

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

July 2026

133, Dock Road, Tilbury, Essex, RM18 7BT

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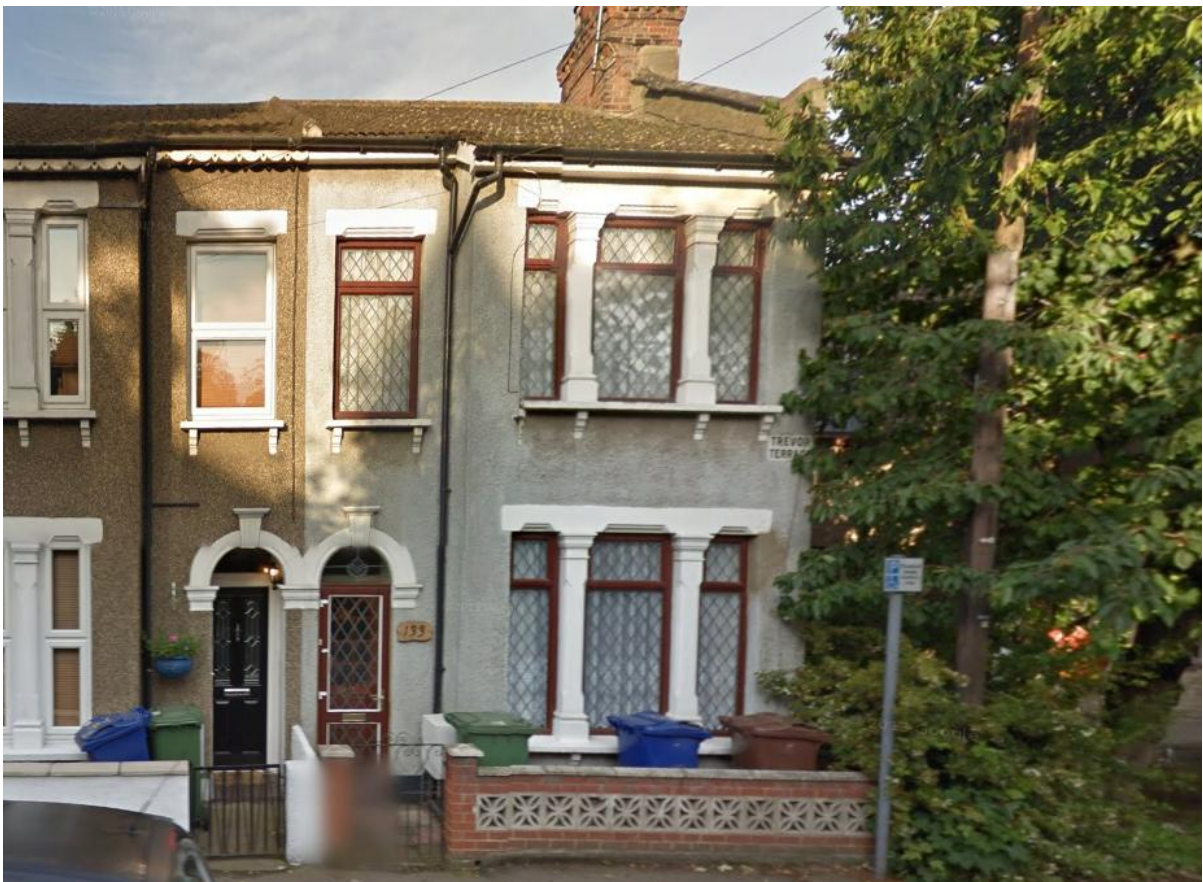
Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Planning Dimensions Ltd in support of a full planning application at 133 Dock Road, Tilbury, Essex, RM18 7BT.

The application seeks planning permission for a single storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear dormer and one front rooflight, to facilitate the change of use from a six (6) bedroom house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4) to a seven (7) bedroom house in multiple occupation (sui generis). It should be noted that both the single storey rear extension and the loft conversion have already been approved under prior approval ref. 24/01300/PHA and lawful development certificate ref. 25/01116/CLOPUD respectively, and can therefore be lawfully implemented as a fallback position. The proposal also delivers material improvements to the existing property including dedicated refuse and recycling storage, secure cycle storage, and communal living space at loft level.

This statement sets out the design rationale for the proposal and assesses its compliance with relevant national and local planning policy. It should be read alongside the submitted drawings and supporting documents.

Planning Dimensions Ltd is the acting agent on behalf of the owner of the site.



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Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a two storey end of terrace dwellinghouse situated on the northern side of Dock Road in Tilbury. The site has an area of approximately 153 square metres. The property is not listed and is not located within a conservation area.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, comprising a mix of two storey terraced and semi detached dwellings. Dock Road is a classified road within a built up residential area of Tilbury.

