to carry out a wide range of specified activities lawfully. - Examples include: installations, medium combustion plant, specified generator, waste or mining waste operations, water discharge or groundwater activities, or work on or near a main river or sea defence. - For more information visit: https://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/environmental-permits
Licences (water abstraction or impoundment)	- In order to ensure water resources and water quality activities are protected and appropriately managed, abstracting or impounding water may require an abstraction or impoundment licence. - For more information visit: https://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/water

25th March 2025 We have published new data in the Flood Map For Planning. The flood map includes updated flood zones reflecting existing local models and the new and improved national model, river and sea defended and undefended flood extents and surface water flood risk extents.

Information on the all the data we are publishing is available at [Defra Data Services Platform](#)

- **Thames Water-** Thames Water has reviewed this H4 consultation. Your client may require a build over agreement, as we believe the proposed development could be within 3 meters of a public sewer (of which, the internal diameter is less than or equal to 150mm). There are no mapped public sewers in the vicinity, however following the private sewer transfer in October 2011, it is likely that houses of this type and location will have unmapped public sewers within their boundary.
We therefore strongly recommend your client employs a professional to conduct a survey within their property to ascertain if any shared pipework is present. If there is, then please do contact us again to discuss the next steps.
For more information on locating sewers and drains, watch our video.
Watch our guide to the Private Sewer Transfer – note this only applied to existing drains and sewers that existed and were operational in 2011, not any new sewers or drains built since that time.
Please also advise your client, if applicable, that Thames Water do not permit driven piles within 15m of a public sewer. Our technical guidance can be found [here](#).
- **SSE Consultations** – No response at the time of writing this report
- **RBC Sustainability** – No response at the time of writing this report *Case officer – the refurbished building would be required to confirm with Policy CC2 Sustainable design and Construction and CC3 Adaption to climate change and building regulations.*

A site notice was displayed at the site on 10 December 2025. No letters of representation have been received.

Discussions with the agent

The agent was provided feedback and the option to withdraw but requested a determination to be made.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024 and a submission version submitted in May 2025. Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on

whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the advice given below and are not considered to be 'out of date'.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaption to Climate Change

CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

CR2: Design in Central Reading

CR9 Terraced housing in Central Reading

EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN16: Pollution and Water resources

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

H2: Density and Mix

H7: Protecting the Existing Housing Stock

H8: Residential Conversions

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Residential Conversions (2023)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Guide to Amenity Standards applicable to Houses in Multiple Occupation that require a Licence, RBC

Waste Storage and Collection Guidance.

5. APPRAISAL

For conversions of building into an HMO for multiple occupation the main planning policy is Policy H8 (Residential Conversions), which states that: *"Proposals to convert buildings into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas and other related servicing."*

Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:

- *The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;*
- *The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;*

- *There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- *There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*
- *Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access; and*
- *The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents.....”*

In addition Policy CC8 requires development to not cause “*a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:*

- ☐ *Privacy and overlooking;*
- ☐ *Access to sunlight and daylight;*
- ☐ *Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;*
- ☐ *Harm to outlook;*
- ☐ *Noise and disturbance;*
- ☐ *Artificial lighting;*
- ☐ *Vibration;*
- ☐ *Dust and fumes;*
- ☐ *Smell;*
- ☐ *Crime and safety;”*

“...Where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to restrict such changes.”

Policy H10 is with regard to ensuring that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space.

Together with the relevant adopted local planning policies, the appraisal of this application has been assessed against the adopted Residential Conversions SPD (2023), which provides further guidance on the interpretation of the adopted policies. Section 2 of the SPD deals with ‘All Conversions’. The SPD sets assessment matters against checklist items and the relevant ones have been referred to below.

The main issues to be considered are:

- i Principle of development**
 - ii Design/impact on the character of terraced housing**
 - iii The impact on amenity of existing and future residents of the property and neighbouring properties;**
 - iv Trees**
 - v Car/ Cycle Parking;**
 - vi Bin Storage;**
 - vii Flooding and drainage**
 - viii Other Matters**
-
- i Principle of development**

Policy H2 states “ Wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing ... in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms.”

