



Planning Committee Report

Committee Date: 3rd August 2021

Application Number: N/2021/0421

Location: 22 Stockley Street, Northampton, NN1 5EY

Development: Change of Use from Funeral Parlour (Sui Generis) to 18 occupants House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis)

Applicant: Mr Alex Putjatins

Agent: Mr Alex Putjatins

Case Officer: Wendy Rousell

Ward: Castle Unitary Ward

Referred By: Councillor D Stone

Reason for Referral: Impact on heritage assets and local services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Proposal

Change of Use from Funeral Parlour (Sui Generis) to 18 occupants House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis).

Consultations

The following consultees have raised **objections** to the application:

- Cllr D Stone

The following consultees have raised **observations** on the application:

- West Northants Conservation Officer
- Town Centre Area Advisory Committee
- Local Highway Authority
- West Northants Private Sector Housing
- North Northamptonshire Development Management

3 letters of objection have been received.

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- Principle of Development
- Concentration
- Amenity
- Impact on heritage assets
- Highways and Parking

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

- 1.1 The application site is located on the junction of Stockley Street and Alfred Street/St Edmunds Street, which is about halfway between the Wellingborough Road and Billing Road.
- 1.2 The property was a former boot and shoe factory, but more recently has been used as a funeral parlour on the ground floor with offices/storage on the upper floors. The property is a three-storey white painted property with arch detailing over the upper floor windows. The original loading bay door openings on the first and second floor have been retained, along with what appear to be the original windows.

2. CONSTRAINTS

- 2.1. The application site is within the Boot and Shoe Conservation Area.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The development relates to a change of Use from Funeral Parlour (Sui Generis) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) for 18 occupants.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal:

Application Ref.	Proposal	Decision
N/2004/0052	Conversion of retail outlet to form 5 no flats with 3 garages	Approved 03/03/2004
N/1999/123	Conversion of retail outlet to from 5 no flats	Approved

	(renewal of planning permission 94/0645)	14/04/1999
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5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Duty

- 5.1. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

- 5.2. The Development Plan comprises the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) which was formally adopted by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee on 15th December 2014 and which provides the strategic planning policy framework for the District to 2029, the adopted Local Plan (Part 1 – saved policies) and adopted Neighbourhood Plans. The relevant planning policies of the statutory Development Plan are set out below:

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (LPP1)

- 5.3. The relevant policies of the LPP1 are:

- H1 - Housing Density & Mix & Type of Dwellings
- H5 - Managing the Existing Housing Stock
- S10 - Sustainable Development Principles
- BN5 – Designated Heritage Assets and their setting
- BN7 - Flood Risk

Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies) (NLP 1)

- 5.4. The relevant policies of the NLP 1 are:

- Policy E20 – Design for new development
- Policy E26 – Development in Conservation Areas
- Policy H30 – Multi-occupation with a single dwelling

Material Considerations

- 5.5. Below is a list of the relevant Material Planning Considerations

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:
 - Paragraphs 62 – size, type and tenure of housing need for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.
 - Paragraph 130 (f) - seeks to create safe and healthy places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- Northamptonshire County Parking Standards (November 2016)

- Northampton Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (November 2019)
- Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (November 2019). The HIMO SPD details that proposals for HIMOs should:
 - Result in a balanced and mixed community and protect the physical character of the street and neighbourhood as a whole, by not resulting in a concentration of similar uses, a material change or adverse impact on the character of the area, or more than 10% of HIMOs within a 50 metre radius.
 - Secure the provision of adequate facilities and amenities
 - Provide adequate waste and recycling facilities and sufficient refuse storage
 - Minimise flood risk
 - Secure provision of adequate parking
 - Provide adequate secure cycle storage in accordance with relevant parking standards documents and SPDs

6. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website.

