



Northampton Local Area Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Northampton Local Area Planning Committee held at The Jeffrey Room - The Guildhall, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 5.00 pm.

Present Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair)
 Councillor Anna King (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Muna Cali
 Councillor Nazim Choudary
 Councillor Paul Clark
 Councillor Paul Dyball
 Councillor Cathrine Russell
 Councillor Zoe Smith

Apologies Councillor Sally Beardsworth
for
Absence: Councillor Raymond Connolly
 Councillor Penelope Flavell

Officers: Shaun Robson (Interim Development Manager)
 Nicky Scaife (Development Management Team Leader)
 Adam Walker (Principal Planning Officer)
 Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
 Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

141. **Apologies for Absence and Appointment of Substitute Members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Connolly, Flavell, and Beardsworth.

142. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Z Smith advised of a predetermination in respect of items 7b, 7c, 7d, 7e, and 7f, and stated that she would speak on these items and leave the room for the remainder of the discussion and the vote.

143. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

144. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair introduced Shaun Robson, Interim Development Manager, to the Committee.

The Chair advised that item 7a had been withdrawn from the agenda.

145. **Deputations/Public Addresses**

That under the following items, the members of the public and Ward Councillors listed below were granted leave to address the Committee:

WNN/2022/0053

Danielle Stone
Paul Hanson
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Bob Purser

WNN/2022/0181

Anna Rittler
Danielle Stone
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Bob Purser

WNN/2022/0225

Danielle Stone
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Bob Purser

WNN/2022/0381

Danielle Stone
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Bob Purser

WNN/2022/0392

Danielle Stone
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Bob Purser
Kim Opszala

146. **List of Current Appeals/Inquiries**

The Development Management Team Leader submitted a List of Current Appeals and Inquiries. An appeal relating to 31 Connaught Street which had been determined by officers under delegated powers was dismissed on concentration grounds; the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 12.5% if the application was allowed and so was dismissed by the Inspector. An appeal relating to 87 Earl Street was dismissed by the Inspector; they agreed with the officer decision to refuse the application on the basis that the shutters caused harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and officers had requested that perforated shutters be used instead. The matter was now the subject of enforcement action.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

147. **N/2020/1421 - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of Discount Foodstore (Use Class E), with associated car parking, access, landscaping and associated engineering works. Mayleigh House, Kettering Road North**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

Councillor Z Smith moved to the public gallery, having advised of predeterminations in the remainder of the items on the agenda.

148. **WNN/2022/0053 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 5 occupants. 70 Birchfield Road**

The Development Management Team Leader submitted a report which sought approval for an HMO for 4 occupants to an HMO for 5 occupants. The ground floor living room would be divided to create an additional bedroom and the garage would be used for cycle storage. A number of properties in the area had been investigated as suspected HMOs; 2 were identified, however these were already known by the Council. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 9.4%. Private Sector Housing had raised no objections to the scheme. Highways had concerns regarding the impact on parking in the area, however the property sat within a sustainable location close to public transport links and shopping facilities, and the application complied with the Council's HMO Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Councillor Purser addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and raised concerns around parking, waste, and the lack of amenities and room sizes in the property.

Danielle Stone addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and stated that the application went against the Council's vision for a clean, green and safe town. She voiced concern around the loss of family homes and parking dangers in the area.

Paul Hanson, a local resident, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He stated that the increasing number of HMOs were damaging communities and questioned the Council's concentration figures.

The Development Management Team Leader commented that all bedroom and sizes, and the kitchen/diner, exceeded minimum requirements.

The recommendation contained within the report was put to a vote and was declared carried with 4 votes in favour and 3 votes against. The Chair cast the deciding vote.

RESOLVED:

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

149. **WNN/2022/0181 - Conversion of Dwellinghouse to House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) for 7 occupants and 1no One Bed Ground Floor Flat (Use Class C3) with single storey flat roof rear extension, bin storage and alterations to fenestration. 141 Wycliffe Road**

The Development Management Team Leader submitted a report which sought approval for the conversion of a 6 bed dwellinghouse to HMO for 7 occupants, and a 1-bed flat, converting the existing garage with a single-storey rear extension. Amendments to the front fenestration to change the garage door and provide bin storage in the existing back garden were also proposed. A condition was included to ensure that the flat remained single occupancy. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 3.6%. Private Sector Housing had raised no objections to the application. Highways had raised concerns regarding the impact on parking in the area, however the property sat within a sustainable location close to public transport links and shopping facilities, and the application complied with the Council's HMO SPD.

Councillor Z Smith addressed the Committee and spoke against the application, voicing concerns around overdevelopment. She stated that the amenities were insufficient and that parking issues were impacting residents' safety. She also commented that it was inappropriate to fit a flat into a garage.

After addressing the Committee, Councillor Z Smith left the room for the remainder of the item.

Councillor Purser addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and commented that he could not understand how the garage was considered not large enough for a car but seemed to be suitable for a person to live in. He stated that the application represented an overdevelopment.

Danielle Stone addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and commented that the Council should be setting higher standards; bin storage close to shower rooms and the kitchen was not appropriate. She believed the application was an example overdevelopment and of landlord greed.

Anna Rittler, of a neighbouring property, addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and stated that the rear extension would be higher than the garden wall; she had a visually impaired daughter so was concerned about the loss of light to a bedroom window. She raised concern over the existing lack of parking and noted that the Northampton Local Plan stated that heritage should be protected, which she did not see the application doing.