Policy H7 states “*Planning permission will not be granted for any loss of residential accommodation or land unless there are exceptional circumstances. Planning permission will not be granted for a net loss in the number of residential units or gross floor area.*”

Under Policy H8 and the SPD Checklist item 3 any residential conversion must contribute to achieving an appropriately mixed and sustainable community by providing an acceptable housing mix, ensuring that, as appropriate, single family housing remains the dominant form of dwelling in the vicinity of the application. Policy H8 also states ‘*Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:*

- *The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;’*

Any residential conversion must contribute to achieving an appropriately mixed and sustainable community by providing an acceptable housing mix. The last known lawful layout comprised a 2-bed and 3-bed maisonette (total two family dwellings). Policy H2 identifies family-sized homes (2+ bedrooms) as a priority need across Reading. The 2 properties at 6-8 Stanshawe illustrated on existing plans submitted show that the former units comprised a 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom unit.

Policy H7 resists loss of residential accommodation unless exceptional justification is provided—none has been submitted. Policy H8 and Residential Conversions SPD require that conversions do not dilute the supply of family housing and provide at least one familysized unit within the conversion. The proposal results in the complete loss of two family sized dwellings and provides no familysuitable replacement, contrary to Policies H2, H7 and H8. No exceptional justification has been provided for the loss of family sized residential units. This application is not comparable with PL/25/0501 62 Prospect Street mentioned by the planning agent which had a certificate for lawfulness for existing use and comprised one bedroom units. The proposal results in an unacceptable loss of family housing with no exceptional justification. The proposed intensification would detrimentally impact the mix and variety of housing offered along Stanshawe Road. There is a failure to demonstrate an exceptional justification in the Planning statement provided for the loss of 2 family sized units and contrary to policies H2, H7 and H8. The change of use to a sui generis HMO in a single dwelling unit in multiple occupation is therefore considered unacceptable in principle.

ii Design/impact on the character of terraced housing

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) states that all development must be of high design quality that maintains the character and appearance of the area within which it is located including layout, landscape, density, scale and architectural detail and materials.

Policy CR9: TERRACED HOUSING IN CENTRAL READING states ‘*The character of the following areas of traditional town centre terraced housing will be respected:*

CR9e: Stanshawe Road

Development should not result in a loss, or have a detrimental effect on the character of, these areas.’

There are two terraced rows on opposite sides of Stanshawe Road in a built up area surrounded by office buildings. The location is specifically mentioned in policy CR9e as an area ‘*of traditional town*

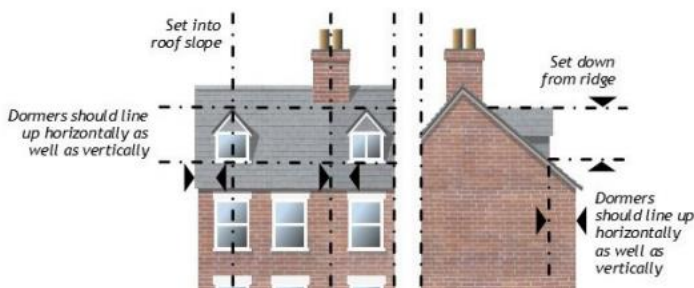
centre terraced housing. The proposed intensification and change in ridge height would detrimentally impact the character, mix and variety of housing offered along Stanshawe Road.

Policy CC7 states that development should, 'Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm', whilst policy H9 states an extension should, 'Respect the character and pattern of neighbouring properties,,,and any other architectural features'

Proposed dormer

Design guidance states that small dormers should be set within a rear roof slope and examples are provided of inappropriate design within the Design Guide to House Extensions.

Acceptable design



Inappropriate design



Birds eye view of the site provided in the planning statement - none of the row of terraced houses have a large rear dormer



Google earth view – the existing roof complements the end of terrace building (no 9-11) on the opposite side of Stanshawe Road.



The size of the rear dormer conflicts with Reading Planning policy and design guidance, which should not be visually dominant or detract from its surroundings. The proposed dormer is excessive in scale spanning almost the full roof width, contrary to SPD guidance requiring dormers to be modest, set-in, and subordinate. There are no comparable large dormers on this terrace; the proposal would be visually dominant and harmful compares to buildings with smaller dormers set into the roof spaces of surrounding developments.

