



Planning Committee Report

Committee Date: 7th March 2022

Application Number: WNN/2021/1145 & WNN/2021/1146

Location: 13 - 17 Bridge Street, Northampton

Development: Planning and Listed Building applications for Conversion to 4no Apartments (Use Class C3) and 7no bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis), including demolition to rear to create associated amenity area and wider associated alterations

Applicant: H and F Enterprises UK Ltd

Agent: CC Town Planning

Case Officer: Jonathan Moore

Ward: Castle Unitary Ward

Referred By: Councillor D Stone

Reason for Referral: Overdevelopment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

Planning Application WNN/2021/1145

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Listed Building Application WNN/2021/1146

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Proposal

Planning Permission and Listed building consent are sought for the conversion of the existing group of three buildings to 4no Apartments (Use Class C3) and a 7no bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis), including the demolition of existing rear outbuildings to create an amenity area and associated alterations. The existing ground floor and basement area would be retained as retail/commercial use comprising 3 separate units with the residential accommodation located on the upper floors. Each of the HIMO bedrooms would be double occupancy all with en-suites. The proposal includes the installation of bin and cycle stores to the rear accessed from the ground floor.

In terms of the listed building application, there would be no changes to the frontage onto Bridge Street. External alterations to the rear would comprise the demolition of the outbuildings and making good, and internal alterations would involve the creation of new internal partitions required to create new residential accommodation.

Consultations

The following consultees have raised **no objections** to the application:

- Environmental Health
- Conservation
- Town Centre Conservation Area Committee (TCCAAC)
- Private Sector Housing
- Highways
- Anglian Water
- Northants Police
- Historic England

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

- Northampton Town Council.

No letters of objection have been received from any neighbouring occupier.

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
- Residential amenity
- Impact on heritage assets
- Flood risk
- Highways and parking
- Security and crime prevention

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that the proposals are 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 comprises a group of 19th century buildings, Nos. 13-17 Bridge Street, with 3 vacant retail units on the ground floor and associated storage use over the floors above and at basement level.
- 1.2 The group of buildings are located in the Town Centre and within All Saints Conservation Area and is located within a Secondary Retail Frontage as defined by the Northampton Central Area Action Plan. No. 17 Bridge Street is Grade II listed.
- 1.3 The buildings stagger in height along Bridge Street, No. 13 being 3-storeys in height, No. 15, 4-storeys, and No. 17, 5 storeys, all with basement level rooms in addition.
- 1.4 The main entrance to the buildings is taken from Bridge Street with on-street parking along Bridge Street.
- 1.5 The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and town centre uses interspersed with residential above.

2 CONSTRAINTS

- 2.1 The application site is within the All Saints Conservation Area. No. 17 Bridge Street is Grade II listed.

3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The development is for the conversion of the existing group of buildings to 4no Apartments (Use Class C3) and a 7no bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) on the upper floors retaining commercial use at ground floor and basement level and retaining the existing shop fronts and an active frontage to Bridge Street. The proposal includes the demolition of outbuildings to rear to create an associated amenity area with refuse storage for both commercial and residential uses and a cycle storage area.

4 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

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

Application Ref	Proposal	Decision
N/2017/0747	Partial demolition at rear of existing buildings, repairs and alterations to No. 17 Bridge Street, and erection of five storey rear extension to create a 41-bed student accommodation with associated works, repairs and alterations to shopfronts, retail/cafe, cycle parking and hard surfacing.	APPROVED
N/2017/0751	Listed Building Application for the partial demolition at rear of existing buildings, repairs and alterations to No. 17 Bridge Street, and erection of five storey rear extension to create a 41-bed (arranged into 18 clusters) building of student accommodation with associated works,	CONSENT GRANTED

	repairs and alterations to shopfronts, retail/cafe, cycle parking and hard surfacing.	
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- 4.2 The above permissions have now lapsed but accepted the principle of residential development at the site and were for a much more intensive form of development.

