

Application Number: F/26/101216
Case Officer: Gregg Chapman
Received Date: Wednesday 8 April 2026
Site Address: Meller House, Oakbank Road, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh, SO50 6HF
Applicant: S Bains
Proposal: Formation of nine new dwellings by reconfiguration of parts of existing building. [Note, physical external alterations in accompanying tandem application]
Recommendation: Approval, subject to conditions

CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans:

Location Plan and Proposed Floor Plans – KC 02 A PP B

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. Within three months of the date of this decision a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Preparation and construction work shall only take place in accordance with the approved CEMP which shall include:

- a) the location of temporary site buildings, compounds, construction material and plant storage areas used during demolition and construction;
- b) the arrangements for deliveries associated with all construction works, loading/ unloading of plant & materials and restoration of any damage to the highway [including vehicle crossovers and grass verges].
- c) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- d) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt generated by demolition and construction;
- e) a scheme for controlling noise and vibration from demolition and construction activities.
- f) provision for storage, collection, and disposal of waste from the development during construction period;
- g) measures to prevent mud and dust on the highway during demolition and construction;
- h) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- i) temporary lighting;
- j) protection of pedestrian routes during construction;
- k) temporary surface water drainage provisions; and
- l) hours of working.

Reason: To limit the impact the development has on the amenity of the locality, in accordance with policies DM1 and DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016- 2036).

Notes to Applicant;

1. **Note to Applicant: In accordance with policy DM3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Eastleigh Borough Council has taken a positive and proactive approach to the consideration of the development proposal, seeking to achieve a positive outcome and a timely decision.**
2. **Note to Applicant: It is requested that the building works are carried out considerably to minimise disruption to the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. The council operates a code of best practice, which is available on the council's website www.eastleigh.gov.uk by following the links to Planning and Building, Building Control, then select 'Considerate Builders Advice Note'.**

Report

- 1 This application has been referred to the Committee by Councillors Gin Tidridge, Cllr Nick Couldrey, and Cllr Louise Parker-Jones.

Site Characteristics and Character of the Locality

- 2 The site occupies a prominent corner position within the Old Bishopstoke Conservation Area, with frontages to both Church Road and the green space, which occupies the site of the former St Mary's Church. Remains of the original church are still evident within the green space. The site also lies opposite the recreation ground and adjoins the entrance to a public right of way leading to the River Itchen, giving it a strong visual and functional relationship with a number of important public spaces within the conservation area.
- 3 The surrounding historic environment includes the nearby listed buildings, Itchen House and The Old Rectory, together with three locally listed lamp posts located along the northern edge of the green. The boundary wall along Church Road also forms a notable feature of the street scene and is understood to date from the original dwelling that formerly occupied the site prior to its redevelopment in the 1970s.

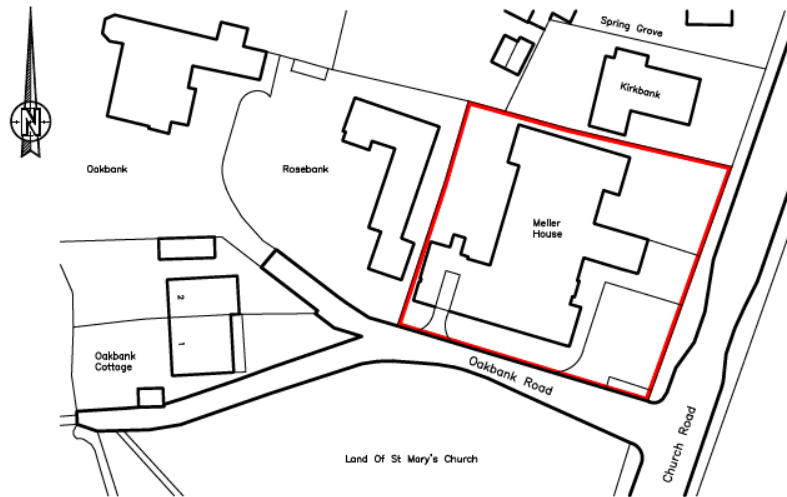


Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figure 2: Photographs of the Existing Building