The intensification from two dwellings to a 10-bed HMO and the change in roof form and large dormer materially alter the character and pattern of development. Bin storage dominating the frontage creates clutter detrimental to the uniform terrace character. The removal of the second existing front door results in a loss of symmetry on the front elevation and will detrimentally impact the view of the building within the public realm.

The proposed large rear dormer, removal of the chimneys, intensified use, and reliance on front-of-plot bin storage would result in a visually intrusive and incongruous form of development, harmful to the character and appearance of the traditional terraced housing within Stanshawe Road, which is protected under Policy CR9e where development should not result in a loss, or have a detrimental effect on the character of, these areas.

The existing hipped roof and chimney stack defines the character of the building as an end of terrace dwelling. The addition of the dormer and increased ridge height is not subservient or subordinate to the building and would have a negative impact of to the group of terraced houses. The dormer fails to comply with local design guidance requiring dormers to remain subordinate to the roofscape and detrimentally impacts the character of traditional terraced housing in Stanshawe Road contrary to Policy CR9e. No material specifications have been provided to confirm whether they would be in keeping with the character of the terraced building. The planning statement states that the roof would be '*sympathetic in relation to the adjacent building*' but does not specify which building it refers to. The proposed roof conversion and loss of the right side front door are considered to be unacceptable and fail to suitably preserve the character and appearance of the building, surrounding area and conservation area in accordance with Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3 is contrary to policies CC7, CR2, CR9e, CC2 and H9 and

the intensity of development will detrimentally impact the character of Stanshawe Road. Paragraph 129, part d) of the NPPF highlights that *'the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting'* should be taken into account. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that proposed developments are *'are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.'*

iii The impact on amenity of existing and future residents of the property and neighbouring properties;

Policy H8 also sets out additional detailed matters for consideration of all types of conversions, self-contained flats and sui generis HMO

The Residential conversion SPD states that *'The use of dormer windows to accommodate additional headroom should be sensitively designed so as not to dominate the roof'* and that section plans should be provided in relation to the proposed loft conversion to demonstrate acceptable head height.

There is a requirement for sufficient communal areas to be provided. The SPD states that *'If the bedrooms provided as part of the HMO are at the minimum size considered appropriate, then a standard of one communal room per four bedrooms as a guide would be sought, one communal room per six bedrooms may be considered appropriate...It should be assumed that the provision of a communal room is in addition to the provision of a kitchen, particularly where the kitchen provides no seating area or space to relax and is purely a functional area.'*

Communal space

120 square metre gross internal space and communal space is proposed; however It is not considered that the proposed plans would provide sufficient communal space for a 10 bedroom HMO. The living area is shown behind a partition, no supporting daylight and sunlight information has been provided to demonstrate a suitable communal space. A 10-bed HMO requires one communal room per four rooms (Residential Conversions SPD). The proposed living space is positioned behind an internal partition with no daylight/sunlight assessment. The area is insufficient for up to 10+ potential occupants and does not meet the Residential Conversions SPD standard.

Inappropriate stacking

Plans show that Bedroom 3 is situated above the kitchen area on the ground floor, whilst the kitchen in the loft area is above bedroom 5. Policy H8 Residential conversions states *'There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;'*

Outlook/Space standards/ Floor height

Bedroom 9 has 3 roof Velux windows however it is unclear whether there will be any outlook from this bedroom. It is also set into the roof eaves and no section of the living space has been provided to evidence that there would be sufficient head height and space standards. The submitted proposed plans do not show room dimensions (only a couple of small, isolated measurements and furniture sizes), and each sheet is marked "Do not scale for construction purposes."

Overlooking

Bedroom 2 faces into the rear garden which is considered to lead to mutual overlooking and a lack of privacy from overlooking from the rear garden. It is also located next to the proposed external amenity dining table and communal seating area which is considered to result in a disturbance to future occupiers.

