

Design & Access Statement

Site Address: 2 Mill Green, Reading, RG4 8EX

Date: 4th January 2026

Prepared by: Mr A S Bhamra

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for development already undertaken at No. 2 Mill Green, Reading, RG4 8EX. The application seeks planning permission for:

- A single-storey rear extension measuring approximately **4 metres in depth** with a flat roof; and
- A **change of use from Use Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Use Class C4**, to allow occupation as a **4-bedroom, 5-person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)**.

The statement explains the design principles, context, and access considerations, demonstrating that the development is appropriate to the site and its surroundings and accords with relevant planning policies.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application property is a two-storey residential dwelling located within the established residential area of Mill Green, Reading. The surrounding area is characterised predominantly by family houses and small-scale residential properties of varying ages and styles.

The property benefits from a private rear garden and is typical in scale and form when compared with neighbouring dwellings. There are existing examples of rear extensions and varied household arrangements within the wider area, reflecting an evolving residential character.

3. Proposal Description

3.1 Single-Storey Rear Extension

The development includes a single-storey rear extension projecting approximately **4 metres** from the original rear elevation. The extension features:

- A flat roof design;
- Materials that match or complement the existing dwelling;
- A scale and footprint that is subordinate to the host property.

The extension provides additional internal accommodation to support the functional requirements of the HMO while maintaining a modest and unobtrusive appearance.

3.2 Change of Use (C3 to C4)

The proposal allows the property to be occupied as a **small HMO** accommodating up to **5 occupants** across **4 bedrooms**. This scale of occupation falls within the C4 use class and remains compatible with the residential nature of the area.

The use does not involve any external alterations that would materially change the appearance of the building from the street scene.

4. Design Principles

4.1 Amount

The extension represents a modest increase in floorspace that is proportionate to the size of the original dwelling and plot. The level of accommodation provided is appropriate for a 5-person HMO.

4.2 Layout

The internal layout has been designed to ensure adequate living standards for occupants, with sufficient bedroom sizes, communal facilities, and circulation space. The rear extension improves functionality without resulting in overdevelopment of the site.

4.3 Scale and Massing

The single-storey nature of the extension ensures it remains visually subordinate to the main dwelling. Its 4-metre depth is consistent with extensions commonly found in similar residential settings.

4.4 Appearance

The flat roof form has been chosen to minimise visual impact and overlooking. Materials have been selected to complement the existing property, ensuring visual cohesion with the host dwelling and surrounding properties.

5. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The extension is located to the rear of the property and does not result in unacceptable loss of light, outlook, or privacy to neighbouring occupiers. Its single-storey height and flat roof significantly limit any potential impact.

The HMO use, limited to 5 occupants, is not considered to give rise to undue noise, disturbance, or activity beyond what could reasonably be expected from a large family dwelling.

6. Access Considerations

6.1 Vehicular Access and Parking

The proposal does not alter existing vehicular access arrangements. The level of occupation is modest, and the site is located within a sustainable residential area with access to local services and public transport.

6.2 Pedestrian Access

Safe and convenient pedestrian access is retained via the existing entrance to the property. No changes are required or proposed.

6.3 Inclusive Access

The ground floor accommodation, including communal areas, is accessible from the main entrance. The proposal does not reduce existing accessibility and provides a suitable living environment for occupants.

7. Waste and Cycle Storage

Adequate refuse and recycling storage can be accommodated within the site in line with local authority requirements. Cycle storage can also be provided within the curtilage of the property, supporting sustainable travel choices.

8. Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal has been assessed against the relevant policies of the **Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted 2019)** and the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**.

Reading Borough Local Plan

- **Policy CC1 (Preserving and Enhancing the Character of Conservation Areas)** – Not applicable, as the property is not located within a conservation area.
- **Policy CC7 (Design and Landscape)** – The single-storey rear extension is modest in scale, subordinate to the host dwelling, and utilises materials that respect the character of the existing property. The development preserves the visual amenity of the area.
- **Policy HO3 (Housing Mix and Type)** – The proposal contributes to meeting local housing needs by providing shared accommodation suitable for smaller households.
- **Policy HO11 (Houses in Multiple Occupation)** – The proposed HMO is small-scale (4 bedrooms, 5 occupants) and does not result in overconcentration or harm to residential amenity. The property provides adequate internal space, facilities, refuse storage, and is well located in relation to services and transport.
- **Policy TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters)** – The change of use does not materially increase trip generation beyond what could reasonably be expected from a large family dwelling. No changes to access are proposed.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal accords with the NPPF by promoting the effective use of land, supporting a mix of housing types, and ensuring developments achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

9. Planning Balance and Agent's Statement

This application is submitted by the appointed planning agent on behalf of the property owner and seeks retrospective planning permission for development that has already been completed.

In considering the planning balance, it is acknowledged that the proposal involves a change of use to a small House in Multiple Occupation. However, the scale of the HMO is limited to 4 bedrooms and 5 occupants, which falls comfortably within Use Class C4 and is consistent with the level of activity that could reasonably be expected from a large family dwelling. The single-storey rear extension is modest, well-designed, and clearly subordinate to the host property. It does not result in overdevelopment of the site, nor does it cause harm to the character and appearance of the area or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The extension is located entirely to the rear, with a flat roof to minimise visual and amenity impacts.

The proposal complies with the relevant policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan, in particular Policies CC7, HO3, HO11, and TR3, and aligns with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework in making effective use of existing housing stock and supporting a mix of housing types.

While the application is retrospective, the planning system requires that applications be assessed on their planning merits. In this case, there are no material planning harms arising from the development that would justify refusal. Any perceived impacts are limited and outweighed by the benefits of providing much-needed shared accommodation in a sustainable and accessible location.

On balance, the proposal represents an acceptable and sustainable form of development. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

10. Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement, together with the Agent's Planning Statement, demonstrates that the retrospective single-storey rear extension and change of use to a small HMO at No. 2 Mill Green, Reading, RG4 8EX is appropriate, policy-compliant, and results in no unacceptable impacts.

The development respects the character of the area, safeguards neighbouring amenity, and contributes positively to local housing provision. Approval of the application is therefore justified.