

Application No: 25/1642/FUL  
Application Type: Full Planning  
Location: 523 West Street, Crewe, Cheshire East,  
Proposal: Conversion from two flats to one C4 6 person HMO.  
Applicant: Meera Ananadakumar, MPA Property Investments Ltd

Expiry Date: 18-July 2025

### **Summary**

The proposed development is compliant with adopted planning policy and the HMO SPD. The scheme would not result in overconcentration of HMOs and offers acceptable living conditions for future occupiers. Issues around parking, waste, and environmental health can be addressed through appropriate conditions. The proposal contributes to housing choice and affordability in a sustainable location.

### **Summary recommendation**

**Approve with conditions**

## **1. Reason for Referral**

1.1. This application is referred to Southern Planning Committee at the request of Cllr Pratt for the following reasons:

*Lack of parking provision - the property is located on a stretch of road with double yellow lines and only offers a single parking space*

*Existing parking pressures in the area due to Bentley staff and contractors parking on nearby residential streets*

*The majority of neighbouring properties do not have off-street parking, compounding the issue*

*The area already suffers from high levels of waste management issues and frequent fly-tipping. HMO's often contribute to this.*

*The proposed HMO would negatively impact the amenity of the area for existing residents*

*The property is a very small two-up, two-down terraced house and would not provide an adequate standard of living for potential tenants*

*Several residents have also opposed this on the planning application for similar reasons.*

## **2. Proposed Development**

2.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of a two and a half storey end-terrace property from two self-contained flats (C3 use) into a 6-person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) under use class C4.

2.2. The proposal does not involve any external alterations other than the removal of a door and window to the side elevation. The internal reconfiguration would provide six en-suite bedrooms across three floors, with shared kitchen.

2.3. One off-street parking space is retained, with refuse storage and a covered cycle shelter for six bicycles proposed in the rear yard.

### **3. Site Description**

3.1. The property is located within the settlement boundary of Crewe and lies near the Merrill's railway bridge. The area is predominantly residential, with some nearby commercial units.

3.2. West Street is a busy through-route with double yellow lines immediately outside the property, limiting on-street parking.

3.3. The site lies within an Ecological Network Restoration Area but is not subject to heritage or environmental constraints.

3.4. The site is located outside of the Article 4 Direction areas.

### **4. Relevant Planning History**

4.1. 14/4937N: Change of use of B1 (Business) Office and ground floor to D1 childcare use - Approved

4.2. 14/2555N: Prior approval for change of use from B1 to children's day nursery to ground floor - Withdrawn

4.3. 09/1205N: Change of Use from Office Use to Revert Back to Domestic Use Only. Internal Decoration Works Only to be Undertaken - Approved

### **5. National Planning Policy**

5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published by the Government in March 2012 and has been through several revisions. It sets out the planning policies for England and how these should be applied in the determination of planning applications and the preparation of development plans. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF is a material consideration for the purposes of decision making.

5.2. National Planning Practice (NPPG) provides detailed guidance on the implementation of the NPPF.

### **5. Development Plan Policy**

5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2010 – 2030) was adopted in July 2017. The Site Allocations and Development Policies Documents

was adopted in December 2022. The policies of the Development Plan relevant to this application are set out below, including relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies where applicable to the application site.

## **5.2. Relevant policies of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Plan Policies Document (SADPD)**

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS):

MP 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
PG 2: Settlement Hierarchy  
SD 1: Sustainable Development in Cheshire East  
SD 2: Sustainable Development Principles  
SC 3: Health and Wellbeing  
SC 4: Residential Mix  
SE 1: Design  
SE 2: Efficient Use of Land  
SE 12: Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability  
CO 1: Sustainable Travel and Transport  
Appendix C: Parking Standards

Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD):

PG 9: Settlement Boundaries  
GEN 1: Design Principles  
ENV 1: Ecological Network  
ENV 7: Climate Change  
HOU 1: Housing Mix  
HOU 4: Houses in Multiple Occupation  
HOU 8: Space, Accessibility and Wheelchair Housing Standards  
HOU 12: Amenity  
HOU 13: Residential Standards  
INF 3: Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

## **5.3. Neighbourhood Plan**

5.3.1. There is no Neighbourhood Plan in Crewe.

## **6. Other Material Considerations**

6.1. Cheshire East Design Guide SPD (2017)

6.2. HMO SPD (2021)

## **7. Consultation Responses**

7.1. **Highways:** No objection. One off-street parking space and cycle provision acceptable in this sustainable location.