Description of Application

- 4 The existing accommodation comprises a visitor bedroom, two one-bedroom flats, one two-bedroom manager's flat, and seventeen bedsits. Six of the existing units (comprising four studios and two one-bedroom flats) remain unchanged and are not part of the consideration of the application.
- 5 The application seeks permission for the internal reconfiguration of the remaining parts of the existing building to form nine dwellings – a total decrease of six units. The proposal would deliver two one-bedroom dwellings, four two-bedroom dwellings and three three-bedroom dwellings. The application can be accessed here - <https://planning.eastleigh.gov.uk/s/public-register>.

- 6 The proposal under the current application is only for the change of use from 21 dwellings to 15. The internal works in themselves do not require permission, and the external works are the subject of parallel linked application F/26/101217, the details of which are set out below.

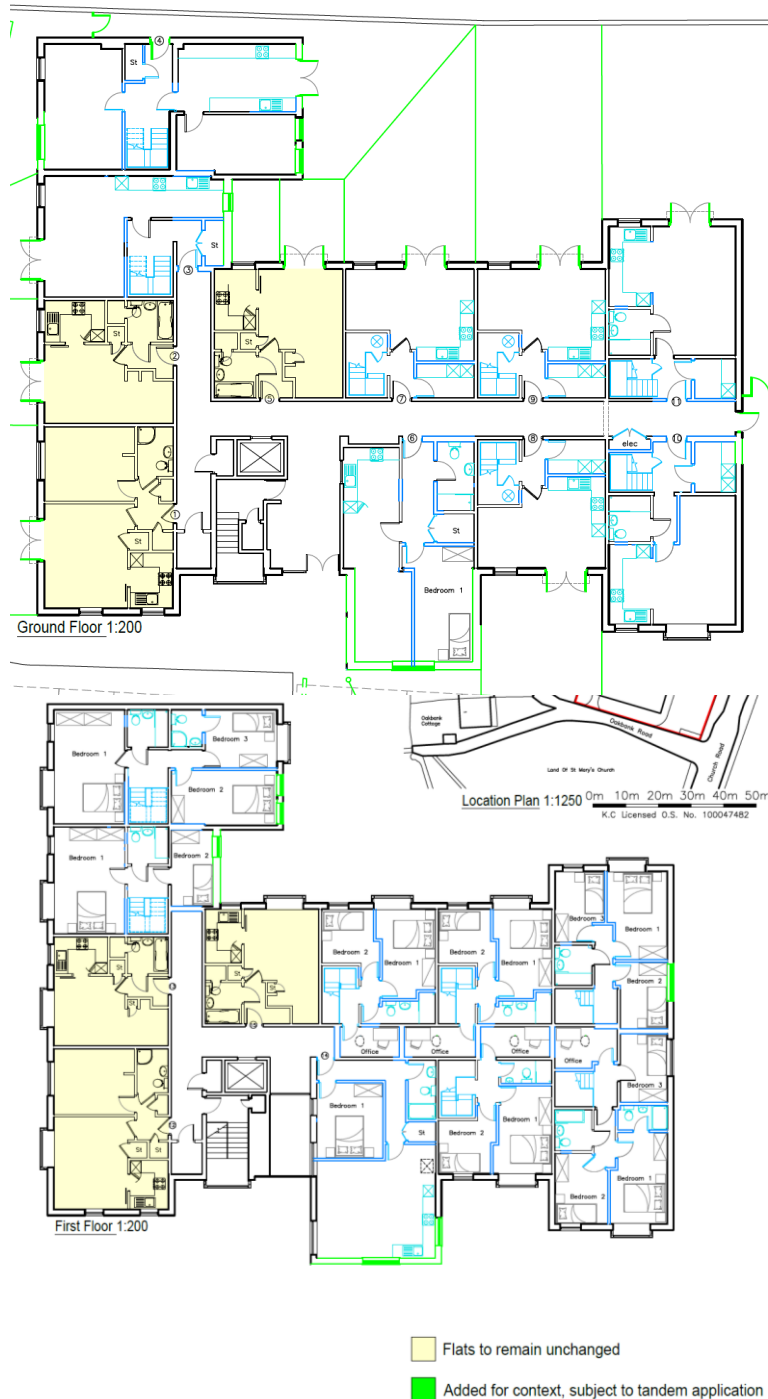


Figure 3: Proposed Floor Plans

Relevant Planning History

- 7 F/25/99311 - Conversion of existing site of 21 dwellings to 15 dwellings including alterations to the roof, and extensions/alterations to the building, and associated works including landscaping, private amenity, refuse, cycle store and parking – Refused, August 2025, for the reasons;
1. The proposal fails to satisfactorily demonstrate that it would achieve the statutory requirement for biodiversity net gain, as set out in Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted

by the Environment Act 2021). The submitted Biodiversity Metric contains errors and omissions and does not provide robust evidence that a minimum 10% net gain can be delivered either on-site or off-site. The development is therefore contrary to the Environment Act 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016–2036.

2. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would not cause harm to protected species, including bats and great crested newts, or to their habitats. In the absence of such information, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the proposals would comply with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Policy DM11 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016–2036, and Paragraphs 187 and 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
 3. The submitted surface water drainage strategy is inadequate and unsupported by site-specific infiltration testing or groundwater monitoring. No robust evidence has been provided to demonstrate the adequacy of the existing drainage system or the viability of the proposed soakaway design. In the absence of this information, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that the development would not increase flood risk on or off site, particularly given the sensitive environmental location in close proximity to the River Itchen SAC and SSSI. The proposals are therefore contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies S1, DM3, DM5 and DM6 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016–2036.
