



81 Hamilton Road, Reading, RG1 5RB

Proposed change of use from HMO to residential use (C3) and part two part single storey rear extension and conversion of outbuilding to ancillary residential use.

Planning Statement

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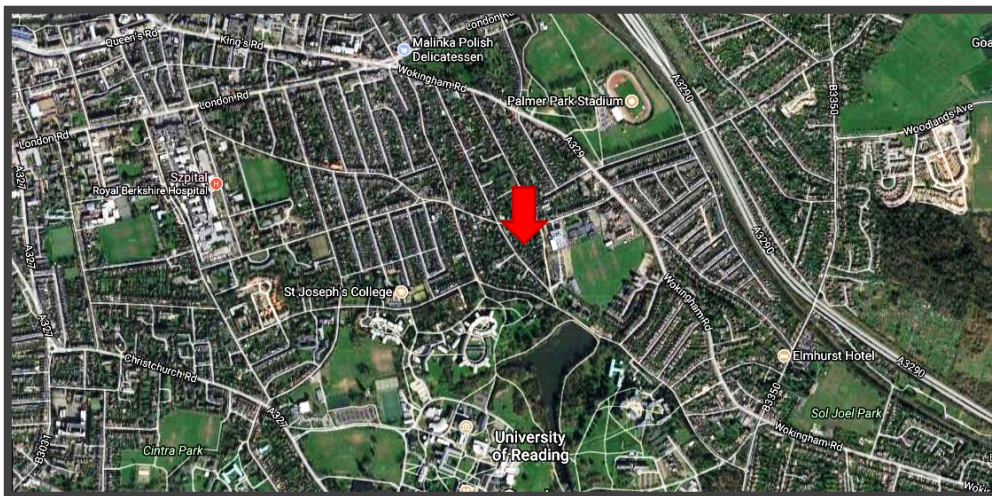
1. Introduction

1.1 Preface

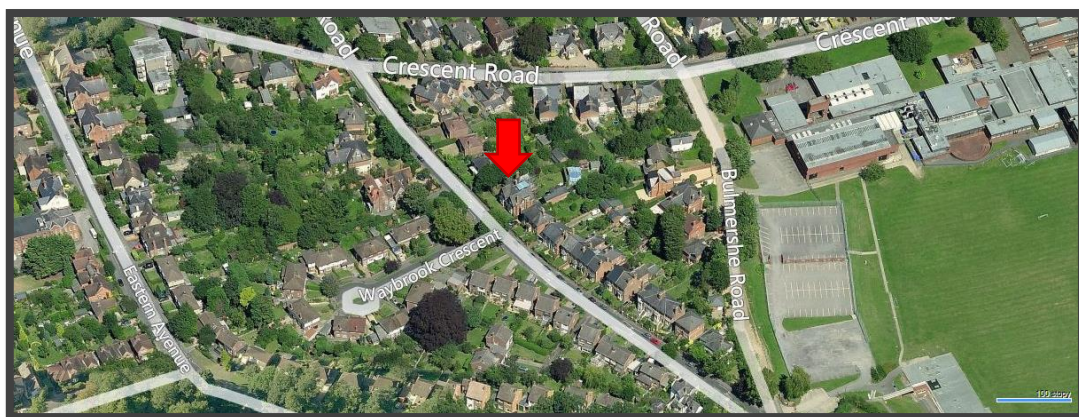
1.1.1 This planning statement has been prepared in support of a Full application for the proposed change of use from HMO to a residential use (C3) and part two part single storey rear extension and conversion of outbuilding to ancillary residential use.

1.1.2 The following statement covers the subject and information required for submission as set National Planning Policy Framework and Reading Borough Council guidelines. This document will outline the application site history and the design strategy for the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

1.2 Site Location



1. Aerial photograph



2. Bird's eye photograph



- 1.2.1 The application site is located on Hamilton Road within the South Park Conservation Area to the east side of Reading, approximately 1.3km from the town centre. The site is occupied by a large traditional building, two storey outbuilding with a greenhouse in the back garden. The application site constitutes about 900.0m² and the host dwelling includes approximately 191.0m² internal area.

