

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/22/94204

Site Address: THE BAYS, UPPER NORTHAM DRIVE, HEDGE END,
SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4BG

Case Officer: Rebecca Altman

Description: Change of use from Class C3 (dwellings) to Class C3b incorporating alterations to create two separate dwellings to provide supported living for two residents including support worker accommodation.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• In the countryside (outside Urban Edge) • In settlement gap • Surface water flood risk on site • Within impact zones for Solent and New Forest SPA		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Z/25592/001/00 – single storey side extension with garage and alterations to roof – permitted 06/02/1985		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One representation received, raising objection on the following grounds: a) The road is quite dangerous due to speeding lorries accessing the nearby lorry park; b) Concerns about noise and disturbance; c) Loss of property value for neighbours; d) Unsustainable location due to poor access to public transport.		
Parish Council:	No objection.		
SGN	Advice provided for the applicants attention regarding gas main location and restrictions.		
SSE	Information provided regarding electricity mains.		
Natural England	No objection.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
22 December 2022 – photographs on file.		

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, DM14 (Parking), DM24 (Mix of housing), DM25 (Older and vulnerable person housing).
Supplementary Planning Documents: Accommodation for older people and those in need of care, Adopted May 2011

Assessment:

Site and proposal

The application relates to a bungalow on the north side of Upper Northam Drive. There is a large driveway/parking area at the front of the site, and a garden and outbuilding to the rear. There are rooflights in the front (south) facing roofslope.

Planning permission is sought for a change of use of the property from a C3 residential dwelling to 2 x units plus support worker accommodation for people with learning and/or physical disabilities. The proposed use would be classed as supported housing, falling within Class C3(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order.

The units would be self-contained with 1 x bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and dining area. Each unit would have its own entrance door plus an internal door leading to a shared hallway, which would also provide access to a support worker bedroom in the roofspace. The applicant has confirmed that each unit would be for single occupancy and there would be a minimum of 2 members of staff present per shift.

Externally, the main alterations would comprise changes to the doors and windows. An existing garage door would be replaced by two new doors, creating a total of three front doors (one to each unit and one to the shared hallway). On the front roofslope, the existing rooflight windows would be retained and photovoltaic panels would be installed. There would be no external changes to the rear elevation.

Principle of the proposal

The Adopted Local Plan highlights the need for a mix of housing, including specialist accommodation. The supporting text to Policy DM25 (para. 5.126) states: '*Vulnerable and older people have a range of individual housing needs... Therefore it is necessary to provide for a range of housing for older people, and other vulnerable groups where there is an identified need, both in the general housing mix and through the provision of specialist accommodation*'. The Council also has an SPD for accommodation for older people and those in need of care, which notes that proposals for such development within the countryside must be considered under the relevant policies of the Local Plan.

The property lies within the countryside but the proposed use would not require any extension to the building and would not increase the level of occupancy compared to that of a single dwelling. The proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of the countryside policies in the Local Plan, and is acceptable in principle. The use of the property within Use Class C3(b) can be secured by condition.

Within the representation, it is noted that the site does not have ready access to public transport and is not a sustainable location. The guidance within the Council's SPD is that new care accommodation should be within 400m of local services and facilities, or within 400m of a bus stop or other means of public transport. In this case, the nearest bus stops are located on Thornhill Park Road approximately 500m away, and there are shops and services further west along Thornhill Park Road. The property is therefore slightly further from local services than is recommended within the SPD, but the positive benefits of providing accommodation to meet specific needs is considered to outweigh this matter.

Design

The main external alterations would include the installation of two new doors (UPVC to match existing) to the front elevation and photovoltaic panels to the roofslope. These alterations are considered acceptable and would not significantly impact on the appearance of the property or surrounding area.

Impact on neighbouring residents

The property is detached and would not be extended. Whilst two units would be created, they would be for single occupancy, therefore the total number of residents within the building would be no greater than could currently reside in the single dwelling. The applicants have confirmed that there would be up to 3 members of support staff at the property at any one time, but generally 2. Although there may be some additional vehicle movements associated with the staff coming and going, it is not considered that this would be significantly greater than would be generated by a single dwelling.

Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents about increased noise and disturbance from the new residents of the building. In response, the applicants have provided a statement explaining how the property would be managed. The support staff would be trained to manage the specific needs of the occupants and would make contact with neighbours to resolve any issues raised. Based on the information provided, it is not considered that the use would generate a significant increase in noise and disturbance to neighbours.

Parking and highway impact

There is a gravel driveway/parking area at the front of the property, which can accommodate 4 cars. This level of parking is sufficient to serve 2 x 1-bedroom units in accordance with the Council's Adopted Parking Standards. There would also be ample space within the rear garden to accommodate cycle storage.

Whilst there would be some vehicle movements from the comings and goings of the support staff, given the low occupancy, it is not considered that the level of vehicle activity would be significant, or have any adverse impact on the local highway network.

Impact on European protected sites

Natural England has identified that new residential development has the potential to impact on the Solent and New Forest Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites, through increased recreational pressure and increased nutrient output. However, in this case, as the occupancy level of the building is not proposed to be increased, it is determined that the development would not impact on the integrity of the protected sites. An Appropriate Assessment screening opinion was sent to Natural England and they have confirmed no objection.

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 Environmental 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 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: The proposed development is considered acceptable to meet specific accommodation needs and would not adversely impact on the character of the area or the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

Conditions:

Implementation time frame.

Plan numbers.

Each flat hereby permitted shall be occupied solely as supported living accommodation for a single occupant within Use Class C3(b), and at no time shall be let or sold separately as a private residential dwelling.

Reason: To ensure that the use would not be intensified to protect the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of neighbouring residents.

Water efficiency.

Retention of parking in front forecourt.

Provision of cycle storage.

Windows and doors to match existing.