The Development Management Team Leader confirmed that a condition was included to ensure that the basement not be used as a habitable room.

Members commented that HMO residents should be able to live with dignity, and that some landlords seemed to be exploiting the current housing situation.

The recommendation contained within the report were put to a vote and was declared lost by 2 votes for and 4 against.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **REFUSED** on the grounds of overdevelopment and residential amenity.

Councillor Z Smith returned to the meeting and sat in the public gallery.

150. **WNN/2022/0225 - Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 5 occupants. 76 Derby Road**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from dwellinghouse for 3 occupants to HMO for 5 occupants including a single storey rear extension to provide a shower room. The property had extant planning permission for use as a 4 bed HMO. Currently, waste storage was proposed in the basement, however this was not considered appropriate, and officers had requested this to be changed with details to be agreed by condition for facilities within the rear garden. Private Sector Housing had raised no objections to the application. Highways had raised concerns regarding the impact on parking in the area, however the property sat within a sustainable location close to public transport links and shopping facilities, and the application complied with the Council's HMO SPD. Should the application be approved, the concentration of HMOs in a 50m radius would be 5.7%.

Councillor Z Smith addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She stated that the shower room was the equivalent of an en suite and not appropriate for 4 people to share.

After addressing the Committee, Councillor Z Smith left the room for the remainder of the item.

Councillor Purser addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and voiced concern around waste issues frequently reported in the area which this scheme would exacerbate. He saw the application as an overdevelopment.

Danielle Stone addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and commented that HMOs saw creeping increases in the number of bedrooms. She stated that on bin days, bags of waste blocked entire paths so pedestrians had to walk in the road.

In response to questions, the Committee were informed that a condition could be included to ensure that the basement was not occupied. It was also noted that ground floor occupants would have access to the upstairs bathroom.

Members commented that ideally, bedrooms in HMOs should all have en suite bathrooms, although it was noted that this was not a requirement.

The recommendation contained within the report were put to a vote and was declared carried by 4 votes for and 3 votes against. The Chair cast the deciding vote.

RESOLVED:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report and with an additional condition to restrict the use of basement.

Councillor Z Smith returned to the meeting and sat in the public gallery.

Councillor Clark joined the meeting and advised of no declarations of interest.

151. **WNN/2022/0381 - Conversion of two storey three bedroom terrace house to 3no self contained flats, including dormer and associated external works. 19 Derby Road**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a conversion of dwellinghouse to 3 x 1-bed flats. A new lightwell to the rear basement flat was also proposed. The existing windows to the rear of the ground floor flat would be enlarged. The principle of subdivision was considered acceptable by officers and the flats all met national space standards. The main habitable rooms throughout the development would be on the ground floor or above. Highways had raised concerns on parking grounds, but it was not considered that the increased demand was significant, and the property sat within a sustainable location.

Councillor Z Smith addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and commented that 2 flats would be more appropriate for conversion of a property this size. She believed that the scheme was an overdevelopment and voiced concern around fire safety and parking problems in the area.

After addressing the Committee, Councillor Z Smith left the room for the remainder of the item.

Danielle Stone addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She raised concerns around significant pressures on local services and stated that families within areas of high-density development were leaving due to what they saw as the breakdown of communities. Raised concerns regarding overdevelopment, loss of family home and existing issues of fly-tipping and refuse.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that the proposed lightwell would also serve as a fire escape.

Members discussed the report.

The recommendation contained within the report were put to a vote and was declared carried with 3 votes for, 2 votes against, and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED:

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

152. **WNN/2022/0392 - Change of Use from 6-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) to 7-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) for 7 occupants. 63 Holly Road**

The Principal Planning Officer submitted a report to the Committee which sought approval for a change of use from HMO for 6 occupants to HMO for 7 occupants. Internal layout changes were proposed to provide an additional bedroom along with some other minor alterations to the property. Officers considered the amenities sufficient and bedroom sizes complied with the Councils HMO SPD and exceeded national space standards. Highways had raised concerns regarding the impact on parking in the area, however the property sat within a sustainable location close to public transport links and shopping facilities. The garage was considered suitable for the storage of cycles and waste.

Councillor Z Smith addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. She commented that the scheme was overdevelopment and created unviable living spaces, the landlord was making money at the expense of residents' quality of life and questioned the safety of the living room in the basement

After addressing the Committee, Councillor Z Smith left the room for the remainder of the item.

Councillor Purser addressed the Committee and spoke against the application. He commented that a seventh bedroom was an overdevelopment and raised concern around the existing lack of parking and waste issues in the area.

Danielle Stone addressed the Committee and spoke against the application and commented that the application was not appropriate for post-covid living. She said that incremental increases to HMOs should not be encouraged.

Kim Opszala, the applicant, addressed the Committee and spoke in favour of the application. She advised that she was the landlord for several properties and had received no complaints from local residents. She noted that the room sizes all exceeded minimum requirements.

In response to questions, Ms Opszala confirmed that neighbours were given her contact details in case of any issues arising from her properties, and the same would be done should this application be approved. She also confirmed that occupants were vetted before they moved into her properties.

Members felt that Ms Opszala had reassured them in her statement and in answering their questions and thanked her for attending the meeting.

The recommendation contained within the report were put to a vote and was declared carried with 6 votes for and 1 vote against.

RESOLVED:

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

153. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 6.52 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____