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.
- 5.2 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development that affects the setting of a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

5.3 Development Plan

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 Central Area Action Plan and Emerging Local Plan. The relevant planning policies of the statutory Development Plan are set out below:

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

The relevant policies of the JCS are:

- H1 - Housing Density & Mix & Type of Dwellings
- H5 - Managing the Existing Housing Stock
- SA - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable development
- S1 - Distribution of Development
- S3 - Scale and distribution of housing development
- S10 - Sustainable Development Principles
- BN5 - Heritage Assets.
- BN7 - Development and Flood Risk
- BN9 - Pollution Control

Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP)

- Policy 1 Promoting Design Excellence
- Policy 16 Central Area Living

5.4 **Material Considerations**

Below is a list of the relevant Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Paragraph 104 Transport issues
- Paragraph 130 Design and amenity
- Paragraph 197- Heritage and conservation

Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (2011-2029) (Emerging)

Following the decision at the Full Council on 18 January 2021, the former Northampton Borough Council submitted the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (2011 – 2029) and supporting documents to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (now Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) on 4 February 2021 for examination. This is in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The policies contained within the emerging Northampton Local Plan Part 2 are therefore a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The weight afforded to be afforded to the policies relevant to this application are set out below:

- Policy 3 Design- (Moderate weight)
- Policy 4 Amenity and Layout (Moderate weight)
- Policy 15 Houses in Multiple Occupation (Moderate weight)
- Policy 31 Heritage (moderate weight)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance HMO Planning Policy
- SPG Planning out Crime
- Northampton Parking Standards 2016 and 2019

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	Comment
Environmental Health	<p>The plans show a large communal area for refuse at the rear of the ground floor. Separate arrangements should be created to serve the commercial units and the residential occupiers. The route for conveying waste to kerbside should also be identified in a waste management strategy. Recommend condition for refuse and contamination</p> <p>Submitted noise report is comprehensive and it is noted that the</p>

	<p>night time economy will have clear impact on noise to front and rear of site. Noise mitigation measures shall be put in place as detailed in report including window specifications and ventilation.</p>
Conservation	<p>No objection on heritage grounds to the proposal, which will secure a viable re-use for the upper floors of an important group of buildings. Any harm to the internal layout of the buildings would be “less than substantial;” but would be outweighed by the wider benefit of securing their occupation.</p> <p>The applications relate to the upper floors of a group of 19th century buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of All Saints Conservation Area. No. 17 Bridge Street is listed but not 13 & 15, although all three properties contribute to the streetscene within the conservation area.</p> <p>Residential use of the upper floors is in keeping with the historic character of the buildings and is acceptable in principle. No alterations to the Bridge Street elevations are proposed. The internal layout of the buildings, including the listed building at No. 17, have been previously altered and the proposed work required to convert them to residential use will not result in further loss of historic fabric. The proposed alterations to the plan layout and installation of services will have an acceptable impact.</p> <p>The detailed heritage impact assessment accurately identifies the significance of the buildings. The existing timber sash windows contribute to the character and appearance of the buildings and should be retained; secondary glazing to meet acoustic or thermal considerations would be appropriate rather than double glazing. Consider the proposal to be less intensive and more sympathetic than the one approved in 2017 and is acceptable.</p>
Historic England	No comments to make. Advise to seek advice of Council’s Conservation Officer
Town Centre Conservation Committee (TCCAAC)	Welcomes building being brought back into use and recommends that Conservation Officer needs consulted
Private Sector Housing	The property is suitable for the 7 households and may accommodate about 14 persons depending on facilities and amenity provided in the property for occupants use.
Highways	Comment that the proposed cycle storage needs secure access
Anglian Water	The applicant should check for any Anglian Water assets which cross or are within close proximity to the site.
Northants Police	Recommend robust level of access control , robust security measures and each apartment door to meet security standards, cycles to be covered and bins access needs consideration Request security condition

Northampton Town Council	Object on grounds of over-development and not in keeping with the area, out of scale with other buildings in the conservation area
Councillor Danielle Stone	Object on over-development and inappropriate form of development, fails to enhance vision of town centre. Calls application to committee.

7 RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

- 7.1 Advertised by site notice, newspaper advertisement and neighbouring properties consulted. No comments received.

8 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

- 8.1 The application proposes the conversion of the existing group of three buildings to form 4 flats and a 7 bedroom (14 person) HIMO retaining commercial use on the ground floor. The application site is located within the town centre where the NPPF emphasises that town centres should be able to grow and diversify and identifies that housing is a suitable use. Policy 16 of the Central Area Action Plan identifies that residential accommodation within the town centre is to be supported. The mixed use development of the site to incorporate residential use would contribute towards the Council's housing supply with associated social and economic benefits and this therefore weighs in favour of the proposal. The principle of providing residential development is, therefore, accepted on this site.
- 8.2 The conversion 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 HIMOs where the proposal would not adversely impact on the character of the area and amenity of residential areas. The submitted detail advise that the building has been vacant for over 5 years and marketed for most of this time. The property is a Grade II listed building within the Conservation Area and a viable use of the building is therefore considered to weigh in its favour. The retention of ground floor as retail would support the vitality of the central area as a retail function in accordance with the NPPF.