- 8 F/26/101217 - Part retrospective external alterations to the existing building, including replacement and insertion of windows and doors, roof alterations, partial reduction of part of the building, alterations to parking layout including enlarged car parking area, provision of bin and cycle storage, boundary fencing and gates, and associated works – Linked Application, Pending Consideration.

Representations Received

- 9 1 letter – Objection
- The proposal is considered, whilst not maybe in planning terms, to represent a significant change from the intended purpose of Meller House of the original owner as sheltered accommodation for elderly residents.
 - The proposal would introduce rental units for families and younger people, changing the character and intensity of occupation. The submitted floor plans indicate potential occupation by approximately 24 adults and 11 children. The increased occupancy and changed demographic would place additional pressure on local infrastructure and amenity, including wastewater, traffic, visitors, deliveries and parking.
 - Oakbank Road already experiences sewage back-up during periods of significant rainfall, including odours and occasional discharge around manhole covers. Increased wastewater discharge should only

be permitted if existing sewer constraints, particularly at Church Road/Riverside, are resolved with Southern Water.

- Oakbank Road is a single-track cul-de-sac with restricted visibility at its junction with Church Road due to existing parking near the bend into Riverside. Concern is raised that additional traffic from residents, visitors and delivery vehicles could result in inappropriate parking on Oakbank Road and obstruct access for residents, deliveries and emergency vehicles. Suggested mitigation includes a stop sign for vehicles exiting Meller House, a clearly marked delivery area, and guidance for residents on addressing illegal or obstructive parking.
- Concern is raised that the proposed 15 parking spaces may be insufficient, as residents could own more than one vehicle, leading to overspill parking on Church Road.
- Request that parking restrictions be considered at the junction of Church Road and Oakbank Road.
- Concern is raised that the application does not specify construction working hours or explain where construction plant and large delivery vehicles would be located.
- Request controls to prevent plant or large vehicles being positioned in Oakbank Road, or alternatively the submission of a management plan where temporary obstruction is unavoidable.

