

23/00442/FUL

WARD:HILSEA

105 BALFOUR ROAD PORTSMOUTH PO2 0NH

CHANGE OF USE FROM PURPOSES FALLING WITHIN DWELLINGHOUSE (CLASS C3) TO 7 PERSON HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (SUI GENERIS)

[23/00442/FUL | Change of use from purposes falling within dwellinghouse \(Class C3\) to 7 person house in multiple occupation \(Sui Generis\) | 105 Balfour Road Portsmouth PO2 0NH](#)

Application Submitted By:

Mrs Carianne Wells

Applecore PDM Ltd

On behalf of:

Mr Jesse Harfield

RDD: 6th April 2023

LDD: 1st June 2023

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

1.1 This application is brought before Planning Committee due to the number of objections (31) including an objection from Cllr. Daneil Wemyss.

1.2 The main issues for consideration in the determination of the application/appeal are considered to be as follows:

- The principle of development;
- Standard of accommodation;
- Parking;
- Waste;
- Amenity impacts upon neighbouring residents;
- Impact upon the Solent Protection Areas; and
- Any other raised matters.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The application relates to a two-storey, mid terraced dwellinghouse (Class C3) located on the western side of Balfour Road below. The dwellinghouse is set back from the road by a small front forecourt and to the rear of the property is an enclosed garden. The property also has an existing loft conversion with rear facing dormer and rooflights to the front slope. The existing layout comprises a kitchen, dining room, lounge and a conservatory at ground floor level; three bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor level, and a bedroom, dressing room and ensuite at 2nd floor level (within an existing loft conversion).

2.2 The application site is within a predominantly residential area characterised by rows of similar two-storey semi-detached and terraced properties with a similar visual style.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the property from a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation use for 7 unrelated individuals.
- 3.2 The proposed internal accommodation comprises the following:
- Ground Floor - Two bedrooms (with ensuites), a shared WC and a Kitchen/Dining room.
 - First Floor - Three bedrooms (all with ensuites).
 - Second Floor - Two bedrooms with ensuites
- 3.3 Permitted development rights are being exercised to construct a small rear extension, a new larger rear dormer extension within the main roof and new roof lights to the front roof slope (as shown in the drawing below), to facilitate the enlargement of the property before undertaking the proposed development. The extensions and alterations can be completed under permitted development regardless of whether the property is in Class C3 or HMO use.
- 3.4 Given the external alterations and enlargements to the property are considered to be permitted development, it is not possible to consider the design or amenity impact of the rear dormer or side/rear ground floor extension as part of this application. There would be no external operational development forming part of this application with the exception of the siting of a cycle store within the rear garden, details of which could be secured by planning condition.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Portsmouth Plan (2012)

- 5.2 In addition to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), due weight has been given to the relevant policies within the Portsmouth Plan (2012), which include:

- PCS17 (Transport)
- PCS20 (Houses in Multiple Occupation)
- PCS23 (Design and Conservation).

5.3 Other Guidance

- 5.4 Guidance for the assessment of applications that is relevant to the application includes:

- National Planning Practice Guidance (revised 2021)
- The Parking Standards and Transport Assessments Supplementary Planning Document (2014)
- The Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy (2017)
- The Interim Nutrient Neutral Mitigation Strategy (2022)

- The Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Supplementary Planning Document (2019) ('the HMO SPD').

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Highways Engineer - no objection as there is no increase in parking demand from existing when assessed against the Transport and Parking SPD. Given the small scale of the development, no parking assessment is required. A condition requiring adequate cycle storage is required.
- 6.2 Public Sector Housing - Based on the layout and sizes provided with this application this property would require to be licenced under Part 2, Housing Act 2004.

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 7.1 Thirty one representations have been received objecting to the proposed development, including one from Cllr Daniel Wemyss.
- 7.2 The above representations of objection have raised the following concerns:
- a) Loss of family home from the existing housing stock;
 - b) Increase in noise and disturbance;
 - c) Increase in crime and anti-social behaviour;
 - d) Lack of car parking provision leading to an increase in traffic and exacerbation of existing on-street parking problems;
 - e) Undue strain on local services and infrastructure, including the sewage, drainage and Doctors/Dentists
 - f) Too many HMOs within the area
 - g) Concerns about impact on community
 - h) Negative affect on property prices
 - i) Increase of nitrates.
 - j) Extension will block light to neighbouring property.

