

COMMITTEE REPORT

**BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 12 January 2022**

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 211420/FUL

Address: 2 Howard Street, Reading

Proposal: Conversion of single dwelling (class C3) to Sui-Generis House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 9 persons, and conversion of the existing garage to bike and bin store, plus erection of two dormer windows and associated enabling internal works and minor external works (amended description)

Applicant: C/O Agent

Minor Application: 8 week target decision date: 9th November 2021

Extended of time date: 14th January 2022

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

1. TL1 - Full - time limit - three years.
2. Approved Drawings.
3. Pre-commencement submission and approval of materials for external works including window and roof details.
4. Cycle storage as specified.
5. Bin storage as specified.
6. Prior to first occupation HMO parking permits (notification to LPA).
7. Prior to first occupation HMO parking permits (notification to occupants).
8. Communal areas marked as social rooms on the approved plans to be retained for communal use at all times.
9. Prior to first occupation submission and approval of noise insulation between basement bedrooms and ground floor communal areas.
10. The HMO use at ground, first and second floors hereby approved shall be restricted to nine single occupancy bedrooms.
11. The garage building shall be retained for storage, including bin and cycle storage ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a large HMO and shall not be used for further residential living accommodation.
12. The area laid as garden shall be retained for private garden with existing vegetation to be retained and shall not be converted into parking areas or areas of hardstanding.
13. Prior to occupation an HMO management plan to be submitted and approved and thereafter complied with.
14. Pre-commencement submission and approval of details of hard and soft landscaping details.
15. Removal of pd rights for extensions, including in roof, hardstanding and outbuildings.
16. Hours of construction (std).

17. Conversion to comply with submitted sustainability strategy.
18. No burning on site.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- Terms and Conditions
- Building Regulations
- No entitlement to parking permits
- Fire safety requirements
- Requirements of the Housing Act
- Highways
- Contact Waste Team to ensure correct number of bins is provided.
- Positive and Proactive
- Pre-commencement conditions agreed by applicant/agent
- HMO expectations informative
- Separate HMO licence required

1. INTRODUCTION

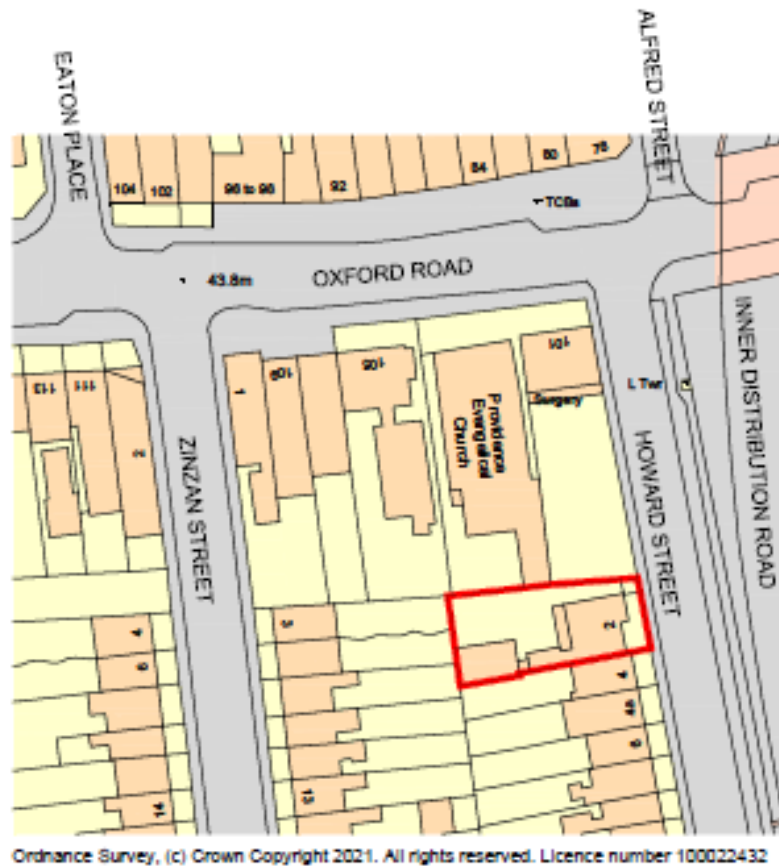
- 1.1 The application site is a two storey end of terrace property with basement and attic accommodation located on the west side of Howard Street. The plot is relatively large and the property has a rear conservatory and extension linking to a garage/workshop structure in the garden. There is a small lawn area at the front of the site, bound by hedging and palisade fencing, with gated access to the north of the building to the rear garden.
- 1.2 Whilst No.2 Howard Street is not listed, Nos. 4 and 4a, to the south are Grade II listed. No.101 Oxford Road, to the north of the site, is also Grade II listed.
- 1.3 The site is within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and the subject property is identified as a Building of Townscape Merit within the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 1.4 Paragraph 6.3.4 of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Conservation Area Appraisal (2020) notes the following in respect of No.2 Howard Street:

“2 Howard Street dates from c.1850-70s and is an attractive single family home of substantial size with a well-tended front garden that lends itself positively to the street scene.”

