

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2024/0000935/FUL
Site:	Ribbon Court, 689 Foleshill Road, Coventry, CV6 5GT
Ward:	Foleshill
Proposal:	Change of use from sheltered housing for older person(s) to temporary accommodation. (Sui Generis).
Case Officer:	Emma Spandley

SUMMARY

The site is an existing building built as purpose-built flats as sheltered accommodation for older persons.

The application seeks to change the use to one of temporary accommodation to house families that are considered homeless by the City Council.

The change of use is considered acceptable subject to conditions restricting the length of time someone can reside in the building and the adherence to a Management Plan to help alleviate the concerns raised by the general public.

BACKGROUND

The application site relates to an existing building granted permission under R/2007/2551 and constructed in 2009/10 for sheltered accommodation for older persons. The building contains 50no apartments, split as 40no x one bedroomed and 10no x two bedroomed.

The building provides 14no off road car parking space.

Condition No.2 of R/2007/2551 restricts the occupancy of the building to sheltered housing scheme providing care and communal facilities for older people.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	Over five objections against Officer recommendation.
Current use of site:	Sheltered Housing for Older people
Proposed use of site:	Temporary Accommodation

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions listed in the report; and

Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead Planning, in consultation with the Chair to agree any amendments to these conditions, which are considered necessary.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety, or neighbouring

residential amenity.

- The proposal accords with Policies DS3, H5, H6, DE1, AC1, AC2, AC3 and AC4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The application proposes the change of use with no external or internal alterations, from older persons accommodation to temporary accommodation.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to an existing building constructed in 2009/10 which is located along Foleshill Road and Churchill Avenue. Foleshill Road is to the east, with Churchill Avenue to the north. The site adjoins No.681 Foleshill Road to the south and the rear gardens of properties No.4 Ransom Road and No.1 Churchill Avenue to the west.

The existing site has an existing 14no spaced car park accessed via Churchill Avenue, adjacent to No.1 Churchill Avenue, which spans the rear gardens of No.1 Churchill Avenue and No.4 Ransom Road, abutting the rear boundary of No.681 Foleshill Road.

No.681 – No.677 Foleshill Road, to the south of the site are commercial properties at ground floor.

Parking is restricted along the western side of Foleshill Road via double yellow lines. There are parking bays on the opposite side of Foleshill Road.

There is unrestricted parking within the side roads.

PLANNING HISTORY

The following is the most relevant: -

Application Number	Description of Development	Decision and Date
R/2007/2551 (Cov Ref. 22188/Q)	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 50 apartments for older persons with care. Revised access and parking	26 th February 2008

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve".

Consultation is currently underway seeking views on the Government's proposed approach to revising the NPPF. It also seeks views on a series of wider national planning policy reforms. The consultation closed on 24th September 2024.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF, and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application is:

- Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy
- Policy H5: Managing existing Housing Stock
- Policy H6: Affordable Housing
- Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design
- Policy AC1: Accessible Transport Network
- Policy AC2: Road Network
- Policy AC3: Demand Management
- Policy AC4: Walking and Cycling

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPD Coventry Connected

CONSULTATION

Non-statutory

No objections subject to conditions have been received from:

- Local Highway Authority (LHA)

Neighbour Consultation

Immediate neighbours were originally notified on 20th June 2024 a site notice was posted on 6th August 2024.

An e petition sponsored by Councillor Shakila Nazir was submitted which ran from 5th August 2024 to 30th September 2024.

It attracted 55 signatures.

The Petition states:

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our strong concerns regarding the

proposal to convert the Ribbon Court building into a homeless shelter on Foleshill Road, Coventry.