8.0 COMMENT

- 8.1 The main determining issues for this application relate to the following:
- The principle of Development;
 - The standard of accommodation;
 - Impact upon amenity neighbouring residents;
 - Parking;
 - Waste;
 - Impact upon the Solent Protection Areas; and
 - Any other raised matters
- 8.2 Principle of development
- 8.3 Permission is sought for the flexible use of the property as a HMO for 7 persons. The property currently has a lawful use as a self-contained dwelling (Class C3).
- 8.4 Policy PCS20 of the Portsmouth Plan states that applications for change of use to a HMO will only be permitted where the community is not already imbalanced by a concentration of such uses, or where the development would not create an imbalance. The adopted Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD (as amended October 2019), sets out

how Policy PCS20 will be implemented and details how the City Council will apply this policy to all planning applications for HMO uses. The SPD states that a community will be considered to be imbalanced where more than 10% of residential properties within the area surrounding the application site (within a 50m radius) are already in HMO use.

- 8.5 Based on the information held by the City Council, of the 70 properties within a 50-metre radius of the application site, there is 1 confirmed HMO (Class C4), 98 Beresford Road. Whilst this is the best available data to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and is updated on a regular basis, there are occasions where properties have been included or omitted from the database in error or have lawfully changed their use away from Class C4 HMOs without requiring the express permission of the LPA.
- 8.6 Following further Officer Investigation, no additional HMOs have been uncovered by the Case Officer. It is noted that a number of consented and potential HMOs have been identified in letters of objection by local residents, however these lie outside of the adopted search area. Consequently, including the application property, the confirmed HMOs within a 50-metre radius of the application property the proposal would result in the percentage of HMOs within the area as 2.9%. This would be considerably lower than the 10% threshold above which an area is considered to be imbalanced and in conflict with Policy PCS20.