Paragraph 6.3.8 of the appraisal notes:

“2 Howard Street, Circa 1850-1870. A fine, well-cared for single family home with intact detailing and interiors.”
- 1.5 The site is not within the Article 4 Direction Area, which restricts the permitted change of use from C3 dwellinghouse to C4 small House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).
- 1.6 The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area.
- 1.7 The application was called in by Councillor Page due to concern over the proposed HMO use.

Location Plan



Aerial View



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The proposal was originally for the change of use from a C3 dwelling to 9-person (9 bedroom) HMO and conversion of existing garage/workshop to separate self-contained flat. The applicant was advised that this was considered to result in an over-intensive use of the site (and potential unacceptable subdivision of the plot) and revised plans were received omitting the conversion of the garage/workshop to self-contained flat and as such the description of development changed to confirm that just the house is proposed for use as a 9-person HMO with the garage retained for bicycle and bin storage.
- 2.2 The proposals include replacing the existing flat roof rear dormer window with two smaller pitch roof dormer windows. It is also proposed to replace the conservatory with a single storey rear extension. The materials for the new elements would match those of the host property.
- 2.3 Each HMO bedroom would have an en-suite bathroom and there would be a kitchen/dining area and separate living area.
- 2.4 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted with the application:

Location Plan PO1
Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plans PO4
Existing First and Second Floor Plans PO5
Existing Elevations PO8
Received 27th August 2021

Design, Heritage and Access Statement
Received 14th September 2021

Further to discussion with the agent, amended plans were submitted which removed the self-contained flat from the garage and instead proposed this space for the use of bike and bin storage. Revised plans also replaced the single flat roof dormer window with two smaller pitched roof dormer windows and plans also showed indicative soft landscaping.

Proposed Block Plan PO2B
Existing and Proposed Site Plans PO3B
Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plans PO6B
Proposed Elevations PO9B
Proposed Site Plan P10B
Received 23rd November 2021

Proposed First and Second Floor Plans P07A
Received 8th December 2021

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 None for No.2 Howard Street.
- 3.2 Other nearby sites:

4 Howard Street
210568/FUL: Conversion of single dwelling (class C3) to Sui-Generis House in multiple occupation (HMO) for 8 persons. Pending Consideration.

4a Howard Street

161375/FUL and 161376/LBC: Change of use from 8 bedroom house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) to 10 bedroom HMO (Sui Generis) to include internal changes, demolition of existing rear projection and erection of basement and single storey rear extensions. Permitted.

160550/FUL and 160551/LBC: Change of use from 8 bedroom house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) to 9 bedroom HMO (Sui Generis) to include internal changes, demolition of existing rear projection and erection of single storey rear extension. Permitted.

11-00489-FUL: Conversion of dwelling to 1 x 2 bed flat and 2 x 1 bed flats. Permitted.

11-00490-LBC: Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations to convert one dwelling to 2 x 2 bed and 2 x 1 bed flats and erection of ground and basement rear extension. Permitted.

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

4.1 None.

(ii) Non-statutory

4.2 Conservation and Urban Design Officer - No comments received.

4.3 Transport - No objection subject to conditions and informatives, discussed below.

4.4 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) - No comments received.

(iii) Public/ local consultation and comments received

4.5 No. 4 Howard Street, 3, 5 and 7 Zinzan Street and 101, 103 and 105 Oxford Road were notified of the applications by letter. A site notice was also displayed at the application site and a press notice provided.

4.6 No neighbour letters of representation have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development". The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

National Policy - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land
Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 5.2 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.3 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.4 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Framework 2021
National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC3: Adaption to Climate Change
CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
CC9: Securing Infrastructure
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
EN15: Air Quality
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
H5: Standards for New Housing
H8: Residential Conversions
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

5.5 Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Residential Conversions (2013)
Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2019)
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

5.6 Other relevant documentation / guidance / legislation

Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal 2020
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b)
Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)
National Design Guide: Planning practice for beautiful, enduring and successful places (2019)

6. APPRAISAL

Introduction

- 6.1 For conversions to residential the main planning policy is: Policy H8 (Residential Conversions), which states that: *'Proposals to convert buildings into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas and other related servicing. Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:*

- *The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;*
- *The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;*
- *There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- *There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*
- *Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access; and*
- *The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents.'*

Policy H8 continues:

'Additionally, in the case of sui generis houses in multiple occupation (HMOs):

- *The property to be converted measures more than 120 square metres gross;*
- *There is sufficient communal space.'*

- 6.2 Along with the relevant adopted local planning policies, the appraisal of the application has been assessed against the adopted Residential Conversions SPD (2013), which provides further detail for the adopted policies. Section A of the SPD, deals with the 'General Assessment of all Conversions' (i.e. from C3 dwellinghouses to flats or HMOs (both small C4 use and sui generis HMOs). Section B specifically covers the assessment of applications for HMOs within the area covered by the Article 4 Direction. Albeit not located within an area covered by the Article 4 Direction, this application has been considered against both sections.