Consultation Responses

- 10 **Bishopstoke Parish Council** - Object to this planning application until all of the outstanding questions and issues had been resolved.
- 11 **Nature Space** – Certificate in respect of a newt district licence issued.

Policy Context and Designations Applicable to the Site

- 12
- Within the Urban Edge
 - Bishopstoke Conservation Area
 - Setting of Listed Buildings
 - Great Crested Newts Red Zone
 - Within Zone of Impact of European protected Solent Complex (SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites), River Itchen (SAC and SSSI) and New Forest National Park (SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites)
 - Public Right of Way Buffer
 - Archaeological Site of County Importance

13 Development Plan Policies

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036

The most relevant policies are;

Strategic policies

- S1 – Delivering sustainable development
- S2 – Approach to new development
- S3 – Location of new housing
- S8 – Historic environment

Development Management policies

- DM1 – General criteria for new development
- DM2 – Environmentally sustainable development
- DM3 – Adaptation to climate change
- DM4 – Zero or low carbon technology
- DM10 – Water and Waste Water
- DM12 – Heritage Assets
- DM13 – General development criteria - transport
- DM14 - Parking
- DM23 – Residential development in urban areas
- DM24 – Creating a mix of housing
- DM30 – Internal space standards for new residential development

14 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- Bishopstoke Conservation Area Appraisal (April 2011)
- Quality Places (June 2026)
- Parking Standards (September 2025)
- Housing (February 2003)

15 **National Planning Policy Framework**

At national level, the recent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026) is a material consideration of significant weight in the determination of planning applications. Policy S3 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For development within settlements, policy S4 provides that development proposals should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF.

The most relevant national policies are;

- Determining development proposals (DM3)
- Use of planning conditions and obligations (DM6)
- Relationship with other regulatory regimes (DM7)
- Presumption in favour of sustainable development (S3)
- Principle of development within settlements (S4)
- Climate Change (CC2 & CC3)
- Meeting the need for homes (HO7)
- Specialist homes (HO9)
- Making effective use of land (L2)
- Achieving appropriate densities (L3)
- Well-designed places - key principles (DP3) & the design process (DP4)
- Locating development in sustainable locations (TR3)
- Street design, access and parking (TR4)
- Assessing transport impacts (TR6)
- Public rights of way (TR8)
- Living conditions and pollution (P3)
- Impact of development on existing activities (P4)
- Assessing flood risk for decision-making (F4)
- Improving the natural environment (N2)
- Areas of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (N6)

- Securing conservation of heritage assets (HE4)
- Assessing effects on heritage assets (HE5)
- Proposals affecting designated heritage assets (HE6)
- Decisions on non-designated heritage assets (HE7)
- Conservation areas (HE9)

16 **Conservation Area**

The site lies within Bishopstoke Conservation Area and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in the Conservation Area of any powers (under the Planning Acts), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.

Principle of Development

- 17 The application site is located within the Urban Edge, where the principle of development and redevelopment for residential purposes is acceptable in principle, subject to meeting other relevant planning requirements, in accordance with policy DM23 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016 – 2036 (EBLP). This is also consistent with Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF (2026), which apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development and support development within settlements unless its benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies.
- 18 The site formerly operated as a ‘semi-sheltered’ housing association site for the elderly, but with units sold on the open market, and with there being no planning restrictions to prevent sale or occupation solely to/by the elderly. There is, therefore, no in principle planning requirement for the retention or reprovision of elderly accommodation through policy DM25 of the EBLP. Policy HO9 of the NPPF (2026) addresses proposals for specialist forms of accommodation, including specialist housing for older people, but does not establish a requirement for unrestricted general housing previously occupied by older people to be retained for that purpose.