The site lies within Flood Zone 3, as confirmed by the Environment Agency. A Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Evacuation Plan accompany this application. The property is located within walking distance of Tilbury Town railway station and is served by bus routes along Dock Road and the surrounding area. The transportation plan submitted with this application demonstrates that the site is within a 5 minute walk of bus stops and a 10 minute walk of the railway station.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision
24/01300/PHA	Rear extension with a depth of 6 metres from the original rear wall of the property, with a maximum height of 3.12 metres and eaves height of 3 metres	Prior Approval Not Required
25/00406/HHA	Single storey rear extension	Permitted
25/01116/CLOPUD	Loft conversion with rear dormer and three roof lights to the front roof slope	Permitted
26/00037/CLOPUD	Lawful Development Certificate for change of use from a 6 Person HMO (Class C4) to a 7 Person HMO (Sui Generis)	Refused

Proposal

The application proposes a single storey rear extension and a loft conversion with a rear dormer and one rooflight to the front roof slope, to facilitate the change of use from a six (6) bedroom C4 HMO to a seven (7) bedroom sui generis HMO.

The proposed layout provides seven single occupancy bedrooms, each with an ensuite bathroom. Four bedrooms are located at ground floor level and three at first floor level. The loft floor is used for ancillary purposes only and does not contain any bedrooms. Two communal kitchens are provided, one at each floor.



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Planning Policy Framework

The development plan for Thurrock comprises the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended, adopted January 2015). The following policies are of relevance to this proposal:

CSTP1 (Strategic Housing Provision) sets out the Council's strategic approach to housing delivery. CSTP22 (Thurrock Design) requires development proposals to demonstrate a positive response to the local context. CSTP23 (Thurrock Character and Distinctiveness) seeks to protect and enhance the character of the borough's places.

PMD1 (Minimising Pollution and Impacts on Amenity) requires that development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or future occupiers. PMD2 (Design and Layout) requires that all development contributes positively to the character of the area. PMD8 (Parking Standards) sets out the Council's parking requirements for new development.

At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) is a material consideration. Paragraph 11(d) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development where the most important policies for determining the application are out of date, or where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. In such circumstances, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Thurrock Council's most recent Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (April 2024) confirms that the Council can demonstrate a supply of deliverable housing sites equivalent to only 1.02 years. The Council has also consistently failed the Housing Delivery Test, with delivery falling well below the 75% threshold that triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged and carries significant weight in the determination of this application.

Thurrock Council has not introduced an Article 4 Direction removing permitted development rights for the change of use from C3 (dwellinghouse) to C4 (small HMO). Accordingly, a property in the borough can be used as a small HMO housing up to six unrelated persons without the need for planning permission under Class L of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. The C4 use of this property is therefore lawful. The only matter requiring planning permission is the change from C4 to sui generis to accommodate a seventh occupant.



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Principle of Development

The property is already in lawful use as a six person C4 HMO. The change of use from C3 to C4 did not require planning permission in Thurrock, as the Council has not made an Article 4 Direction removing this permitted development right. The proposal seeks to accommodate one additional occupant, taking the total from six to seven, which moves the use from C4 to sui generis.

The physical works proposed in this application have already been approved under prior approval ref. 24/01300/PHA and lawful development certificate ref. 25/01116/CLOPUD respectively. These works represent a realistic fallback position and can be lawfully implemented without further planning permission. The sole matter requiring planning permission is the change of use from C4 to sui generis.

The increase from six to seven occupants is a modest intensification of the existing HMO use. The nature and pattern of activity associated with the property would not materially differ from the existing lawful C4 use. No family dwelling is being lost as the property is already in established HMO use.

Policy CSTP1 supports the delivery of new housing to meet local need, and paragraph 63 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to reflect the need for housing of different sizes, types, and tenures, including the needs of people who rent their homes. HMO accommodation serves a specific and underserved part of the housing market, providing affordable and flexible accommodation for single adults and key workers.

Thurrock Council can demonstrate a housing land supply of only 1.02 years and has consistently failed the Housing Delivery Test, with delivery falling below the 75% threshold. The tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged, and the contribution of additional shared housing carries weight in favour of the proposal.

The Council has approved comparable HMO intensification schemes elsewhere in the borough, including the expansion of a six bed HMO to nine occupants at Crouch Road, Chadwell St Mary, establishing the principle that C4 to sui generis conversion is acceptable where the standard of accommodation is adequate and there are no overriding amenity concerns. Thurrock Council does not have an adopted HMO concentration policy and there is no evidence of overconcentration of HMO uses in the immediate vicinity of the application site.