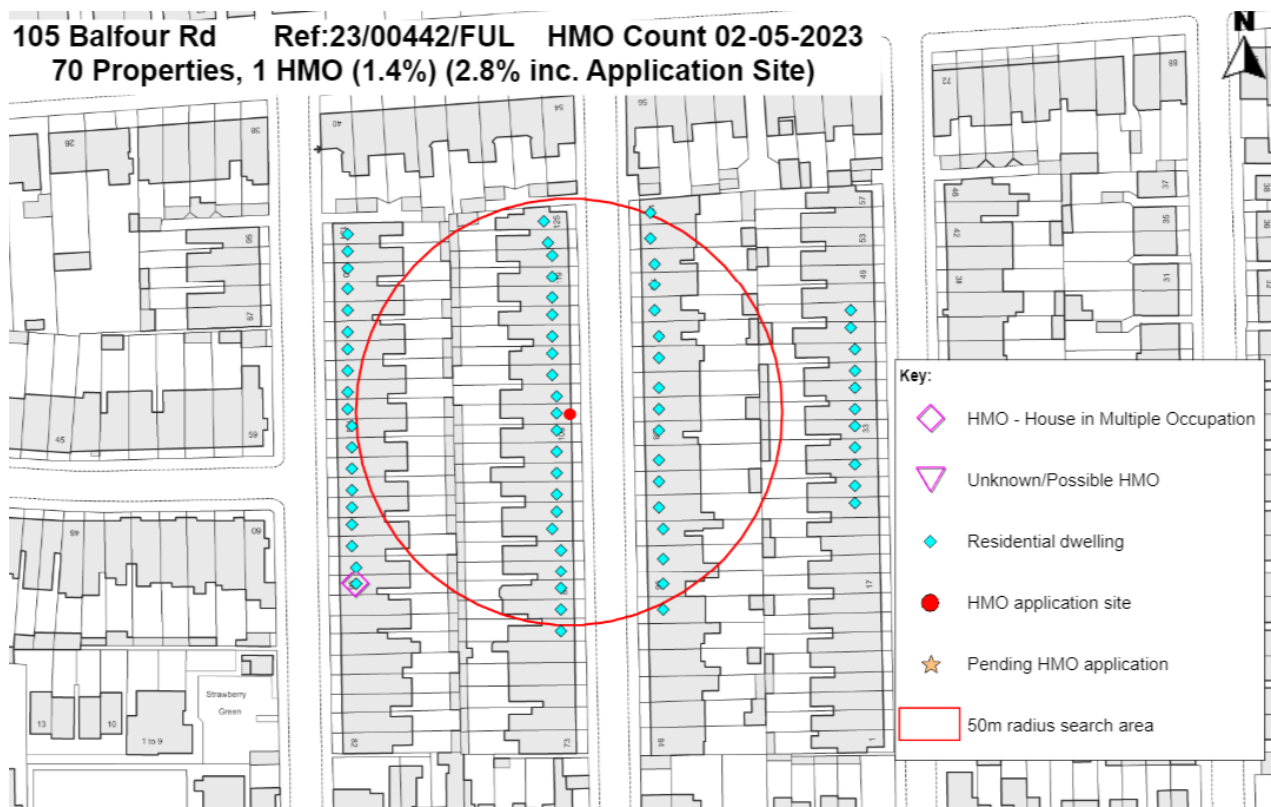


Figure 4 - Existing HMOs within 50m of the application site

- 8.7 A further policy strand introduced in July 2018, amended in October 2019, seeks to ensure that the amenity and standard of living environment of neighbours and local occupiers is protected. This is explained within Appendix 6 of the HMO SPD, which references the specific proximity of HMOs to adjacent dwellings and how these circumstances may give rise to a particular risk of harm to amenity and disturbance. These are where: the granting of the application would result in three or more HMOs adjacent to each other, or where the granting of the application would result in any

residential property being 'sandwiched' between two HMOs. There is no conflict caused by this proposal with this guidance.

- 8.8 Having regard to the above, the proposal would comply with the aims and objectives of Policies PCS19 and PCS20 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012).

8.9 Standard of accommodation

- 8.10 The application seeks, in addition to a C3 use, the opportunity to use the property as a 7 person HMO. The submitted plans have been checked by officers and the below table compares the proposed room sizes against the standards set out within the HMO SPD.

Room	Area Provided	Required Standard
Bedroom 1	10.02m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 2	10.05m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 3	12.10m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 4	10.22m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 5	12.01m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 6	12.80m ²	10m ²
Bedroom 7	10.3m ²	10m ²
Communal Kitchen/Dining area	22.51m ²	22.5m ² as all bedrooms exceed 10m ²
Ensuite bathroom 1	2.93m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 2	2.76m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 3	2.74m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 4	2.74m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 5	2.76m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 6	2.77m ²	2.74m ²
Ensuite bathroom 7	2.85m ²	2.74m ²
Tanks room/WC	2.9m ²	1.17m ²

- 8.11 As is shown in the table above, the proposal results in an internal layout that meets a straightforward appraisal against the Council's adopted space standards as detailed in the HMO SPD, which at para 2.6 advises that more detailed guidance, beyond the headline requirements should be referred to within the Council's standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation Guidance (September 2018). This more detailed guidance applies lower minimum requirements (of 22.5m²) for combined living accommodation in circumstances where all bedrooms are at least 10m² and the accommodation is otherwise acceptable as communal space. Based on the information supplied with the application this detailed guidance is considered applicable and the resulting layout is considered to result in a satisfactory standard of living environment.

8.14 Impact on neighbouring living conditions

- 8.15 In terms of the impact on the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers, it is considered that the level of activity that could be associated with the use of any individual property either as a dwellinghouse (Class C3) which involves occupation by a single family, would be unlikely to be significantly different from the occupation of the property by between 3 and 6 unrelated persons as a house in multiple occupation.

- 8.16 The HMO SPD is supported by an assessment of the need for, and supply of, shared housing in Portsmouth and of the impacts of high concentrations of HMOs on local communities. Paragraphs 9.1-9.10 of the SPD discuss the negative impacts of HMO concentrations on local communities and points to the cumulative environmental effects of HMO concentrations. However, given that there is not an over-concentration of HMOs within the surrounding area, it is considered that the impact of one further HMO would not be significantly harmful.
- 8.17 Concerns have been raised in the representations regarding a potential increase in crime and anti-social behaviour as a result of the proposed change of use. However, the Council does not have any evidence to suggest that HMOs result in higher levels of crime or anti-social behaviour than a Class C3 dwellinghouse.
- 8.18 In terms of the impact on the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers, it is considered that the level of activity that could be associated with the use of any individual property as a dwellinghouse (Class C3), would not be significantly different from the occupation of the property by between 3 and 6 unrelated persons as a house in multiple occupation.
- 8.19 The proposal would not result in an overconcentration of HMOs within the surrounding area, and therefore it is considered that the impact of one further HMO (bringing the total to three within a 50m radius) would not have any demonstrable adverse impact to wider amenity.
- 8.20 Having regard to this material consideration, it is considered there would not be a significant impact on residential amenity from the proposal.
- 8.21 Highways/Parking
- 8.22 The City Council's Parking Standards SPD sets the level of off-road parking facilities for new developments within the city and places a requirement of 2 off-road spaces for Class C4 HMOs with four or more bedrooms. However, it should be noted that the expected level of parking demand for a Class C3 dwellinghouse with four or more bedrooms would also be 2 off-road spaces, and these bedrooms could be achieved, and are being constructed, by permitted development without any planning control on parking. The submitted existing plans show that the property currently has 6 bedrooms. The property has no off-street parking.
- 8.23 As the level of occupation associated with an HMO is not considered to be significantly greater than the occupation of the property as a similarly sized Class C3 dwellinghouse, it is considered that an objection on either highway safety grounds, or car parking standards, could not be sustained on appeal. It should be noted that the property could be occupied by a large family and/or with adult children, each potentially owning a separate vehicle.
- 8.24 The Council's Adopted Parking Standards set out a requirement for C4 HMOs to provide space for the storage of at least 4 bicycles. The property has a rear garden where secure cycle storage could be located. The requirement for cycle storage is recommended to be secured by condition.