Concentration of HIMO uses in the area

- 8.3 Council records evidence that there are no other HIMOs within a 50m radius of the application site. The use of this property as a HIMO would therefore equate to only 6.7 per cent concentration. It is considered therefore that there would still be a reasonable mixture of house types and uses within the area and a balance of community.

Residential Amenity

- 8.4 Policy H1 of the Joint Core Strategy can be afforded more weight in decision making given that it is an up to date development plan policy; criteria (f) relates specifically to the amenity of future occupiers. Policy 4 of the submitted Local Plan Part 2 is a material consideration and seeks to ensure that all new residential development provides at least the minimum internal space standards as set out in the National Described Space Standards (NDSS). The minimum recommended space for a 1-

bedroom dwelling for 1 person with a shower room is 37 square metres and for a 1-bedroom unit with 2 person occupancy the requirement is 50 square metres in the NDSS.

- 8.5 It is acknowledged that the Council has not yet adopted the NDSS however, the emerging policy is a material consideration that can be given moderate weight. In addition, adopted Policy H1 of the JCS and the NPPF require a good standard of amenity for proposed occupiers and the NDSS is considered an appropriate standard by which to assess what is an appropriate level of amenity. The proposed flat sizes are all over 37 square metres with two of the units being over 50 square metres and therefore considered to provide an acceptable level of amenity in respect of size of units. In addition, all rooms are served by sufficient windows to provide adequate light and outlook
- 8.6 In terms of the HMO, the property is considered to be of sufficient size, providing room sizes in accordance with the Council's HIMO Facilities and Amenities Guidance and appropriate kitchen/dining, WC and wash facilities with all bedrooms being en-suite. The proposed 7-bedrooms meet the required standards for double occupancy and a condition restricting the use of the HIMO property to a maximum of 14 people would ensure over-development does not occur. Private Sector Housing has confirmed that the room sizes, amenities and facilities indicated on the submitted plans are acceptable and accord with requirements. All bedrooms would be served by adequate outlook and light from window openings.
- 8.7 The site is located in the central of the town close to a number of bars and clubs which generate noise late into the evenings particularly at weekends. The application is supported by a Noise Survey which has been assessed by Environmental Health and is considered to be robust. Mitigation measures proposed to protect the residential amenity of future occupiers would include secondary glazing and mechanical ventilation. A condition is proposed to ensure appropriate mitigation in this regard.
- 8.8 Surrounding uses are a mix of commercial and residential. Subject to appropriate mitigation measures in respect of noise as outlined above, it is not considered the proposal would lead to any unacceptable impact on existing uses or surrounding amenity.
- 8.9 Details have been submitted for a refuse storage area in the rear with separate storage for both commercial and residential which are deemed acceptable and would be secured by condition in conjunction with a management plan. This would accord with Policy H1 of the Joint Core Strategy in respect of appropriate amenity provision.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 8.10 Policy BN5 of the JCS and Policy 1 of the CAAP seek to ensure that heritage assets are preserved and enhanced. Policy 31 of the emerging Local Plan 2 relates to the protection and enhancement of designated and non-designated heritage.
- 8.11 The NPPF requires that great weight is given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

- 8.12 The property is situated in All Saints Conservation Area and No. 17 Bridge Street is Grade II listed. No objection is raised to the demolition of the outbuildings to the rear of the property which are later additions to the original buildings and the level of harm to heritage assets in respect of the proposed development is considered less than substantial.
- 8.13 In this circumstance, the NPPF requires the impact of the proposal to be weighed against wider public benefit, which would include securing a viable use for an important listed building that makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. The buildings have been vacant for some time and the proposed residential use of the upper floors of the property and retention of commercial use at ground floor/basement level would assist in maintaining the building in a viable use and preserving the historic integrity of the listed building and character and appearance of the conservation area. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the NPPF, Policy BN5 of the JCS, Policy 1 of the CAAP and Policy 31 of the submitted Local Plan Part 2.