2. Appraisal - Background

- 2.1.1 The proposed site is situated within the South Park Conservation Area, formally designated on the 28th of April 1988, following the 1976 planning policy document. The South Park Conservation Area comprises an essentially mid to late Victorian and Edwardian suburb of Reading, mainly focused on Eastern Avenue and Hamilton Road, which run north-south between the main Wokingham Road (A329) east out of Reading to the north and to and across Crescent Road to the south. The Conservation Area is generally, a fully built up urban area composed of continuous frontages of 2-3 storey buildings with front gardens to the back of pavement edge, albeit with a prevalence of large properties on large plots. The nearest public open space is Palmer Park available to residents for informal and formal recreation. Application property no. 81 Hamilton Road ("Rosehill") is a 2 storey detached villa with gabled slate roof, projecting bracketed eaves and decorative verandah with curved roof (partially removed to accommodate later bay).
- 2.1.2 Given that a number of the surrounding dwellings have been converted into flats and HMO's, as a result of market demand in the area for such units, also the host building is currently used as a large HMO (8-bedsit).
- 2.1.3 The proposal includes conversion to a single residential unit with extension to 6no. bedrooms. The site is a considerable area and is occupied by a detached building in size and purpose that suits its surroundings. The building is of an appropriate scale and this can be demonstrated by the functionality of the site, providing adequate car parking, bin/bike storage, facilities and operation without nuisance or disturbance to the surrounding dwellings. There is significant existing area of soft and hard amenity space to the rear. In general, all these features contribute to a site appropriate for residential C3 use.



3. Planning Policy

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

- 3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was substantially revised and republished on 17 August 2026, replacing the December 2024 version. The revised Framework separates plan-making from national decision-making policies and adopts a coded policy structure. It is this version against which the application falls to be assessed as a material consideration.
- 3.1.2 The purpose of the planning system remains to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through economic, social and environmental objectives delivered in a mutually supportive way. Policy S3 applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and Policy S4 confirms that development within settlements should be approved unless approval "would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects" when tested against the Framework's decision-making policies. The application site lies within the built-up area of Reading and Policy S4 is therefore directly engaged.
- 3.1.3 Policy L2 (Making effective use of land) gives substantial weight to the benefits of using suitable previously developed land and of making effective use of existing buildings and residential curtilages. The proposal makes efficient use of an existing building and its curtilage within a highly sustainable urban location, without any loss of undeveloped land.
- 3.1.4 Chapter 14 (Achieving well-designed places) sets out the key principles for well-designed places at Policy DP3, under which poorly designed development should be refused. Policy DP3 requires proposals to respond to their context, to be visually attractive, and to reflect and, where appropriate, reinforce local character - a requirement of particular importance given the site's position within a conservation area.
- 3.1.5 The historic environment chapter has been restructured into a series of coded policies (Policies HE1 to HE6). Policy HE2 deals specifically with conservation areas, and Policy HE4(2) requires proposals to avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets. The previous test of "less than substantial harm" has been removed, with the revised Framework distinguishing instead between total loss, substantial harm and other harm (Policies HE5 and HE6), and substantial weight continues to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The Framework expressly confirms that it does not displace the statutory duties of decision-makers, including the duty under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.



- 3.1.6 Policies CC2 and CC3 of the Framework support design approaches that conserve energy and other resources, encourage the take-up of renewable and low-carbon technologies, and require flood risk to be minimised or safely managed, including through sustainable drainage. Policy DM4 confirms that the weight to be given to policies in an emerging plan depends on the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency with the Framework.

