

Public Document Pack

PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 26 February 2025 at 10.30 am in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Portsmouth

These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda and associated papers for the meeting.

Present

Councillors Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)
Judith Smyth (Vice-Chair)
Richard Adair
Chris Attwell
Peter Candlish
Matthew Cordy
Hugh Mason
Asghar Shah
Mary Valley

Welcome

The chair welcomed members of the public and members to the meeting.

Guildhall, Fire Procedure

The Chair explained to all present at the meeting the fire procedures including where to assemble and how to evacuate the building in case of a fire.

20. Apologies (AI 1)

Councillor Derek North sent apologies. Councillor George Madgwick attended as standing deputy.

21. Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

22. Minutes of previous meeting - 5 February 2025 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5 February 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

Planning Applications

The Supplementary Matters report (SMAT) is on the Council's website at [Supplementary Matters report.pdf](#)

Deputations (which are not minuted) can be viewed on the webcast at [Agenda for Planning Committee on Wednesday, 26th February, 2025, 10.30 am Portsmouth City Council](#)

23. 24/01089/FUL - Venture Tower, 57- 67 Fratton Road, Portsmouth PO1 5LD (AI 4)

The Principal Planning Officer introduced the report which was for the change of use of the building (1st - 8th floor) to form a student hall of residence comprising 100 study bedrooms; external alterations to include construction of extensions and alterations to elevations, replacement cladding, windows; provision of communal facilities, bicycle and refuse storage.

The Principal Planning Officer drew attention to the SMAT which did not change the officer recommendation.

It was noted that the site already benefited from an extant planning permission 17/0105/FUL in 2017 which had already formally commenced.

Deputations

- Carl Inman (objecting)
- Jacob Short (objecting)

Members' Questions

In response to Members' questions, officers provided the following information as clarification:

- The legal requirements for notification of an application, was to either erect site notices or to send letters to neighbouring properties. Portsmouth takes the decision to do both. A site notice was posted for this application, and letters were sent to adjoining/adjacent properties as committed to in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Adjoining properties are defined in the SCI as those sharing a common boundary. In this instance, planning had gone wider and delivered letters to properties opposite, on the opposite side of Fratton Road and to the Central Mosque in Somers Road North.

The legal officer confirmed that planning officers had complied with their statutory requirements and their SCI so the application could legally continue.

- No response had been received from the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding the application. The Health and Safety Executive had been consulted due to the number of storeys, and they were satisfied with the scheme. It was noted that, in the development of Somers Orchard, Hampshire Fire and Rescue had been happy that the Health and Safety Executive were covering all safety aspects.
- There were 3 different stairways located around the building for residents to access in case of a fire.
- The position of the staircases was confirmed by reference to the plans and whilst one did not run all the way to the ground floor it was adjacent to another staircase that did.
- The legal agreement included a student management plan in terms of management of the building.

- The application was a Sui Generis application so, in terms of planning, could not be used as a permanent residential accommodation without an application for a change of use.
 - There was a Student Halls SPD which states that a single room should be 7m² and a single with en-suite should be 10-15m². Within this application there was a student apartment which was 28.2m² and rooms at 20.3m², 20m² and 18.6m². The smallest room in the development was 16.4m² and this would share communal facilities.
 - A condition could be imposed to ensure the maximum occupancy would be 100.
 - The definition of a student would be dealt with within the management plan to ensure occupants are enrolled on a course but it was not known if this was limited to students at Portsmouth University.
 - The building could be converted into traditional residential units in the future, with some work, due to the core partitions being easily combined, and all the plumbing and heating being in place. This would need planning permission.
 - It was not known whether the sewerage ran into the main sewer in Fratton Road or into a side road sewer. Southern Water had been notified of the application, and they had not raised any concerns regarding the proposal.
 - The substation would be behind closed doors and there were conditions attached to it in relation to noise.
 - The cycle store had been considered by PCC highways officers who were satisfied it was large enough for 40 cycles. The number of spaces allocated was less than required in the SPD but was an increase on the previous scheme. The justification was due to the building's proximity to several shops including a large supermarket, the train station and bus stops and being in walkable distance to the university.
 - It was confirmed that the SPD guidance for cycle spaces for student accommodation was one space per student, but the council could accept a lower standard if it could be justified based on where the accommodation was located.
 - The building had 4 laundry rooms.
 - The tall part of the building would remain in a brick finish, with the lower aspects being a darker shade of material than at present.
 - The issue of disabled access would be a matter for Building Regulations to ensure all areas were accessible.
- The conditions being proposed were as follows:

- Time limit
 - Plans list
 - Materials
 - Completion of external alterations
 - Drainage
 - Ventilation and air conditioning
 - Dispersal of fumes
 - Noise and insulating the noise
 - Construction management plan
 - Landscaping
 - Bike storage
 - Refuse store
 - Use of the roof terrace
- The number of people who could be in the building at any one time would be covered by the management plan attached to the legal agreement. Officers reminded the panel that the building had previously been an office block and would have probably exceeded 100 at any one time. Again, this was an issue for the building regulations.
 - There was no space for parking on site. Parking on the street or nearby laybys could be used short term, to get people to and from the building.
 - There was no provision for e-scooters in the bike store.
 - There were no specific standards on the amount of laundry rooms.

Member's comments

Members drew attention to the emerging Local Plan that states any student accommodation should be capable of being converted for normal occupancy by other people should they no longer be needed for students and noted that the application had some very generous studio flats which could be useful for that purpose in the future.

Members were concerned that the amount of cycle storage was not adequate for the number of residents and that the space may not be big enough to store 40 cycles.

There were concerns about the accessibility of the building for disabled students with wheelchairs and the storage of mobility aids.

Members requested a condition be attached to limit occupancy to 100 students.

