

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 1st February 2023

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220028/FUL

App Type: FUL

Address: 62 Goldsmid Road, Reading, RG1 7YB

Proposal: Proposed erection of a part single part two storey rear extension to dwelling, following demolition of the existing outbuilding and conversion to HMO.

Applicant: Mrs A Daby

Minor Application: 8-week target decision date: 9th May 2022

Extended decision date: 3rd February 2023

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 5th September 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 door details.
4. Cycle Parking (as specified).
5. Bin Storage (details to be submitted).
6. Communal areas marked on the approved plans to be retained for communal use at all times.
7. The HMO use at ground and first floors hereby approved shall be restricted to six single occupancy bedrooms.
8. The area laid as garden shall be retained as private garden with existing vegetation to be retained and shall not be converted into parking areas or areas of hardstanding.
9. Removal of pd rights for extensions, including in the roof, hardstanding and outbuildings.
10. Hours of construction.
11. No burning on site.
12. Obscure glazing to en-suite bathroom to Bedrooms 4 and 6
13. Pre-commencement submission and approval of internal sound insulation scheme.
14. Pre-commencement submission of landscaping scheme for front garden area.
15. HMO Tenant Management Plan (to be submitted).
16. HMO Parking Permit (notification to LPA)
17. HMO Parking Permit (notification to Occupants)

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- Terms and Conditions
- Building Regulations
- No entitlement to parking permits
- HMO Management Plan
- RBC HMO Requirements
- Housing Act
- Highways
- Positive and Proactive
- Pre-commencement conditions
- Separate HMO licence required

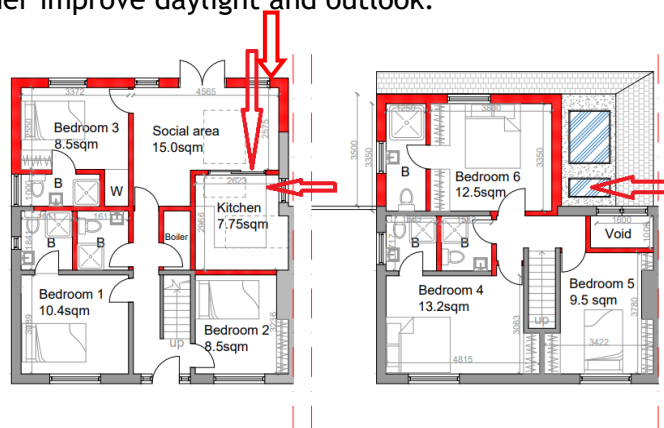
1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At your December meeting, consideration of this planning application was deferred in order to seek additional information and clarification on the lighting provisions for the kitchen. The previous report is appended to this report at Appendix 2 and the two should be read together. The recommendation is set out above.

2. RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS POLICY

The assessment of potential living conditions is undertaken against the Reading Borough Council Residential Conversion Policy H8 and with reference to guidance contained within the Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (2013) which states at Checklist 10: *“Habitable rooms, such as living rooms and bedrooms, should benefit from an external window. The provision of natural light and ventilation is a legal requirement under Environmental Health legislation”*.

- 2.1 In response to the concerns raised by the Committee regarding natural lighting, amendments have been made to the original designs by the applicant. These amendments have introduced an additional rooflight over the kitchen, an additional external window to the side of the kitchen, as well as a double leaf glass door in the wall between the kitchen and the communal area, while also introducing an additional window to the external wall serving the communal area. This window is directly in line with the double leaf transparent door to the kitchen to further improve daylight and outlook.