3.2 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- 3.2.1 The statutory development plan for the application site is the Reading Borough Local Plan, adopted on 4 November 2019, which guides development in the Borough to 2036. The following policies are considered most relevant to the determination of this application.
- 3.2.2 Design and amenity: Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires development to be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires that development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of adjoining occupiers, including by reason of loss of light, loss of privacy, overbearing effect, noise or disturbance.
- 3.2.3 Extensions and ancillary accommodation: Policy H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation) is the principal policy against which the proposed part single, part two storey rear extension and the conversion of the outbuilding fall to be assessed. It requires extensions to be subordinate to and compatible with the original dwelling in scale, form, materials and detailing, and to avoid harm to neighbouring amenity or to the character of the area. The policy also governs the use of outbuildings for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling, which must remain genuinely incidental to the residential use of the host property and must not result in the creation of a separate independent unit.
- 3.2.4 Historic environment: Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) supports proposals that protect and, where possible, enhance heritage assets and their settings. Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) requires development within a conservation area to preserve or enhance its character and appearance, having regard to the relevant conservation area appraisal. Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) requires new development in a historic context to respect the established scale, form, materials, rhythm and detailing of the surrounding historic environment. The South Park Conservation Area Appraisal is a material consideration in the application of these policies.



- 3.2.5 Housing: Policy H2 (Density and Mix) seeks an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes and types, including family sized accommodation, reflecting identified needs across the Borough. Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) requires new residential accommodation to meet the nationally described space standards and to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of layout, outlook, daylight and ventilation. Policy H8 (Residential Conversions) governs proposals involving the conversion of residential buildings and the associated standard of accommodation, amenity and parking provision.
- 3.2.6 Outdoor space: Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) requires new and converted dwellings to be provided with adequate private outdoor amenity space appropriate to the size of the unit. The application site benefits from a substantial rear garden of a size well in excess of the standard expected for a single family dwelling.
- 3.2.7 Transport and parking: Policy TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) requires development to provide safe and adequate access and to avoid unacceptable impacts on highway safety or the operation of the highway network. Policy TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) requires parking to be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards, together with secure and covered cycle parking and, where appropriate, provision for electric vehicle charging.
- 3.2.8 Climate change and sustainability: Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) requires development to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures, and Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) requires development to be designed to adapt to a changing climate, including through sustainable drainage and measures to avoid overheating.
- 3.2.9 Natural environment: Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) requires development to protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and to contribute to the green network, and Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) protects existing trees and hedges of amenity value and requires appropriate replacement planting where loss is unavoidable. Policies EN15 (Air Quality) and EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) are also relevant to the construction and occupation of the development.

3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.3.1 The following adopted Supplementary Planning Documents are material to the determination of the application: the Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (adopted March 2021), which sets out the Council's detailed guidance on the design of rear and two storey extensions, including within conservation areas; the Residential Conversions SPD (adopted



March 2023); the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD; the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (adopted December 2019); and the Tree Strategy (March 2021). The South Park Conservation Area Appraisal provides the area-specific assessment of character against which the proposal has been designed.

3.4 Emerging Local Plan Partial Update

- 3.4.1 The Council is undertaking a Partial Update of the Local Plan, which would extend the plan period to 2041 and update approximately half of the plan's policies. The Local Plan Partial Update was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 9 May 2025, with Stage 1 hearings held in November 2025 and Stage 2 hearings in February 2026.
- 3.4.2 In accordance with Policy DM4 of the NPPF, the weight to be given to the emerging policies depends on their stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections and their consistency with the Framework. Pending adoption, the adopted 2019 Local Plan remains the statutory development plan and the emerging policies attract limited to moderate weight only. The proposal has nonetheless been designed with regard to the direction of travel indicated by the Partial Update, particularly in relation to design quality, biodiversity and sustainable construction.

4. Appraisal

4.1 General concept

- 4.1.1 The overall aim of the proposal is to make efficient use of the existing site and its assets, help to resolve borough's existing housing issues and meet the target for family housing through the above proposal. The application property is characterized with a very sustainable location and the proposed development itself would improve the character and vitality of the area and quality of the environment.

4.2 Appearance and Character

- 4.2.1 The proposal would introduce several external changes to the appearance, scale and fenestration of the existing building. The proposals include:
- Conversion of the rear outbuilding to ancillary residential use with storage (bikes);
 - Part single part two storey rear extensions;
 - Alterations to internal layout to provide more spacious arrangement with additional first floor bedrooms.

