PLANNING BY DESIGN
FROM CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Change of Use from Apartment (C3) to Small House in Multiple Occupation (C4) for up to Four People

Apartment 6, Trinity Court, 44 Higher Cambridge Street, Manchester M15 6AR

On Behalf of Xiaolin Qin

Prepared by **Planning By Design**

Application

Planning By Design (Agent) has been instructed to act on behalf of Xiaolin Qin (Applicant) to submit a planning application to Manchester Council (the Local Planning Authority) for the change of use of Apartment 6, Trinity Court, from a self-contained dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for up to four unrelated individuals, at Apartment 6, Trinity Court, 44 Higher Cambridge Street, Manchester M15 6AR (the site). For the avoidance of doubt, the applicant would be willing to accept a planning condition limiting occupancy to three persons should the Local Planning Authority consider this more appropriate.

The proposed HMO will be managed professionally by Yours Link Limited, an experienced HMO management company with offices located within 1.2 miles of the property. Their management plan includes robust systems for tenant vetting, noise and anti-social behaviour control, waste management, regular inspections, and compliance with all HMO regulations. This ensures that the property will be operated responsibly and in line with best practice standards.

The application is accompanied by full supporting drawings, a detailed Management Plan, and this Planning, Design and Access Statement to demonstrate compliance with the relevant planning policy framework.

Site Location

The property is located at Apartment 6, Trinity Court, 44 Higher Cambridge Street, Manchester (M15 6AR). Trinity Court is a modern multi-storey apartment complex positioned on a main arterial route connecting the Oxford Road Corridor with the wider city.

The site falls within the Central Manchester policy area and also lies within the Regional Centre. It is located within Manchester's Article 4 Direction Area, which removes permitted development rights for changes of use from C3 to C4. As such, full planning permission is required.

A review of the Council's HMO licensing register confirms that there are no existing licensed HMOs within the site's postcode (M15 6AR). Accordingly, there is no existing concentration of HMOs in this location.

The site benefits from excellent accessibility. It is within close proximity to Manchester Metropolitan University, the University of Manchester, the Oxford Road Corridor innovation district, and extensive employment opportunities. Public transport links are frequent, with regular bus services along Higher Cambridge Street and nearby Deansgate-Castlefield and Oxford Road railway stations.

The wider development includes secure cycle parking, refuse storage facilities, and communal open space at ground floor level.

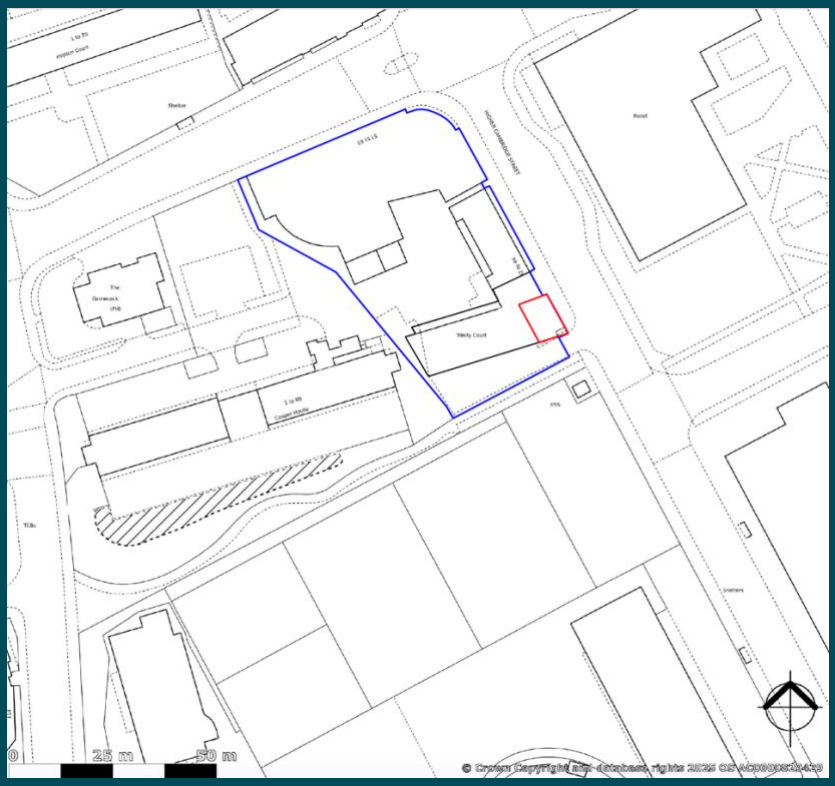


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Planning History

The wider Trinity Court development has been subject to a number of planning applications, the most relevant being reference **130444/FO/2021**, which granted consent for external works to the building. These applications related solely to the fabric and appearance of the wider block and do not affect the use of Apartment 6.

There is no record of any previous applications at Apartment 6 for HMO use. The property has only ever been used as a self-contained apartment within Class C3.

The Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of Apartment 6, Trinity Court, from a self-contained three-bedroom apartment (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for up to four unrelated individuals.