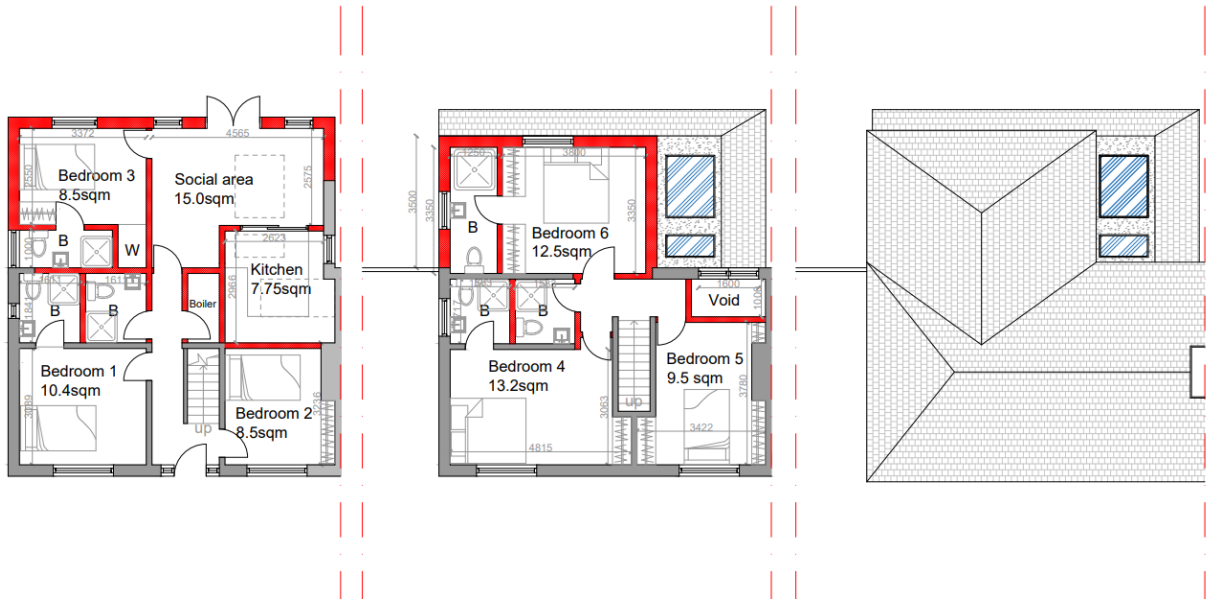
- 2.2 Officers have reviewed these amendments and consider that the application, as amended, has responded adequately to the concerns raised by the Committee in December 2022 with regard to the lighting provisions for the kitchen.

3 CONCLUSIONS

The above discussion seeks to address previous concerns of the Committee and it is considered that the internal areas would offer an appropriate standard of amenity for future occupiers. The overall conclusions of the previous report (Appendix 2) still apply and the application is recommended for approval as set out in the recommendation as set out above.

Case Officer: Chukwudi Onwudinanti

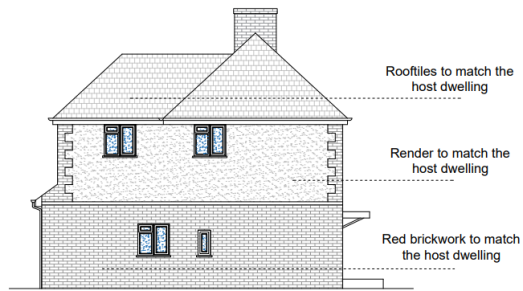
Appendix 1 - Floor Plans and Elevations



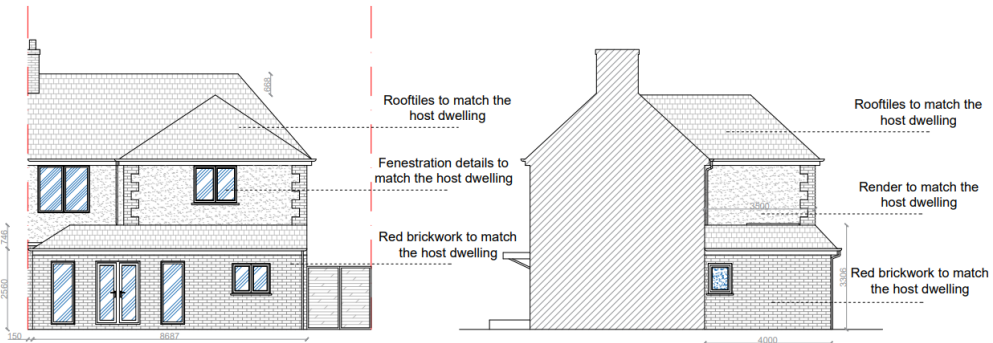
Proposed Plans



Proposed Front Elevation



Proposed Side Elevation



Proposed Elevations.