In addition to accommodating one further occupant, the proposal delivers material improvements to the quality of the existing HMO. The provision of dedicated refuse and recycling storage, a secure covered cycle store, two communal rooms at loft level, and the additional floor area created by the rear extension and loft conversion all represent enhancements to the standard of the property that benefit existing and future occupants alike. The proposal therefore does not simply intensify the existing use but actively improves the overall quality of the accommodation.



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Design and Layout

Single Storey Rear Extension

The proposed single storey rear extension has already been approved under prior approval ref. 24/01300/PHA and can be lawfully implemented without further planning permission. The extension would project 6 metres from the original rear wall of the property, with a maximum height of 3 metres and an eaves height of 3 metres. It would be constructed in materials to match the existing dwelling.

Loft Conversion with Rear Dormer and Front Rooflight

The proposed loft conversion has been confirmed as permitted development under lawful development certificate ref. 25/01116/CLOPUD. The works comprise a rear dormer and one rooflight to the front roof slope. The submitted volumetric calculation confirms that the total volume of the dormer is within the permitted development allowance for a terraced dwelling. The dormer would be set back from the eaves and set in from the side boundaries, and would be clad in materials to match the existing roof.

Internal Layout

The internal layout has been designed to provide a functional living arrangement for seven occupants. Each bedroom is served by a private ensuite and the two communal kitchens are located centrally within the plan on each floor. The loft floor is used for ancillary purposes only and does not contain any bedrooms.

Materials

External materials for both the rear extension and the loft dormer would match the existing dwelling in terms of brickwork, render, and roof tiles. The front elevation remains unchanged other than the insertion of one conservation style rooflight.



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Residential Amenity

The proposed layout provides seven single occupancy bedrooms across the ground and first floors, each served by a private ensuite bathroom. The loft floor is used for ancillary purposes only, comprising a cinema room, home office/work space, and storage/utility room. No bedrooms are located at loft level.

Accommodation Schedule

The following table sets out the proposed accommodation and demonstrates compliance with the Thurrock Council minimum HMO licensing standards. Bedroom sizes are assessed against the minimum of 8.5 m² for a single person room with a separate shared kitchen. All seven bedrooms meet or exceed this minimum.

Room	Users	Provision (m ²)	Standard (m ²)	Complies?
Bedrooms				
Bedroom 1 (GF)	1	14.86	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 2 (GF)	1	9.23	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 3 (GF)	1	8.50	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 4 (GF)	1	13.07	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 5 (FF)	1	13.97	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 6 (FF)	1	10.98	8.5	Yes
Bedroom 7 (FF)	1	15.13	8.5	Yes
Kitchen Facilities				
Kitchen / Dining (GF)	4	7.51	7 for 5 persons	Yes
Kitchen / Dining (FF)	3	7.83	7 for 5 persons	Yes
Communal Space				
Work/Office space	7	9.40	Not required but provided	Yes
Cinema Room	7	21.18	Not required but provided	Yes
External Amenity				
Rear Garden	7	50.90	No minimum standard	Yes

The combined gross internal area of the proposed dwelling across ground and first floors is approximately 166.7 m² (100 m² at ground floor and 66.7 m² at first floor). The loft floor provides an additional 38.94 m² of ancillary space.



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The loft floor includes a cinema room (21.18 m²) and home office/work space (9.40 m²) available to all occupants. These communal rooms are not required by the adopted amenity standards but represent a significant enhancement to the quality of the accommodation.

All habitable rooms benefit from adequate natural lighting and ventilation by way of openable windows with a glazed area in accordance with the minimum standards. Mechanical extract ventilation is provided to all kitchens and bathrooms. A shared rear garden of approximately 50.9 m² provides external amenity space for all seven occupants.

Two communal kitchens are provided, one at ground floor level serving four occupants and one at first floor level serving three occupants. Both kitchens are equipped with the required cooking, washing, and food storage facilities in accordance with Table 2 of the Thurrock Council adopted amenity standards for shared kitchens serving up to five persons. Each bedroom is served by a private ensuite bathroom, removing the need for shared bathroom facilities.

The overall standard of accommodation substantially exceeds the minimum requirements of the Thurrock Council adopted amenity standards. The proposal provides an acceptable standard of residential amenity for all future occupants in accordance with Policy PMD1 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The physical works proposed have already been approved as permitted development and prior approval respectively. The single storey rear extension and loft dormer do not introduce any new amenity impacts beyond those already accepted by the Council through those determinations.