Intensification

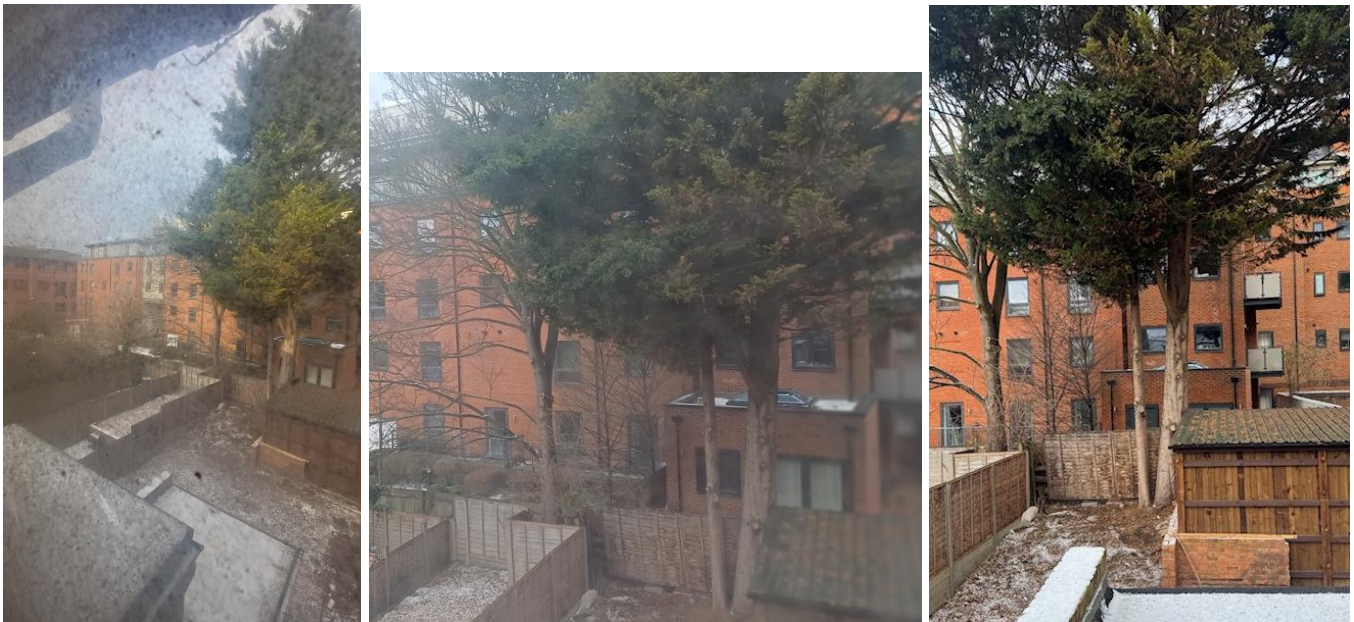
It is considered that the proposal will result in an over-intensification of the building. All bedrooms are proposed as “small doubles,” intended for couples, students, or young professionals with double beds shown in each bedroom, with no limit provided on the total amount of proposed occupants. No individual room sizes have been indicated on the proposed plans.

No information has been provided regarding any other existing HMOs in the vicinity. The existing plans for the ground floor layout (unverified) indicate bedroom 1 has no windows which does not provide adequate daylight and sunlight however the proposed plans do not overcome wider issues relating to the provision of substandard accommodation and living conditions for future residents. The proposal fails to demonstrate that it would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation and amenity for future HMO occupiers and therefore fails to comply with Policy CC8 and H8 and the Residential Conversions SPD.

iv Trees

Policy EN14 : Trees, Hedges and Woodlands states *“Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance”*

Site visit photos of trees



It was not possible to go in the rear garden however photos were taken from the rear windows of the building. No trees are indicated on the plans provided despite clear evidence of trees on site and the cycle stores are shown at the end of the garden which appear to overlap with an existing tree. There is a failure to demonstrate that the trees at the rear of the site would be protected during the refurbishment works and to provide additional information regarding any potential impact on any root protection areas. A cycle store is shown on the block plan in the same location as an existing tree. The trees should be shown on the proposed plans, with a tree survey to provide additional tree information. No hard and soft landscaping scheme has been provided to indicate the proposed flooring materials. The proposal is contrary to policies CC7 and EN14 or the Reading Local Plan 2019.