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7th December 2022

ITEM NO.

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220028/FUL

App Type: FUL

Address: 62 Goldsmid Road, Reading, RG1 7YB

Proposal: Proposed erection of a part single part two storey rear extension to dwelling, following demolition of the existing outbuilding and conversion to HMO.

Applicant: Mrs A Daby

Minor Application: 8-week target decision date: 9th May 2022

Extended decision date: 12th December 2022

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 5th September 2022

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

18. TL1 - Full - time limit - three years.
19. Approved Drawings.
20. Pre-commencement submission and approval of materials for external works including window and door details.
21. Cycle Parking (as specified).
22. Bin Storage (details to be submitted).
23. Communal areas marked on the approved plans to be retained for communal use at all times.
24. The HMO use at ground and first floors hereby approved shall be restricted to six single occupancy bedrooms.
25. The area laid as garden shall be retained as private garden with existing vegetation to be retained and shall not be converted into parking areas or areas of hardstanding.
26. Removal of pd rights for extensions, including in the roof, hardstanding and outbuildings.
27. Hours of construction.
28. No burning on site.
29. Obscure glazing to en-suite bathroom to Bedrooms 4 and 6
30. Pre-commencement submission and approval of internal sound insulation scheme.
31. Pre-commencement submission of landscaping scheme for front garden area.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- Terms and Conditions
- Building Regulations
- No entitlement to parking permits

- HMO Management Plan
- Housing Act
- Highways
- Positive and Proactive
- Pre-commencement conditions
- Separate HMO licence required

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The dwelling benefits from a single storey rear extension. The dwelling is not considered to be of any special architectural or historic interest and makes a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area overall.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is largely residential in nature and is characterised by a range of large detached and semi-detached properties, as well as large blocks of flats. In terms of parking areas set out in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, it is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, which directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. There is a good frequency of public transport services to and from the town centre.
- 1.3 The application site is not within the Article 4 Direction Area, which would have restricted the permitted change of use from C3 dwellinghouse to C4 small House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Therefore, although permission is sought for a single storey rear extension and a change of use to a small C4 HMO (up to 6 persons), permission is only actually required for the extension not the use. However, as the application description includes for the change of use to a small HMO, for completeness, the following report will assess the HMO use, but in the context that significant weight should be given to the fall-back position which is that only permission for the extension could be secured and the use commenced without any further requirement for a separate change of use permission.
- 1.4 The application was called in by Councillor Page and Councillor Rowland for concerns at the size of some of the bedrooms and what appears to be very limited communal living space and, indeed, is shown simply as a dining and kitchen area on the ground floor.



Aerial View



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The scheme is for the change of use from a four bed C3 dwelling to 6-person (6 bedroom) HMO. It also proposes the erection of a part single part two storey rear extension to dwelling.
- 2.2 The existing rear extension would be demolished to facilitate the proposal. At the ground floor level, the proposal would extend across the full width of the dwelling, projecting to a depth of 4m. At the first-floor level, the proposal would project to a depth of 3.5m, set 3m away from the boundary with number 60 Goldsmid Road.
- 2.3 A proposed bin store, cycle store and other storage would be within the curtilage of the property.
- 2.4 Each HMO bedroom would have an en-suite bathroom and there would be a kitchen/dining area and separate living area
- 2.5 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted with the application:
Plans considered Received 10 January 2022
Drawing No: 03 - Existing Site Plan
Drawing No: 06 - Block Plan
Drawing No: 01 - Existing Floor and Roof Plans
Drawing No: 04 - Proposed Floor and Roof Plans
Drawing No: 02 - Existing Elevations
Drawing No: 05 - Proposed Elevations

Further to discussion with the agent further amended plans were submitted which addressed the concerns raised over internal floor spaces as follows:
Drawing No: 04 - Proposed Floor and Roof Plans Rev F received 18th October 2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No: 200103

Application Pre-application advice for proposed erection of a single storey 6m rear extension and double storey rear extension with the creation of new accommodation units.

