

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 19th May 2020
DEPARTMENT: Planning Service
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING: Peter Baguley

APPLICATION REF: N/2020/0197

LOCATION: 117 Upper Thrift Street

DESCRIPTION: Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 6 occupants (retrospective)

WARD: Abington Ward

APPLICANT: BR Northampton
AGENT: Archi-tec Architectural Design

REFERRED BY: Councillor Z Smith
REASON: Parking concerns

DEPARTURE: No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1 RECOMMENDATION

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

The principle of the proposed use is considered acceptable within an established residential area. The premises would provide adequate facilities for future occupants. Notwithstanding existing parking conditions in the local area, the site is in a sustainable location close to the town centre, bus services and amenities and would provide adequate facilities for cycle storage and refuse storage and have an acceptable impact on flood risk. The proposal thereby complies with Policies H1, H5, BN7 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, saved Policies E20 and H30 of the Northampton Local Plan, the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD 2019 and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for 6 occupants (retrospective). No external alteration has been proposed.
- 2.2 The proposed layout includes a basement kitchen, two bedrooms and a shower room on every floor i.e. ground, first and second floors.

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The site consists of a terraced property located along a residential street of similar uses. There is private amenity space to the rear enclosed on three sides. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and is not in a conservation area. Parking is provided on street on an unrestricted basis along Upper Thrift Street and other nearby side streets.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None.

5 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

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 the Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

6 National Policies

- 6.1 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 72 - ensure a variety of homes meet needs of different groups.

Paragraph 127 - seeks to create safe and healthy places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

6.2 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:

H1 - Housing Density, Mix and Type of Dwellings

H5 - Managing the existing Housing Stock

S10 - Sustainable Development Principles

BN7 - Flood Risk

6.3 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 (design)

H30 Houses in multiple occupation

6.4 Supplementary Planning Documents

Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

Northamptonshire County Parking Standards 2016

Northampton Parking Standards 2019

6.5 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HIMO) Supplementary Planning Document (November 2019)

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

7 CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 7.1 **Councillor Zoe Smith:** call in and object to on grounds of impact of parking.
- 7.2 **NCC Highways:** Highways requested that a parking beat survey be undertaken to establish the level of parking demand in the area. The applicant has produced a Sustainability Statement instead detailing that the site is in a sustainable town centre location with bus stops and local services nearby.
- 7.3 **Private Sector Housing (NBC):** The room sizes, amenities and facilities indicated on the submitted plans indicate that the proposals would meet the requirements for a 6 occupant HIMO.
- 7.4 **1 Objection received on following grounds:**
- Detract from local sense of community
 - Over concentration within the area
 - Noise and anti-social behaviour
 - Lack of family homes
 - Neglect of property
 - Not adequate facilities for number of occupants
 - Increase in vehicles, leads to lack of parking

8 APPRAISAL

Principle of the development

- 8.1 The conversion of the existing dwelling to a HIMO 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 Joint Core Strategy allows for HIMOs where the proposal would not adversely impact on the character of the area and amenity of residential areas.

Area concentration

- 8.2 NBC records evidence that there are 2 other HIMOs (out of 31 properties) within a 50m radius of the application site. The use of this property as a HIMO would equate to 9.6% concentration and would clearly fall within the 10% maximum threshold recommended by the Council's adopted SPD in relation to HIMOs. It is considered therefore that there would still be a reasonable mixture of house types within the area.

Size of property and facilities for future occupiers

- 8.3 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 HIMOs to be of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use. 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, WC and wash facilities. A condition restricting the use of the property to a maximum of 6 people would ensure over-development does not occur. All bedrooms would be served by adequate outlook and light. Private Sector Housing were consulted and confirmed that the rooms sizes and amenities are sufficient to meet the requirements of a 6 occupant HIMO.

Flood Risk

- 8.4 The site lies in a low risk Flood Zone (Zone 1) where there is limited risk from flooding to the proposed use.

Highways / Parking

- 8.5 The Houses in Multiple Occupation 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.
- 8.6 No parking beat survey was submitted with the application. It is considered that the application site is in a sustainable location within 400 metres of bus stop with buses stopping, on average, every 30 minutes. The site is also located within 124m of the nearest bus stop on Billing Road to the south of the site. In this regard, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the SPD in respect of parking considerations. It also complies with Principle 5 of the Parking Standards SPD.
- 8.7 Within such areas, the SPD recommends that storage space should be provided which is accessible to cycle users. Full details have not yet been submitted for the cycle storage located to the rear of the property, however, this can be secured by condition. The proposal is, therefore, in compliance with this principle of the SPD. The Northamptonshire Parking Standards state that HIMO shall provide on plot parking at the ratio of one parking space per bedroom. The proposed development will produce a demand for 6 spaces. The agent noted in the Sustainability Statement that the site had been visited in both the early and late evenings and in the period after 6pm to establish the parking demand in the area and found that parking was not normally at capacity and there were spaces available along the Billing Road, it was also noted that a number of the residential properties along the Billing Road have on-site parking available off a private rear access, which helps the parking situation.
- 8.8 There is no evidence to support that all the residents would own cars. Furthermore, regard must be paid to recent appeal decisions where Planning Inspectors have consistently taken the view that where a site is close to local amenities and public transport, and no parking is provided, considerable weight has been given to the sustainable location of the site, and the appeals concerned have been allowed. Indeed, some Inspectors have taken the view that proposed occupiers in recognising the lack of parking provision and proximity to amenities, may choose the location for this purpose and not wish to have cars.
- 8.9 In view of the recent appeal decisions, and the weight the Inspectors have given to the sustainability of locations and having regard to the sustainable location of the application site, the number of occupants proposed, and that there is sufficient room within the site to provide secure bicycle storage, it is not considered that a refusal on highway grounds could be upheld at appeal.