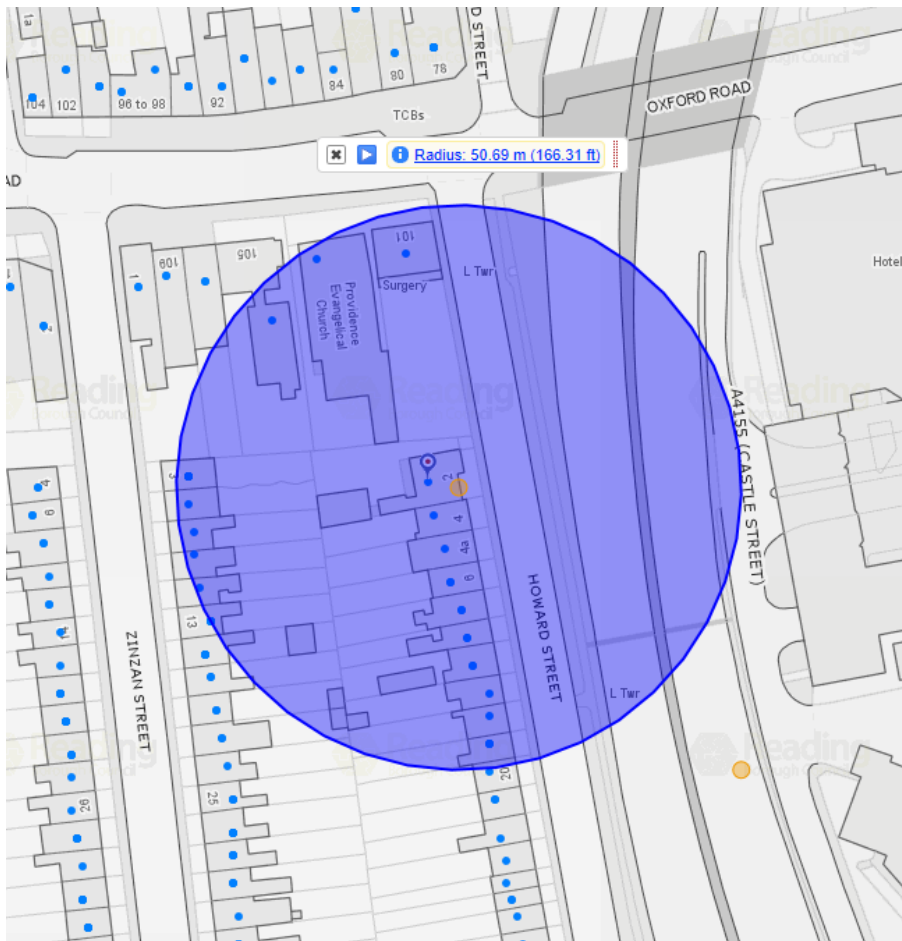
Main considerations:

The main issues to be considered are:

- i) Principle of development: Size requirements and whether the property results in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community
- ii) The impact on amenity of future occupiers and existing residents of nearby properties
- iii) Design considerations and impact on the Conservation Area and other heritage assets
- iv) Car/ cycle parking
- v) Bin storage
- vi) Sustainability

(i) Principle of development: Size requirements and whether the property result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community

- 6.3 In terms of whether a property is suitable to be converted to a large HMO, Policy H8 (Residential Conversions) and the Residential Conversion SPD requires the property to have a gross floor area in excess of 120m² when measured externally. The property meets this requirement and therefore the conversion into a large HMO is acceptable in principle.
- 6.4 Further assessment as to whether a property is suitable for conversion is whether such a conversion would result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community. This is assessed using the ‘tipping point’ calculation.
- 6.5 The SPD identifies that the *‘tipping point is when the concentration of HMOs becomes over dominant and the community is no longer considered to be mixed and sustainable.’* The SPD states that *“planning permission will not normally be granted where the proportion of HMOs will result in HMOs representing 25% or more or the residential properties within a circle of 50m radius measured from the application site” (para. 5.43).*
- 6.6 Further to this, it is noted that the site lies outside of the Borough’s Article 4 Direction area, wherein HMO developments are more strictly controlled. In this respect, Policy H8 only refers to use of the 25% threshold inside these areas. However, the SPD, (para 4.2) explains that this calculation is to be applied to changes of use from C3 dwellinghouses to large Sui Generis HMOs anywhere in the Borough. Specifically, in respect of large *sui generis* HMOs the policy guidance does refer to the need to comply with the 25% threshold both within and outside Article 4 areas. Taking this guidance but noting the absence of such requirements in the overarching Policy H8 it is considered that the 25% threshold represents a good ‘rule of thumb’ for testing whether the proposal would unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community and as such this calculation has been undertaken by officers.
- 6.7 The concentration of HMOs in the area surrounding the application site has been calculated as a percentage of the total estimated number of existing HMOs (C4 or sui generis) against the total number of residential properties, i.e. those falling with C3, C4 or sui generis HMO use. Available data from Environmental Health, Council Tax, extant (unimplemented) permissions for HMOs, data on property websites, and data held by the Enforcement Team, has been used.



