



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

North Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the North Planning Committee held at The Jeffrey Room - The Guildhall, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Wednesday 7 June 2023 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair)
Councillor Peter Matten (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Daniel Cribbin
Councillor Penelope Flavell
Councillor James Hill
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor Cathrine Russell

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Anna King

In Attendance:

Councillor Rupert Frost

Officers:

Shaun Robson (Development Manager)
Nicky Scaife (Development Management Team Leader)
Oliver Billing (Senior Planning Officer)
Erica Buchanan (Principal Planning Officer)
Andrew Holden (Senior Planning Officer)
Sukhjeevan Bains (Senior Planning Officer)
Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

1. **Apologies for Absence and Appointment of Substitute Members**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Irving-Swift advised of a predetermination in respect of item 7a as the call-in originator. She advised that she would speak on the item and leave the room for the remainder of the discussion and the vote.

3. **Minutes**

The Chair advised that there had been a correction to Daventry Local Area Planning Committee minutes, which had been circulated to members. It related to an application at 31 Kilsby Road and additional wording had been added to clarify comments made by the Development Manager.

The minutes of the meetings of the Northampton Local Area Planning Committee held on 4 April 2023 and the Daventry Local Area Planning Committee (as corrected) held on 10 May 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

4. **Chair's Announcements**

None advised.

5. **Other Reports**

None.

6. **Council Applications**

None.

7. **Applications for Determination**

7.1 **WND/2022/0493 - Construction of single storey kitchen extension, two storey entrance and single storey extensions. Conversion of outbuilding to habitable space. Two front dormers on the principal elevation. The Roserie, 26 Westhorpe, Sibbertoft**

The Planning Officer presented the report to the Committee which sought approval for the construction of a single-storey kitchen extension, two-storey entrance and single storey extensions, conversion of an outbuilding to habitable space, and 2 front dormers on the principal elevation. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained a revised Condition 3.

Councillor Irving-Swift addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She thanked the applicant for reducing the scale of the initial proposal and voiced concern around the overbearing effect that the proposal would have on the neighbouring property.

Councillor Irving Swift left the room for the remainder of the item.

Matthew Roe, on behalf of residents of a neighbouring property, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that his clients' property shared multiple party walls and boundaries with the application site; this relationship had not been properly communicated in any submitted plans. The existing site plan suggested that the south-eastern outbuilding and cottage were connected which was not the case; there was a gap allowing for access to the cottage. Evidence of this had previously been submitted to the Council on multiple occasions. Mr Roe's clients were concerned that any future repairs to their property that made use of the access would not be able to be carried out if the development went ahead.

Cindy Cade, a resident of a neighbouring property, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She commented that objections had not been

addressed by the applicant. Closest separation distance between her property and the application site was less than 20m. the proposal would result in increased overlooking into 3 of the bedrooms in Ms Cade's property, private balcony, and garden. She stated that the proposed flat roof dormers and modern materials were not in keeping with other properties in the area.

Roy Hammond, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. He advised that the applicant had worked closely with the planning officer and amended the scheme to address concerns raised by neighbours; Mr Hammond did not agree that the proposal would result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or light, and also stated that there were examples of dormer windows in the local area and that one of the windows was accessible, in the event that roof repairs were required.

In response to questions to the officer, the Committee heard that the proposed removal of permitted development rights would ensure that the Council had control over any future changes to the property. The property was not in a conservation area or listed; the Conservation Officer had some design concerns which were taken into account by the planning officer, but the amended dormer designs were considered acceptable.

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Cribbin seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 6 votes for and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report and **the revised Condition 3** contained in the addendum.

Councillor Irving-Swift re-joined the meeting.

7.2 WND/2022/1129 - Demolition of stable building and construction of single dwelling including access. Land adj Royal Oak PH, Church Street, Naseby

The Planning Officer presented the report which sought approval for the demolition of a stable building and the construction of a single dwelling including access. The officer recommendation was for refusal, for reasons set out in the committee report.

Councillor Harris, as the call-in Member, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He agreed with the officer recommendation and urged the Committee to refuse the application.

Paul Reedman, Chairman of Naseby Parish Council, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that while the Parish Council supported the officer recommendation to refuse the application, it disagreed with the Highways Officer's approval of the proposed access. Councillor Reedman noted that in relation to previous appeal decision relating to an application in the same location, a Highways Officer had written to the Inspector advising that a visibility display of 2.4m x 71m would be acceptable.

