

Trace Architects
1A Grange Avenue
Rotherfield Peppard
Henley On Thames
RG9 5JP
18/08/2025

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Planning Application 346-348 Oxford Road, RG30 1AQ

Design and Access Statement

Proposal

The application proposes the conversion of the existing first-floor office and vacant rooms above the existing shop on the north side of Oxford Road to create one new self-contained one-bedroom flat.

The proposal also includes internal alterations to the existing first-floor one-bedroom flat to relocate its bathroom. The application will therefore provide **two self-contained one-bedroom flats in total**, of which one is existing and one is proposed.

Use and Amount

The proposed new flat will have a total internal floor area of approximately **52 sqm**. The existing flat currently has an internal floor area of approximately **44 sq m** and will remain as an existing residential unit, subject only to the proposed internal relocation of its bathroom. The new floor area of this unit will be **38 sq m**.

The proposal makes efficient use of existing floor space and does not involve any extension or increase in the footprint of the building. The new flat sizes conform with the national space standards including internal storage space.

Layout and Scale

The proposed accommodation is entirely contained within the existing first-floor space. There will be no change to the external footprint, height, massing or scale of the building.

The proposed 52 sqm one-bedroom flat provides an appropriate level of internal accommodation. The Reading Residential Conversions SPD identifies the nationally described space standards as a useful basis for assessing internal floorspace in converted residential accommodation.

Appearance and Residential Amenity

No external alterations are proposed, and the existing appearance and character of the building will be retained.

The proposed new flat has only two windows to the side elevation, both serving the bathroom. These windows are located in the same position as the existing bathroom windows and therefore do not introduce new overlooking of neighbouring properties or materially alter the existing relationship with surrounding properties.

The proposal is consequently considered to have no unacceptable impact on privacy, daylight, outlook or the general residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with Policies **H8 and CC8** of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Access, Parking and Cycle Provision

Access to the proposed flat will be via the existing access arrangements serving the first floor. No new access onto Oxford Road is proposed. Flats will have level thresholds.

There will be bike and bin storage provided for both units sited at the rear of the curtilage and shown on the site plan.

Recycling and Refuse Storage

Recycling and refuse storage will be accommodated within the existing driveway, at the rear of the curtilage.

Planning Considerations

The proposal is considered to accord with the relevant policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, including **H1 (Provision of Housing)**, **H2 (Density and Mix)**, **H8 (Residential Conversions)**, **CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage)**, **CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)**, **CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)**, **CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)** and **TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)**.

In particular, the proposal provides an additional residential unit through the effective reuse of existing underused first-floor accommodation, without extending the building or altering its external scale or character. The conversion results in limited intensification, with new cycle parking provision and no material increase in overlooking or loss of privacy.

The proposal therefore represents an appropriate and efficient use of the existing building and is considered to satisfy the relevant requirements of the Council's planning policies and Residential Conversions SPD.

Your Sincerely,

Giles Lovegrove
RIBA Trace Architects