Decision: Observation Sent with suggested modifications prior to applications

Decision Date: 10/6/2020

Application No: 210765

Application Description: Part one, part two storey rear extension

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

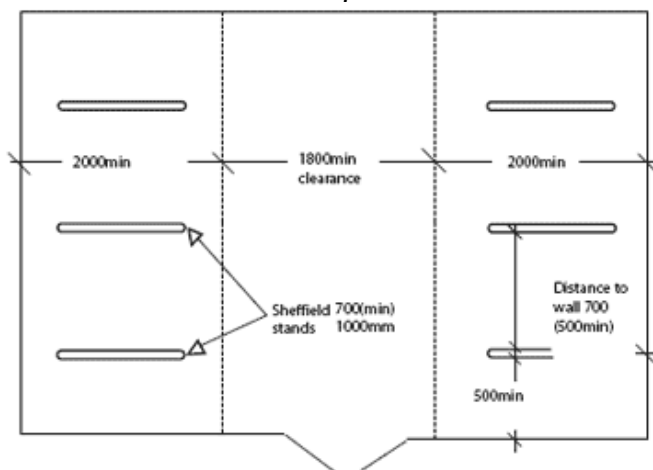
4.1 None.

(ii) Non-statutory

4.2 *Transport Comments*

“Given the extensive parking restrictions in place including Goldsmid Road being included in the Councils Residential Permit Parking scheme whereby only permit holders can park in the bays, double yellow lines preventing on street parking outside and around the property and the site located in close proximity to the town centre, Reading West and Reading Central train station and R50 and cycle routes, a car free development can be considered in this instance. The applicant should be advised that if the application is approved, the appropriate parking conditions and informative will be applied to prevent any future occupants of the HMO from obtaining resident or visitor parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on streetcar parking in the area.

In accordance with the Council’s Parking Standards and Design SPD, cycle storage for the HMO should be provided at a ratio of 0.5 secure cycle storage spaces per room in the form of a Sheffield type stand within a lockable store. Based on this, 3 cycle spaces would be required for the HMO. Plans submitted illustrate a cycle storage area at the rear of the property, accessed along the side of the house, however `no Sheffield type stands have been illustrated. A minimum of 2 Sheffield type stands are required within the lockable storage unit. Revised plans are required; however, I am happy to deal with this by way of condition. Below is a plan of a typical cycle store and required dimensions that I would expect.”



4.3 *Environmental Protection*

The standing advice relevant to this application is:

“Standing Advice A: For extensions to a single dwelling NOT on potentially contaminated land

Construction and demolition phase

EP commonly receive complaints about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and about smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site of minor developments.

EP recommend the following informative is attached to help prevent complaints.

Recommended informative

Noisy construction, demolition and associated activities should be restricted to between the hours of 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, with no noisy works taking place at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays.

There should be no burning of waste on the site.”

This advice has been incorporated in the assessment and determination of the application.

4.4 Conservation Area Advisory Committee:

Summary of observations:

- The property and its setting are not suitable for a 6 bedroomed HMO designed for (at least) 6 people
- Concerned about the amenity for occupiers of some of the bedrooms
- Should this application be approved conditions should be added to improve and protect the façade and frontage of the property to improve the character and appearance of the Russell Street/Castle Hill/ Oxford Road Conservation Area

4.5 RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer

“The existing house is run down and needs updating to make it fit for purpose. It is a neutral design and overall does not harm the character or setting of the conservation area”.

