

# LR Architecture Design and Access Statement | 1 Ferndale

## **Introduction:**

1 Ferndale is an existing residential property that was converted in 2005 into four self-contained two-bedroom flats. While the conversion has provided residential accommodation, the current layout has become financially unsustainable. The achievable rental income no longer meets the ongoing mortgage and maintenance costs, resulting in the building operating at a loss. If this situation continues, there is a significant risk that the property will fall into disrepair, which would negatively impact the visual appearance of the site and the wider streetscape.

## **Pre-application advice: (3 family homes)**

Pre-application advice was sought in relation to the redevelopment of the site to provide three family dwellings. The Local Planning Authority advised that this form of development would not be appropriate due to the presence of protected trees and the potential ecological impacts associated with the proposed layout. We are grateful for the guidance provided and have carefully considered the concerns raised. In particular, it was noted that the proposed family dwellings would be located closer to neighbouring properties than the existing building, and would also encroach further into tree root protection zones. In response to this advice, and in order to minimise environmental and residential amenity impacts, it is considered that the most appropriate and sustainable option is to convert the existing building from four self-contained flats to a Sui Generis House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). This approach enables the continued residential use of the site while avoiding the need for new building footprints, reducing ecological disturbance, and maintaining appropriate separation distances to neighbouring properties and existing trees.

Taking this advice into account, and in recognition of the need to secure the long-term viability of the site, it has been concluded that the most appropriate solution is to convert the property into a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) aimed at professional occupants. This proposal will enable reinvestment into the building, allowing comprehensive internal and external improvements to be undertaken, thereby enhancing the overall appearance, condition, and quality of accommodation provided.

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The property currently comprises four self-contained flats, each containing two bedrooms. Under the existing arrangement, each flat could reasonably accommodate a family household, for example two adults occupying the main bedroom and one or two children sharing the second bedroom.

At the lower end of occupation, this could result in a minimum of eight residents across the site if only one bedroom per flat were occupied. However, given current rental market conditions, it is increasingly unlikely that a single occupant would rent a two-bedroom flat. A more realistic scenario is that each flat would be occupied by a family household of three to four people. This would result in an overall site occupancy of approximately 12 to 16 residents across the four flats.

This demonstrates that the existing arrangement already has the potential for a relatively high level of residential occupancy.

The proposed development would provide a total of nine bedrooms, resulting in a maximum occupancy of nine residents. When compared to the potential occupancy levels achievable under the existing arrangement, this would not represent an increase in overall residential intensity. As outlined above, the current layout could reasonably accommodate between 12 and 16 occupants.

As such, the proposal would not result in an overconcentration of residents on the site and would not give rise to any additional adverse impacts on the surrounding area in terms of amenity, infrastructure demand, or character.

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## Existing street scene and proposed



Within the proposal we wish to address the street scene and overall improve the kerb appeal to help add value to the local area and first impressions for onlookers to the site.

The current issues we wish to address with the proposal are the overgrown bushes and caravans being stored.

The proposal would remove the caravans and aim to propose a new rendered wall with intricate details highlighting the sites entrance and gives the site a clear purpose / entrance point.

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## Current issues

Evidence of movement issues resulting in low quality of living on site.



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## Current issues

As shown on the images taken during the survey the home itself is starting to show its age, Due to the property not being purpose built for 4 flats the parking is also not suitable and cause issues for the local area.

As part of the survey we delivered some letters to neighbours saying that we wish to improve the site what issues or concerns do you think need addressing.

A very common issue that was identified thanks the feedback from those in the local area was on street parking issues related to 1 Ferndale and the caravans.

The proposal aims to address these issues and follow the Havant planning parking requirements.

The proposal seeks to have one parking space per bedroom and also includes secure cycle storage to encourage those who may work locally or nearby to use a bicycle.

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The proposed HMO has been designed to deliver high-quality, purpose-built accommodation aimed at professional occupants. Each of the nine bedrooms will have a minimum floor area of 14m<sup>2</sup> and will be provided with a fully equipped private en-suite bathroom. In addition, every room will include a compact kitchenette incorporating a sink, two-hob cooking facility, integrated storage units, and sufficient space to accommodate a microwave, subject to individual occupant preference.

Communal facilities have been carefully designed to promote resident well-being and social interaction. A dedicated on-site gym will be provided, enabling occupants to exercise conveniently within the building and enhancing the overall living experience and adding a unique selling point to the accommodation.

A generous 53m<sup>2</sup> shared kitchen, lounge, and dining area will also be provided. This space will be fully equipped with two double sinks, two ovens, and two five-ring hobs, along with integrated dishwashers. Four full-height refrigerators will be installed, with clearly allocated storage provision for each resident to ensure adequate and organised food storage. Residents will also benefit from access to the rear garden and external amenity space, further enhancing the quality of accommodation and providing valuable outdoor space for relaxation and social use.