The submitted architectural drawings confirm that no external alterations are proposed to the building. The existing elevations will remain unchanged, and the wider residential block will continue to function as designed.

The internal layout will provide:

- Three bedrooms measuring 6.5 m², 10.5 m² and 11.1 m² respectively, each compliant with Manchester's HMO space standards.
- A shared kitchen and living area of 15.8 m², providing a functional and appropriate communal space.

- Bathroom and ensuite provision that meets HMO standards for shared accommodation.
- A private balcony of 5.2 m², ensuring additional amenity space for future occupants.

The building already benefits from established on-site car parking and secure cycle parking at ground floor level, alongside communal bin storage areas, all of which are available for use by residents of Apartment 6.

No physical enlargement or external modification of the apartment is proposed, ensuring that the scheme represents a modest and contained change of use only.

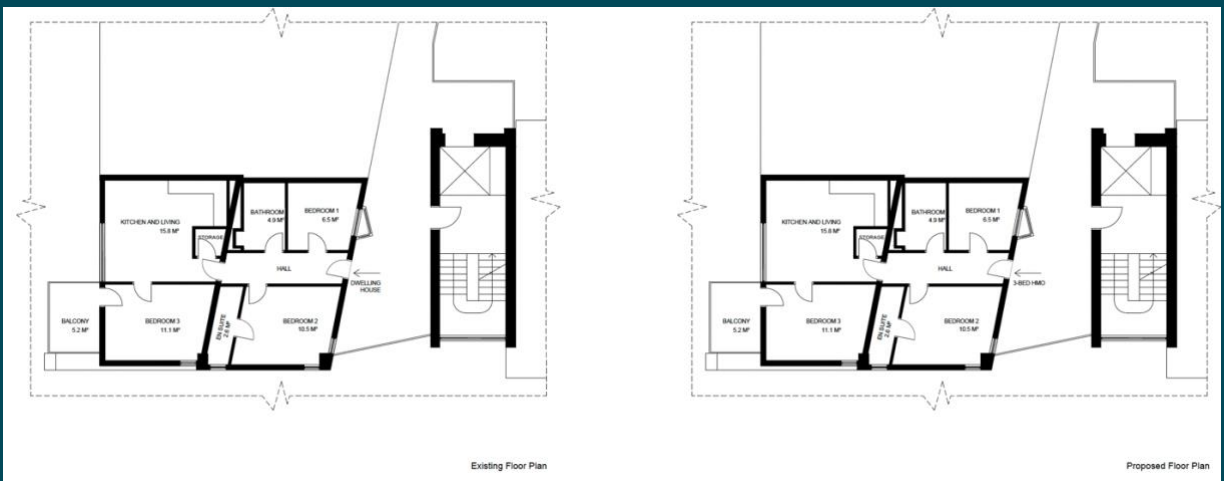


Figure 2: Proposed Floor Plan (no change)

Planning Policy

The following planning policy and guidance documents are recognised as material considerations for the assessment of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024 – NPPF)

- Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 11: Making effective use of land
- Section 12: Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places

Manchester Core Strategy (2012, with 2024 Addendum)

- Policy H6 – Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Policy H5 – Central Manchester Housing
- Policy JP-H3 – Housing Types, Sizes and Tenures: promotes a range of housing choices, including shared housing in accessible locations.
- Policy EC3 – Regional Centre: supports urban living and sustainable housing provision within the Regional Centre.

Places for Everyone (PfE) – Joint Development Plan Document (Adopted December 2024)

- Policy JP-H1 – Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing
- Policy JP-H2 – Affordability of New Housing
- Policy JP-H3 – Housing Mix and Diversity
- Policy JP-P1 – Supporting Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-D1 – Design Principles

Manchester HMO Guidance and Amenity Standards (2020)

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The proposed change of use from a self-contained apartment (Use Class C3) to a small HMO (Use Class C4) is acceptable in principle. The site lies within the Regional Centre and the Central Manchester designation, where the strategic planning framework actively supports urban living and housing diversity.

Policy EC3 of the Core Strategy and Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan emphasise that the Regional Centre is the focus for high-density housing delivery. The re-use of an existing apartment in this accessible location optimises the use of the housing stock, consistent with NPPF Section 11 (Making effective use of land).

Furthermore, Policy H5 (Central Manchester Housing) and Policy JP-H3 (Housing Mix and Diversity) support the provision of accommodation suited to students, young professionals, and single-person households. The proposed HMO will contribute to meeting this demand in a sustainable and well-connected location, reducing pressure on conventional housing stock.

Concentration of HMOs

A core requirement of Policy H6 (Houses in Multiple Occupation) and the 2024 Addendum is to avoid harmful concentrations of HMOs. The Council's HMO licensing register confirms that there are no existing HMOs within postcode M15 6AR, and therefore no risk of cumulative impacts on amenity or community balance.

This aligns with Policy JP-H3 of the PfE Plan, which recognises the role of shared housing while ensuring balanced neighbourhoods. In this case, the absence of any existing HMOs locally demonstrates that the proposal will not contribute to overconcentration.