Consultee Name	Position	Comment
West Northants Conservation Section (Northampton Area)	Comments	No objection to conversion of the building, however the surviving small pane, cast iron windows are a distinctive and characteristic feature of the building, the design statement indicates these are to be replaced with uPVC. If they are to be replaced, the replacement should be metal to match as closely as possible the appearance of the existing frames.
Town Centre Conservation Area Advisory Committee	Comments	Concerned about unsympathetic windows, poor level of amenity for residents, concerns about concentration of HIMOs and request that the concentration is checked.
West Northamptonshire Highways and Access	Comments	The property lies within a permit zone and therefore all parking in the vicinity is controlled.
Northampton Town Council	No response	-
West Northants Private Sector Housing	Comments	Room sizes, kitchen facilities and sanitary facilities area all adequate for an 18 person HIMO. Further details would be required for fire protection, detection and alarm systems for licencing.
Castle Unitary Ward – Cllr Stone	Objects	Unsympathetic to the history and architecture of the building, landlord greed and opportunism, already intense pressure

		on local services, covid outbreaks, community fragmentation.
Castle Unitary Ward – Cllr Alwahabi	No response	-
Castle Unitary Ward – Cllr Haque	No response	-
North Northamptonshire – Development Management	Comments	Request any s106 agreement include a financial contribution towards libraries and request conditions relating to fire hydrants/sprinklers and broadband

7. RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

Below is a summary of the third party and neighbour responses received at the time of writing this report.

7.1. There have three objections the comments of whom are summarised as follows:

- Over intensive reuse which is harmful to a much valued local heritage asset
- Prominent position, visual importance
- Replacement uPVC windows would be harmful to the appearance of the building
- Whilst the re-use could be beneficial, ensuring an active and useful feature for the building, the proposal is unsympathetic
- Experience has shown that buildings in multiple occupation can sometimes fail to achieve appropriate care by owners and occupiers.
- Already too many HMOs in the town
- Parking concerns
- Antisocial behaviour
- Not practical for the area

8. APPRAISAL

8.1 The conversion of the existing building to an HMO is considered to be in line with national policy requirements to deliver a wide choice of homes to create sustainable and mixed communities. Policy H5 of the JCS allows for HMOs where the proposal would not adversely impact on the character of the area and amenity of residential areas.

8.2 Although not implemented, planning permission has been previously approved for the conversion of the property into 5 flats, most recently in 2004.

Concentration of HIMO uses in the area

8.3 The Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (HMO SPD) states:

“The proposal should not result in a concentration of similar uses in one particular locality. It should not result in a material change or an adverse impact on the character and amenity of the area. It should not result in more than 10% of the total number of HMO dwellings, regardless of whether licensed or not, within a 50m radius of the application site, in order to prevent over concentration of similar uses in one locality”.

- 8.4 The number of HMOs is calculated from a number of data sources, including previous planning permissions, licences granted under the Housing Act, other data held by the Council and survey work. Within the 50m radius, there are currently 3 other HMOs (established or with planning approvals) all on Palmerston Road.
- 8.5 Council records evidence that the proposal would not lead to an over-concentration of authorised and licensed HMOs within a 50m radius of the application site. There are 67 properties within a 50m radius of the application site therefore, 10% would equal 6.7 properties. The inclusion of the proposed HMO would result in a 4.5% concentration of HMOs properties within a 50m radius. The proposed concentration is therefore within the threshold of 10% as described in the adopted SPD.

Size of the property and facilities for future occupiers

- 8.6 Policy H30 of the Local Plan, although dated, is in line with the aims of NPPF in respect of the provision of adequate amenity for proposed occupiers and requires HMOs to be of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use.
- 8.7 The property is considered to be of sufficient size, providing larger single occupancy bedroom sizes (all upwards of 10m²) in accordance with the Council's HMO Facilities and Amenities Guidance. All bedrooms have en-suite toilets and showers which are considered to be appropriate facilities which would provide all occupants with a high standard of amenity and personal space. On the ground floor, two separate kitchen/living areas are proposed measuring 16.2m² and 20.5m² respectively and this would meet the requirement as stated in Principle 2 of the HMO SPD 2019. There is also an additional storage area located in the basement.
- 8.8 There is an additional access door to a courtyard to ensure access for refuse and cycle storage is accessible, but secure.
- 8.9 A condition restricting the use of the property to a maximum of 18 people is proposed to ensure an appropriate level of amenity is retained. Private Sector Housing have confirmed that the proposals would meet the requirements for an 18 person HMO. All bedrooms would be served by adequate outlook and light.

Impact on heritage Assets

- 8.10 The key issue from a heritage concern is the impact on the external appearance of the building. On the ground floor the existing modern garage door on the north elevation is indicated to be replaced with the addition of new window openings in addition to the relocation of the entrance door. Three new window openings are also proposed on the south elevation and two new openings on the west elevation to serve a stairwell.
- 8.11 The proposal as submitted referred to the replacement of the existing windows with uPVC. During the course of the application, discussions have taken place with the applicant and advice sought from the Conservation Officer who has advised that the proportions and profile of the existing small pane cast iron windows, which are a distinctive feature, should be matched as near as possible when considering any replacement.
- 8.12 The applicant has submitted a number of suggested window proposals, for openable double-glazed units, with the same window proportions as the existing. The Conservation Officer has recommended that a condition be imposed to allow further

discussion to take place on options for the replacement windows submitted by the applicant.