In terms of the change of use, the addition of one occupant to the existing six person HMO would not result in any material increase in noise, disturbance, or overlooking. The property would continue to function as a shared house, and the every day pattern of activity would remain consistent with the existing residential use of the area. Each occupant has their own ensuite, which reduces the need for shared facilities and the potential for disturbance within the property.

The proposal would not result in any loss of light, outlook, or privacy to the occupiers of adjoining properties beyond the impacts already accepted through the permitted development and prior approval routes. The proposal accords with Policy PMD1 of the Core Strategy.



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Access, Parking and Transport

The site is accessed from Dock Road. No changes are proposed to the existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements.

The submitted transportation plan (drawing PR L002) demonstrates that the site is located in a sustainable and accessible location. Tilbury Town railway station is approximately 6 minutes walk from the site, providing regular c2c services to London Fenchurch Street, Grays, Basildon, and Southend. The nearest bus stop is approximately 94 yards from the property, and Tilbury town centre is a 4 minute walk, providing access to everyday shops, services, and employment opportunities. The Port of Tilbury is a major local employer situated in close proximity to the site.

The site is also well placed in relation to further and higher education. South Essex College (Thurrock Campus) is located in Grays, approximately 2 miles from the site and accessible by a short train journey from Tilbury Town station. The University of Essex (Southend Campus) and University Centre South Essex are located in Southend on Sea, approximately 18 miles to the east and directly accessible by c2c rail services. The University of Greenwich is also accessible via rail connections through London.

In response to the highways consultation comments requesting two off street parking spaces, it is noted that the Thurrock parking standard under Policy PMD8 requires a minimum of 2 parking spaces for a dwelling with 2 or more bedrooms. The property has never provided any off street parking, either in its original use as a C3 dwellinghouse or in its current lawful use as a C4 HMO. The standard was not applied or enforced at either stage. It would be unreasonable to require the provision of two off street parking spaces as a consequence of adding one additional occupant to an existing HMO use, particularly where the site has no frontage capable of accommodating off street parking. The site is located immediately adjacent to Tilbury town centre and within a 6 minute walk of the railway station. This is a highly sustainable location where car ownership among HMO occupants is typically low. The addition of one occupant to the existing use would not give rise to any material increase in parking demand or any unacceptable impact on highway safety. The NPPF at paragraph 115 is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. That threshold is not met by the addition of one occupant to an existing HMO.

A secure and covered timber enclosed cycle store providing six cycle spaces is proposed within the rear garden, as shown on the submitted plans.

Refuse and Recycling

Provision is made for refuse and recycling storage within the front of the property which will store two 240L general waste wheelie bins and two 240L recycling wheelie bins. This provision is sufficient for seven occupants and accords with the Council's waste collection requirements.



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Fire Safety

A fire safety strategy accompanies this application. The submitted fire escape floor plan (drawing PR L003) demonstrates that all occupants have access to a protected escape route. The proposal meets the requirements of the LACORS fire safety guidance for HMOs.

Sustainability

The proposal makes efficient use of an existing residential property within the urban area, reusing and extending the built form rather than developing a greenfield site. The conversion of an existing dwelling to HMO use reduces the per capita resource consumption compared to conventional single household occupation, as kitchen, living, and utility facilities are shared between occupants. The site is in a sustainable location with access to public transport, local shops, and community facilities, reducing reliance on the private car.

Conclusion

This statement has demonstrated that the proposed change of use from a six (6) bedroom C4 HMO to a seven (7) bedroom sui generis HMO, together with a single storey rear extension and loft conversion with rear dormer and a front rooflight, is acceptable in planning terms and compliant with the relevant policies of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). The physical works have already been approved through the permitted development and prior approval routes and represent a realistic fallback position. The change of use from six to seven occupants is a modest intensification of an existing lawful HMO use that does not materially alter the character of the property or its impact on the surrounding area.

All seven bedrooms meet or exceed the minimum space standards set out in the Thurrock Council adopted amenity standards, and each bedroom is served by a private ensuite bathroom. Two communal kitchens are provided, meeting the standards for shared kitchen provision. The fire safety strategy meets the LACORS guidance for HMOs. Beyond the change of use, the proposal delivers tangible improvements to the quality of the existing accommodation that benefit both existing and future occupants. The proposal does not give rise to any material harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, the character of the area, or highway safety. The site is in a sustainable location with access to public transport, and the level of parking demand associated with the use is low.

Thurrock Council can demonstrate a housing land supply of only 1.02 years, and the Housing Delivery Test confirms persistent under delivery. The tilted balance under paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is therefore engaged. The proposal contributes to the supply of shared housing accommodation in the borough, and this benefit weighs in favour of the grant of permission. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits. Planning permission should therefore be granted.



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