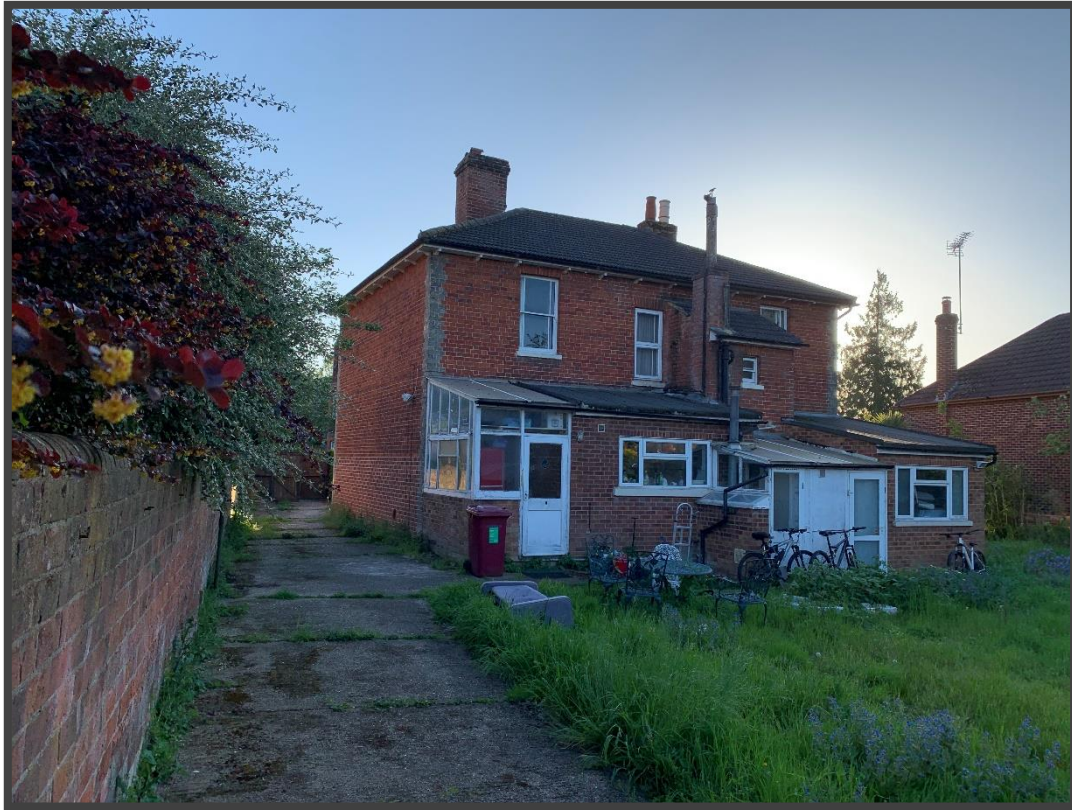


- 4.2.2 The proposal would amend the arrangement of the rear and side elevations and create extensions, which would be considered as a clear visual improvement, as it would remove awkwardly designed single storey elements at the back and replace this with a cohesive and a neat design of the external elevations. It is therefore considered that the overall appearance and site layout of the host dwelling would be significantly enhanced, in particular that the site is clearly visible within the streetscene. The application dwelling would benefit from a more functionally organised arrangement, suitable for a large family sized unit.
- 4.2.3 The rear and front garden is proposed to be adjusted for the parking standards and will be landscaped to a good standard.



3. External frontage appearance to be retained.





4. External side and rear elevations to be enhanced with rear extension.



5. External side and rear elevations to be enhanced with rear extension.



4.3 Transport and access

- 4.3.1 The proposed site is located at the south-eastern end of Hamilton Road, in between Crescent Road and Whiteknights Road. Given close proximity from Wokingham Road (about 350.0m) and from Whiteknights Road (about 200.0m), the application property benefits from an extensive bus service including routes 4, 9, 13, 14 and 17 with frequent links to Reading and Wokingham Town Centre and Reading University Campus.
- 4.3.2 The application dwelling's close vicinity to Wokingham Road provides vehicle access to the A329 & A4 and links with the M4 for towards the east to London and Wales to the west. The broad road networks around the site also provide huge choice and possibilities of cycle routes and walking paths in and around the area, from local amenities on Wokingham Road to Reading Town Centre, which include wider range of services.
- 4.3.3 No. 81 Hamilton Road benefits from an access situated on the right hand side of the property, directly off of Hamilton Road. The car park for 3 cars will be located to the rear of the dwellinghouse.

