

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

38 Wantage Road, Reading, RG30 2SF

Proposal:

Conversion of the existing House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to provide two self-contained residential units, comprising one ground-floor flat (38A) and one maisonette arranged over the first and loft floors (38B), together with associated internal alterations, refuse and cycle storage.

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Date: August 2026

1. Introduction

This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application at **38 Wantage Road, Reading, RG30 2SF**.

The application seeks permission for the conversion of the existing licensed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to provide **two self-contained residential units**, comprising:

- **38A – one-bedroom ground-floor flat;**
- **38B – one-bedroom maisonette arranged over the first and loft floors.**

The proposal principally involves the reorganisation and conversion of the existing residential accommodation. No extension or increase in the existing building footprint is proposed.

The development seeks to make efficient use of the existing building while providing two appropriately arranged independent residential units.

2. Site and Existing Property

The application site comprises an existing residential property located at **38 Wantage Road**, within an established residential area of Reading.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and contains a mixture of dwelling types and forms.

The property is currently in use as a **licensed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)** providing shared residential accommodation. This existing use is identified consistently within the submitted planning application.

The application site measures approximately **131.99 m²**, while the existing building provides approximately **106.61 m² Gross Internal Area**.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal involves the conversion of the existing HMO into **two independent self-contained residential units**.

Flat 38A – Ground Floor

The ground floor would provide a self-contained **one-bedroom residential flat**, incorporating appropriate living, kitchen, sleeping and sanitary accommodation.

Flat 38B – First and Loft Floors

The first and loft floors would together form a self-contained **one-bedroom maisonette**, with accommodation distributed across the two levels.

The internal arrangement has been carefully developed having regard to the physical constraints of the existing building, available floorspace, functionality and residential amenity.

The proposal therefore results in:

Existing: One HMO property

Proposed: Two self-contained residential units

Net gain: One residential unit

The submitted application accordingly identifies two proposed one-bedroom flats/maisonettes.

4. Principle of Development

The proposal represents the effective reuse and reorganisation of an existing residential building within an established residential area.

Rather than introducing substantial additional built development, the scheme utilises the existing building envelope and available internal accommodation.

The proposal would replace the existing shared HMO accommodation with two independent self-contained homes.

There would be no substantial change to the overall scale, footprint or established residential character of the property.

The proposal therefore represents an efficient use of an existing residential site and existing building stock.

5. Residential Accommodation and Space Standards

Particular consideration has been given to the size, arrangement and intended occupancy of the proposed dwellings.

The scheme has deliberately been designed to provide appropriately sized **one-bedroom units**, rather than attempting to accommodate an excessive number of bedrooms within the available floorspace.

The proposed upper maisonette, Flat 38B, is arranged across the first and loft floors and provides a Gross Internal Area exceeding the applicable minimum **58 m² benchmark for a one-bedroom, two-person dwelling arranged over two storeys**.

In assessing the available accommodation, consideration has also been given to the sloping roof configuration and usable floor area within the loft.

The loft accommodation has been designed to make effective use of the available headroom while providing a practical relationship between the first and loft-floor accommodation.

Overall, the proposed dwellings provide functional living, sleeping, kitchen and sanitary accommodation appropriate to their intended occupancy and make efficient use of the available existing floorspace.

6. Design and External Appearance

The development principally comprises an internal conversion of the existing building.

No extension or increase in the existing building footprint is proposed as part of this application.

Consequently, the established scale, form and overall appearance of the property would remain substantially unchanged.

Any minor external alterations necessary to facilitate the residential conversion would be appropriately integrated with the existing building and would not materially alter its established residential character.

The proposal would therefore preserve the general character and appearance of the property and surrounding residential street scene.

7. Residential and Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal has been designed with consideration for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents.

As the development principally involves the internal conversion of the existing building, there would be no substantial increase in building footprint, height or external massing.

The proposal is therefore not expected to result in unacceptable loss of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy to neighbouring properties.

The continued residential occupation of the property is also compatible with the established residential character of Wantage Road.

The conversion from shared HMO accommodation to two independent residential units provides a clearly defined arrangement of residential accommodation within the existing building.

8. Access and Highways

The existing pedestrian access arrangements serving the property would generally be retained.

No new or altered vehicular access from the public highway is proposed.

There would be no new public roads or public rights of way created as part of the development.

The proposal therefore does not materially alter the existing relationship between the site and the public highway.

9. Cycle Storage

The proposal incorporates dedicated cycle-storage provision for future residents.

The submitted application provides **two cycle spaces**, compared with no dedicated existing cycle spaces.

The provision of convenient cycle storage encourages sustainable modes of transport and reduces reliance upon private motor vehicles.

The location and arrangement of the cycle-storage facilities are identified on the submitted site plan.

10. Refuse and Recycling

Appropriate provision has been incorporated for domestic refuse and recyclable waste.

Dedicated bin-storage areas are provided within the site for each of the proposed dwellings, with convenient access for residents and collection.

Separate refuse and recycling provision is shown on **Drawing P-05 – Proposed Site Plan**.

The proposed arrangements would therefore allow waste to be appropriately stored within the site prior to collection.

11. Drainage

The existing property is served by established drainage infrastructure.

The existing drainage system would continue to be utilised by the proposed residential units, and **no alterations to the existing external drainage system are proposed.**

This approach is also identified within the submitted planning application.

Detailed internal drainage arrangements, where necessary, would be addressed as part of the subsequent Building Regulations design.

12. Biodiversity

The proposal principally concerns the conversion of an existing residential building and does not involve an extension or increase in building footprint.

The application site measures approximately **131.99 m² (0.0132 hectares)** and therefore falls substantially below 0.2 hectares.

The proposal does not involve the removal or disturbance of habitat as part of an enlargement of the building.

The Biodiversity Net Gain position and relevant exemption have been identified within the submitted application on the basis of the small site area and nature of the development.

13. Accessibility

The development utilises the established access arrangements associated with the existing property.

Flat 38A is located at ground-floor level, while Flat 38B is arranged across the existing upper floors.

The detailed technical requirements relating to access, means of escape, fire safety, ventilation, thermal performance, acoustic separation and other relevant matters would be addressed as part of the subsequent Building Regulations design and approval process.

14. Sustainability

The proposal represents a sustainable approach to residential development through the **reuse and adaptation of an existing building.**

The scheme avoids substantial demolition and does not require an extension or significant additional building volume.

The proposal makes efficient use of existing residential floorspace, established infrastructure and an existing developed site.

Cycle-storage provision is also incorporated to support sustainable transport choices.

15. Conclusion

The proposed development seeks the conversion of the existing HMO at **38 Wantage Road, Reading, RG30 2SF** into **two self-contained residential units**, comprising a one-bedroom ground-floor flat and a one-bedroom maisonette arranged over the first and loft floors.

The proposal represents a considered and efficient reuse of the existing residential building.

In particular, the development:

- provides **two self-contained residential homes** within the existing building;
- results in a net gain of **one residential unit**;
- makes efficient use of existing residential floorspace;
- does not require an extension or increase in building footprint;
- provides appropriately arranged one-bedroom accommodation having regard to the available floorspace;
- incorporates dedicated refuse, recycling and cycle-storage provision;
- retains the established access and external drainage arrangements;
- maintains the general scale and character of the existing property; and
- is not expected to result in unacceptable effects upon neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposal therefore represents an appropriate and proportionate residential conversion of the existing property, and it is respectfully requested that **Reading Borough Council supports the proposal and grants planning permission.**