



**NORTHAMPTON**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
Planning Committee

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
**DIRECTORATE:** Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning  
**DIRECTOR:** Steven Boyes

**N/2015/0282:** Change of use to 3no. one-bed apartments together with two storey rear extension at 15 Beaconsfield Terrace

**WARD:** Castle

**APPLICANT:** Mr M Hughes  
**AGENT:** Architectural Solutions

**REFERRED BY:** Former Borough Councillor Winston Strachan  
**REASON:** Congestion due to on-street-parking – too many vehicles already in the street with insufficient parking accommodation

**DEPARTURE:** No

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**APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposed development would have no adverse impact on the character of the street or conservation area, would not result in significant additional demand for parking and would not affect the amenities of adjoining occupiers. The proposal thereby conforms with Policies S1 and H1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies E20, H6, H21, H23 and H24 of the Northampton Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**2. THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 The proposal relates to the change of use of the premises to three one bedroom apartments, together with a two storey rear extension.

**3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

3.1 The site comprises a two storey terraced property, which the applicants have stated is in use as a house in multiple occupation for up to five occupiers. The existing layout consists of two bedrooms and a kitchen on the ground floor, and

three bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor, with the cellar used for storage. No off-street parking spaces are provided.

- 3.2 The site falls within the boundary of the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 None.

#### **5. PLANNING POLICY**

##### **5.1 Development Plan**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) and Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

##### **5.2 National Policies**

The 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:

**Paragraph 17** - Core Principles – seeks to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for existing and proposed occupiers.

**Paragraph 49** - Housing applications considered with presumption in favour of sustainable development.

**Paragraph 50** - To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.

**Paragraph 56** - Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

##### **5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)**

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

**Policy S1** – Distribution of Development – States that development will be concentrated primarily in and adjoining principal urban area of Northampton.

**Policy H1 – Housing Density & Mix & Type of Dwellings** – States that development should provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures to cater for different accommodation needs. Housing developments will be expected to make the most efficient use of land having regard to the location and setting of the site, the existing character and density of the local area, accessibility to services and facilities, proximity to public transport routes, the implications of density for affordability and viability, the living conditions provided for future residents, the impact on the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

#### 5.4 **Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)**

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policies are material to this application:

**E20 – New Development** – The design of a new building or extension should adequately reflect the character of its surroundings in terms of layout, siting, form, scale and use of appropriate materials and be designed, located and used in a manner which ensures adequate standards of privacy, daylight and sunlight.

**H6 – Housing Development** - Planning permission for residential development will be granted except where the development would be at a scale and density which would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area or would result in an over intensive development of the site, would not comply with highway design or parking standards, would be piecemeal in character or result in the loss of facilities for which there is a need, or trees or land of significant amenity value.

**H21 – Conversion to flats** – This policy states that “Planning permission will not be granted for the conversion of a house into flats where it is considered that the introduction of or increase in the number of conversions would prejudice the character or amenity of a particular locality, irrespective of whether or not the house is suitable for conversion”.

**H23 – Conversion to flats** – States that “Planning permission will not be granted for the conversion to flats of a dwelling with a combined ground and first floor area (measured internally) of 100 square metres or less and with a frontage (measured internally) of less than 4.7 metres.”

**H24 – Conversion to flats** – This policy states that “Planning permission for flats wholly or partly in basement areas will be granted only where adequate self-contained access is provided and there is adequate natural daylight available in the habitable rooms and where the outlook is not unduly obstructed”.

#### 5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards SPG 2003  
Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

### 6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Local Highway Authority** – Note that this is not a town centre location and would have concerns with regard to redevelopment from HIMO to flats with no associated parking or cycle parking facilities. Therefore the planning authority

should satisfy itself that the parking pressures that may be associated with the new use are less than or the same as the existing use.

6.2 **Conservation** – No objection subject to conditions covering materials and retention of wooden windows to the front.