7.2. **Environmental Protection:** No objection. Recommend conditions re: ultra-low NOx boilers and construction hours.

7.3. **Housing Standards:** No objection in principle. Loft room ceiling height to meet HMO standards.

7.4. **Strategic Planning:** No objection. No overconcentration of HMOs within 50m. Recommends EV charging point, drying area, secure waste and cycle storage.

## **8. Views of the Town or Parish Council**

8.1. **Crewe Town Council:** Object to the application on the following grounds:

- That the proposals constitute over development of the site, which demonstrates lack of sustainability in the application.
- Lack of internal amenity space for the proposed high-density accommodation.
- Lack of external amenity for potential residents
- Loss of amenity for neighboring residences due to noise and on street waste.
- Lack of off-street parking, which will lead to adverse impacts on existing residents and traffic due to lack of on-street parking availability locally

## **9. Representations**

9.1. Eight letters of objection have been received which raise the following points:

- Concerns about parking.
- Living standards
- Waste
- Noise
- Cumulative HMO impact.

9.2. One letter of support has been received which raises the following points:

- Large, terraced house can easily accommodate 6 people.
- The large kitchen is able to accommodate 6 people.
- If sufficient bins are provided, then waste will not be an issue.
- Lack of affordable rental property in Crewe. Especially for single people.
- People living in a HMO do not tend to be car owners.

## **10. Officer Appraisal**

### **Principle of Development**

10.1. The site is located within the Crewe settlement boundary, identified as a Principal Town in the CELPS (Policy PG 2), where development to support a sustainable mix of housing is acceptable in principle. Policy SD 1 of the Local Plan Strategy seeks to ensure that development is appropriately located and encourages the reuse of existing buildings, which this proposal achieves by converting an existing residential building.

10.2. Policy HOU 4 of the SADPD sets out criteria for the assessment of Houses in Multiple Occupation. The proposal meets the threshold criteria in that fewer than 10% of residential properties within a 50m radius are currently in HMO use (0% based on Council records), and there is no "sandwiching" of non-HMO residential dwellings. As such, the proposed use would not result in an overconcentration of HMOs or create an adverse cumulative impact on the character of the area.

10.3. The proposal also complies with the aims of Policy SC 4 (Residential Mix), which seeks to promote choice and affordable housing across Cheshire East and is consistent with national objectives in the NPPF (para. 63) to create inclusive and mixed communities. While concerns regarding intensification and perceived harm to neighbourhood character have been raised in public representations, no policy conflict or quantifiable harm has been

identified by consultees. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to an assessment of amenity, design, highways and infrastructure implications.

## **Living Conditions for Future Occupants**

10.4. The proposed HMO provides six bedrooms across three floors, with sizes ranging from 10.4 to 15.8 square metres. Each of the rooms exceeds the minimum size requirements set out under the Nationally Described Space Standards and the Council's HMO guidance, ensuring that future occupants will have a satisfactory amount of personal living space. Additionally, all bedrooms benefit from windows that provide natural light and ventilation, which supports a healthy internal environment in accordance with Policy HOU 12 of the SADPD.

10.5. The shared kitchen measures 16.5 square metres, which is significantly above the 15 square metre minimum for combined kitchen/dining rooms set out for six-person HMOs in the Council's Amenity and Facilities Standards. This ensures adequate space for food preparation, storage, and circulation, complying with Policy HOU 4 (Houses of multiple occupation) and Policy HOU 12 (Amenity) of the CELPS and the HMO SPD.