Refuse storage

- 8.10 Details have been submitted for refuse storage, which is to be located within the rear amenity space which is deemed acceptable. A condition has been recommended to secure the arrangement and provision.

Amenity

- 8.11 The proposed use falls within Use Class C4, which in effect categorises this as a residential use here is no evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would generate adverse amenity impacts such as noise or anti-social behaviour over and above those created by a more conventional C3 dwelling. Consequently, it is not considered that a refusal of planning permission, or the imposition of conditions in relation to amenity issues would be reasonable or sustainable at appeal.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed development would not lead to an unacceptable concentration of HIMO's within the locality that would adversely affect the character of the local area, 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 and would not impact adversely on flood risk. The proposed development would be in accordance with the requirements of Policies H1, H5, BN7 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, saved Policies E20 and H30 of the Northampton Local Plan, the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

10 CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: M76-1

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

- 2) The maximum number of occupiers shall not exceed six at any one time.

Reason: In order to prevent over-development to accord with Policy H5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and H30 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- 3) Within two months of the date of the planning permission hereby granted, full 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 details shall be implemented within one month following approval of the details and thereafter retained.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy S10 of the Joint Core Strategy and E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

- 4) Within two months of the date of the planning permission hereby granted, 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. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within one month following approval of the details and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate facilities in accordance with Policy S10 of the Joint Core Strategy and E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

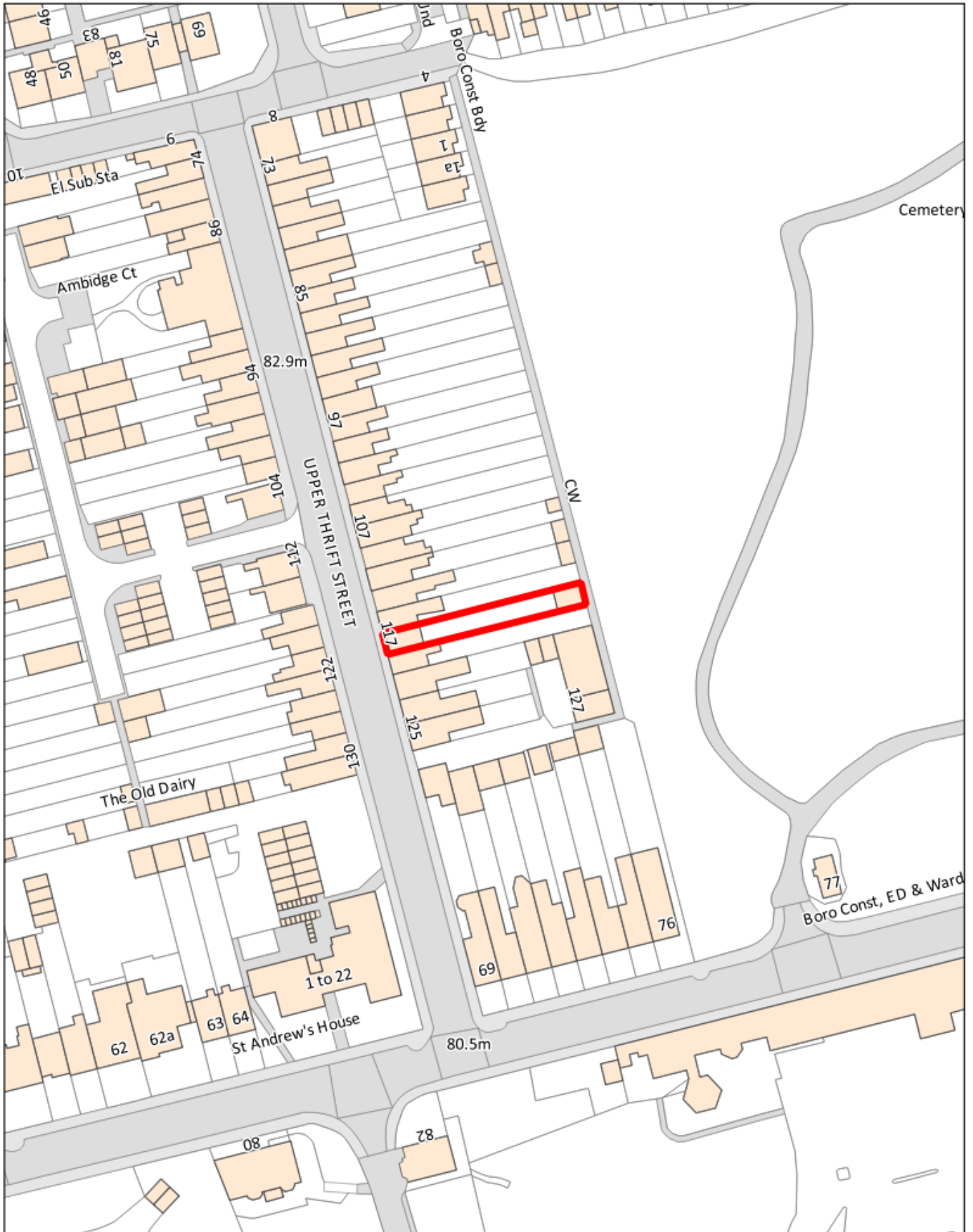
- 11.1 None.

12 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The development is not CIL liable.

13 SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 13.1 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.



Title: **117 Upper Thrift Street**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey licence no. 100019655

Date: 23-04-2020

Scale: 1:1,000

Drawn by: -----