6.3 **Former Councillor Strachan** – Concerned about effect in terms of fly tipping and congestion of on-street parking, request the application is referred to Planning Committee.

6.4 Letters of objection received from the neighbouring occupiers at **32 and 44 Watkin Terrace** making the following points in summary:

- The plans contravene planning policy as no. 15 Beaconsfield Terrace is no more than 14 feet wide and is a small 2 / 3 bedroom two storey family house and completely unsuitable for conversion to flats.
- The number of multi occupied properties in Beaconsfield / Watkin Terrace has caused a substantial decline in in the environmental and amenity quality of the road.
- There has been an increase in minor anti-social behaviour.
- Increase in domestic refuse left in the street, result in in high level of vermin in the street.
- Majority of properties are in single family occupation and there is a demand for those types of properties which meet an important social need.
- Beaconsfield Terrace is within the conservation area – there is visual evidence that multi occupied property and flat conversions are externally neglected, having a detrimental effect on the overall street scene.
- The house is a two bedroom family house, it is not a five person house.
- Many houses have been converted into four flats per house which has caused social and environmental problems – need balance for social cohesion.
- Terraced family houses should remain as family houses, once converted into apartments they will never go back.
- Converting HIMO into apartments does cause greater burden on infrastructure because in HIMO few people own cars but people who rent flats do have cars.
- Already have a huge problem with parking, with double parking and cars crammed in.
- Once house are converted into tiny flats, there is nowhere to put rubbish and bags are out on the street all week.

## 7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The issues to consider are the impact on the street scene and the Conservation Area, on amenities of adjoining occupiers and in respect of highway congestion, as well as the acceptability of the proposed development, in terms of the living conditions of future occupiers.

### **Principle of Development**

7.2 The proposed development is for three flats across the ground and first floors. Flat one will have two rooms, a living room and bedroom at the front of the ground floor and a kitchen in the basement; a second flat occupying the rear of the ground floor and the rear of the first floor, in a duplex arrangement with a living room and kitchen at ground floor and a bedroom and shower room above,

and a third flat at the front of the first floor, consisting of a living room with kitchen facilities to the front, a bedroom behind this and a small shower room.

- 7.3 The saved Policies H21 to H23 of the Northampton Local Plan are relevant.
- 7.4 In respect of Policy H21, which states that planning permission will not be granted where the introduction or increase in the number of flats would prejudice the character of the area. No formal planning permission was ever granted for the change of use to flats within Beaconsfield Terrace, however, it does not mean that there is no flats currently exist. Watkin Terrace is in the same street, and this does include a number of flats, including some recent conversions. It is considered that this gives the street very much the character of a flatted street on the Watkin Terrace side, but not on the Beaconsfield Terrace side. In light of this character, it is considered that the change of use of this one property on the Beaconsfield side would not have any significant impact on this overall character.
- 7.5 Policy H23 refers to the floor area of the property and states that permission for conversion to flats will not be granted if the premises have a ground and first floor area of less than 100 square metres and a width of less than 4.7m. The application premises in this case has marginally less than this area of floorspace without the proposed two storey rear extension, at just under 95 square metres, but has an internal frontage of 4.8m. As the policy clearly refers to both criteria, the proposal is technically in compliance with this policy, and in any event this shortfall in area can be viewed as very much marginal.
- 7.6 Furthermore, it is relevant to note that the pre-amble to the policy refers to the need to preserve such premises for single family occupation. In this case the property is stated by the applicants as not being a single family dwelling but a house in multiple occupation, therefore not available for single family occupation.
- 7.7 It must be clarified that there is no record that the lawful use of the premises is as a house in multiple occupation, however evidence has been provided by the applicants which indicates that it is likely that this is the case.
- 7.8 Additionally, it should be noted that an extension to the building is proposed to accommodate the flats, thereby ensuring adequate space within each flat. It is considered, therefore, that the proposed change of use would not conflict with the aims of Policy H23.
- 7.9 Policy H24 of the Local Plan is also relevant, as this refers to conversion to flats wholly or partly in basement areas. The policy states that adequate self-contained access should be provide and also adequate natural daylight. In this case only the kitchen of one of the flats is proposed to be in the basement area. The flat has a separate living room and bedroom and therefore differs from those cases envisaged in the policy, where the only accommodation would be in the basement. In fact it is considered that the kitchen represents additional space, which could be omitted from the scheme without making it unacceptable, by providing a kitchen area within the living room, as with the other flats.
- 7.10 Policy H1 of the Joint Core Strategy is also of relevance, stating that provision should be made for a mixture of house types, the proposal would provide more flats in an area of largely family housing, and is therefore consistent with this aim.
- 7.11 The conversion of the property into three flats is considered to be of acceptable layout, it includes access to the rear garden by occupiers of all three flats, which