Our community is deeply troubled by this development for several reasons:

- 1. ****High Crime Rates****: According to a report from Crimerate.co.uk, Foleshill has the second-highest crime rate in Coventry. This alarming statistic raises serious concerns about the safety and security of both residents and individuals who may be placed in the proposed shelter.*
- 2. ****Proximity to Vulnerable Areas****: Ribbon Court is located directly opposite Edgwick Community Primary School and Edgwick Park playground. This location raises concerns about the safety of our children, who frequently use these facilities. Creating a homeless shelter in such close proximity to a school and playground may pose additional risks.*
- 3. ****Family and Community Impact****: Foleshill Road is home to a diverse family community and various businesses, including off-licenses. The proposed change in the building's use may disrupt the community's fabric and affect the quality of life for existing residents.*
- 4. ****Existing Services****: We would like to highlight that there is already a homeless hotel operating on Harnall Lane. Given this provision, there is no pressing need for another homeless shelter on Foleshill Road. The concentration of such facilities could place an undue burden on our local community and its resources.*
- 5. ****Balancing Responsibilities****: While we recognize our statutory duty to support vulnerable populations, we also have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of our children and all Foleshill residents. It is essential that any decisions made consider the impact on both groups.*

20no. letters of objection were received, raising the following material planning considerations:

- Increase in crime.
- Cause anti-social behaviour.
- Cause noise and disturbance.
- Impact on traffic and congestion
- Impact on parking
- Impact on the local primary school
- Impact on local services

Out of the objections received the following are NOT considered to be material planning considerations.

- Impact on house values

APPRAISAL

Policy Background

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 11, states that "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For Decision Making, this means: -

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.” Footnote 8 to paragraph 11 confirms that this includes situations where the local authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Coventry Local Plan was formally adopted on 6th December 2017. Since it was adopted, the Government introduced the Standard Method, a standardised way of calculating minimum housing need. As the Local Plan is now more than five years old the Standard Method is now the determining factor when considering local housing need. The Standard Method incorporates an uplift which applies to certain cities and urban centres (including Coventry). When using the Standard Method, the Council is not able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. As such, the tilted balance is engaged and therefore planning permission should be granted, unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole.

Consultation is currently underway seeking views on the Government’s proposed approach to revising the NPPF. The proposed revisions fundamentally change the calculation and outcome of the Standard Method resulting in a lower housing target for Coventry. As the revisions are currently the subject of consultation, the changes are only considered to be afforded limited weight at this stage.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Principle of the Change of Use

R/2007/2551 granted permission for the redevelopment of the site for 50no apartments for older persons with care together with associated access and parking.

The mix of apartments comprises 40no, one bedroomed unit and 10no two bed units. Communal facilities in the form of a lounge/dining area are located on the ground floor of the building.

Condition No.2 of the 2007 permission secured the site as ‘*sheltered housing scheme providing care and communal facilities for older people and for no other purpose*’.

The reason the condition was included:

‘The development does not propose any affordable housing and proposes a level of car parking proposed which is significantly below that which would be expected for a residential development of the scale proposed and permission is only granted on the understanding that the development will be used as sheltered housing providing care. In such circumstances it is considered that having regard to the nature of accommodation proposed, the use and the level of car parking would be acceptable.’

The proposal is to change the use of the building from sheltered housing scheme providing care and communal facilities for older people to temporary accommodation.

Temporary accommodation is a broad term that describes temporary housing for people who are homeless.

Anyone can be placed in temporary accommodation by local authorities under the Housing Act 1996, providing they fit the criteria of being in priority need and are 'vulnerable enough.' This is often families with children, pregnant women, elderly people and individuals who are particularly vulnerable.

Latest government figures on Statutory homelessness in England: January to March 2024, show there are officially 117,450 households, including 151,630 children in temporary accommodation; a new high since records began 25 years ago.

The City Council has a duty to provide temporary or interim accommodation to people who:

- appear to be homeless and in priority need, and
- passed all four homelessness tests and are waiting for an offer of social housing.

Despite improving local housing systems, the city still has high levels of homelessness, highlighting a need to work together with partners to improve the use of existing homes and empty dwellings.

The change of use is being supported by the City Councils Housing Team.

It is considered that the existing and proposed uses were and are residential, therefore, the main issue is the loss of the sheltered housing scheme providing care and communal facilities for older people.