Simon Tindle, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. He commented that the proposal was acceptable under Policy RA2 of the Daventry Local Plan part 2 due to the need for housing in the area and the report did not provide enough commentary around why the application did not meet the circumstances set out in the policy.

In response to questions, Mr Tindle advised that the applicant offered to attend a parish meeting to discuss their plans with the Parish Council, but the offer was declined.

Councillor Irving-Swift proposed and Councillor Beardsworth seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 8 votes for.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **REFUSED** for the reasons set out in the report.

7.3 WNN/2023/0297 - Change of Use from a residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to Children's home for up to 4 children aged 8-18 years (Use Class C2). Alterations to existing building to include enlargement of car parking area and improvement of turning circle / visibility splays, ground floor side and rear single storey extensions (side extension built over demolished conservatory), conversion of garage to office / utility / bathroom, first floor change from hipped roof to gable end roof to one end of the property to add new bedroom and stairs / landing / WC arrangement. 56 Greenhills Road, Northampton

The Planning Officer presented the report which sought approval for a change of use from a dwellinghouse to Children's Home for up to 4 children aged 8-18, including alterations to the existing building, including enlargement of the car parking area and improvement of turning circle/viability splays, ground floor side and rear single storey extensions, conversion of the garage to office/utility/bathroom, first floor change from hipped roof to gable end roof to one end of the property to add new bedroom and stairs/landing/WC arrangement. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained a summary of additional representations received, and officer responses to them.

Councillor Rumens, as the Call-in Member, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that the change of use was not appropriate in the proposed location. He voiced highways concerns around the increased use of the driveway and the loss of light to the neighbouring property that would be caused by the installation of the dormer window, and the potential increase in noise.

Scott Crowson, on behalf of a family member who neighboured the proposal, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that the proposal was an overdevelopment; the garage conversion would cause a noise intrusion to the neighbouring property and the dormer would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking. Mr Crowson believed that the development would change the character of the area.

T D Brown, of a neighbouring property, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She commented that the proposed utility room would result in unacceptable overlooking into her property and the first-floor extension would result in loss of light to her kitchen. Ms Brown felt that a residential area was an inappropriate location for a business.

In response to questions, Ms Brown commented that other properties converted to children's homes experienced issues relating to noise.

Ashley Stokes, the agent on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. He commented that the proposal would see the property's footprint increase by 25m² which did not constitute an overdevelopment of an individual site. The proposal would not result in overlooking into any neighbouring habitable rooms and Mr Stokes noted that Highways had not objected to the application, and he advised that the number of cars would be controlled, which was not the case for a private dwelling. Mr Stokes also stated that claims of increased crime in the area were unsupported.

In response to questions, Mr Stokes advised that the property struck a good balance between home and garden space and was in an ideal location, close to local amenities.

Hannah Farrell, the proposed Operations Manager for the site, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. She stated that the company ran a children's home nearby that had been approved for 5 children but had only ever housed 3; it was important that the children could live dynamically with each other. The company had an "outstanding" Ofsted rating and did not take violent children. She advised that there was a national shortage of these types of homes and that currently, children were being moved as far away as Scotland because there was nowhere suitable locally for them. Ms Farrell advised that the children in the company's other home had become part of the local community and hoped that the same would happen with the new home. She further advised that there would be 2 staff members on site at all times with changeovers taking place at 8am and 10pm, with managers visiting throughout the day.

In response to questions, Ms Farrell advised that while the approval being sought was for children aged 8-18, it was unlikely that the company would take on children older than around 14, since older teenagers would benefit more from semi-independent homes which the company did not provide. Children in the company's other house ranged from 8-13 years old.

The Planning Officer advised that while the property would be classed as a business, its impact would be similar to a family home. He advised that the conservatory was an existing extension to the property that was proposed to be replaced, and not a temporary building. He noted that each application was considered on its own merits and not automatically refused if it was above a certain size.

In response to questions to the officer, the Committee heard that there was scope for limited works to be carried out under permitted development currently.

Members discussed the report and made the following comments:

- There was a clear need for this type of development, and the Children's Trust were in support of the application.
- Traffic in the area was a problem and some members were concerned that a Highways officer had not visited the site.
- Members may struggle to find material reasons to refuse the application.

Councillor Flavell proposed and Councillor Russell seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 8 votes for.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

7.4 WNN/2023/0317 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 5 persons & rear ground floor extension. 12 Cedar Road, Northampton

Councillors Beardsworth and Flavell sat in the public gallery for this item and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

The Planning Officer presented the report which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 5 people, and rear ground floor extension. No alterations to the front of the property were proposed. Internal layout changes were proposed, and all of the bedrooms would exceed minimum space standards. Cycle and refuse storage would be located to the rear of the property. No off-street parking was proposed, however the property was within close proximity to shopping facilities. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 7.9%.

