



HMO Conversion Roadmap

The Ultimate Cheat Sheet For HMO Investors

PORTFOLIO ARCHITECTS

HMO CONVERSION ROAD MAP

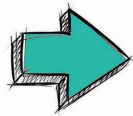


CLIENT DUE DILIGENCE

1

The first step of any project is for you, the client, to undertake due diligence on your potential property. For us, as Architects and Property Investors ourselves our due diligence process looks like this:

- Visit the property to assess the condition
- Assess local sold prices on [Rightmove](#)
- Check Prime Location heatmap [here](#)
- Assess local [Spare Room](#) room rates
- Check if it is in a flood risk area [here](#)
- Check if it is a listed building [here](#)
- Check local statistics and crime rate [here](#)
- Check the local noise and air quality [here](#)
- Last but certainly not least, is to check your local council's website for details of Article 4 areas, conservation areas, relevant planning policy and HMO regulations. Find my local council [here](#).



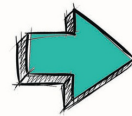
DESIGN FEASIBILITY

2

Having completed your initial client due diligence, the next step is to explore and maximize the potential of your property. This includes both maximizing the use of the existing space within the property and exploring adding additional space.

You can explore this yourself however alternatively we offer a fixed fee design feasibility service where we utilise our skills and expertise as both Architects and Investors to create 3-5 different high quality proposed floor plan layouts utilising every inch of space to your exact brief taken during an initial zoom call.

You can find out more about our service on our [website](#).



PLANNING PERMISSION

3

Having finalised the design and layout in the previous step, the next step to apply for the necessary planning consents. Here are some rules of thumb:



C4 - Small House in Multiple Occupation

- 3-6 unrelated occupants
- Conversion from a C3 dwellinghouse to C4 small HMO is normally a 'Permitted Development' change of use therefore does not require a full planning application. You can read more [here](#) about change of use that do not require planning permission. Exceptions to this include properties in Article 4 Areas.
- If your property is a listed building and / or in a conservation area certain elements of the works will likely require a full planning application.
- If you do not require a full planning application, we would recommend applying for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC). You can read more about LDC's [here](#).
- If you are looking to extend your property through an extension or loft conversion you might also not require planning permission. You can read more about permitted development rights [here](#).



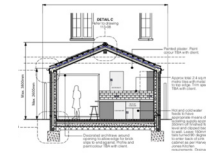
Sui Generis - Large House in Multiple Occupation

- 7+ unrelated occupants
- A full planning application will be required.
- You can include extensions and loft conversions in the same application as well as the change of use.

Timescales & cost to the council for different applications:

- Full planning application - 8 weeks minimum
- Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) - 8 weeks minimum
- Notification of a proposed larger Home Extension - 42 days min.

See planning application council fees [here](#).



TECHNICAL DESIGN

4

Once you have the necessary planning consents or LDC's in place, the next step is to develop the drawings further so that builders can accurately price from the drawings and they can also be submitted for Building Regulations.

How to go about Building Regulations:

You can find out more about Building Regulations [here](#), including the different routes of getting B.R. approval which is either via the local council building control or an Approved Inspector. You can also download the Approved Documents which set out the requirements in order to get B.R. approval. You will need to decide upon your Building Control route prior to starting on site.

Our preferred method:

We normally appoint a Private Sector Approved Building Control Inspector instead of using the local Building Control. You can find an Approved Inspector [here](#), and we typically get 3 different quotes to compare their fees. Once instructed, the first step is to issue your drawings to the Approved Inspector for an initial 'plans check' which will identify if there are any issues and they will also request any further information required.

Before starting the works on site, the Approved Inspector must notify the Local Council of the intended building work with an initial notice at least 5 working days prior to commencement.

Once on site, the Approved Inspector will then conduct site visits at stages of the build. We normally make it the builder's responsibility for notifying the Approved Inspector when various elements of the works are ready for inspection. Upon completion following the Inspector's final site visit, they will issue the Building Regulation completion certification.

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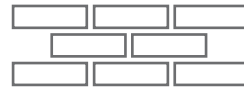


PRESTART CHECKLIST

5

Here's our prestart checklist we use to ensure that we are ready to start on site:

- Organise a pre-start meeting with your contractor on site
- Arrange formal building contract with your builder. We normally use a standard form contract such as [JCT contract](#) or a [RIBA Contract](#).
- Ensure you have any Party Wall Agreements in place and complied with the Party Wall Act. Find out more [here](#).
- Ensure any 'build over agreements' are in place if you intend to divert or build over existing sewers or drains.
- Ensure you and your contractor have the correct building insurance policies in place.
- Ensure that you have discharged any pre-commencement planning conditions (if relevant)
- Ensure you have understood the duties under Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015). You can find out more [here](#).
- Notified the local council or your approved Building Control Inspector of your intended start date on site.
- Serve an [F10 notice](#) to HSE if the construction work is expected to last longer than 30 working days AND have more than 20 workers working at the same time at any point on the project OR exceed 500 person days.
- If the proposals include the removal of existing building fabric, undertake an asbestos refurbishment and demolition survey prior to starting on site.



CONSTRUCTION PHASE

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During the construction phase it is important that you or a representative regularly visit the site to check progress and quality control. Here are some pointers on how to work effectively with your builder and avoid getting into disputes:

- 1** Hold regular site meetings with your builder where you can discuss the progress, required client decisions, required client supplied items on site, and any issues that may have arose. You should record the key decisions, key actions and any issues which can be as simple as key bullets points in a following email to the contractor so you have a written record should any disputes arise at a later date. You can also go through the previous site minutes at the next site meeting to ensure that previous actions have been completed.
- 2** Take lots of photographs on each site visit so you have a record of the progress. Therefore if any disputes arise later or you need check something that has since been closed up you can rely on the photos.
- 3** Never pay upfront for building work.
- 4** Ensure that your builder understands that any variations from the contract works or additional works must be agreed in detail and price before they are undertaken.

Extra Tip:

During the construction we would normally start to market the HMO rooms on spareroom in order to minimise the void period between completion on site and tenants moving in.



COMPLETION

7

Here's our practical completion checklist that we use before the Works are deemed practically complete:

- All works and snagging has been completed.
- You have received the Building Regulations Completion Certificate.
- You have received the relevant certification such as gas safe certificate for boiler installations and electrical, fire alarm and emergency lighting installation certificates.
- You have tested all fixtures and fittings such as flushing toilets, sinks and basins, sockets and light switches.



GET READY FOR TENANTS

8

Here's our checklist before tenants move in:

- The construction works are practically complete.
- You have received the relevant certification and paperwork required as a landlord such as gas safe certificate, electrical installation certificate and property fire safety policy for example. Your local council will confirm the requirements.
- You have activated any warranties such as on kitchen appliances for example.
- Ensure you have appropriate insurances in place both for the building, contents, public liability and as a landlord.
- You have applied for / got your HMO licence.
- You have had a fire risk assessment conducted.
- You have organised appropriate management, if you are not self-managing.
- You have provided sufficient communal items and furniture such as kitchen utensils, chairs and required safety items such as fire blanket in the kitchen.
- You have applied for a TV licence for any provided TVs.

Please note: This checklist is for guidance only. Please check with your property manager or letting agency and local authority to ensure that you have met all compulsory legislation prior to tenants moving in.

Want to get in touch?



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HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

We have a small number of 1-1 zoom design surgeries available each month where Emma can answer any of your questions and discuss your specific projects.

[BOOK HERE](#)