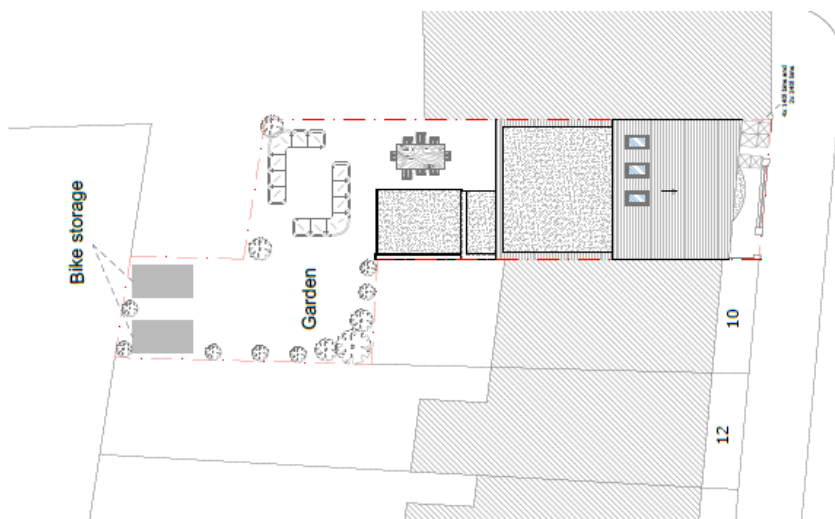
v **Car/ Cycle Parking;**

This application seeks a change of use from C3 residential use to a 10 bed HMO. The site is located on the borders of Zone 1 and 2 of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD which is an area at the very heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments, with limited residential. The site is in a highly sustainable location which offers visitors a range of non-car travel options. This area is well served by rail and bus links.

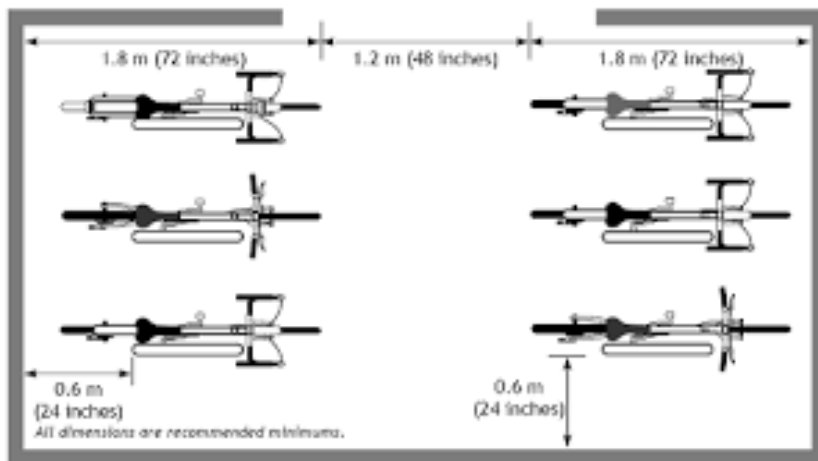
In accordance with the Council's current adopted parking standards and design SPD each 1 bedroom unit would require 0.5 parking spaces per 1 bedroom unit for zone 1 and 1 parking space per unit for zone 2. There is no off-street parking associated with this property. Stanshawe Rd is a no through road, except for buses and taxis. Extensive parking restrictions operate in the area including the operation of the Council's Residential Permit Parking Scheme. Shared user bays are present along one side of the carriageway which allows non permit holders to pay to park for a maximum of 2 hours between 10am and 4pm after which time it reverts to permit holders use only. Surrounding roads also are part of the CPZ.

Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. There should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed HMO will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits which would be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area. A car free development could be considered given that unauthorised parking can be controlled and monitored. Therefore, the lack on on-site parking provision would not constitute a reason for refusal.

In accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, cycle storage for 10-bedroom HMO should be provided at a ratio of 0.5 secure cycle storage spaces for each letting room in the form of a Sheffield type stand within a lockable store. This equates to 5 cycle storage spaces. Submitted plan (extract below) illustrates 2 storage units located in the rear private garden with access from the rear (as stated in the submitted Planning Statement).