There are no policies which restrict the loss of such uses, indeed, both uses are considered to be 100% affordable residential housing.

Ribbon Court was constructed in 2009/10 and has struggled to reach financial viability as an older person's facility. It never reached its capacity in terms of occupation and with the restricted user group failed to attract the traction in the housing market it required to continue as an older person's facility.

At the time of the submission of the application there were only two occupants of the building.

In terms of the nature of the use proposed it would assist in meeting a number of City Council housing priorities, it is for a different form of affordable housing therefore in accordance with the reasoning behind condition No.2 of the 2007 permission. The principle of the change of use will not remove or even reduce the affordable housing element and is acceptable in principle subject to satisfactory car parking provision being provided.

HIGHWAYS, ACCESS AND PARKING

Policy AC1 'Accessible Transport Network' of the Coventry Local Plan states that development proposals which are expected to generate additional trips on the transport network should:

- a) Integrate with existing transport networks including roads, public transport and walking and cycling routes to promote access by a choice of transport modes.
- b) Consider the transport and accessibility needs of everyone living, working or visiting the city.
- c) Support the delivery of new and improved high-quality local transport networks which are closely integrated into the built form.
- d) Actively support the provision and integration of emerging and future intelligent mobility infrastructure.

Policy AC2 of the Coventry Local Plan states new development proposals which are predicted to have a negative impact on the capacity and/or safety of the highway network should mitigate and manage the traffic growth which they are predicted to generate to ensure that they do not cause unacceptable levels of traffic congestion, highway safety problems and poor air quality'. Highway mitigation and management measures should focus firstly on demand management measures (Policy AC3) including the promotion of sustainable modes of travel, and secondly on the delivery of appropriate highway capacity interventions. Highway capacity interventions should be appropriate to the scale of development and expected impact and will be determined through the associated Transport Assessment.

Accesses

The existing vehicle access to the site is from Churchill Avenue providing 14no spaces to a car park provided at the rear of the building. This will not change as part of the application.

Pedestrian / Cycle Network

Pedestrian access is provided into the building from the main front entrance located on Foleshill Road and from the parking area to the rear.

The existing highway network lends itself to cycling. National Cycle Network Route 52 is located approximately 650m to the north-east of the site, which provides a direct off-road connection to Coventry City Centre.

Bus Provision

A bus stop is located immediately adjacent to the frontage on Foleshill Road providing services for the 20, 20A, 20B and 148 buses.

Parking

One of the reoccurring objections received centre around the parking provision for the building and the impact this would have on surrounding residential streets.

In accordance with the Coventry Connected SPD, all one-bedroom properties require one parking space and all properties with two bedrooms require two off road, dedicated parking spaces.

Therefore, if the site was being used for open market housing the parking requirement

would be:

- 40no x one bedroomed units require 40no car parking spaces, and
- 10no x two bedroomed units require 20no car parking spaces,
- Total requirement 60no car parking spaces.

Visitor Parking

One bedroomed units require one visitor parking spaces per five units and two bedroomed units require one visitor parking spaces per ten units.

Eight visitor parking spaces are required for one bedroomed unit and two visitor parking spaces required for two bedroomed units, making a total of 10no visitor parking spaces required. When added to the requirement for the flats themselves it makes a grand total of 70no spaces being required.

The concerns of the residents regarding the impact on parking in surrounding street were originally echoed by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) who required more information requiring the potential car ownership levels of people residing within the building.

More information was submitted in support of the application stating that the proposals are for transitional accommodation for families, who would occupy the site on a temporary basis (up to two years) until future residence is determined.

A review has been undertaken of the Census 2021 Car Ownership data for the Foleshill ward in which the site is located. The data demonstrates that 37.6% of all person's residing in Foleshill ward do not own a car, and 41.2% of all persons residing in Foleshill ward only own one car. This demonstrates that car ownership is generally low in the ward as a whole. It should also be noted that these figures are representative of typical household types.