10.6. The proposal includes external amenity provision, and this would include a bin store, a six-space cycle shelter located in the rear yard and some space for the drying of clothes and for sitting outside. The site is located approximately five minutes' walk from Queen's Park, a large and well-equipped public park offering extensive recreational and amenity value. Furthermore, the Hulme Street Allotments are directly behind the application site, and residents may apply to lease an allotment plot through the local authority. These nearby green spaces offer opportunities for informal recreation and community interaction. This arrangement is considered sufficient to satisfy the requirements of Policy SC 3 (Health and Wellbeing) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy and Policy HOU 12 of the SADPD, which seek to ensure that residential development provides appropriate and accessible amenity opportunities.

10.7. The applicant stated that the second-floor loft accommodation meets the spatial requirements in terms of floor area. An updated plan/section drawing has been requested to confirm this.

## **Design**

10.8. The proposal involves very minor external changes (the bricking up of one door and one window to the side elevation) and thus retains the existing character and appearance of the property and the surrounding street scene. The property is a traditional end-of-terrace dwelling constructed in brick with a slate roof, typical of the area. The internal works, while substantial, do not alter the external character or frontage of the building. As such, the development respects the local vernacular and complies with Policy SE 1 (Design) of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy and Policy GEN 1 (Design Principles) of the SADPD, both of which seek high quality and locally appropriate design that contributes positively to the built environment.

## **Amenity**

10.9. The use of the property as a 6-person HMO would intensify residential use, but not to a degree that would be out of keeping with the established character of the area. The internal layout provides acceptable space standards, with shared and private facilities meeting relevant guidance. While concerns have been raised by residents regarding potential noise and disruption, there is no evidence to suggest that a 6-person HMO would result in undue harm to residential amenity. The Council's Environmental Protection team

has raised no objection, and the property will be subject to HMO licensing which will address management and standards. The proposal therefore complies with Policy HOU 12 (Amenity) and Policy SD 2 (Sustainable Development Principles), which require development to safeguard residential amenity.

## **Parking & Highways**

10.10. The application provides one off-street parking space. Due to double yellow lines immediately outside the property, there is no on-street parking available on West Street. It is acknowledged that surrounding streets, including Hulme Street, are heavily parked, partly due to existing residential demand and overspill from nearby employment uses. However, the site is located within walking and cycling distance of the town centre and is close to frequent public transport links, including Crewe railway station and bus services. The Strategic Transport team have confirmed that HMOs generally have lower levels of car ownership and have raised no objection, concluding the level of provision to be acceptable in this sustainable location. Secure cycle storage for six bicycles is proposed in the rear yard.

## **Waste and Recycling**

10.11. The proposed plans show the provision of two 240L wheeled bins (one for general waste and one for recycling) to be stored in the rear yard. This arrangement is consistent with the Council's domestic waste collection standards for a six-person HMO. Subject to a condition securing their provision and retention, the waste storage arrangements are considered acceptable and compliant with Policy INF 3 of the SADPD.

## **Energy and Climate Considerations**

10.12. The Environmental Health Officer has recommended the installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charging point in the parking area and ultra-low NOx boilers to mitigate the environmental impact of the development. EV Charging is now dealt with via Building Regulations, but the low emission boiler can be secured by planning condition and will support the Council's broader objectives for sustainable and low-emission development under Policies SE 12 (Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability) and INF 3 (Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure) of the development plan.

## **11. Planning Balance/Conclusion**

11.1. The proposed development is compliant with adopted planning policy and the HMO SPD. The scheme would not result in overconcentration of HMOs and offers acceptable living conditions for future occupiers. Issues around parking, waste, and environmental health can be addressed through appropriate conditions. The proposal contributes to housing choice and affordability in a sustainable location.

## **12. Recommendation**

**Approve subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Standard time - 3-year commencement**
- 2. Development in accordance with approved plans**
- 3. Maximum 6 persons (use class C4 only)**
- 4. Provision of secure 6-space cycle shelter before occupation**
- 5. Provision and retention of bin storage before occupation**
- 6. Installation of ultra-low NOx boilers (max 40mgNOx/kWh)**

**In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions / informatives / planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Board, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.**