Mix and Type of Accommodation

- 19 Policy DM24 of the EBLP seeks a mix of accommodation, which the proposal would deliver, diversifying the site from predominantly studio apartments to create four two bedroom dwellings and three three bedroom dwellings. This directly reflects the expectations of the supporting text to policy DM24 (paragraph 5.123) which seeks the provision of two and three bedroom dwellings;

“The PfSH Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA 2014) examines the future housing needs in the Borough. Due to an ageing population and falling household sizes, it identifies a need for more two and three bedroom dwellings. These can be attractive to both older people looking to downsize and families. An estimated 75% of all market sector, and 65% of all affordable sector, dwellings should be two or three bedroom properties. In accordance with DM24, new development should reflect the

identified needs as set out in a Housing Market Assessment or in the Council's Housing Strategy."

This also reflects the Council 2003 Housing SPD which seeks 35% of units to be 2 bedroom and 50% to be three bedrooms. The proposed mix, and diversification of bedroom numbers is, therefore a material benefit in favour of the proposal which meets policy DM24 of the EBLP. The provision of a greater proportion of two and three bedroom accommodation which responds to identified housing needs is also supported by policy HO7 of the NPPF (2026), which requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of providing homes which contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community.

- 20 As set out above, the site formerly operated as a 'semi-sheltered' housing association site for the elderly, but with units sold on the open market, and with there being no planning restrictions to prevent sale or occupation solely to/by the elderly or for any affordable purpose. Whilst the carrying on of such an arrangement may have been desired/intended by a previous owner, there is no planning requirement for the retention or reprovision of elderly accommodation. There is a material fallback position that the current units (which as set out below are under sized against Nationally Described Space Standards) could be occupied and sold/rented as studio flats by any persons.
- 21 Policy DM25 of the EBLP seeks to provide older peoples housing. The supporting text (paragraph 5.125) explains that the circumstances where this is anticipated is as part of the mix on "*larger allocations*". The proposal is not a strategic allocation or large site. The provision of older persons accommodation cannot be required through policy DM25.

Residential Amenity

- Living Standards

- 22 Policy DM30 of the EBLP sets an expectation that new dwellings meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). The existing accommodation is formed by one 17m2 visitor bedroom, two 1 bed flats and one 2 bed manager flat, and a total of seventeen bedsits of approximately 30m2 each. These are all under the NDSS (the minimum for a studio flat is 37m2). The submission proposal does not include any alteration to the floor plans of four studios and the two 1 bed units (six units in total). The remaining units would be amalgamated to create two new one bed units, four new two bed units, and three new three bedroom units. The below table considers the proposed altered unit sizes against the NDSS.

23

Unit	Proposal	Proposed Size (sqm)	NDSS (sqm)
3	2b3p (2 floors)	77	70
4	3b5p (2 floors)	122	93
6	1b2p	55	50
7	2b3p (2 floors)	70	70
8	2b3p (2 floors)	70	70
9	2b3p (2 floors)	70	70
10	3b4p (2 floors)	95.6	84

11	3b4p (2 floors)	84	84
14	1b2p	55	50

All of the proposed units achieve the applicable overall NDSS gross internal area requirements.

- 24 In addition, all of the single bedrooms are larger than the NDSS advised 7.5 sqm, but four of the double bedrooms (units 7, 8, 9 and 11) are smaller than 11.5 sqm for double occupancy (the smallest being 9.5 sqm and the largest 10.6 sqm).
- 25 Given that the overall property sizes meet standards, thereby providing space elsewhere within the properties, that the building is an existing structure (and thereby has limitations on its form) and the departure is not significant, it is considered this can be accepted. It would provide adequate overall living standards, that residents would be buying into.
- 26 It is also relevant, and part of the planning balance, that the units being amalgamated are already currently under the relevant NDSS in their overall size, not providing sufficient space.
- 27 The proposals achieve overall space standard expectations and result in 15 existing substandard units being reconfigured into nine larger units, with six units removed overall. Four bedrooms would fall below the NDSS requirement for double occupancy; however, having regard to the overall floorspace provided, the constraints arising from the reconfiguration of an existing building and the significant improvement over the existing accommodation, this limited departure is considered acceptable and the proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions overall.