The application provides a total of 14no. spaces for the 50 units, which equates to 28% parking provision on the site.

Having regard to the bespoke nature of the proposals (in which the housing type would not typically align with those captured by Census data, and future occupants' personal circumstances would be very different), coupled with the sustainable location of the site, it is expected that car ownership levels will be low for future occupants.

Dovetailed with the above information and the sustainable location of the site a Management Plan was requested to be submitted to set out the criteria for how the building, occupants and car parking would be managed.

The Management Plan sets out the following:

Admission to Ribbon Court will be managed through Coventry City Council's housing service. Families in need of accommodation will be assessed, and appropriate referrals will be made. Occupants will sign licence agreements, which include strict conditions for occupancy, parking use, and visitor policies. Breaches of these agreements may lead to termination of the licence. The building will operate a no visitor

policy, ensuring that only authorised professionals can enter.

Eight spaces (No. 1 to 8) will be allocated to tenants. Six spaces will be restricted to staff and professional visitors (No. 9 to 14). Parking permits will only be issued to tenants following a referral process and the completion of a risk assessment to ensure the suitability of car use. This will prevent the car park from overflowing and ensure fair allocation of spaces.

Referral agreement: Once all eight parking tenant permits have been issued, Coventry City Council will strictly only refer households that are not car users, to reduce the impact on the local area.

Tenant Parking Permits: Of the 14no parking spaces, eight will be designated for tenants. Parking permits will be issued only after a thorough referral process and risk assessment prior to confirmation of accommodation. This process will determine whether the tenant is a car user and genuinely requires on-site parking, with the goal of limiting car use on-site to necessary cases.

The license agreements will stipulate the rules for parking, and any breach could result in the revocation of the permit or further penalties, including potential eviction for repeated violations.

Staff and Professional Parking: The remaining six spaces will be allocated for staff and essential visiting professionals. These spaces will not be available for general tenant use and will be closely monitored.

CCTV and Monitoring: The car park will be monitored by CCTV to ensure compliance with parking allocations. Any unauthorised vehicles will be quickly identified, and staff will take necessary action to enforce the parking policy.

Enforcement and Eviction: The applicant will strictly enforce the parking rules. Tenants who breach the parking conditions, such as using a space without a permit, will be subject to license breach actions under the legal terms of their agreement. This could include the revocation of parking privileges or, in cases of repeated violations, eviction. To proactively avoid eviction, the applicant will work with the tenant and Coventry City Council to secure alternative accommodation.

Enforcement Measures for Unauthorised Car Use: If a resident without a parking permit begins bringing a vehicle to Ribbon Court or parking in nearby streets, the applicant will issue an initial warning, reminding the resident of the no-parking terms in their licence agreement. Should unauthorised parking continue, Coventry City Council will support the family in relocating to alternative accommodation within 2 to 4 weeks.

Staff Alternative Parking: The applicant will also utilise dedicated parking spaces at their nearby office (James Brindley House, Canal Basin, Coventry, CV1 4LY) to further reduce the demand for on-site parking and ensure staff carpool when required.

Sustainable Travel Encouragement: Tenants and staff will be encouraged to use public transport, walking, or cycling due to the site's proximity to well-connected

public transport options. Travel packs with information on local bus routes, cycle paths, and other sustainable travel options will be provided to tenants as part of their welcome pack.

Bicycle Storage: A secure bicycle storage area will be made available in the paved area of the site this space will be provided to encourage cycling as a sustainable mode of transport for both tenants and staff.

Therefore, on this basis, the provision of 14no. spaces is considered appropriate in this situation and the Local Highway Authority has raised no objection on the basis of the free flow of traffic and highway safety, subject to conditions requiring the following:

The building shall be occupied for temporary accommodation only and for no other purpose.

The building shall not be occupied by any persons for a continuous period exceeding 730 days (2 years) in total. The owners/operators of the building shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers at the building and the date in which they commenced occupation and make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.