The dining area could fit around 3 to 4 small tables with 3 chairs, resulting in multiple people cooking and eating within this area with no issue.

As mentioned previously, each room has a designated cycle storage and car parking space which allows the residents to not have to park on the road meaning there cars and bikes will be left on the property.

A shared bin area will also be provided as it will tidy up the existing arrangement with multiple bins all over the place.

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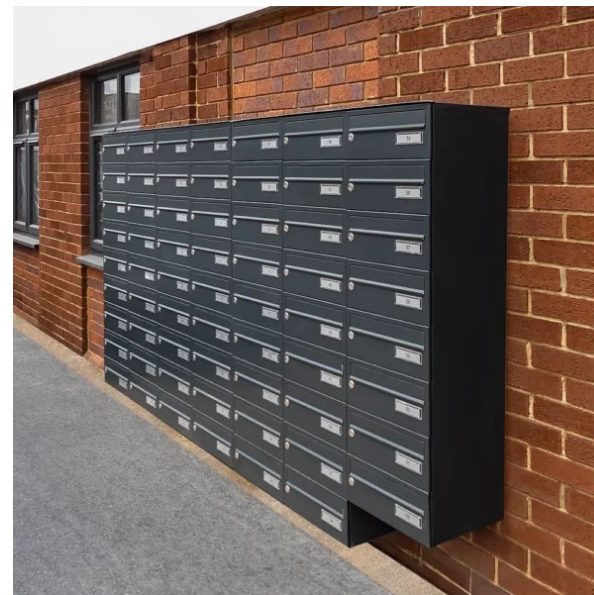
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The external appearance of the building has been carefully designed to reflect the character of a large family dwelling while incorporating contemporary architectural elements. The proposed materials palette includes white rendered finishes and timber-effect cladding, complemented by dark grey window frames. This combination will provide a refreshed, high-quality appearance and contribute positively to the visual character of the street scene.

The main entrance will be accessed via an automated entrance gate, which will open when vehicles approach the designated waiting area. This feature will provide an additional level of privacy and security for occupants while reinforcing the appearance of a well-managed and high-quality residential property.

Refuse storage has been thoughtfully integrated into the site layout. Shared waste and recycling bins will be housed within a purpose-built timber enclosure, ensuring they are visually screened and maintained in an orderly manner. Where required, bins will be presented at the site entrance on collection days should waste collection vehicles be unable to access the site directly.

Each unit will be provided with its own individual external post box, ensuring that residents' mail is stored securely and privately within a dedicated, lockable unit. This arrangement will provide occupants with peace of mind, particularly for sensitive or valuable deliveries, and will help prevent any potential confusion or misdelivery of post between residents. While the proposed accommodation is intended for professional occupants, the provision of individual mail facilities represents good management practice and enhances the overall quality and attractiveness of the development.



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The proposed works are predominantly internal in nature and will not impact the existing trees or the main roof structure of the building. A minor amendment is proposed to the front roof area to create a small entrance porch feature; however, should this element trigger the requirement for additional ecological surveys, such as a bat assessment, this alteration can be omitted to ensure full compliance with ecological protection requirements.

As the majority of the proposed changes involve internal reconfiguration only, there is no anticipated risk of disturbance to protected trees, root protection zones, or on-site ecology. This approach has been informed directly by the advice received at the pre-application stage and reflects a commitment to minimising environmental impact.

Furthermore, the existing trees are recognised as a valuable asset to the site. They contribute positively to the character of the street scene, enhance privacy for occupants, and add to the overall visual quality and amenity value of the property. The proposal seeks to retain and protect these features as part of the development.

The proposed replacement windows will be specified to provide improved acoustic performance when compared to the existing units. This will enhance internal living conditions by reducing external noise intrusion and creating a quieter, more comfortable environment for residents.

Comprehensive fire safety measures will be incorporated throughout the building in accordance with current Building Regulations and HMO standards. These measures will include the installation of certified fire doors, fire-resistant plasterboard where required, and appropriate fire separation between rooms and communal areas. Each bedroom will be provided with a fire blanket and fire extinguisher, together with clear fire safety instructions to ensure all occupants are informed of emergency procedures.

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The main stairwell will be fully protected as a designated escape route. This will ensure that, in the event of a fire in any individual room, occupants will be able to safely evacuate the building or remain within their rooms where appropriate, in line with fire safety guidance and containment strategies.

Internal refurbishment works will allow modern acoustic insulation to be installed within walls and floor structures. This will significantly improve sound insulation between rooms and between floors, as well as reduce noise transmission from the adjacent road. These upgrades will contribute to a high standard of residential amenity and provide comfortable living conditions suitable for long-term occupation.

Each bedroom will be provided with an ample number of electrical sockets to ensure safe and convenient access for all occupants. This approach will reduce the need for extension leads, minimising the risk of electrical hazards or trip hazards.