(iii) **Public/ local consultation and comments received**

4.6 Nos. 44-64A Goldsmid Road, as well as 50 and 52 Baker Street were consulted. Two objections were received from Nos 52 and 42 Goldsmid Road and two objections were received from Councillors as set out below. The issues raised are as follows (full responses are available to view online):

Parking problems/ highway safety

- Appalling parking problem and the proposal would increase the cars trying to park on the road and have a negative impact on highway safety.
- Goldsmid Road has a residents’ parking scheme; this means that the already overcrowded road will have yet more cars trying to park on street.

Traffic

- Goldsmid Road is extremely congested.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Property and Conservation Area

- HMOs are never maintained to a high enough standard and quickly deteriorate.
- HMOS do not enhance Conservation status; the proposal would impact negatively and not improve the character and vitality of the area.
- Changing the usage and increasing occupancy will be likely to detract from the current appearance through increased outside amenity space for parking, bike storage, bin storage.

No. of HMOs

- Already a large number of HMOs on Goldsmid Road.
- Yet another in close proximity to no. 52 and 44 Goldsmid Road will undoubtedly prove detrimental to the area.
- Surely the fact that the house is in a conservation area is compelling grounds for refusal.

Effect on character of area

- Another HMO will threaten the balance of family homes and rented and change the area.

Effect on amenity of neighbours, future residents and the community

- Increase in noise, disturbance and nuisance from six individuals rather than a single dwelling, including the outside space.
- There are already disturbing noises and anti-social behaviour around Goldsmid Road and this development will cause an increase.
- Amenity space will be severely impacted, and it will fall short of guidelines.

HMO requirements

- Room sizes are too small to meet Council's minimum standards.
- Insufficient communal rooms: one per 4-6 bedrooms is required.
- The internal configuration approved in previous application 210765 was different from that now proposed.
- The approved application could have provided a 3 or 4 bedroomed large family home for which there is a great demand in Reading.

Process & Plans

- This should be referred to committee.
- Should this application be approved conditions should be added to improve and protect the façade and frontage of the property to improve the character and appearance of the Russell Street/Castle Hill/ Oxford Road conservation area.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 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) - among them the "presumption in favour of sustainable development".
- 5.2 Section 16(2) 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.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance
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

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)

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)

- 5.4 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. Also 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.

- 5.5 Whilst 62 Goldsmid Road is not listed, it is in close proximity to The Reading National Spiritualist Church as well as Nos 61 to 79 Baker Street which are listed buildings. 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. APPRAISAL

Main considerations:

- 6.1 The main issues to be considered are:

- i) Principle of development: Whether it would result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community;
- ii) The impact on amenity of existing and future residents of the property and neighbouring properties;
- iii) Design considerations and impact on the Conservation Area and other heritage assets;
- iv) Car/ Cycle Parking;
- v) Bin Storage;
- vi) Sustainability; and
- vii) Other Matters

- 6.2 Policy H8 (Residential Conversions), 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.'*

6.3 Notwithstanding that the proposal for an HMO does not require planning permission in its own right for the application site, the scheme has been assessed against Policy H8 and further guidance set out within the adopted Residential Conversions SPD (2013), specifically Section A, which 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). Although it is not within the Article 4 area, nor a Sui Generis HMO, for completeness, it has been assessed against the threshold guidance as set out in Part B of the SPD.

(i) **Principle of development: Whether it would result in unduly diluting or harming a mixed and sustainable community**

6.4 Policy H8 requires an 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.

6.5 Although not explicit within the main H8 policy the associated Residential Conversions SPD identifies that a '*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*". However, this can only reasonably be considered as a material consideration to be afforded some weight but is not determinative on its own as both Policy H8 and the SPD are clear that this threshold only applies in areas covered by the Article 4 Direction restricting change of use from Class C3 to Class C4 or for proposals for large Sui Generis HMOs. Neither are the case for the application being considered.

6.6 The 25% threshold, therefore, represents a loose 'rule of thumb' and is included for information purposes as it cannot be determinative in the case of the current proposal.