Flood Risk

- 8.14 The site lies in a low risk Flood Zone (Zone 1) where there is limited risk from flooding. In addition, no habitable accommodation would be provided at basement level. Anglian Water raise no objections to the application but advise the applicant to have regard to any nearby assets. The proposal therefore accords with Policy BN7 of the JCS.

Highways/Parking

- 8.15 The application has no off road parking with parking in the vicinity of the street being on-street. It is considered that the application site is in a sustainable location being in the town centre and within walking distance of both the Bus Station and Railway station. In this regard, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the HIMO SPD in respect of parking considerations. It also complies with Principle 5 of the Northampton Parking Standards SPD (2019). The Highway Authority raise no objection to the proposal.
- 8.16 Within such areas, the HIMO SPD recommends that storage space should be provided which is accessible to cycle users. There is sufficient room to the rear of the site for cycle storage and an area is shown on the submitted plans for such provision. Details of secure cycle storage will be required by condition to ensure compliance with this principle of the SPD.

Security and Crime Prevention

- 8.17 Comments have been received from the Northamptonshire Police advising on need to control access to bins and cycle storage and request a security condition to this effect in accordance with Policy S10 of the JCS and the SPG on Planning out Crime.

8.18 Other issues

Environmental Health have commented on contamination and recommend a contamination condition for unsuspected contamination in accordance with Policy BN9 and S10 of the Joint Core Strategy.

9 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The proposal is not CIL Liable

10 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

10.1 The proposed retention of commercial use at ground floor and residential use of the upper floors is considered an appropriate mix of uses with the Town Centre and would assist in retaining this heritage asset in viable use whilst maintaining a use that would contribute to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. The proposed development would not lead to an unacceptable concentration of HIMO's within the locality and is of sufficient size to accommodate the level of accommodation as proposed and would provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers. It is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on heritage assets, neighbouring uses or amenity or parking provision and that any harm to heritage assets would be less than substantial and outweighed by the benefits of retaining a viable use for the building and the provision of housing.

10.2 In light of the above, the proposed development would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies H1, H5, BN5, BN7 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policy 1 and 16 of the CAAP, Policies 3,4 15 and 31 of the submitted Local Plan Part 2 and the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.

11 RECOMMENDATION / CONDITIONS AND REASONS

11.1 Planning Application WNN/2021/0877

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: Location Plan, 021/051/002D and 021/051/003A.

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

3) Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of the provision for the management storage and collection of refuse and materials for recycling shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The scheme agreed shall be implemented prior to the development coming into use and shall be retained thereafter.

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

4) Notwithstanding the submitted details, full details of facilities for the secure and covered parking of bicycles shall be first 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: To ensure the provision of adequate facilities in accordance with Policy H1 of the Joint Core Strategy.

- 5) The maximum number of occupiers of the approved HIMO shall not exceed 14 at any one time.

Reason: To prevent over-development to accord with Policy H1 of the Joint Core Strategy.

- 6) Prior to installation of any secondary glazing, large scale plans at 1:20 detailing the proposed secondary glazing to front windows shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and retained thereafter.

Reason: in the interests of sound heritage practice to accord with Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

- 7) The noise mitigation proposals set out in Section 6 and Table 8 of the Ion Acoustic Report dated 26th November 2021- Reference A1195 R03 shall be implemented in full at the application site prior to occupation of the residential elements of the development hereby permitted. A Verification/ Validation report confirming that all noise mitigation works have been implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the report, shall be provided post completion in writing to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, prior to the first occupation of the proposal. The approved noise mitigation shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity to comply with Policy BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

- 8) In the event that unexpected contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development hereby approved, it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development works at the site shall cease and an investigation and risk assessment undertaken to assess the nature and extent of the unexpected contamination. A written report of the findings shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, together with a scheme to remediate, if required, prior to further development on site taking place. Only once written approval from the Local Planning Authority has been given shall development works recommence

Reason: in interests of residential amenity to comply with Policy BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

- 9) Prior to first use of the approved development, full details of security measures including access controls, security cameras and other associated measures shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of crime prevention and to ensure as secure standard of development to accord with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

11.2 **Listed Building Application WNN/2021/1146**

- 1) The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, 021/051/002D and 021/051/003A.

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

- 3) Prior to installation of any secondary glazing, large scale plans at 1:20 detailing the proposed secondary glazing to front windows shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of preserving the integrity of the listed building and conservation area in accordance with Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Title: **13 - 17 Bridge Street**

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