

1. Introduction

This Supporting Statement accompanies a full planning application for the change of use of 63 Donnington Road, Reading, from a C3 dwellinghouse to a C4 House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for up to four unrelated tenants.

2. Site and Surrounding Area

The application property is a two-storey mid-terrace house situated on Donnington Road, a predominantly residential street located close to the University of Reading and to local shops and services. The area is a typical mix of family homes and smaller HMOs, occupied by students and young professionals. Internally, the property provides four bedrooms, a shared kitchen and living space, and a rear garden that is well-suited for both cycle and bin storage. Parking on Donnington Road is primarily on-street, in keeping with the wider pattern of development.

3. Proposal

The proposal seeks permission for the change of use from C3 to C4, enabling up to four unrelated individuals to live at the property. Internal alterations will be limited to minor adjustments to ensure all rooms meet Reading Borough Council's minimum HMO space standards and necessary fire safety regulations.

4. Policy Context

This application has been prepared with reference to relevant national and local planning policy, including:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) – particularly Policy H8: Residential Conversions and Policy H5: Standards for New Housing
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) – supporting the effective use of existing housing stock
- Reading Article 4 Direction (2013) – requiring planning permission for changes from C3 to C4 use in designated areas

The proposal is aligned with these policies, delivering well-managed, good-quality housing whilst safeguarding the character of the local area, supporting a balanced mix of housing in the area, whilst not adding to any over-concentration of HMOs and continues to offer a good level of internal space, natural light, and ventilation.

Internal works are modest and adhere to good design principles, ensuring the original character and appearance of the home is retained. The property also benefits from a private rear garden, providing outdoor space that meets, and in practical terms, exceeds the requirements for a small HMO. This area remains fully accessible to all occupants and will be kept in a usable, tidy condition.

The proposal has been carefully considered to avoid any negative impact on neighbours or new occupants. This includes avoiding issues such as noise, loss of privacy, overlooking, or overshadowing.

Enhanced sound insulation will be introduced where appropriate, ensuring a good level of acoustic separation between bedrooms and communal areas as detailed in the plans.

5. Assessment Against Local HMO Policy

Reading Borough Council's HMO policy seeks to avoid an over-concentration of HMOs by ensuring that no more than 10% of residential properties within a 100-metre radius are in HMO use. A review of the Council's mapping information, supported by a visual survey of Donnington Road, indicates that existing HMO numbers within the 100-metre radius are below the 10% threshold. On this basis, the proposed change of use would not lead to over-concentration or adversely affect the balance of the local community.

6. Residential Amenity

The scheme has been designed to provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants. Key features include:

- Bedrooms that meet or exceed the Council's minimum size requirements
- A well-proportioned shared kitchen and living area
- A private rear garden that can comfortably accommodate bin and cycle storage
- Adequate and compliant bathroom provision
- Safe, convenient circulation throughout the home
- Reliance on on-street parking, which is consistent with the surrounding area and supported by excellent local transport links

All elements of the proposal align with the Residential Conversions SPD and local HMO licensing requirements. Given the property's sustainable location, close to the university, regular bus services, and local shops, the proposal is not expected to give rise to parking pressure or amenity concerns.

7. Transport, Parking, and Cycle Storage

The property is in a highly accessible part of Reading with easy access to public transport, local services, and major destinations such as the university and town centre. To support sustainable travel:

- Secure cycle storage for bicycles will be provided
- Refuse and recycling facilities meet the Council's collection requirements

Given the location and the typical travel habits of small HMO occupants, parking demand is expected to remain low and consistent with the current on-street arrangements.

8. Sound Insulation Measures

To ensure a high standard of amenity and compliance with Policies CC8 and H8, the conversion will incorporate several acoustic improvements, including:

- Additional insulation between floors
- Upgraded internal wall partitions

- Quiet, efficient mechanical ventilation where needed

9. Management Arrangements

The property will be managed by the landlord who will ensure:

- Full compliance with all HMO licensing and fire safety standards
- Regular maintenance and inspections
- Clear tenant agreements and prompt responses to any neighbour queries or concerns

These arrangements will ensure that the property remains well-run and continues to sit comfortably within the residential character of the street.

Conclusion

The proposed change of use from C3 to C4 represents a thoughtful, policy-compliant, and sustainable form of development that:

- Provides well-managed, high-quality accommodation to meet local housing needs
- Maintains and complements the residential character of Donnington Road
- Fully accords with Reading Borough Council's Local Plan policies and HMO guidance

For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.