

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2024/0000825/FUL
Site:	2 Grasscroft Drive
Ward:	Cheylesmore
Proposal:	Two storey side and rear extensions, alterations and change of use from residential to 7 bedroom HIMO
Case Officer:	Grace Goodman

SUMMARY

The application proposes a two-storey side/rear extension and single storey rear extension, together with the associated change of use from a C3 residential dwelling house to a large (7-Bed) House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class Sui Generis).

BACKGROUND

The application was previously considered by Planning Committee on 18th July where the resolution was to defer the application to consider the matters of the level of occupancy and parking provision. These matters are now being considered. In that regard, the applicant has indicated that they do not wish to make any amendments to the application.

Members also asked for an indication of whether those writing in support of the application are local to the application site.

The application has been recommended for approval. The application has received 5 public representations objecting to the proposal.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	5 objections
Current use of site:	Residential dwelling
Proposed use of site:	House in multiple occupation
Proposed no of units	7-bed House in multiple occupation
Parking provision	2 spaces proposed

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposal accords with Policies: DE1, DS3, H5, H11 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017, the emerging Houses in Multiple Occupation DPD, together with the aims of the NPPF (2023).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a detached dwelling sitting on the corner of Grasscroft Drive and Poitiers Road opposite Cheylesmore community centre. The site is of a triangular shape and benefits from some rear amenity space. There is currently one off-street parking space accessed from Poitiers Road.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent to create a two-storey side extension 4m in width that extends 3.3m past the rear elevation. The first floor would be set back from the front elevation by 1m and the ridge set down accordingly. At the rear would be a single storey rear extension, 3.3m in depth.

The proposal would also convert the property into a 7 bed HMO with the extensions. The property may have been used as a small HMO in the past but most recently used as a single dwelling and therefore we consider this application to be a conversion from a single dwelling to an HMO.

Since the original submission of the application, amendments have been requested by officers in order to make the development acceptable in officer's view, subject to conditions. These amendments which now form the considered plans before committee include;

- The width of the side extension being reduced to 4m from 4.3m;
- The first floor rear facing window being obscurely glazed, and;
- A reduction in the number of bedrooms from 8 to 7.

Following deferral from last committee amendments were sought regarding reducing occupancy and increase off-street parking, however the applicant has chosen not to make any further amendments to scheme. Consequently, the proposals need to be considered on the basis of the above details.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history.

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".

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 H11: Homes in Multiple Occupation

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy AC3: Demand Management

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPD Coventry Connected

SPD Householder Design Guide

DPD Houses in Multiple Occupation (Draft)

CONSULTATION

Statutory

None

Non-statutory

No objections subject to conditions have been received from:

- Highways

Neighbour consultation

Immediate neighbours have been notified; a site notice was posted on 22nd May 2024.

6 letters of objection have been received, raising the following material planning considerations:

- Loss of privacy
- Noise
- Overlooking
- Anti-social behaviour
- Increase in traffic
- Out of keeping with the area

10 letters of support have been received raising the following material planning considerations:

Good design

Meets need for housing

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

APPRAISAL

The main issues in determining this application are principle of development, the impact upon neighbouring amenity, impact upon visual amenity and highway considerations.

Principle of development

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."

Policy H11 allows for the provision of HMO's where:

- a. the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties (including the provision of suitable parking provisions);
- b. the appearance or character of an area;
- c. local services; and
- d. The amenity value and living standards of future occupants of the property, having specific regard to internal space and garden/amenity space.

The emerging HMO DPD is also a material consideration in this case, of which sets out further policies and considerations pertinent to the assessment as to whether such a change of use is acceptable from a C3 residential dwelling to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class Sui Generis). It should be noted that this area of the city is subject to the article 4 direction which removes the permitted development rights to change the use from a C3 residential dwelling to C4 HMO (Up to 6-Bed). As the proposal is for a seven bed HMO, this would be classed as a sui generis (large HMO) and would need consent in any case.

Considering the requirements of the DPD further, HMO1 sets out the sustainability of the location of the HMO. In this case No. 2 Grasscroft Drive is located a short 3-to-4-minute walking distance from bus stops on Black Prince Avenue as well as being within a 10 minute walk from local shops and amenities. The application site is considered to be in a sustainable location with good accessibility to local amenities and public transport, in accordance with policy HMO1 of the Homes in Multiple Occupation DPD 2023.

Policy HMO2 of the Homes in Multiple Occupation DPD 2023 states that, "Where there is an existing HMO concentration of 10% or more of all dwellings within 100 metres radius of the centre point of the application property, HMO applications will not be supported."

Policy HMO3 of the Homes in Multiple Occupation DPD 2023 states that "proposals for the provision of HMOs must not result in a non-HMO dwelling being sandwiched between two HMOs and must not lead to a continuous frontage of three or more HMOs."

The concentration of HMO's is very low within the vicinity of the application site, with only 2 other HMO's in a 100m radius, as such the 10% concentration is not reached. The site, No. 2 Grasscroft Drive is located a fair distance away from both of these HMO's as such it is considered to comply with Policy HMO2 and HMO3 of the Homes in Multiple Occupation DPD in that there will not be a sandwiching effect in which a residential dwelling will be sited between two dwellings in use as a HMO. The Development Plan Document (DPD) aims to ensure that such development preserves the residential amenity and character of an area, and that any potential harmful concentrations do not arise.

The proposals are therefore considered acceptable in terms of meeting Policies HMO1, HMO2 and HMO3 as well as policy H11

Impact on visual amenity

Policy DE1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure high quality design and development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 135 states that "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The NPPF further states (at paragraph 139) "Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes".