6.8 The total number of properties within the 50m radius, including the application site, has been calculated as twenty-three. At the time of this assessment the total number of properties in HMO use, using the above sources of data, is estimated to be four (excluding the application site) and therefore the overall percentage is calculated as 17.39% which is below the threshold of a maximum of 25%. If the application site were to become an HMO this would push the percentage to 21.74% and would remain below the threshold of a maximum of 25%. In this regard, , the proposals are not considered unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single-family housing. Therefore, the principle of the conversion of the application property to a 9 person large Sui Generis HMO is therefore considered acceptable subject to meeting other policy requirements below.

(ii) **The impact on amenity of proposed and existing residents of nearby properties**

- 6.9 The Residential Conversions SPD sets out a number of checklist items which provide further detail related to adopted Policies CC8, H8 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 6.10 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires development to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; Crime and safety.

- 6.11 Policy H8 (Residential Conversions) requires that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties.
- 6.12 Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) deals specifically with private and communal space and requires such space to allow for sitting out, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, drying space.

Room Sizes

- 6.13 The SPD states, *"Where the cooking facilities are provided in a separate room, each bedroom must be a minimum of:*
- *6.5 square metres if occupied by one person;*
 - *10.5 square metres if occupied by two persons".*
- 6.14 The bedrooms are proposed for one person and there is a separate communal kitchen/dining area (and separate communal living area discussed below). The kitchen/dining area is shown as 19.1sqm and the smallest bedroom (no.8 on the first floor) is 12sqm with the majority of bedrooms far larger than this and all have en-suite bathrooms. All the proposed bedrooms (and kitchen area) are acceptable in terms of size and occupancy of the HMO will be restricted by condition.

Communal Space

- 6.15 The SPD identifies that the amount of communal space that is considered appropriate in a large HMO would be dependent on the number and size of bedrooms. The standard set out is for one communal room for every 4-6 bedrooms depending on the size of the bedroom. The amended scheme provides for two communal areas on the ground floor with a total area of 31.3sqm comprising a kitchen/dining room (19.1sqm) and a separate living area (12.2sqm) with seating for 9 persons. Furthermore, there will be bike and bin storage areas for future occupiers and a separate garden room area which could be used for extra storage if required. As above, all the bedrooms are of a good size and the communal space is considered to be of an acceptable size and layout to accommodate residents. Therefore, the overall level of communal provision is considered acceptable. A condition is recommended to ensure that the communal areas are retained for communal use only.

Amenity Space

- 6.16 The application includes a good size rear garden area of 204m² and amended plans indicate hard and soft landscaping as well as soft landscaping to the front of the site. Plans also show bike and bin storage within the existing garage structure and as such no further outbuildings are required. Given the size and nature of the communal garden area, which is considered to provide sufficient space for functional communal space and sitting out and given the site's central location close to public recreation and leisure facilities, this is considered to be in accordance with Policy H10.

External windows

- 6.17 All habitable rooms would benefit from external windows. The two basement bedrooms would be served by large front and rear lightwells providing an acceptable degree of daylighting to these rooms. Furthermore, the head height of the two bedrooms in the basement (2.3m) is acceptable.

Layout/Stacking of Rooms

- 6.18 The Council's House Conversions SPD seeks to avoid layouts which locate living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens, next to, above, or below, proposed or neighbouring bedrooms. The layout largely achieves this with only the communal kitchen/dining/living room located above the basement units. The remainder of the rooms are stacked appropriately. The development would likely require additional internal insulation to ensure basement bedrooms are protected from noise and to comply with building regulations and a condition requiring details of how this will be achieved to safeguard residential amenity will be required prior to commencement of the development.

Privacy and Overlooking/Overbearing Impacts

- 6.19 The two proposed dormer windows would face down the application site garden and any views towards the garden of No.4 Howard Street would be at an oblique angle. It is not considered that there would be any significant material loss of privacy over and above the existing dormer window such to raise concern. Given the scale and position of the dormer windows, they will not result in any overbearing effects to any neighbouring property. Similarly, given the position of the single storey rear extension, this is not considered to result in any material overbearing effects over and above the current situation.

Noise and Disturbance and Pollution

- 6.20 The level of noise and disturbance from nine people is unlikely to be significantly harmful to the residents of adjoining properties, additional nuisance is controlled by civil enforcement (police) and statutory nuisance legislation (Environmental Health). A condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a management agreement, which among other matters includes the requirement to set out how noise within and outside the property will be managed.

(iii) Design considerations and impact on conservation area and other heritage assets

- 6.21 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to ensure that new development enhances and preserves the local character. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) states that the design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity.
- 6.22 The site lies within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/ Oxford Road Conservation Area and as such there is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regards to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This is reflected in Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) which states that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced and Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) which states that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced and that development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The Council will, therefore, have regard to both the quality of the townscape and the quality and interest of the area, rather than solely that of the individual building.
- 6.23 Whilst No.2 Howard Street is not listed, it is identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a Building of Townscape Merit and is therefore reasonable to consider

this to be a non-designated heritage asset. Furthermore, No.4 (and 4a) Howard Street is a listed building. As such there is also a duty imposed by Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving its setting or any features of special architectural historic interest which it possesses. This is also reflected in Policy EN1.