6.7 The total number of residential properties (excluding purpose built flats) within the 50m radius, including the application site, has been calculated as 17. The total number of properties in HMO use, using sources from HMO licencing, Council Tax, Online Private Letting sources etc is estimated to be 3 (including the application site) and therefore the overall percentage is calculated as 17.7% which is below the threshold of a maximum of 25%. In this regard the principle of the conversion of the application property to a C4 small HMO or Sui Generis HMO would be considered acceptable even in the event that it could be applied.



(ii) **The impact on amenity of existing and future residents of the property and neighbouring properties**

- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 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.

Impact on amenity of existing and future residents of the property

Room Sizes

- 6.12 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".
- 6.13 The bedrooms are proposed for single occupancy and there is a separate communal kitchen and living area. The kitchen is shown as 7.75sqm and the smallest bedroom (no.2 on the ground floor) is 8.5sqm with the majority of bedrooms far larger than this. 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

- 6.14 The scheme provides for a communal area on the ground floor with a total area of 22.75sqm comprising a kitchen (7.75sqm) and a separate 'Social' area (15.0sqm) adequate to seat 6 people. Furthermore, there will be bike storage areas for future occupiers and a separate garden 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

- 6.15 The application includes a good size rear garden area. Plans also show bike and garden storage within the existing curtilage and as such no further outbuildings are required within the main garden area. 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

- 6.16 All habitable rooms would benefit from external windows.

Layout/Stacking of Rooms

- 6.17 The Council's 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 room (adjacent to the kitchen). The kitchen is next to bedroom 2 and partially below bedroom 5. Bedrooms 6 and 3 are also next to and above the social area. It is considered reasonable and necessary to secure by way of condition, requirement for sound insulation scheme for walls and ceilings of the social area and kitchen to be submitted prior to occupation.

Privacy and Overlooking/Overbearing Impacts

- 6.18 The proposed extension includes a ground floor which would extend to a depth of 4m into the rear and would span the full existing width of the building. The first floor element has been stepped back relative to the ground floor at 3.5m deep and approximately 4.8m wide. This arrangement at the first-floor level and the appropriate depth of the ground floor would ensure that the proposal would not result in an overbearing effect on the adjoining neighbours. The proposal also does not present any side windows facing neighbours except for bathrooms which would be conditioned to be obscure glazed and set at an appropriate height above floor level. It is not considered that there would be any harmful loss of privacy.

Noise and Disturbance and Pollution

- 6.19 The level of noise and disturbance from six people is unlikely to be significantly harmful to the residents of adjoining properties, and additional disturbance or nuisance is controlled by civil enforcement (police) and statutory nuisance legislation (Environmental Health). A condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a pre-commencement plan for sound insulation.

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

- 6.20 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.
- 6.21 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. Also 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.
- 6.22 Whilst 62 Goldsmid Road is not listed, it is in close proximity to The Reading National Spiritualist Church as well as Nos 61 to 79 Baker Street which are listed buildings. 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.
- 6.23 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.
- 6.24 The building is not listed and as such there is little planning protection over interior alterations generally. It is not considered that the rear extensions aspect of this application would have a significant effect on the Conservation Area as there are no considerable alterations of the architectural form and character of the building. There is also no immediately apparent impact on the Conservation Area resulting from the conversion to a small HMO compared with the building remaining in use as a single family dwelling.
- 6.25 The proposed rear extension would remain a subservient addition to the existing property. The new roof over the extension would be set well below the main roof ridge and is not considered to result in any harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area nor the setting of the adjacent listed building.
- 6.26 The front garden area is poorly maintained and an overall stark unattractive appearance. There is a significant opportunity to enhance the conservation area with improved surfacing/planting areas and a condition is recommended to secure this.
- 6.27 Overall, it is considered that the proposed external works would not result in harm to 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 however, conditions are recommended above requiring the submission of external material details including all new window and doors. In design terms the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies CC7, EN1, EN3 and H10.

iv) Car/Cycle parking

6.28 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.

6.29 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.