- Garden Space

- 28 Alterations to the internal accommodation are not proposed through this application and are for consideration under application F/26/101216, which is considered to be acceptable.
- 29 In terms of garden provision for the units that would be created by the internal works, the communal garden area would be revised to provide private gardens for ten of the fifteen dwellings. The ten proposed gardens would be modest in size. However, this would represent a material improvement over the existing situation, where no private gardens are available. The five dwellings that would not have access to private garden space comprise three upper floor flats that form part of the existing layout and are not proposed to change, together with two one-bedroom flats. The proposed new flats without private amenity space would replace studio units that currently do not benefit from such provision.
- 30 Although some occupiers would not have private or communal garden space, the site is immediately adjacent to the former St Mary's Church green space and lies opposite the Church Road/Glebe Meadow recreation ground. The updated Quality Places SPD does not set a fixed minimum standard for flatted development and, where private amenity space is not provided, gives weight to access to high-quality public open space, particularly in compact development situations. In this context and having regard to the improvement over the existing arrangement, the standard of outdoor amenity space is

considered acceptable and to broadly comply with policies DM1 and DM30 of the EBLP and the Quality Places SPD. The proposal is also consistent with policy DP3 of the NPPF (2026), which includes liveability and the provision of well-designed public and private spaces amongst the principles of well-designed places.

Construction Impacts

- 31 Policy DM1 of the EBLP requires development to have an acceptable impact on the amenities of existing and future residents and users of the surrounding area. Policy DM8 seeks to ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable environmental impacts, including through noise, disturbance, dust, vibration or other forms of pollution.
- 32 A degree of disruption is commonly associated with construction activity. In this case, it is considered that any temporary impacts arising from the construction phase could be appropriately managed through the submission and approval of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. This would secure details relating to construction compounds, storage areas, parking, deliveries, vehicle movements, dust and mud control, waste management, temporary lighting, surface water drainage, working hours, and measures to protect pedestrian routes and the public highway.
- 33 Subject to this requirement, the construction phase of the development would be capable of being managed in a manner that would adequately safeguard local amenity and highway conditions. The proposal would therefore accord with policies DM1 and DM8 of the EBLP. The proposal would also accord with policy P3 of the NPPF (2026), which seeks to safeguard health and living conditions from unacceptable pollution impacts, whilst the use of the proposed CEMP condition is consistent with Policy DM6 of the NPPF (2026).

Other Matters

- 34 The application proposes only internal alterations to reduce the number of units at the site. There is a separate linked application (F/26/101217) for the external operational development. Considerations related to the external works to the building and the wider application site including an increased parking area are not in themselves material considerations for the current application and will be considered under the linked application. These include the character and appearance of the area/conservation area/setting of listed buildings, highway matters/parking, ecology and net gain, and flood risk and drainage.

SPA Mitigation

- 35 The application proposes a decrease in the number of units of overnight accommodation and therefore would not have a significant effect on protected sites. The proposal is therefore consistent with Policy N6 of the NPPF (2026) insofar as it relates to internationally designated habitats sites.

Climate Change

- 36 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; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality; (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.

- 37 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 (2026) 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.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 38 Policy S3 of the NPPF (2026) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As the application site lies within a settlement, policy S4 of the NPPF applies. This provides that development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF (2026).
- 39 The proposal would result in a decrease of the number of residential units on site. However, this loss is outweighed by the fact that the proposal would result in the refurbishment of an existing site, bringing it back in to use, provision of a better mix and quality of accommodation through the replacement of substandard studio units with larger dwellings as sought by council policy. These benefits are supported by policy HO7 of the NPPF (2026), in respect of meeting evidenced accommodation needs, and policy L2 of the NPPF (2026), which requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of making better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings.
- 40 Any limited adverse effects identified would not substantially outweigh the benefits of the proposal and, accordingly, the development accords with the applicable national decision-making policies and the approach required by policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF (2026).
- 41 Other matters are considered under the linked application F/26/101217 which is also recommended for approval.