- 8.13 In terms of the internal layout, whilst the proposal indicates the subdivision of the internal space, it does respect the existing walls within the building and there the previous layout is retained, rather than to be removed, thereby keeping the integrity of the original form.
- 8.14 It is considered that subject to the window design, the proposal demonstrates a good use of an existing heritage asset and will secure its future as an important feature in the street scene.

Flood Risk

- 8.15 The site lies in a low risk Flood Zone (Zone 1) where there is limited risk from flooding.

Highways/Parking

- 8.16 The HMO SPD sets out clearly that where limited or no parking provision is proposed, the site must provide a parking beat survey. Should a parking beat survey reveal that there is insufficient on-street parking capacity, the application site should be within 400m of a bus stop with at least one bus every 30 minutes between 0700 and 1900 Mondays to Sundays and be located within 400m of facilities and services contained in a town centre, district centre, local centre or neighbourhood parade. Only outside such locations is parking required to be provided.
- 8.17 In this instance a parking beat survey has not been submitted. However, the property lies within a Permit Zone and therefore all parking in the vicinity is controlled. The local highway authority holds the right to restrict the number of permits issued to any property and this may result in the number being restricted. It is noted that there is no guarantee that every resident within such areas will be issued with a permit.
- 8.18 As the application site is in a sustainable location within 100-250m of bus stops on St Edmunds Road, Wellingborough Road and Billing Road, and also within walking distance of local facilities on the Wellingborough Road, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the HMO SPD in respect of parking considerations.
- 8.19 The HMO SPD recommends that storage space should be provided which is accessible to cycle users to encourage and facilitate sustainable transport. Space is available in the courtyard for cycle storage and a condition is proposed to require details for appropriate provision.
- 8.20 A further consideration is that this has been used as a funeral parlour with offices. Generally, such operations require 24 hour access and can have visitors for much of the day and into the evening. Whilst there is an existing garage facility for the funeral cars, parking for visitors in the area is limited. It is therefore accepted that there would have been some vehicle movements associated with the existing use.

Refuse storage

- 8.21 There is sufficient space to the rear of the property for bin storage within the courtyard. This would allow for storage of waste prior to refuse collection days. These facilities would ensure there was space to store refuse prior to refuse collection days and a condition can be attached to ensure that the refuse storage is retained thereafter.

Other Matters

- 8.22 The proposal does not include any external alterations that would increase the extent of overlooking or loss of privacy to that existing.
- 8.23 Impact on antisocial behaviour is a management issue and not something that can be addressed through the planning process.
- 8.24 A financial contribution of £1,962 has been sought from North Northamptonshire Council towards library services. Registration for broadband services and a condition relating to fire hydrants and sprinkler systems has also been sought.
- 8.25 Internal sprinkler systems will be required as part of the licensing of the HIMO and can be dealt with at that stage. In terms of the contribution towards library services, there is currently not policy basis on which to seek this contribution.

9.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The development is not CIL liable.

10.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposed development would not lead to an unacceptable concentration of HIMOs within the locality that would adversely affect upon the character of the local area, street scene, nor would the development have significant adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity or parking provision. The property is of sufficient size to accommodate the level of accommodation as proposed.
- 10.2 The proposed development would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies H1, H5, BN5 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, saved Policies E20, E26 and H30 of the Northampton Local Plan and the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION / CONDITIONS AND REASONS

- 11.1 The proposed development is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Proposed plans and elevations dated 29-04-2021 and the location and block plan dated 29-04-2021 (received 18/05/2021)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

3. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, prior to any works being carried out in respect of existing or proposed windows/doors, full details of any replacement/new windows/doors (including cross-sections, profiles and materials) for the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to

installation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that the development will harmonise with its surroundings and in accordance with Policy S10 and BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy E26 of the Northampton Local Plan

4. Notwithstanding the submitted plans and prior to the occupation of development, further details of facilities for the secure and covered parking of bicycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and fully implemented prior to the development being first brought into use and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policies H1 and H5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. The refuse and recycling storage shall be provided in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans prior to occupation and retain thereafter.