8.25 Waste

8.26 The storage of refuse and recyclable materials would remain unchanged, being located in the forecourt area, and an objection on waste grounds would not form a sustainable reason for refusal.

8.27 Impact on Special Protection Areas

8.28 Natural England have agreed to figures to offset the impact on Nitrate output and SPA recreational disturbance and this will be resolved through a s111 agreement.

8.29 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

8.30 The development would not be CIL liable as there would be no increase in the Gross Internal Area of the application property.

8.31 Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED")

8.32 The Council is required by the Human Rights Act 1998 to act in a way that is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Virtually all planning applications engage the right to the enjoyment of property and the right to a fair hearing. Indeed, many applications engage the right to respect for private and family life where residential property is affected. Other convention rights may also be engaged. It is important to note that many convention rights are qualified rights, meaning that they are not absolute rights and must be balanced against competing interests as permitted by law. This report seeks such a balance.

8.33 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of persons by reason of their protected characteristics. Further the Council must advance equality of opportunity and foster good relation between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Having had due regard to the public sector equality duty as it applies to those with protected characteristics in the context of this application, it is not considered that the officer's recommendation would breach the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

8.34 Other Matters raised in the representations.

8.35 Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents regarding the pressure the use would put on local services. However, having regard again to the existing lawful use of the property as a self-contained dwellinghouse, it is considered the use of the property would not have a significantly greater impact on local services than the existing use which could be occupied by a similar number of occupants. Furthermore, the likelihood as to whether the future occupants already live within the city, if not the area, should be considered and as such, there is no demonstrable increase in demand for public services.

8.36 As mentioned above the rear dormer and rear extension accords with Permitted Development and therefore the Local Planning Authority cannot give consideration towards the impact of the built form on the neighbour amenity.

- 8.37 Objections have been received that centre around parking issues. This matter is discussed above in greater length. In summary, a lack of parking could not be defended at appeal due to policy having the same parking requirement for the proposed C4 use and the current C3 use.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year Housing Land Supply, and consequently the tilted balance applies to the determination of the application. Having regard to all material planning considerations and representations it is concluded that the proposed change of use is acceptable and would be in accordance with the relevant policies of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).

RECOMMENDATION I - That delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Planning & Economic Growth to Grant Conditional Permission subject to:

(a) satisfactory completion of a Legal Agreement necessary to secure the mitigation of the impact of the proposed development on Solent Special Protection Areas (recreational disturbance and nitrates) by securing the payment of a financial contribution.

RECOMMENDATION II - That delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Planning & Economic Growth to add/amend conditions where necessary.

RECOMMENDATION III - That delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Planning & Economic Growth to refuse planning permission if a Legal Agreement has not been satisfactorily completed within three months of the date of this resolution.

Conditions

Time Limit:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission. Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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Approved Plans:

- 2) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

- Location Plan - TQRQM23076100051180
- DUAL USE PLAN - Dwg No.PG.8020 · 23 · 4 rev A

Reason: To ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the permission granted.

Cycle Storage:

- 3) Prior to first occupation of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation within Use Class C4, secure and weatherproof bicycle storage facilities for 4 bicycles shall be provided at the site and shall thereafter be retained for the parking of bicycles at all times.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision is made for cyclists using the premises in accordance with policies PCS17 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan.

External works as shown:

4) Prior to first occupation of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation within Use Class C4, the building operations indicated within approved drawing numbers: namely the construction of the single storey rear extension, and dormer window shall be completed.

Reason: To ensure that adequate and communal living space is provided in accordance with Policy PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (2019).