The proposed design includes a minimum of four double sockets per room, strategically positioned—typically one in each corner—so that occupants are always within easy reach of a power source, regardless of furniture layout. In rooms with irregular shapes or layouts, additional sockets will be provided as necessary to maintain safety and convenience.

Each room will be provided with an individually controlled radiator of an appropriate size to ensure efficient and effective heating. The radiators will be designed to warm each room quickly, providing a comfortable living environment while optimising energy efficiency. This allows occupants to control the temperature in their own rooms, reducing unnecessary energy use and contributing to the overall sustainability of the building.

Each room will be designed to benefit from natural ventilation through well-positioned windows. Where possible, rooms will incorporate cross-ventilation to allow a natural airflow, providing occupants with a cooling breeze during warmer months. All en-suite bathrooms will also include windows to facilitate natural ventilation.

For privacy and security, the operable sections of the windows will be positioned at approximately 1.7 m above floor level, while the lower glazed panels will be fitted with opaque glass. This ensures adequate ventilation while maintaining privacy for all residents.

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The proposed accommodation is intended to serve working professionals who are employed within the surrounding area and require high-quality, single-occupancy living spaces. The design has been carefully considered to meet the practical needs and lifestyle requirements of this target demographic.

It is anticipated that many occupants will rely on private vehicles to commute to work. To support this, each room is provided with a dedicated parking space, enabling convenient access without the need for on-street parking or walking significant distances. Secure cycle storage is also provided to encourage sustainable transport options and offer flexibility for residents who commute by bicycle.

In addition, the inclusion of an on-site gym facility has been specifically designed to appeal to working professionals with limited time availability. Providing a dedicated fitness space within the building allows residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle without the need to travel elsewhere, supporting efficient use of time before and after working hours.

Overall, the proposal seeks to deliver a high-quality, well-designed living environment that supports the day-to-day needs of modern professionals while reducing pressure on local parking infrastructure and promoting sustainable travel options.

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The existing site access has been upgraded to enhance both visual appearance and highway safety. The proposed rendered boundary wall will be lower in height than the existing overgrown hedging and temporary caravan structures, resulting in improved visibility splays for vehicles entering and exiting the site. The removal of the caravans also enables a more efficient parking layout, providing adequate turning areas so that all vehicles are able to enter and leave the site in forward gear, in accordance with highway safety best practice.

The proposed entrance gates will operate automatically via a sensor system and have been set back from the highway boundary to prevent vehicles waiting on the public highway or footway. A minimum of 5.5 metres of queuing space is provided between the gates and the highway, allowing cars and vans to safely wait off the road while the gates open. The gates will open inwards, enabling vehicles to pull fully clear of the footpath at all times and ensuring unobstructed pedestrian access.

Should the Highway Authority require increased visibility splays, this may have implications for nearby tree root protection areas. In such circumstances, and subject to agreement with the Council's Tree Officer, the boundary wall position could be adjusted to achieve the required sightlines while minimising impact on protected trees.

It should be noted that the existing access point remains unchanged in its location and alignment, with improvements limited to visual appearance, safety enhancements, and site security upgrades.

Because the number of occupants is not significantly changing in comparison to the four 2-bedroom flats, which could have 2 cars each (one per adult) We believe highways do not need to access the safety. However we are more than happy to provide amendments to the plans and show visibility splays in accordance with the highway's request.

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There are currently no existing HMOs along this section of the road. The proposal has therefore been carefully designed to integrate sensitively within the established residential character and to avoid any form of overconcentration. By providing a single, well-managed HMO targeted at working professionals, the development helps meet local housing demand while maintaining a balanced and sustainable neighbourhood. The scale, appearance, and operational management ensure that the property will function in a similar manner to a large family dwelling, with no adverse impact on the surrounding area.

The application site is larger than many surrounding residential plots and is capable of accommodating a large residential dwelling. If utilised as a single family home, the site could reasonably support a 5–6 bedroom property. In the current housing market, larger dwellings are increasingly occupied by multiple adults of driving age, which can result in comparable vehicle ownership levels to shared accommodation.

The proposed development provides **9 on-site parking spaces for 9 bedrooms**, achieving a **1:1 parking ratio**, which aligns with and exceeds typical local parking expectations for shared residential accommodation. This ensures that all resident vehicles can be accommodated within the site boundary, avoiding reliance on on-street parking and preventing additional pressure on the surrounding highway network.

Given the size of the plot and the potential parking demand associated with its lawful residential use, the proposed arrangement does not represent an intensification beyond what could reasonably occur under alternative residential occupation scenarios. Instead, the proposal provides a structured and managed parking layout that improves site organisation, vehicle circulation, and highway safety.

Furthermore, adequate turning space is provided within the site to allow vehicles to enter and exit in forward gear, in accordance with highway safety best practice. This arrangement ensures safe operation of the access and minimises any potential conflict with pedestrians and other road users.

Overall, the proposed parking provision is considered proportionate, appropriate to the scale of development, and compliant with local highway safety objectives.