Loss of Family Housing

Policy H6 also seeks to protect family-sized housing. However, Apartment 6 is located within a large, high-density apartment block fronting a major arterial road, in close proximity to university campuses. The flat was originally a two-bedroom unit, later reconfigured internally to create a third bedroom. Its design and context, without private garden space, within a managed block, and adjacent to student and professional markets make it unsuitable for long-term family occupation.

Accordingly, its loss as a notional "family-sized unit" does not conflict with the objectives of Policy H6, nor with PfE Policy JP-H3, which encourages housing mix but recognises that the

type of accommodation being protected is typically self-contained dwellings with private outdoor space. The proposal therefore does not equate to a material loss of family housing in planning terms.

Residential Standards and Amenity

The proposal fully complies with Manchester City Council's HMO Standards (2020), which set minimum requirements for bedrooms, shared spaces, and sanitary facilities. Each of the three bedrooms is suitable for single occupancy, with two rooms of sufficient size to allow for double occupancy if required. On this basis, the property could reasonably support up to four residents. The applicant nevertheless recognises the Council may prefer a lower intensity and has confirmed a willingness to accept a planning condition limiting occupation to three individuals if considered appropriate.

Bedrooms: The three bedrooms measure 6.5 m², 10.5 m² and 11.1 m². The standards require a minimum of 6.51 m² for a single person aged over 10 years, and 10.22 m² for two persons sharing. Each bedroom therefore meets or exceeds the Council's requirements for single occupancy.

Shared Kitchen and Living Space: For HMOs occupied by 2–4 persons, the standards require a minimum kitchen size of 5.5 m² and a shared dining/living area of at least 9 m². The apartment provides a combined kitchen/living area of 15.8 m², comfortably exceeding the minimum requirement.

Sanitary Facilities: The standards require at least one bathroom and WC for up to four occupants. The apartment is served by a main bathroom and an ensuite, ensuring provision above the minimum required level.

Amenity: The flat also benefits from a private balcony (5.2 m²), providing valuable outdoor space in addition to the communal facilities within the wider block.

The proposed layout therefore meets or exceeds the adopted HMO Standards in full. Future occupiers will benefit from a good standard of residential amenity, in line with Core Strategy Policy H6, PfE Policy JP-D1 (Design Principles), and NPPF Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places).

Transport and Accessibility

The site is in a highly sustainable location, benefiting from excellent public transport links and proximity to services, jobs, and education facilities. The building provides established on-site car parking and secure cycle parking at ground floor level, which will be available to residents of Apartment 6.

Given the demographic profile of likely occupiers (students and young professionals), car ownership levels are expected to be low, reducing potential traffic or parking pressures. This approach is consistent with NPPF Section 9 (Promoting sustainable transport), PfE Policy JP-P1 (Supporting Sustainable Places), and Manchester's broader strategy of encouraging active and sustainable travel choices.

Management and Safeguards

The scheme will be subject to professional management by Yours Link Limited, as set out in the submitted HMO Management Plan. This provides robust systems for:

- tenant vetting and referencing;
- noise and anti-social behaviour monitoring;
- waste management (aligned with Council collection arrangements);
- regular inspections; and
- compliance with all safety and licensing requirements.

These safeguards directly address the qualitative considerations in Policy H6 and the 2024 Addendum, ensuring that the property will be well-managed and will not give rise to amenity or community concerns.

Planning Balance

In this case, the applicant has taken a pragmatic approach by seeking permission for up to four residents but explicitly confirming a willingness to accept a planning condition limiting occupancy to three should the Local Planning Authority consider this more appropriate. This flexibility ensures that the application can be supported without the need for resubmission or amendment, while demonstrating the applicant's commitment to aligning with the Council's policy objectives. This balanced approach further strengthens the planning case in favour of approval.

When assessed against the development plan as a whole, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF para. 11), the benefits of the proposal are clear. It delivers affordable, well-managed shared accommodation in a sustainable location, without loss of genuine family housing or harm to amenity. It is fully aligned with the housing and placemaking objectives of the Core Strategy and the Places for Everyone Plan.

Conclusion

The proposed change of use of Apartment 6, Trinity Court, to a small HMO (Use Class C4) for up to four residents with the applicant's express willingness to accept a condition limiting occupancy to three if required represents a modest, sustainable and policy-compliant development. The scheme makes effective use of existing housing stock in a highly accessible city-centre location, contributes to the diversity of housing choice in line with local and strategic policy, and provides affordable, well-managed accommodation for students and young professionals.

The property meets or exceeds Manchester's adopted HMO Standards, will be professionally managed to safeguard residential amenity, and will not result in any harmful concentration of HMOs or loss of genuine family housing. With no external alterations proposed, the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area will remain unaffected.

Taken as a whole, the proposal accords with the NPPF, the Manchester Core Strategy (with 2024 Addendum), and the Places for Everyone Joint DPD, and should therefore be approved in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.