The storage units should be equipped with Sheffield stands. Confirmation and revised plans are required; this can be dealt with by way of condition. Below is an example of a layout for cycle storage and the required dimensions.



Cycle storage could be provided within the rear garden, although the practicalities of taking bikes through the house would make this undesirable. However, as this is an accessible location, the lack of suitable cycle storage would itself not constitute a reason to withhold permission.

Bin storage should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings and should be located no further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Plans illustrate bin storage located at the front of the site following the removal of one of the accesses to the property. bins must not intrude onto the street and must be contained within an appropriate front wall, fence or hedge, or alternatively, within a dedicated and suitably designed structure within the boundary of the premises. Bin storage areas should be located in a suitable area to minimise nuisance to adjoining properties. It is noted that there is no provision for food waste bins.

If in the event that the development and change of use was considered acceptable, given the sites location, a scaled down version of CMS would be required to ensure there is no disruption or impact on the highway and to pedestrians, identifying key points such as vehicle parking, storage of materials and equipment, scaffolding etc. and for conditions relating to HMO refuse and recycling, HMO Cycle storage and HMO parking permits.

vi Bin Storage;

Concerns were raised relating to bins storage within and outside the site as they are required to be retained within the boundary of the private property when not being collected so as not to cause an obstruction to the pavement. There is no storage provision for food waste recycling. The plans do not show that they have allowed adequate space for bin storage within the private frontage and RBC Waste services raised concerns that quarterly inspections will not be frequent enough to keep on top of any issues relating to waste and recycling management at this large HMO. Photos of the property in 2023 show 4 bins to the front of the property awaiting collection, it has not been demonstrated that there is adequate bin provision and waste collection for the proposed change of use.

vii Flooding and drainage

The Environment Agency provided standing advice in relation to the proposed change of use. A Flood risk assessment has been submitted The building is being extensively refurbished, including works to the ground floor. Additional information is required regarding any flood risk resilience being undertaken and measure to be incorporated as outlined in the flood risk assessment. The flooring proposed for the rear garde has not been specified and was not mentioned in the flood risk assessment. No internal material specifications have been provided and there is no method to inform future residents of flooding incidents or to monitor groundwater flooding. It is unclear whether access was made to the ground floor of the

building in order to complete the FRA due to the presence of asbestos on site. Clarification is not provided within the current application, as such there is a failure to demonstrate that the development will provide sufficient Flood resilience requirements as required by Policy EN18.

viii Contamination

At the site visit, it was not possible to access the ground floor due to the presence of asbestos. The agent confirmed that the asbestos was due to be removed however no information or contaminated land assessment has been provided to confirm that the only asbestos in the property was on the ground floor and also to confirm that it has been safely removed. There is a failure to demonstrate that contamination, and asbestos will not cause a danger to future occupants in a 10 bedroom HMO, contrary to Policy EN16: Pollution and Water resources.

Other Matters

Sustainability

- Works to refurbish the building would be required to conform to building regulations, particularly to implement insulation measures under Part E. The building is currently being gutted and all electric and plumbing is removed on the upper floors, with changes to the existing internal layout. If the proposal for a change of use and roof extension were considered acceptable it would also have to comply with Policy CC2 Sustainable design and Construction and CC3 Adaption to climate change.

Pre-application advice

- No pre-application advice was sought.

HMO management plan

- The submitted HMO Management Statement includes inaccurate licensing information.

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, although the redevelopment of the site would enable upgrades to the property and changes to the internal layout, the proposal fails to comply with key Local Plan policies and the Residential Conversions SPD and the benefits of the refurbishment do not outweigh resultant harm. The development would result in the unjustified loss of two family-sized dwellings, harm the established character and appearance of the CR9e designated terraced housing, and provide substandard living conditions for future occupants. The proposal represents an over-intensive form of development, resulting in an unjustified loss of two family-sized dwellings and harm to the character and appearance of Stanshawe Road (including a visually dominant dormer) with substandard living conditions for future occupiers;

Furthermore, inadequate information has been submitted in relation to trees, waste storage, fire safety, noise mitigation, contamination and flood resilience, preventing the Council from reaching a positive conclusion on these matters.

