

**Design & Access Statement on behalf of
Euro Link Property Services relating to
2A,2B,2C West Hill RG1 2PL**

Project Ref

Date. July 24

1.0.0. History

The 3 no dwellings were completed in February 2022 as 3 dwellings (as detailed within the completion notice) from Quadrant Building Control.

Since then, the buildings have been let to linked families & friends who have resided in the dwellings but had the benefit of an additional kitchen in the basement area.

A connecting door at ground floor level ensures that the dwellings are resided in as one dwelling at 2A/2B & 2C respectively.

Reading Borough Council were made aware of the arrangement & visited the properties to understand the situation.

Reading Borough Council Considered that these may be two flats rather than one house, which is not the case here.

1.1.0. The site & its surroundings

The site is located to the rear of 116-126 Southampton Street with access off West Hill via electric gates.

The site is very close to the town centre & namely The Oracle.

All local facilities are close by including good bus services.

1.2.0. The Proposal

The proposal is to change the use from C3 to C4 ie single family dwelling to a house in multiple occupation. Normally this would not require express planning consent, however there is an Article 4 Direction within this area which necessitates a full Planning application.

1.3.0. The Design

The design is not materially changed from that what was approved.

1.4.0.

1.5.0. The Amount

The amount does not change from what was approved.

1.5.0. The Layout

The conversion works very well within the building with no structural alterations required or extensions. This indicates that it is not an over development of the site.

1.6.0. The Scale

Having regards to the amount of conversion there is no increase in the scale of the development from a visual point of view.

There is no living accommodation proposed on the first floor, only the ground floor. Therefore, noise disturbance from the occupants will be little different from a family house.

1.7.0. Landscaping

The landscaping will not change.

There is sufficient private rear amenity for each HMO unit.

1.8.0. Bins & cycles storage.

No change.

1.9.0. Appearance

The appearance of the building will not change

1.10.0 Policy

Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document Adopted March 2023

As the property is within the article 4 Direction restricting permitted change from C3 to C4, there is a criteria ;

The Policy states;

“Residential conversions have an important role to play in housing land supply in Reading and contributing to the provision of reasonably affordable rented accommodation. However, conversions, either individually or cumulatively, can have a harmful impact through unduly diluting mixed and sustainable communities.

There is therefore a need to identify what proportion of properties an area can accommodate as HMOs and what proportion of properties would represent a “significant loss of single family housing” which would result in “unduly diluting or harming an existing mixed and sustainable community”. 5.14 This proportion is defined as a ‘tipping point’, i.e. when the concentration of HMOs becomes over-dominant and the community is no longer considered to be mixed and sustainable. Some streets within the area covered by the Article 4 Direction have already exceeded this ‘tipping point’. In those areas, it is unlikely that further HMOs would be permitted. If properties in an HMO use are converted back to a single family use, it may be possible to start to redress the balance over time. However, residents that have lawfully converted their property prior to the Article 4 Direction coming into force will be entitled to continue to use their property as an HMO.

Defining the Tipping Point 5.15

It is difficult to identify precisely what constitutes a mixed and sustainable community. It is evident that areas with high concentrations of HMOs experience negative impacts on the sustainability of the communities (especially as perceived by permanent residents).

The definition of a tipping point must take into account historical data and a comparison of that data with current data and consideration of the impacts of the changes to the population.

The tipping level, or threshold, needs to be set significantly below the current levels of some hotspots of HMOs in these areas given that these are already considered to be severely suffering from the effects of a community that is no longer mixed and sustainable.

The threshold needs to recognise that many streets are already suffering severe impacts and are no longer considered to be balanced and sustainable, whilst also acknowledging the proximity of the university to the area covered by the HMO Article 4 Direction. 5.30 A threshold of 25% meets this balance. This level would fall well below these concentrated hotspot levels, but would be above the average level for each of the wards as identified in the 2011 Census data.

Implementing the Threshold 5.31 Having considered different radii, a 50m radius provides a fair and balanced area to create a meaningful sample size that will also respond to area specific concentrations. 5.32 The centre of the radius will be the front door of the property. A 50m radius will be drawn from this point and any properties or any part of a building falling within the radius will be taken into account in the assessment. If a part of a building falls within the radius and partly without, then the property will form a part of the assessment. 10 5.33 This approach provides a consistent method of identifying the area surrounding the application site affected by a concentration of HMOs. A radius of 50m defined in this way, will almost always include the immediate neighbours to the application site and will typically include some properties on nearby streets. 5.34 Where the radius includes properties that are within Reading Borough's administrative boundaries but outside the area covered by the Article 4 Direction, they will be taken into account in the assessment

The map on the following page indicates the application site & a 50m radius.



West hill	Southampton st	Pell st	Sherman Place	Sherman Rd
5 West hill	132 Southampton st	96 Pell St	1 Sherman Place	1 Sherman rd
7 West hill	130 Southampton st	94 Pell st	2 Sherman Place	2 Sherman rd
9 West hill	128 Southampton st	92 Pell St	2	3 Sherman rd
11 West hill	126 Southampton st	90 Pell St		4 Sherman rd
13 West hill	124 Southampton st	88 Pell St		
15 West hill	122 Southampton st	86 Pell St		6 Sherman rd
17 West hill	120 Southampton st	84 Pell St		7 Sherman rd
19 West hill	118 Southampton st	7		8 Sherman rd
2 West hill	116 Southampton st	6		9 Sherman rd
4 West hill	114 Southampton st			10 Sherman rd
6 West hill	112 Southampton st			11 Sherman rd
8 West hill	108 Southampton st			12 Sherman rd
10 West hill	106 Southampton st			13 Sherman rd
12 West hill	102 Southampton st			14 Sherman rd
14 West hill	100 Southampton st			15 Sherman rd
16 West hill	98 Southampton st			16 Sherman rd
18 West hill	96 Southampton st			17 Sherman rd
20 West hill	94 Southampton st			18 Sherman rd
18	92 Southampton st			19 Sherman rd
17	75 Southampton st			20 Sherman rd
	77 Southampton st			21 Sherman rd
	79 Southampton st			22 Sherman rd
	81 Southampton st			23 Sherman rd
	85 Southampton st			24 Sherman rd
	87 Southampton st			25 Sherman rd
	89 Southampton st			26 Sherman rd
	95 Southampton st			27 Sherman rd
	97 Southampton st			28 Sherman rd
	99 Southampton st			29 Sherman rd
	101 Southampton st			30 Sherman rd
	103 Southampton st			31 Sherman rd
	105 Southampton st			32 Sherman rd
	107 Southampton st			34 Sherman rd
	33			36 Sherman rd
	27			38 Sherman rd
				40 Sherman rd
				42 Sherman rd
				36
				34
	Due to being a flat block or SUI HMO			
best case	96	As seen.		
worst case	86	accounting for Flat block as 1 property & discounting the SUI HMOs		
HMO Total	10			

Within this 50m radius there are 10 HMO properties.

This equates to Circa 10% which is under half the maximum density set by Reading Borough Council.

Therefore this application passes this criteria.

1.12.0. Flooding

The site is not in or close to flood zones 2 or 3.

1.13.0. Transport/ Parking Policy

There are currently 6 no parking spaces provided within the site.

This is well in excess of the requirement for HMO houses which equate to 0.25 per bedroom.

1.14.0. Conclusion

- The conversion of these properties from C3 three bedroom dwelling to a 3 bedroom HMO is Policy compliant, there only being 10 HMOs within the 50m radius.
- The HMO conversion proposed is not intensive & will comply with Reading Borough Council's HMO standards. The licences have been applied for.