is not normally possible when a property of this type is divided into flats. It is considered that in spite of the small extension proposed, that this would not represent over-development of the site.

#### **Impact on adjoining occupiers**

- 7.12 To accommodate the three flats, the proposal includes a two storey rear extension, which would be in matching materials and would project as far as the neighbouring single storey extension. The extension would not affect the neighbouring occupiers in respect of loss of light, overshadowing or overlooking, the immediate neighbour has no rear facing window adjacent to the proposed extension whilst there is no side facing window proposed which could result in overlooking of the garden area of the other neighbour.

#### **Impact on the street scene and conservation area**

- 7.13 The only alteration proposed to the front of the building is the insertion of a window to the cellar, to provide light to the basement kitchen. Provided this is constructed in appropriate materials, this would not adversely impact on the street scene or the conservation area. A condition is proposed requiring details of materials, including fenestration to be submitted.

#### **Parking / highway issues**

- 7.14 In respect of the potential for increased demand for parking, the current use of the premises, whether a family house or a HIMO, would allow for up to five occupiers (in the case of a house 2 parents and three adult children). Each of these could, in theory, have a car. Each of the proposed flats would have one bedroom, and each bedroom could be occupied by up to two persons. Whilst each of these could have a car, it is not necessarily the case that this maximum occupancy would be reached and it is unlikely that even if reached that all occupants would have their own car. Even if this was to occur, only a maximum of one additional car would be added to the street.
- 7.15 It can also be noted that the site is within a relatively sustainable location, close to some local amenities and bus stops on Barrack Road and also within a reasonable walking distance of many more shops and facilities, and further bus stops, on Kettering Road. In order to promote sustainable travel and reduce the dependency on car use, a condition requiring details of cycle storage is proposed.

#### **Refuse Storage**

- 7.16 Reference is made by objectors to the amount of refuse which has been left in the street, although there was no evidence of this during the case officer's site visit. In order to offset the potential for inappropriate depositing of rubbish, a condition for the provision of a bin storage area is recommended. There is sufficient space for this and cycle storage within the rear garden area, and direct access to the rear garden for all flats.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 It is considered that the proposal would not be detrimental to the character of the area or the amenities of adjoining occupiers and would not result in any significant increase in demand for parking, and that adequate refuse storage

could be provided. There would be no adverse impact on the street scene or Conservation Area.

## **9. 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: 13/H159/1, 13/H159/2.

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

(3) Details and/or samples of all proposed external facing materials, including fenestration, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that the development will harmonise with its surroundings in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

(4) Details of the provision for the storage of refuse and materials for recycling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be implemented prior to the occupation or bringing into use of the building and thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

(5) Full details of facilities for the secure and covered parking of bicycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the development and retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: To secure the provision of adequate facilities in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