- 6.24 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 states that decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment.
- 6.25 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF 2021 details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 6.26 The recently published National Design Guidance identifies 10 key components for good design and of particular note is the characteristic of 'Context' and it states that "well designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It should enhance positive qualities and improve negative ones." Additionally, there is specific reference to 'views inwards and outwards'.
- 6.27 Given the nature of the proposals, there would be no increase in the footprint of the property. In fact, following the replacement of the existing conservatory with single storey rear extension there would be a slight reduction in the footprint. The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the building as having well-intact interiors and the building has largely been well maintained. The building is not listed and as such there is little planning protection over interior alterations generally. However, it is noted that the proposals would not require a high degree of harmful change as the proposed HMO use would by its nature fit within existing internal spaces preserving the existing plan-form and would not require significant other alteration as shown on the proposed plans.
- 6.28 The proposed single storey rear extension would remain a subservient addition to the main property. Comprising red brick, white timber sash windows and slate roof, that would match the host property, this is considered to be an improvement on the existing uPVC conservatory. The rear extension would also allow for the reinstatement of the basement level window and allow increased daylight into the basement area than achieved at present.
- 6.29 Concern was originally raised by the case officer that the proposed flat roof rear 'box dormer' window would, due to its scale and design, fail to satisfactorily integrate with the character of the host property or preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Revised plans were received replacing the dormer window with two smaller pitched roof dormer windows. These revised dormer windows would not be excessive in scale and would neatly align with the windows below. They would be set well below the main roof ridge, sitting comfortably within the roof slope and they are not considered to result in any harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area nor the setting of the adjacent listed building. Indeed, the dormer windows would replace the existing single dormer window that is currently considered to be visually discordant. In this respect, the proposed dormer windows are considered

to result in a visual benefit to the building and character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 6.30 The proposals include the renovation of the existing rear garage structure, which includes replacing the corrugated galvanised steel tin roof with slate to match the main building and replacing the existing timber walls with fire retardant treated vertical timber boarding. This is considered to improve the overall character and appearance of this structure.
- 6.31 Further to revised plans omitting the originally proposed self-contained flat from the scheme, the garage structure is instead now proposed to be for bin and cycle storage, rather than requiring a separate structure for storage within the garden. This is considered to be an efficient use of the land/existing structure and will prevent the harmful clutter of bins, which is normally an indicator of large HMO use.
- 6.32 Overall, it is considered that the proposed external works would not result in any detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposals, which include refurbishment works, are considered to provide some enhancement to the appearance of this non-designated heritage asset. To ensure design quality, conditions are recommended above requiring the submission of external material details including window details. In design terms the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies CC7, EN1, EN3 and H10.

(iii) Car/Cycle parking

- 6.34 The site is located within Zone 2 for accessibility as identified in the Council's Parking and Design SPD, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs.
- 6.35 In accordance with the SPD, an HMO property would be required to provide 0.25 car parking spaces per room. No off-road parking is to be provided with this proposal. However, given the close proximity to the town centre and good transport links this is considered acceptable in this instance. Future occupiers would not be automatically entitled to resident or parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. This would ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area. Conditions and an informative are included in the Recommendation above regarding a restriction on the entitlement to parking permits for existing and future schemes in the area.
- 6.36 In accordance with the SPD, cycle storage for an HMO should be provided at a ratio of 0.5 secure cycle storage spaces for each letting room, in the form of Sheffield type stands within a lockable store. 12 Sheffield stands are proposed in the existing garage structure which exceeds the required provision and is acceptable. A compliance condition is recommended to ensure that this facility is provided and retained for bicycle parking at all times.

(iv) Bin Storage

- 6.37 Policy H8 requires that bin storage is of an appropriate size and to which there is easy access. Bins are proposed to be stored in the existing garage in the rear

garden, which is acceptable. Bins will be moved to the front side of the property on collection day. The recommended condition for the management plan agreement will include for management of the disposal of waste. Given that the bins would be stored within an existing structure (which in itself is proposed to be refurbished) this is not considered to result in any detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area (or setting of the adjacent listed building) and nor would it raise amenity concerns for residents. A condition is recommended to ensure this facility is provided and retained. An informative is included to advise contacting the Council's Refuse and recycling Team to ensure the correct capacity of bins is provided.

(v) **Sustainability**

- 6.38 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction), supported by the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD seeks the proposal, as a 'creation of new residential units through conversion', to comply with BREEAM Level of 'Very Good'. Policy CC2 also requires new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials by using designs and site layouts which use *"energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change"*.
- 6.39 Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) requires that all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Supporting text in para 4.1.8 states that *"The design of developments therefore needs to more carefully consider matters such as shading, insulation and ventilation, surface water runoff and storage and the use of appropriate tree and other planting."*
- 6.40 Further to the above, it is acknowledged that the proposals, as largely a refurbishment proposal of an older, characterful building, and change of use of an existing building, do not neatly align with the standard BREEAM requirements. Instead, the applicant is proposing sustainability enhancements to support the application including: energy efficient lighting; energy efficient fixtures/fittings (water heating and water management); soft landscaping.
- 6.41 Officers are satisfied that in this specific instance and with regard to the site context and nature of the scheme, that the proposals will allow the building to perform in an improved way to meet current sustainability policy expectations and the improvements will be secured by condition. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies CC2 and CC3.