4.4 Parking

- 4.4.1 The site will provide a minimum of 3no. parking spaces (in accordance with the Reading Parking Standards SPD). It is accepted that no road parking permits are to be granted for this planning application. The application dwelling's location also benefits from a very sustainable situation for public transport services and walking/cycling to all local amenities. It can be found in more detail in the appraisal above the various transport options available to the residents.

4.5 Cycle storage

- 4.5.1 It is proposed to provide bike storage in the outbuilding in the rear of the property. This will allow for secure and covered storage for up to 8no. bicycles in accordance with the Councils Parking Standards and Design SPD.

4.6 Waste storage and collection

- 4.6.1 The bin store would be located to the rear of the application property. Travel distances to the bin store would not exceed 30.0m. The bin store is located in a significant distance from the main highway, therefore no unacceptable detrimental impact to the character of the Conservation Area would occur.



4.7 Private amenity space

- 4.7.1 There is an existing significant green space to the rear of the property along with a hard standing area, which will allow to commence all necessary garden activities. Along with amenity space at the property, the site is within a walking distance from the Palmer Park, which includes extensive recreational areas.



6. Rear garden



7. Rear garden, greenhouse and outbuilding





8. Rear outbuilding

4.8 Impact on neighbours

Loss of Light and Overbearing

- 4.8.1 Due to the host building's situation, reasonable increase of the overall scale on the upper levels and provision of sufficient separation distances from the neighbouring properties, no detrimental infringement of 25° and 45° or sightlines in relation to adjacent habitable windows would occur.
- 4.8.2 Effectively, no adverse changes to current overbearing and overshadowing arrangement would be considered to arise.

Overlooking

- 4.8.3 The proposed fenestration changes on the upper levels would result in no adverse alteration to the current overlooking arrangement, what would be considered to have no unacceptable impact upon the adjacent occupiers' amenity.



4.9 Trees and landscaping

- 4.9.1 The proposed development would be designed to minimize the impact upon the existing landscaping and it is proposed to provide additional soft landscaping to the rear and side of the building, along the sidewalks and along the boundaries of the application site, which would successfully mitigate the impact of the proposed development upon the character of the surrounding area.
- 4.9.2 Despite of the property being in the Conservation Area, the existing landscaping include only insignificant amount of bushes within 15.0m from the proposed development at the rear, therefore no tree survey is considered to be required in this instance.

4.10 Biodiversity

- 4.10.1 The proposed development would be erected in the area on site, which is currently covered by concrete (side) or it would replace the existing single storey rear extensions, so no loss in terms of biodiversity aspect would arise.
- 4.10.2 Furthermore, it would be designed to provide adequate biodiversity benefits on site, by proposing additional planting around the site in order to increase level of variety of plants species in the area, which would introduce an adequate mitigation of the proposed scheme with regards to this aspect. It is considered that the proposed development would achieve new native soft landscaping, hedgerows, shrubs and effectively it would result in a clear and demonstrable biodiversity net gain on site.

4.11 Community safety

- 4.11.1 Hamilton Road is considered as a well-lit residential road. Access to the property is found via a locked front gate, and the building's entrance is through locked double front door. The rear car park has a security gate positioned in the southern corner of the application property. The bike storage is lockable as well.

4.12 Use and amount

- 4.12.1 The proposed application is for planning permission for a conversion of the existing 8 bed HMO, which would be replaced with a large single family size dwelling (C3).
- 4.12.2 It is important to note that there is a recognized need for family sized dwelling within the Reading BC and therefore intensification of such residential use to be proposed. The proposal



would be characteristic for the surroundings and it is considered to be most respectful to the rich character of the Conservation Area.

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