6.30 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. 6 Sheffield stands (12 spaces) 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.

v) Bin Storage

6.31 Policy H8 requires that bin storage is of an appropriate size and to which there is easy access. Bins are proposed to be located to the side of the property and therefore close to the bin collection point. Environmental Protection have advised that bin stores need to be vermin proof and a condition is recommended for details of the bin store to be submitted for approval.

vi) Other Matters

6.32 In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under 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.

Community Infrastructure Levy

6.33 The proposal does not result in increased floorspace above 100sqm nor create a new dwelling, therefore, the proposed development is not CIL liable.

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 a C4 small HMO is not considered to unduly dilute or harm the surrounding area and will ensure that this remains a mixed and sustainable community. Ultimately the LPA has little control over the change of use of the existing building as it is not subject to an Article 4 direction preventing change of use to Class C4. 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, the Conservation Area or other nearby heritage assets.

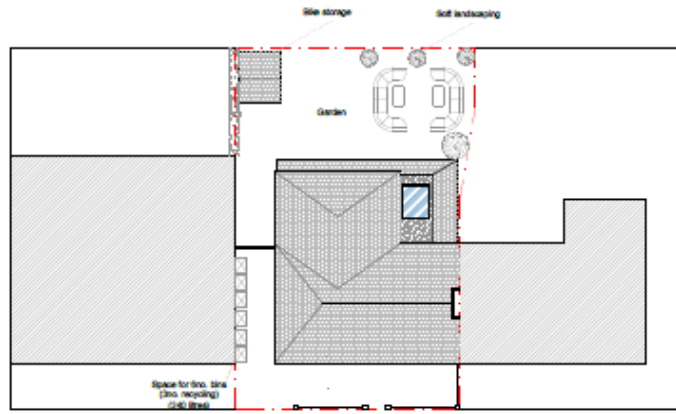
7.3 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme, and the amendments provided by the applicant to overcome previous concerns raised with the scheme are considered to satisfactorily address policy issues and, overall, officers consider this to be a supportable scheme. It is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions and informatives as above.