Equality Impact

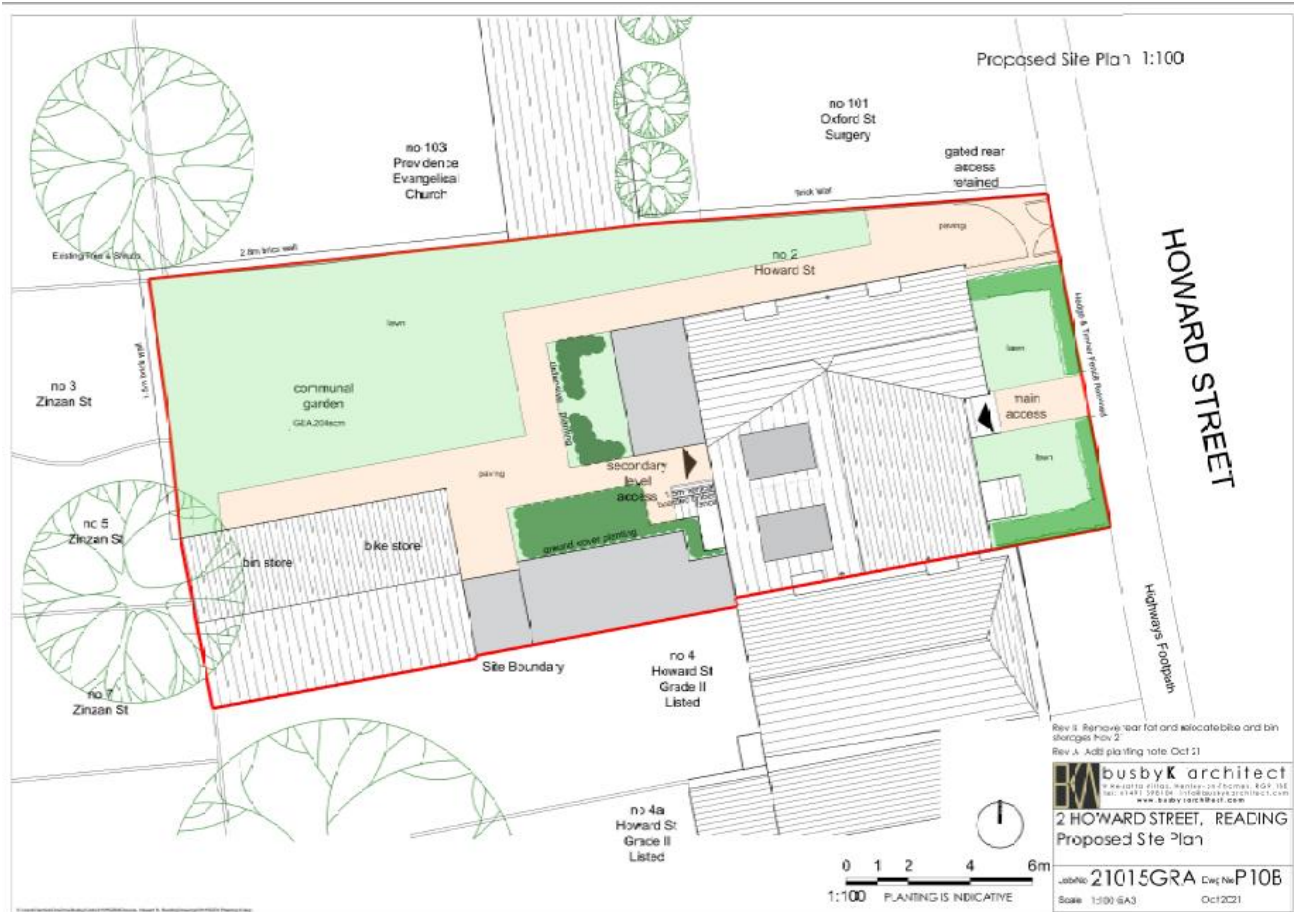
- 6.42 In determining these applications, the Committee is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