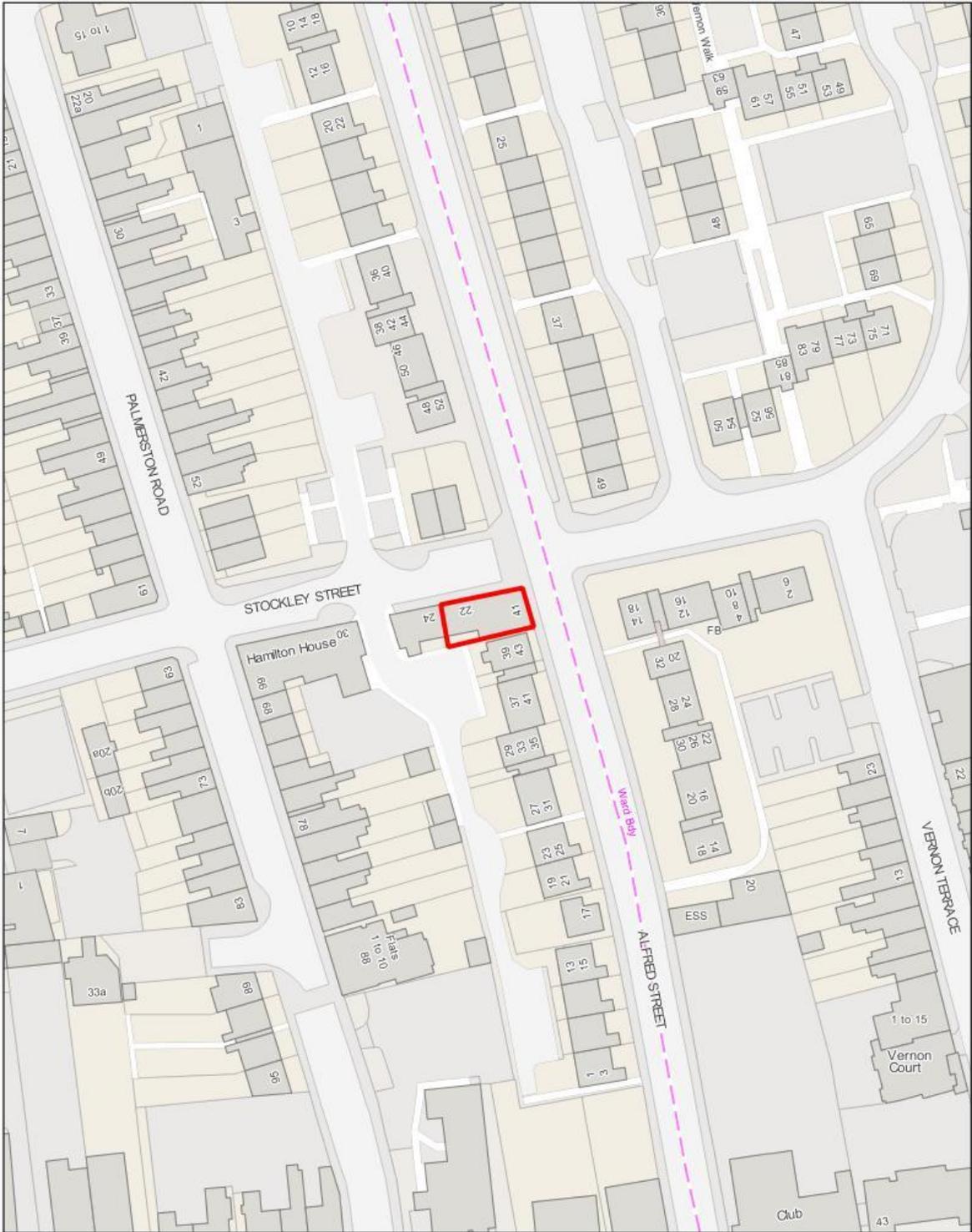
Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policies H1 and H5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The development hereby permitted shall be occupied by a maximum of 18 occupants at any one time.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of the proposed occupiers and the surrounding area in accordance with Policies H1 and H5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

7. The basement shall not be used as habitable accommodation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of the proposed occupiers in accordance with Policy H1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Title: **22 Stockley Street**

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Scale: 1:1,000 @A4

Drawn: M.Johnson