

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/22/94185

Site Address: 76 ALLBROOK HILL, EASTLEIGH, SO50 4LY

Case Officer: Gary Osmond

Description: Conversion of existing storeroom to bedroom to create a 7no. bedroom HMO

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☐	No ☒
The application building is a large two storey end of terrace dwelling fronting Allbrook Hill. To the rear is a former Baptist Chapel, now converted to a single residential dwelling, together with a sizable area of hardstanding used for casual parking accessed down the side of the property. There is no formal garden or amenity space to speak of. Allbrook Hill is a narrow but busy road fronted on either side by predominantly two storey dwellings of varying ages, from Victorian through to much more recent development. Most parking is on-street, due to the historic nature of most buildings. To either side and opposite the application site are residential properties, with a commercial/industrial yard to the rear used for the storage and maintenance of cranes and other large scale construction plant.		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
The building appears to have originally been a shop, which was later converted to a single dwelling, including single storey extensions to the front and rear. There have been a number of applications to convert the building into flats and bedsits, the most recent of which was F/06/57027 for 'Change of use of dwelling into 7No. Bedsits' which was refused predominantly on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One received from the neighbouring industrial occupier raising no objection.		
Allbrook Parish Council:	Objection: Overdevelopment of site, lack of amenity space, lack of provision of parking and waste disposal.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 19/01/2023		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:

Proposal:

The application seeks consent to convert one of the front ground floor rooms, which is currently used for storage, into a bedroom, resulting in a seven-bedroom House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). No external alterations to the building would be required and only very minimal internal works.

Policy & Principle:

The application site lies within the urban edge where the basic principle of development is considered acceptable, with any formal planning approval being based on the exact details of that proposed and whether it accords with the relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents. The most relevant policy in this instance being DM1 which covers various issues relating to design, impact on neighbours and ensuring developments are appropriate in nature and scale to the character and context of the locality.

Whilst there appears to be no specific planning history relating to the present use of the dwelling as an HMO, it is clear from visiting that site that this is its current use and that it appears to have been used for this purpose for some time. Notwithstanding the lack of planning history, a dwelling can be converted into an HMO for up to six residents without requiring the need for formal planning application. The proposed conversion of the storeroom to a bedroom, increasing the number of residents, changes the use class from C4 to *sui generis* in planning terms and therefore requires formal planning consent.

In principle that proposed is acceptable, with approval being subject to the impact of that proposed.

Layout, Design, Street Scene & Area Character:

Externally there will be no change in the appearance of the building or areas to the rear of the site. As such, there will be no impact upon the street scene or visual amenity and character of the area. Internally no significant physical works are required, simply the change in purpose of the front room to a bedroom.

The concerns raised by the parish are noted. However, in this instance the provision of a single additional bedroom is unlikely to result in any significant impact upon the locality, resulting in only a very modest intensification of use of the property. With regards to waste disposal, again a single additional occupier should easily be accommodated by the existing waste facilities.

Amenity:

Whilst a modest intensification of use, this is not expected to be to the extent that the amenity of any neighbouring properties will be impacted in any negative way.

With regards to the amenity of existing and future occupiers of the HMO, whilst the lack of useable external amenity space is not ideal, this will be something readily apparent to any new occupiers and is not something that could justifiably be used as a refusal of the application.

Parking & Highway Issues:

The concerns of the parish in relation to parking are noted. However, for planning purposes an HMO would be considered as a single residential dwelling. As such, a minimum of three off-road parking spaces should be provided. This can easily be provided to the rear of the site without any changes being required. There is also ample space to accommodate a number of additional vehicles if required. As such, parking could not be used as a reason to refuse the application, despite the parking difficulties experienced along Allbrook Hill. Equally, the very modest nature of that proposed is unlikely to have any impact upon highway movements or safety.

Nature Conservation:

The very modest nature of that proposed and lack of any physical alterations to the building is not considered to result in any issues for nature conservation or ecology.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environment Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications

Conclusion:

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☒	REFUSE ☐
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For the reasons set out above, the application is considered to accord with the requirements of Policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14 of the Local Plan and is recommended for approval.