The cumulative extent and nature of these issues is such that they cannot be addressed through minor amendments during the course of the application. The proposal therefore represents an unacceptable form of development, and planning permission is recommended for refusal.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Reasons for refusal:

1. The proposal would result in the loss of two existing self contained family sized dwellings (a 2 bedroom and a 3 bedroom maisonette) each with separate entrances, without any demonstrated exceptional justification. The development fails to retain or provide replacement family accommodation and dilutes the existing housing stock and therefore conflicts with Policies H2, H7 and H8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the guidance within the Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document 2023, which collectively prioritise the protection and provision of family housing and with paragraphs 129 and 135 of the NPPF (December 2024 as amended)
2. The proposed large rear dormer, intensified use, and reliance on front-of-plot bin storage would result in a visually intrusive and incongruous form of development, harmful to the character and appearance of the traditional terraced housing within Stanshawe Road, which is protected under Policy CR9e where development should not result in a loss, or have a detrimental effect on the character of, these areas. The existing hipped roof defines the character of the building as an end of terrace. The addition of the dormer and increased ridge height is not subservient or subordinate to the building and would have a negative and harmful impact on the character and appearance of the group of terraced houses. The dormer fails to comply with local design guidance requiring dormers to remain subordinate to the roofscape. The development therefore conflicts with Policies CC7, CR2, CR9e and H9 of the Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan and associated Design Guide to House extensions SPD and paragraphs 135 and 198 of the NPPF (December 2024 as amended).
3. The proposed conversion would result in a detrimental impact on the living conditions of future residents of the proposed HMO because it would fail to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation and amenity for future HMO occupiers. In particular there is insufficient and poorly lit communal living space, inappropriate stacking of incompatible room uses (kitchen over bedroom and vice versa); poor internal layout causing overlooking between Bedroom 2 and the rear amenity space and an over-intensification through use of small double bedrooms with no maximum occupancy stated and insufficient head space for the loft rooms. Noise mitigation details are insufficient. and insufficient internal and external waste storage and waste collection provision.
The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policy CC7, CC8 and H8 of the Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the Residential Conversions SPD 2023, resulting in substandard living conditions and paragraphs 130, 135 and 198 of the NPPF (December 2024 as amended).
4. There is a failure to demonstrate that trees within the vicinity of the site will be protected. No trees have been illustrated on proposed plans and no tree survey, root protection area assessment or arboricultural information has been submitted despite the presence of trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the rear garden. The proposed cycle stores appear to conflict with an existing tree, and no details of protection during construction have been provided. Contrary to Policy EN14 of the Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and paragraphs 136 and 187 of the NPPF (December 2024 as amended).
5. There is a failure to demonstrate sufficient flood resilience measures. The submitted Flood risk assessment does not identify suitable flood resistance and resilience measures, including measures to ensure that all building occupiers are fully informed of procedures to be

implemented during periods of flooding. Contrary to Policy EN18 Flooding and drainage of the Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and paragraphs 125, 162 and 176 of the NPPF (December 2024 as amended).

Informatives

1. This decision relates to the following plans and documents submitted with the application:
 - 0 Location plan
 - 11 Proposed ground and first Floor plan
 - 12 Proposed second and loft Floor plan
 - 13 Roof Plan – Proposed
 - 14 Elevation (Front & side) - Proposed
 - 15 Elevation (Rear) – Proposed
 - 16 Proposed Block plan of the site
 - HMO Management statement, 1 Right plan
 - Sustainability and air quality statement, 1 Right plan
 - Planning statement, 1 Right plan
 - Noise impact assessment, 1 Right plan
 - As received 21 October 2025
 - 764 FRA-v1 6-8 Stanshawe Road Flood risk assessment, Urban water, Dec 25
 - As received 28 January 2026
2. This planning application was submitted without the benefit of first seeking pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority, which can often result in the avoidance of refusal of planning permission. Please see the following link to the Council's pre-application service here:
<https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/before-making-a-planning-application/pre-application-planning-advice/>
3. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to see if relevant concerns could be resolved to allow permission to be granted. However, that has not been possible within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale and therefore the decision to refuse planning permission has been taken.