The Head of Development Management reminded the panel that should the application be refused; it would go to the fallback position of the 2017 approved scheme which was less generous in terms of facilities such as the bike store and laundry rooms. He also advised about straying into areas governed by building regulations such as accessibility. He also reminded members that highways officers had been satisfied with the number of bike spaces within the store.

As the applicant was present, the Chair invited him to update the committee on the development and this could be viewed on the web stream as per the deputations.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Economy, Transport & Planning to grant conditional permission subject to an additional condition limiting the occupation of the student accommodation to 100 persons and to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure:
 - (a) 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.**
 - (b) Include a student management plan and financial contribution**
 - (c) Prepare, implement and monitor a Travel Management Plan and financial contribution****
- 2. Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Economy, Transport & Planning to add/amend conditions where necessary.**
- 3. Delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Economy, Transport & Planning to refuse planning permission if an internal local authority approval mechanism (an equivalent legal agreement) has not been satisfactorily agreed within six months of the date of this resolution.**

24. 24/01157/FUL - 35 Sandringham Road, Portsmouth PO1 5DJ (AI 5)

The Head of Development Management introduced the report which was for the change of use from a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to a 7-bed/7-person HMO

Deputations

- Oliver Farr (agent).

Planning Permission

Members unanimously agreed that the application did require planning permission as it would create additional pressure in terms of parking, antisocial behaviour, rubbish and noise.

Members' Questions

There were no questions.

Members' Comments

Members considered it would be good practice for licensing to double check the sizes of rooms where they just met the space standards, such as with this application with rooms at 10.01m².

They also stressed that it was not acceptable, under any circumstances, for there to be any form of abuse to members, officers, past officers and employees of management companies by members of the public such as described in Mr Farr's deputation.

Members considered there was no sustainable reason to refuse the application and proposed acceptance with conditions.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The proposal was considered to be a development requiring planning permission as it potentially created additional pressure in terms of parking, anti-social behaviour, rubbish and noise impact.**
- 2. Planning permission be granted, subject to completion of a suitable agreement to mitigate impacts on the Solent Special Protection Area and the imposition of conditions requiring the following:**
 - (a) Implementation of the additional occupancy within 3 years (a time limit condition)**
 - (b) Development be carried out in accordance with plans submitted (an approved plans condition)**
 - (c) Provision of a cycle store**
 - (d) Water efficiency details as agreed and; subject to completion of a suitable agreement to mitigate impacts on the Solent Special Protection Area.**

25. 24/01425/FUL - 95 Queens Road. Portsmouth PO2 7LT (AI 6)

The Head of Development Management introduced the report which was for the change of use from a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 7-bed/7-person House in Multiple Occupation.

He drew attention to the information in the SMAT, which did not change the officer recommendation.

Deputation

- Joao Virtudes (agent).

Members' Questions

In response to Members' Questions, officers provided the following information as clarification:

- The property was not currently licensed. If members wanted to ensure that no more than 7 people occupied the property, they could condition this.

- Natural light was available to bedroom 7 through the rear window. Officers were satisfied that there would be adequate light and outlook for the occupier of that room, and this was evident from the photo.
- In bedroom 1, the dotted line indicated the area of the slope of roof where there was a lower head height. The space in the room was still sufficient.
- The yellow dots on the local plan of HMOs indicated commercial properties.
- The depth of the garden would comfortably allow for a bike store to accommodate four bikes. The store was shown on the side elevation of the plans, at the end of the garden.
- Illegal HMOs in the area were not included in the percentage count to discourage applications jumping the queue and in order not to reward someone for operating an HMO without consent. These would be investigated by the team. Officers were satisfied their HMO data count was accurate.
- The width of the rear of the property was 2.3 metres. Bicycles would have to come through that area to reach the back garden, but this would apply with the existing Class C3 use.
- The property did not have a balcony on the second floor.

Members' Comments

Members were concerned at the narrowness of the back of the property in terms of taking bicycles through when residents were using that room. Officers noted that Planning inspectors consider that would only be a temporal conflict and had upheld appeals on this matter.

RESOLVED that conditional permission be granted subject to conditions for time limit, approved plans, cycle storage, waste storage, water efficiency and PD works.

26. 24/01481/FUL - 129 New Road, Portsmouth PO2 7QS (AI 7)

The Development Management Lead introduced the report which was for the change of use from a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 7-bed/7-person House in Multiple Occupation.

He drew attention to the information contained in the SMAT which did not change the officer recommendation but updated condition 2 - Approved plans.

Members' Questions

In response to Members' Questions, officers provided the following information as clarification:

- The measurements of bedroom 6 did include the slight 'nip' in the shape of the room.

- The measurement of bedroom 3, excluding the corridor area was 9.75m².

Members' Comments

Members considered that due to bedroom 3 being smaller than the required space standards the application should be refused.

Officers stressed that a minor failure against the standard did not automatically equate to a strong reason to refuse the entire scheme and advised members to proceed with caution. The professional advice was that there had been appeal decisions with rooms at 9m² or 9.6m² and the inspector had considered that to be a minor failure and did not feel it was harmful.

Members noted that they are urged to agree applications when the space standard is only just met or only just over, so felt this should also apply in the opposite direction, to refuse an application when it was under the standard. Members were tasked to consider the quality of life of people living in the buildings.

The legal advisor noted that properties can have rooms of a smaller size, such as single rooms at 6.51m² but they then require a larger communal area.

RESOLVED that planning permission be refused, due to inadequate space in the proposed communal area due to not all proposed bedrooms being a minimum of 10m², contrary to the adopted Houses in Multiple Occupancy Supplementary Planning Document

The meeting concluded at 12.42 pm.

.....
Signed by the Chair of the meeting
Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE