

Application No: 14/2906N
Location: 16, GAINSBOROUGH ROAD, CREWE, CW2 7PH
Proposal: Change of use from C4 HMO to sui generis 7 bed HMO
Applicant: Wendy Whittaker-Large, Welcome Properties
Expiry Date: 26-Aug-2014

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

MAIN ISSUES

Amenity, Design and Highway Safety

REASON FOR REPORT

This application has been referred to the Southern Planning Committee by Councillor Kevin Hickson for the following reason:

"Possible health and safety implications of having so many people in a house not designed for that purpose - especially fire. Also, that parking is very difficult on this road already and that having a house of multiple occupancy would only add to these problems. It is actually quite a dangerous stretch of road."

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is a two storey mid terrace dwelling situated on Gainsborough Road within the Settlement Boundary for Crewe. To the front is a small paved area while to the rear is a single storey, flat roof extension, beyond which is an alley way.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application seeks retrospective approval for a change of use from Use Class C4 House of Multiple Occupation (6 beds) to sui generis 7 bed House of Multiple Occupation. The dwelling has been used as a House of Multiple for approximately 9 months.

Externally the only alteration has been the removal of the former garage door to the rear and its replacement with a brick wall and window.

RELEVANT HISTORY

None

POLICIES

Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council Local Plan Policy

Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

In view of the level of consultation already afforded to the plan-making process, together with the degree of consistency with national planning guidance, it is appropriate to attach enhanced weight to the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy - Submission Version in the decision-making process.

At its meeting on the 28th February 2014, the Council resolved to approve the *Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version* for publication and submission to the Secretary of State. It was also resolved that this document be given weight as a material consideration for Development Management purposes with immediate effect.

The relevant policies of the **Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version** are:

Policy SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

Policy SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles

Policy SE 1 Design

Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council Local Plan Policy

Crewe Settlement Boundary

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design

BE.3 - Access and Parking

RES.9 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

TRAN9 – Car parking standards

National Planning Policy Framework

CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways

The Highways Officer initially objected to the proposal due to lack of car parking provision and the poor level of detail submitted with the application. Despite the limited information the Officer has since confirmed that they could not sustain their objection on grounds of lack of car parking resulting from this proposal. It is proposed that a secure cycle store is obtained via condition.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Wistaston Parish Council objects to the creation of yet another house in multiple occupancy in this area. There is no designated parking space on the plan, and we are concerned about the lack of adequate space for refuse disposal, and the density of occupation. We consider that the downstairs bathroom should be available to the occupants of all ground floor rooms, and not just as an en suite.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

None received

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the Crewe settlement boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development. RES.9 of the Local Plan refers to houses in multiple occupation. Policy RES.9 advises that planning permission will be granted provided that;

- the building to be converted is large enough to provide satisfactory living accommodation for future residents without the need to construct extensions which would conflict with Policies BE.1 and BE.2;
- the proposal would not result in an adverse change to the external appearance of the building which would be unacceptable in terms of design or materials used;
- the development does not detract significantly from neighbouring amenities and;
- provision is made for adequate parking.

As such, the determination of the proposal depends on the adherence with these requirements.

It is also important to note that there is a permitted change of use from Class C3 (Dwelling House) to C4 (Houses in Multiple Occupation). As such the first 6 rooms do not need permission.

Amenity

In terms of neighbouring residential amenity the proposal does not involve any extensions or significant alterations to the existing building. As such, there will not be a detrimental effect on neighbouring amenity from this perspective.

The proposed development may lead to a marginal increase in vehicles parked along Gainsborough Road, however this is not considered significant enough to have any detrimental effect on the amenity of residents of Gainsborough Road.

A condition will also be attached to any permission requiring details of waste bin storage to be provided and approved by the LPA.

As a result the proposed development is in accordance with Policy BE.1 (Amenity) and Policy RES.11 (Improvements and Alterations to Existing Dwellings) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

Design

There have been limited changes to the external appearance of the dwelling with the only change being the bricking up of the garage door to the rear and the installation of a window. As such, there will not be an adverse change to the external appearance of the building in accordance with Policy RES.9.

Overall, due to the limited nature of the changes that have taken place, the design of the proposed development is considered to be of a size and scale that respects the host dwelling on those in the surrounding area. Furthermore, there will not be a harmful effect upon the streetscene.

As a result the proposed development is in accordance with Policy BE.2 (Design Standards) and RES.9 (Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

Highways

The Highways Officer has viewed the proposal and notes that the HMO does not provide any parking, however it is unlikely that each person within the HMO would have a vehicle. At present only one of the current occupants has a car. The site is close the town centre (approximately 0.6 miles) and good public transport links are available for future occupiers of the building.

As there is no off street parking provided the Highways Officer has requested a condition requiring that secure cycle storage is provided. This will be for a total of 7 cycles.

There are no parking restrictions along Gainsborough Road with the majority of local residents parking on the street. Any occupants of the application site would be entitled to park along Gainsborough Road. However, the Highways Officer does not consider that a refusal

based on lack of car parking provision would be sustainable at appeal given the single net increase in occupancy resulting from the proposal..

As a result the proposed development is in accordance with Policy BE. (Access and Parking) and RES.9 (Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011.

Other Matters

The issue surrounding possible health and safety implications is one that does not fall within the remit of the Local Planning Authority and is dealt with by other legislation.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposed change of use is located within the Crewe settlement boundary and would only involve a simple external alteration to the unit. It would not have an adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity or raise any significant highway/parking issues. The proposal therefore complies with Policies BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards), BE.3 (Access and Parking) and RES.9 (Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. The development also complies with the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE subject to the following conditions

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Materials**
- 3. Plans**
- 4. Cycle Storage**
- 5. Bin Storage**

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