The building hereby permitted shall only operate in full accordance with the approved management plan, namely REPORT - Ribbon Court Management Plan, as submitted 15th November 2024. The building shall only operate in full accordance with the approved details which shall not be amended in any way.

IMPACT ON EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

Policy DS3 of the Coventry Development Plan together with the aims of the NPPF seek sustainable development.

Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Policy H5 of the Coventry Local Plan states where appropriate, the existing housing stock will be renovated and improved, in association with the enhancement of the surrounding residential environment and to meet local housing needs.

The petition and a number of the objections are concerned with the impact of temporary accommodation on the existing residential properties and the nearby schools and playgrounds.

It is understood that temporary accommodation conjures up many images, but the building is proposed to house families who are in need of permanent accommodation. Once suitable permanent accommodation has been found the families will be rehoused.

The building has self-contained flats, these are not bedrooms with all shared facilities like an HMO or a Hostel.

Ribbon Court will operate with 24/7 security and staffing split between daytime support

staff, with a concierge service managing security during off-hours. There will also be CCTV both internal and external, secured fob access and regular patrols by the concierge services.

To create positive relations with the local community and proactively manage any parking issues associated with Ribbon Court, the applicant will implement clear communication channels for nearby residents. These channels will allow residents to easily report any observed parking issues directly related to Ribbon Court tenants or visitors.

On this basis, the use is residential in nature which is compatible with the surrounding residential area. The approval of the Management Plan will help ensure that the occupants of the site are safe, and the existing residents have assurances.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states: -

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.

There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle and will not result in any significant impact upon the free flow of traffic or residential amenity. The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the development is in accordance with: Policies DS3, H5, H6, DE1, AC1, AC2, AC3 and AC4, of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

CONDITIONS/REASON

1.	The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
Reason	<i>To conform with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).</i>
2.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRAWING - Location Plan, dated 21st May 2024 • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plans - Drawing No.1018-002 Rev B • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed First Floor Plans - Drawing No.1018-008 Rev B • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed Second Floor Plans - Drawing No.1018-004 Rev B • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed Third Floor Plans - Drawing No.1018-005 Rev B • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed Elevations 1, 2 & 3 - Drawing No.1018-006 Rev C • AMENDED DRAWING - Existing and Proposed Elevations 1, 2 & 6 and Streetscenes - Drawing No.1018-007 Rev C • REPORT - Ribbon Court Management Plan, as submitted 15th November 2024.
Reason	<i>For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</i>
3.	Prior to occupation of the building for temporary accommodation hereby permitted, details of cycle parking facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking facilities shall be provided in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the building and thereafter those facilities shall remain available for use at all times and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>In the interests of encouraging the use of alternative modes of transport with the aim of creating a more sustainable city in accordance with Policies DS3, AC3 and AC4 of the Coventry Local 2017.</i>
4.	The building hereby permitted shall only operate in full accordance with the approved management plan, namely REPORT - Ribbon Court Management Plan, as submitted 15th November 2024. The building shall only operate in full accordance with the approved details which shall not be amended in any way.
Reason	<i>To ensure that the development is compatible with nearby uses and so that it does not adversely impact upon the safe and free flow of traffic in the vicinity of the site or residential amenity in accordance with Policies AC1, AC2, AC3 and</i>

	<i>DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
5.	The building shall be occupied for temporary accommodation only and for no other purpose
Reason	<i>To ensure that the development is compatible with nearby uses and so that it does not adversely impact upon the safe and free flow of traffic in the vicinity of the site or residential amenity in accordance with Policies AC1, AC2, AC3 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
6.	The building shall not be occupied by any persons for a continuous period exceeding 730 days (2 years) in total. The owners/operators of the building shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers at the building and the date in which they commenced occupation and make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.
Reason	<i>To ensure that the development is compatible with nearby uses and so that it does not adversely impact upon the safe and free flow of traffic in the vicinity of the site or residential amenity in accordance with Policies AC1, AC2, AC3 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>