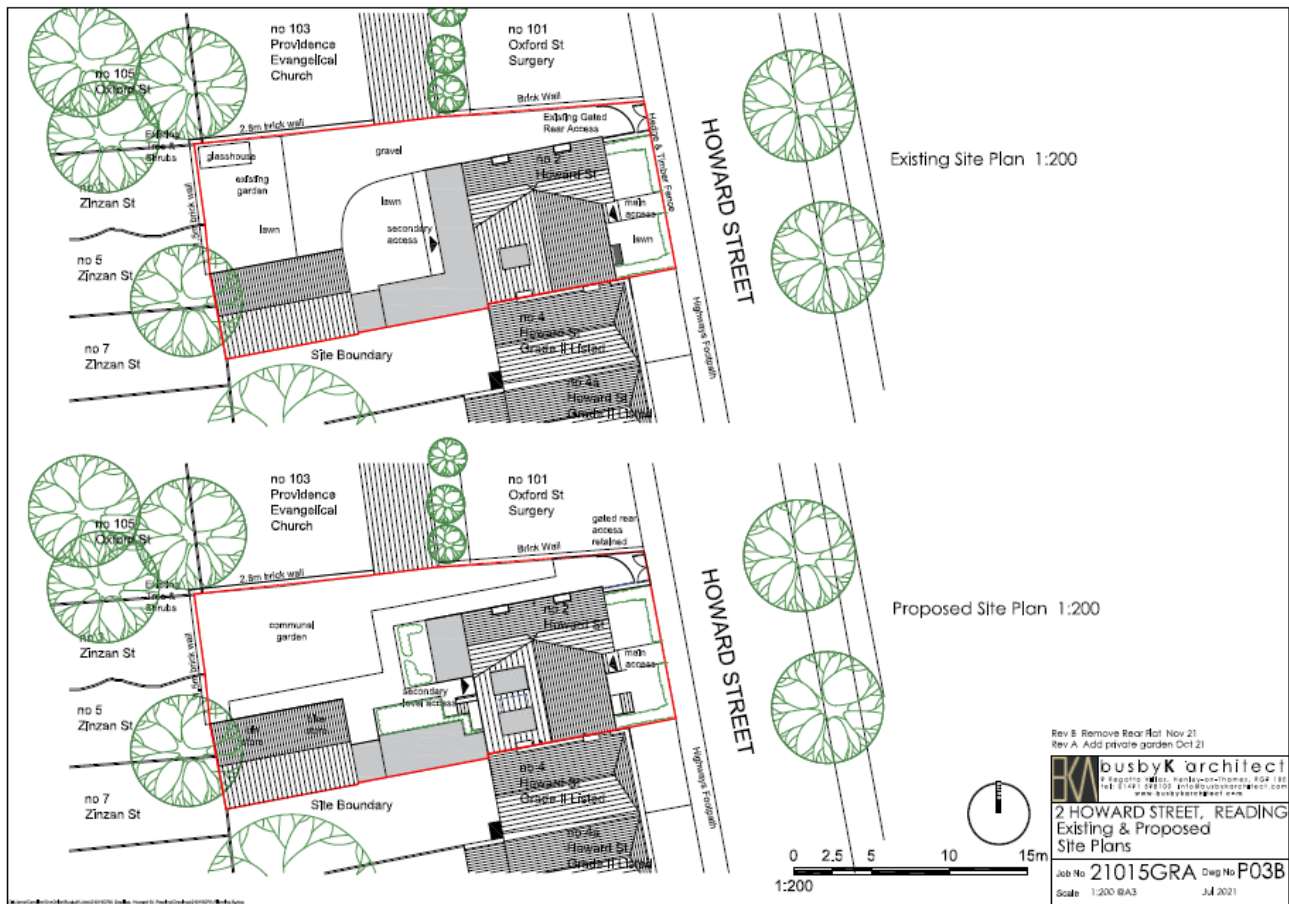
- 7.1 The proposal has been considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 7.2 The proposal to convert the property from a C3 dwellinghouse to large HMO is not considered to unduly dilute or harm the surrounding area and will ensure that this remains a mixed and sustainable community. In addition to this, it is considered that the proposal will not have any detrimental impact on amenity of future residents or existing residents of nearby properties, and nor will the proposals have any detrimental effect upon the character of the property as a Building of Townscape Merit or character and appearance of the Conservation Area or other nearby heritage assets.
- 7.3 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme, and amendments have been secured, which considered to satisfactorily address policy issues and, overall, officers consider this to be a supportable scheme. It is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions and informatives as above.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

Application Drawings



Proposed Site Plan



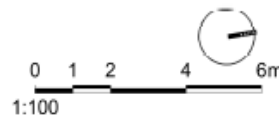
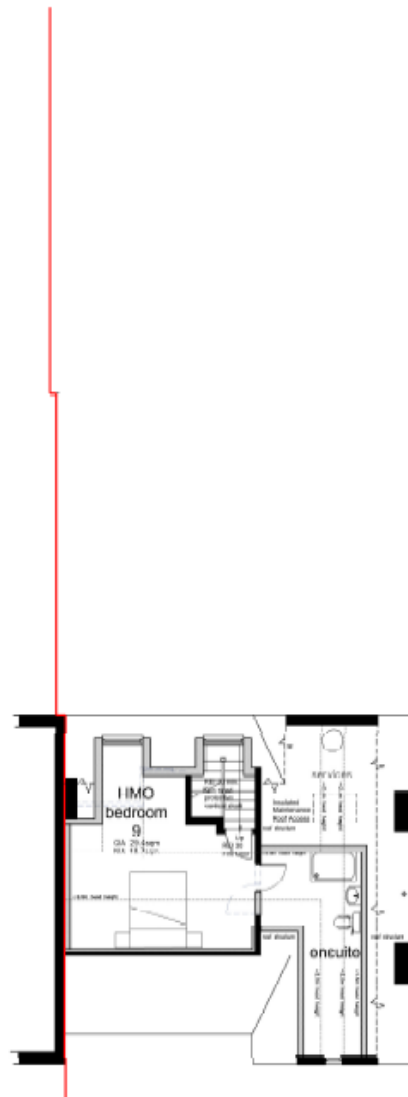
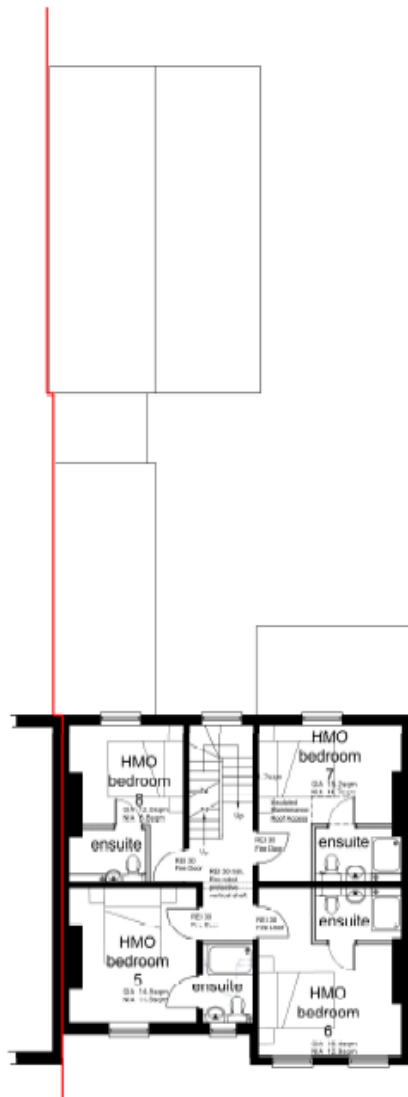
Existing and Proposed Site Plans