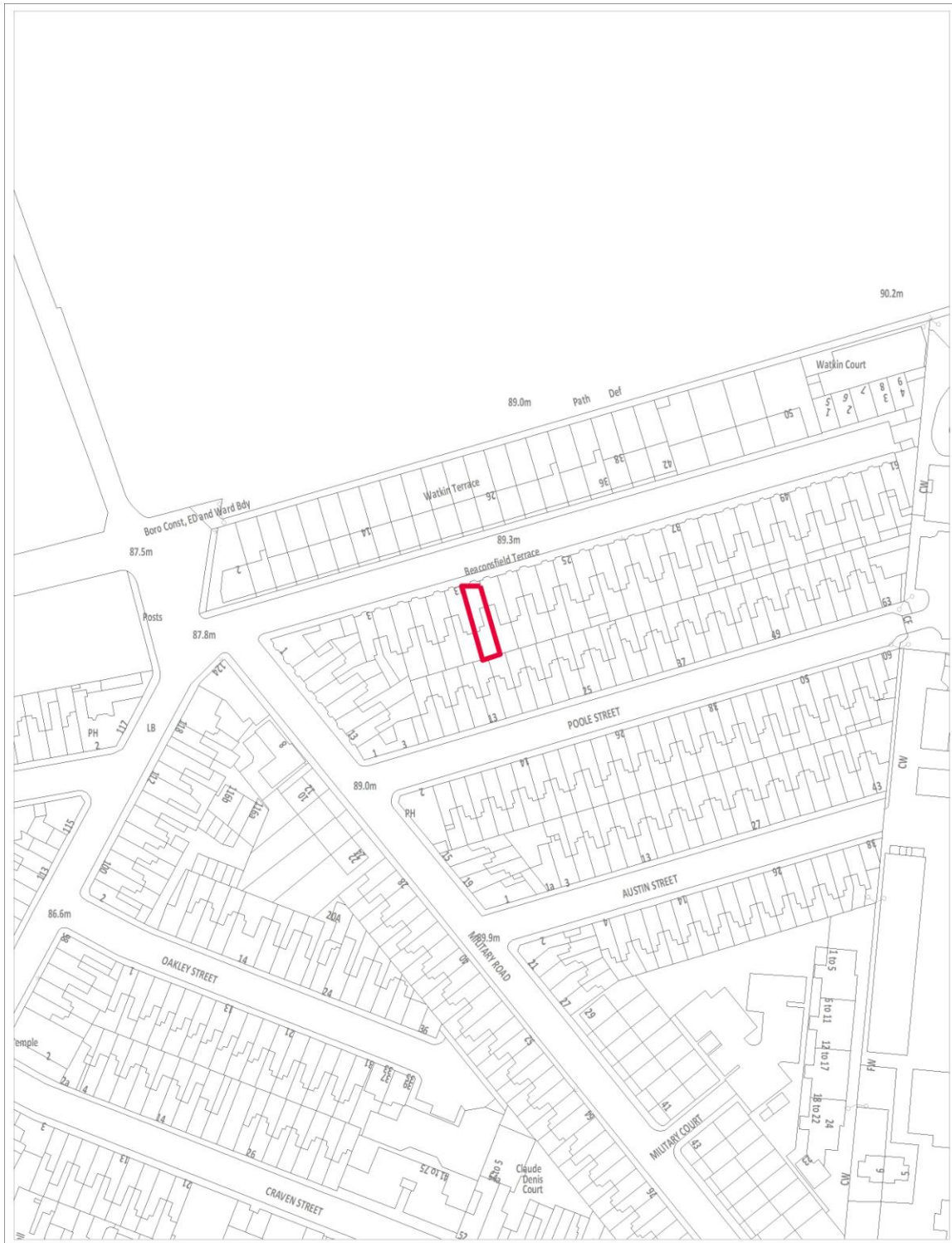
10.1 Application file N/2015/0282

## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

## **12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN**

12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



Name: Site Location Plan  
 Date: 18th June 2015  
 Scale: 1:1250  
 Dept: Planning  
 Project: Planning Committee

**Title**  
**15 Beaconsfield Terrace**

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