Case Officer: Chukwudi Onwudinanti

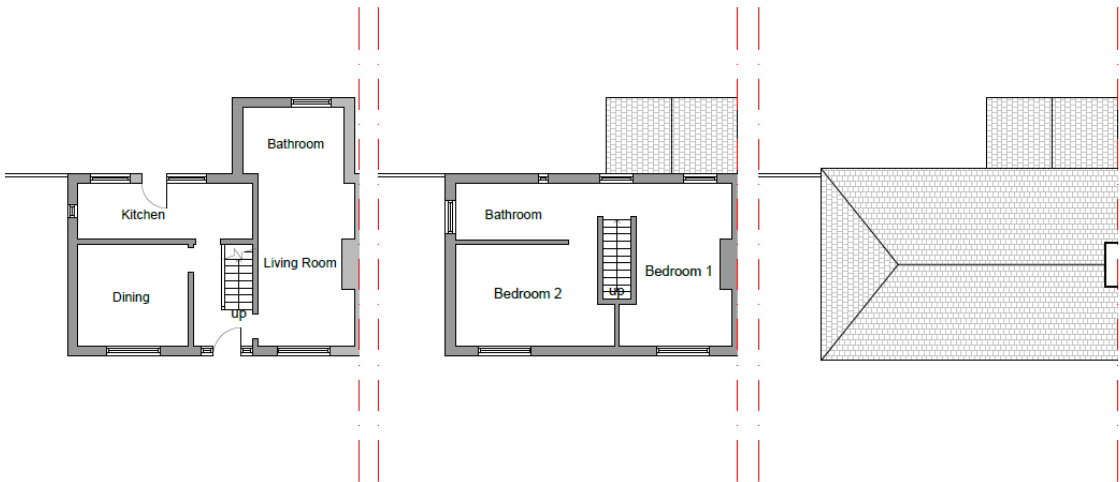
APPENDIX 1: Plans and Photos



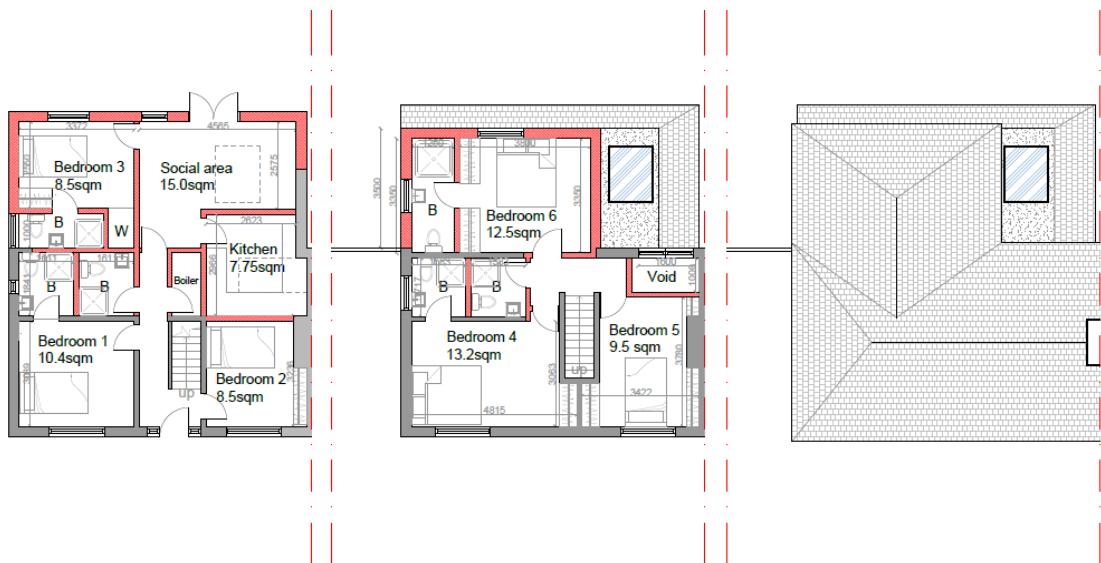
Location Plan



Proposed Block Plan



Existing Floor Plans



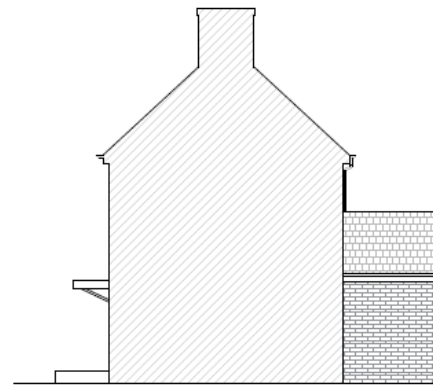
Proposed Floor Plans



Existing Front Elevation



Existing Side Elevation



Existing Elevations



Proposed Front Elevation

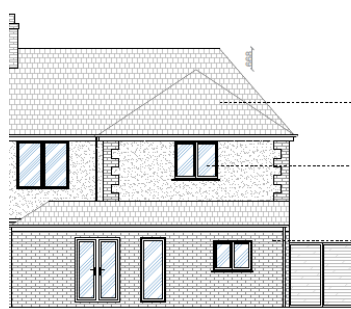


Proposed Side Elevation

Rooflines to match the host dwelling

Render to match the host dwelling

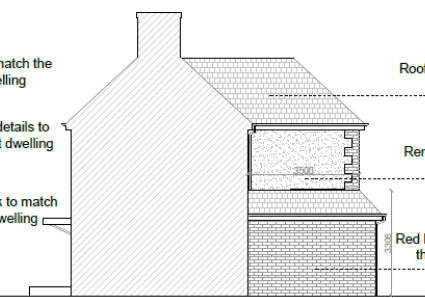
Red brickwork to match the host dwelling



Rooflines to match the host dwelling

Fenestration details to match the host dwelling

Red brickwork to match the host dwelling



Rooflines to match the host dwelling

Render to match the host dwelling

Red brickwork to match the host dwelling

Proposed Elevations