Councillor Z Smith, as a ward member for Abington and Phippsville, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She stated that consecutive HMOs in a street had a greater impact on neighbour amenity than those spread out and commented that "sustainable locations" were not alleviating parking demands in areas where HMOs were approved on this basis.

The Planning Officer advised that the Article 4 Direction put in place by the former Northampton Borough Council prevented property owners from converting houses to HMOs under permitted development rights.

Members discussed the report and commented that whilst there was some concern with having a row of consecutive HMOs, there were no material reasons to refuse the application.

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Matten seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 5 votes for and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

Councillors Beardsworth and Flavell re-joined the meeting.

7.5 WNN/2023/0328 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation for 5 occupants (Use Class C4). 46 Brookland Road, Northampton

The Planning Officer presented the report which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 5 occupants, with internal alterations. Members' attention was drawn to the addendum which contained additional neighbour representations and officer responses and a point of clarification to the report. All of the bedrooms would exceed minimum space standards, waste storage would be located in the front garden and cycle storage in the rear outbuilding. A condition had been suggested to restrict the use of the outbuilding to storage to prevent the creation of additional residential accommodation. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 8.57%.

Councillor Z Smith, as a ward member for Abington and Phippsville, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She commented that the property was already being used as an unlicensed HMO and there had been a number of antisocial behaviour issues associated with it. She did not feel that the facilities within the property would be adequate. Councillor Z Smith highlighted comments made by Highways in relation to the lack of residual parking, notwithstanding the property's sustainable location.

Darren Burdock-Latter, a local resident, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that only 1 neighbour was consulted by post. He acknowledged the need for this type of housing but suggested that its close proximity to other HMOs would have a negative impact on the area. Mr Burdock-Latter voiced concerns around parking, which would be exacerbated should the development go ahead. He suggested that the irregular layout of the property might pave the way for future increases in occupation, and also advised that the works being applied for had already been carried out.

In response to questions, Mr Burdock-Latter stated that he believed a neighbour had previously reported the property to the Council as an unlicensed HMO.

Jodie Newman, a local resident, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. Ms Newman had previously been in contact with the local Environmental Protection Officer in regard to issues relating to the property. She advised that there was a proposal to install 3 EV parking on the street, which would worsen the existing parking problems. Ms Newman felt that the works to the property should not have been carried out until planning permission had been approved.

The Planning Officer advised that while the proposals were unorthodox, the facilities provided within the property would be in excess of minimum requirements. He further advised that the HMO concentration, if approved, would be below the 10% threshold. He advised that a site notice was displayed outside of the property, and that the Council's statutory obligation in terms of consultation had been met.

In response to questions, the Committee heard that the planning system allowed for retrospective applications. It was also explained, in relation to a question around AirBNB, that there were currently no policies in any of the legacy authority local plans pertaining to AirBNB properties.

Members discussed the application and made the following comments:

- It was concerning that the owner was allowed to run an unlicensed HMO for a year, causing distress to residents.
- Notwithstanding concerns raised by neighbours, there were not any material planning reasons to refuse the application.

Councillor Irving-Swift proposed and Councillor Hill seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 5 votes for and 3 abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

7.6 WNN/2023/0422 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 5 occupants. 107 Birchfield Road, Northampton

The Planning Officer presented the report which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse to HMO for 5 occupants, with internal alterations. The existing outbuilding would be used as cycle and refuse storage. The property sat within a sustainable location, close to shopping facilities and transport links, and should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 3.6%.

Councillor Z Smith, as a ward member for Abington and Phippsville, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She noted comments in the report made by the Police in relation to the lack of parking in the area. She stated that more discussions needed to be had with the Planning Inspectorate in relation to well documented traffic/parking issues raised by the Council and its partners.

In response to a question in relation to the Police comments, it was explained that while all consultation responses were taken into account, more weight was given to the Council's HMO SPD which stated that an HMO must be in a sustainable location if it did not provide any parking; this property met the required tests, so the application was considered acceptable.

Members discussed the report and commented that a family with 2 adult children may have 4 or more vehicles; the problem was that Victorian terraced streets were not designed with cars in mind.

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Lane seconded that the officer recommendation be agreed. The recommendation contained in the report was put to a vote and declared carried with 6 votes for and 2 against.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report.

8. **Northampton Partnership Homes Applications**

None.

9. **Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____