Proposed Elevations



Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plans



Rev A: Change doors Oct 21

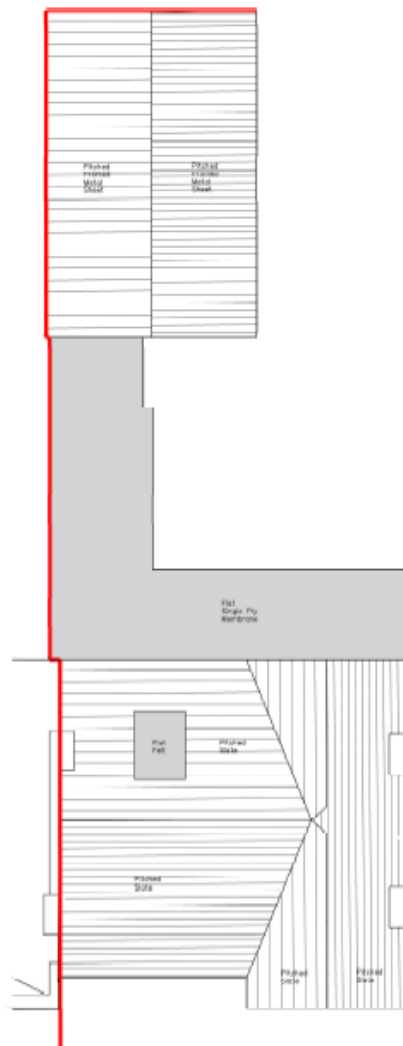
busbyK architect
8 Regatta Villas, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1RE
Tel: 01491 378100 www.busbykarchitect.com

2 HOWARD STREET, READING
Proposed First
& Second Floor Plans

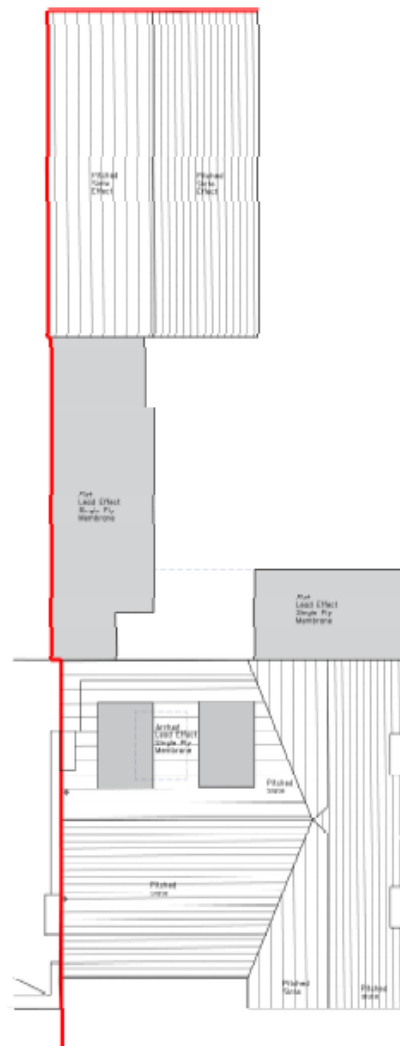
JOB NO 21015GRA DWG NO P07A

Scale 1:100 @ A3 Jul 2021

Proposed First and Second Floor Plans



Existing Roof Plan



Proposed Roof Plan

Rev A Change dormers Oct 21

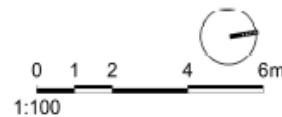


2 HOWARD STREET, READING
Existing & Proposed Roof
Plans

Job No 21015GRA Dwg No P10A

Scale 1:100 @A3

Aug 2771



Existing and Proposed Roof Plans