

Planning Department
Reading Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Bridge Street,
Reading,
RG1 2LU

My reference:

Your reference:

By Email: plgadmin@reading.gov.uk

20th June 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
GROUND FLOOR, 346-348 OXFORD ROAD, READING RG30 1AQ

1. We submit this letter in support of a current application to the Council on behalf of Irongate Property Asset Management Ltd in respect of proposed new windows and doors to the rear of the property at this address.
2. This application is accompanied by floor plans, elevations and sections of the existing and proposed building, the site plan/block plan and the location plan of the site.

Site and Surroundings

3. The existing building comprises a 2-storey building with loft space in a mixed-use area and rear single storey extension. The ground floor comprises a furniture shop unit.
4. The property occupies a key frontage to the Oxford Road West District and Local Centre. The property easily accessible to local shops and services and within walking and cycling distance of all district centre amenities, given its central location.
5. The property is situated on A329 Oxford Road, which is a busy public transport route between the central Reading and the west. Frequent bus services serve the site every 7-8 minutes Mon-Fri and Saturday daytimes and every 15-20 minutes evenings & Sundays. The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. This zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. The site is located in a Residents Permit zone where there are extensive parking controls preventing on-street parking.

6. The area of the site within the red line of this application is within Flood Zone 1.
7. The property is not listed and is not within a conservation area.

Description of the Building

8. The property comprises a two storey plus roof end of terrace property on a busy high street with side entrance to parking and accommodation to the rear. Windows are UPVC and double glazed.



9. The rear of the existing ground floor shop extends all the way back to and including the two rear single storey extensions shown in the aerial shot below; partly flat roof and partly pitched roof.



Planning and Use History

10. Planning permission was granted on 17th May 2017 for “Conversion of first floor office and vacant rooms to self-contained apartment and internal alterations to existing first floor flat to create relocated bathroom.” LPA reference: PL/17/0187.
11. Similarly, on 9th June 2003, permission was granted for “Change of use of part first floor and second from retail showroom/storage to two x one bedroom flats”. LPA reference: PL/03/0553.
12. On the 7th April 1989, planning permission was granted for “Erection of external fire escape stairs, 3 dormer extensions to second floor and alterations to front elevation.” LPA reference: PL/89/1145.

The Proposals

13. The proposals comprise the addition of two new doors and three new windows to the side elevation and the re-opening of three windows to the rear elevation that had been bricked up at some point in the past. This application proposes no change to the use, only external physical changes to allow in more natural light and ventilation and enable direct access to the rear of the shop from the side access.
14. The following are enclosed:
 - Site location plan showing the application site in red outline.
 - Site Plan/block plan showing access from the street.
 - A full set of existing and proposed floor plans, elevations and sections.

Design and Appearance

15. The proposed windows would be aluminium framed and double-glazing, of similar appearance to the rest of the building. The new doors will be timber.
16. With regard to Policy CC7, the proposed changes would take place to a discreet location on the property, largely hidden from public view and appropriate to the character of the property and the area, especially with regard to detailing, materials and size of openings. The photo below shows the side elevation of the property.



17. With regard to Policy CC8, the proposals would not have a material adverse impact on the amenity of any nearby residential premises. In particular, the proposals would involve the opening up of three rear windows that had been open in the past but were blocked up. These face toward the rear yard and then on to a blank side brick elevation (see aerial shot above). The photo below shows the side of the rear extension and part of one of the blocked-up windows.



18. The photo below further shows the rear of the property and facing side wall.



Access & Highways Impact

19. The Site is in a mixed-use area with a host of local facilities available within a short walking distance.

20. There is no proposed change in the use of the property. The proposals would merely open up direct access to the rear and side of the existing shop and allow in extra natural light.

Biodiversity Net Gain – De minimus exemption

21. The Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)) would not apply in this case as the nature and location of this development would be too small to qualify, with regard to Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. The proposed development would not impact an onsite priority habitat, and the development proposed would impact less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero; less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

Flood risk assessment – low/no risk (Flood Zone 1)

22. As the application site falls within Flood Zone 1, no flood risk assessment is needed with this application.

Conclusions

23. The proposed side and rear windows and side doors to this property would be acceptable in design terms with regard to the location of this property.
24. Therefore, we ask that this application should be granted subject to such planning conditions as the Council considers appropriate.

Yours faithfully,

David Kemp BSc(Hons) PGDL MRICS Barrister*
Director
DRK Planning Ltd
(*non-practising member)