

PLANNING STATEMENT

**RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL DWELLING TO 5
NO. BEDROOM HMO.
11A COMMERCIAL ROAD, NEWPORT, NP20 2PA**

This statement has been provided in support of a planning application for the continued use of the above property as a HMO.

Site Description

The accommodation subject to this application is located on the upper two floors of a three storey building on the eastern side of Commercial Road with a currently vacant commercial space on the ground floor. Access to the accommodation is via a doorway on Commercial road with access to the rear of the property via Ruperra Lane.

The location is highly sustainable from an access and services point of view and within the settlement boundary.

Planning Designations

The Site is not subject to any designations as defined by the Council's adopted Policies Map nor is it within, or immediately adjacent to, any national designations, AONBs, National Parks etc.

The property is not listed nor are there any designated heritage assets nearby.

The Proposal

The property was formerly two residential flats but was converted for use as a HMO without planning permission some nine months ago and has been successfully operating as a HMO since.

Following a recent licensing visit a few recommendations were made by the Local Authority that the sizes of some areas needed to be increased and that planning permission is required for the continued operation of the property as a HMO.

The plans accompanying this application propose some minor internal layout alterations to ensure that all of the spaces are in line with the published guidelines for HMO accommodation.

The accommodation proposed comprises 5 bedrooms, a communal lounge, communal kitchen/ dining room, two wc's and a shower room. All of the bedrooms intended for single person occupation are 8m² minimum whilst those capable of housing two adults are a minimum 12m².

No external alterations are proposed.

Planning Appraisal

The Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) to 2015 is the development plan for the purposes of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The relevant policies are referred to below.

- SP1 Sustainability;
- SP3 Flood Risk;
- GP2 General Amenities;
- GP4 Highways and Accessibility;
- H8 Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation; and
- T4 Parking.

The main issues that are considered to be relevant in this case include:

- i) The principle of development in relation to land use planning policy and sustainable development;
- ii) Flood Risk
- iii) The effect the proposal will have on the character and appearance of the area;

iv) The impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties; and
v) Parking and servicing arrangements.

i) Principle of Development

Policy SP1 of the LDP seeks the efficient use of land within the urban boundary and there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, subject to other material considerations.

The principle of the change of use of this property within the defined settlement boundary and the creation of additional residential units is an efficient re-use of the property. The proposal is compliant with both local and national planning policy.

The proposal does not create an over-concentration of houses in multiple occupation in any one area of the city which would change the character of the neighbourhood or create an imbalance in the housing stock.

ii) Flood Risk

The application site is situated in an area deemed low risk for surface water and very low risk from sea and river flooding so no additional consideration for flooding has been deemed necessary.

iii) Character and Appearance

No external alterations are required. As a result, the proposal will maintain the character and appearance of the area.

iv) Neighbour Amenity

The surrounding area is urban and built up with tight grain development close to a raft of local amenities. There is no evidence to suggest that the creation of a HMO in this location would have any impact on neighbour amenity over or above that posed by a self-contained flat. The upper floors of the properties along Commercial Road are almost entirely used for residential purposes.

The proposed use is commensurate with the size of the property, and would not undermine the amenity of the neighbouring properties, through any increase in noise and disturbance.

Overall, the proposal would not materially harm the amenity of neighbouring properties and therefore accords with Policies GP2 and H8 of the LDP.

v) Parking and Servicing

As is commonplace along Commercial Road where there is no designated parking for the residential properties above commercial units. This property does not benefit from private or off road parking however it does occupy a highly sustainable location with easy access to services and amenities. As a result, occupants will enjoy easy access to shops, services and facilities as well as local employment opportunities, therefore reducing the reliance on the private car. This accords with the overarching pursuit of sustainable development set out in Planning Policy Wales. Given the proximity to a range of local services, the absence of off-street parking is fully justified.

This view has been borne out in numerous planning appeals where refusals have been overturned based on the view that parking standards should be applied flexibly and be informed by local context and that HMO's generally are an attractive form of accommodation for those on lower incomes without regular access to a car.

A bike store for 5 bikes is proposed within the rear garden which is accessed from Ruperra Lane at the rear.

Conclusion

The property has been operating successfully as an unofficial HMO for some time without issue or complaint and is a much needed source of accommodation for those who need low cost, safe and comfortable accommodation in a well connected and sustainable location.

This statement has identified that the proposed development complies with national and local planning policy. The Council's decision on the planning application must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The scheme is generally in accordance with the development plan with the exception of the parking arrangements. The location of the property and previous judgements in similar appeal cases hopefully demonstrates that this exception is not sufficient in itself for refusal and therefore it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.