The extensions have been amended to reduce the width of the side extension by 0.3m and the first-floor front elevation has been set back from the front elevation in accordance with the Householder Design Guide SPD and to create subservience. Other amendments include ensuring the first-floor rear facing window will be obscure glazed to reduce the impact of the extensions upon the neighbours.

Impact on residential amenity

The extension to the house will not have any adverse impact upon the neighbouring properties. The rear window on the first-floor extension will be obscure glazed to prevent overlooking to any of the neighbours to the rear of the property. Furthermore, the extension as a whole will be obscured from view from any of the neighbours to the rear by the existing conifers along the side and rear boundary of No. 2 Grasscroft Drive.

The proposed extension accords with the Householder Design Guidance SPD. The SPD states that a single storey rear extension can breach the 45-degree rule as long as it does not exceed a projection of 4m along the boundary. Therefore, there will not be a greater impact upon No. 4 Grasscroft Drive or any of the other neighbours.

There will be an increase in occupancy as a result of the proposal however, given location at the end of residential row, opposite a community centre rather than dwellings as well as being a detached property, it is considered that there would only be a minimal impact and the use will not adversely affect neighbours.

The proposed rooms are considered to be of an adequate size for living and whilst we do not have internal space standards for individual rooms as a planning authority, the size of the rooms does meet HMO licensing standards. Therefore, the proposal would provide a suitable residential living environment for future occupiers.

Highway considerations

Policy AC2 of the adopted Local Plan requires development proposals to not have a detrimental impact upon the road network, and where any impact is identified, suitable and proportionate mitigation should be sought within any planning approval. Policy AC3 requires development proposals to meet the council's adopted parking standards for cars and bicycles as set out in Appendix 5 of the Coventry Connected SPD. Policy AC4 supports the provision of enhancements to cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

In this case the development seeks consent for the change of use from a dwelling house to a seven bed HMO. The modest scale of development does not give rise to a likely impact on the existing road network.

It was previously reported that:-

As proposed 0.75 spaces are required per bedroom, there is a requirement therefore of 6 spaces in total. There is considered to be 1 space in front of the garage currently with an additional space proposed adjacent to this, thus providing 2 spaces for the proposed development. Therefore, there is a shortfall of 4 parking spaces associated with the proposed use on the basis of the maximum parking standards set out within appendix 5 of the Local Plan.

The parking survey suggests the use of parking at the site frontage, but as this does not have a dropped kerb is not considered to be a formal parking space and is not in a location where a dropped kerb access would be considered appropriate on the junction. Notwithstanding this, the parking survey does demonstrate that the surrounding roads can easily accommodate any overflow parking that a development of this size could generate as there is sufficient on-street parking available in the vicinity of the site.

A parking survey has been submitted with the application demonstrating that on average 61% of the spaces within 200m of the site were available at any one time. Highways have not objected to the application, subject to cycle storage provision. The location of the site is deemed to be sustainable with easy access on foot to the local centre and bus routes towards to the city centre. A condition is recommended to ensure provision of cycle storage.

It is recognised that the amount of off-street parking is limited, however given the level of availability of on street parking, officers are satisfied the proposals would not give rise to harm to highway safety and visual amenity.

Members raised concerns about the lack of parking and the application was deferred to enable the officer to discuss this with the applicant to see how this could be addressed. There did not appear to be options to provide additional parking within the site so the only way to address this would be to reduce the scale of the extensions and/or reduce the number of occupiers. The applicant has indicated that they do wish to amend the application so the parking position is as previously reported.

Whilst the parking provision falls short of the Council's parking standards officers consider that there is sufficient on-street parking available to meet the needs of this proposal.

Other Matters

Ten letters in support of the application were received indicating that the proposals were of good design and would meet the housing needs. Members asked if the addresses of these were known to understand if they live locally. The representations are by email and the addresses were not provided.

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 neighbour amenity and highway safety, subject to relevant conditions. The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the development is in accordance with: Policies DE1, H5, H11 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017, together with the aims of the NPPF.

CONDITIONS / REASON FOR REFUSAL

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.	The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan Site Plan DWG 9699-03 A Existing and Proposed Elevations DWG 9699-01 A Existing and Proposed Floor Plans DWG 9699-01A
Reason	<i>For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</i>
3.	Other than where specified on the approved plans, no facing and roofing materials shall be used other than materials similar in appearance to those used predominantly in the construction of the exterior of the existing building.
Reason	<i>To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017.</i>
4.	Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any statutory instrument amending, revoking and/or replacing that Order, the first floor window to be formed in the north-west facing elevation of the extension hereby permitted shall only be glazed or re-glazed with obscure glass and any opening part of any window will be at least 1.7m above the floor of any room in which the window is installed

Reason	<i>In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017.</i>
5.	The HMO hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the bin storage areas have been provided in full accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and thereafter they shall remain available for use at all times and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>In the interests of the amenities of the future occupants of the residential accommodation in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017.</i>
6.	The HMO hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the car parking provision has been constructed and / or laid out in accordance with the approved plans and made available for use by the occupants and / or visitors and thereafter those spaces shall be retained for parking purposes at all times and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>To ensure the satisfactory provision of off-street vehicle parking facilities in accordance with the Council's standards and in the interests of highway safety and the satisfactory development of the site in accordance with Policies AC1, AC2 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017.</i>
7.	Prior to occupation of the HMO 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>
8.	Any gas boilers installed on site shall have a dry NOx emission rate of no more than 40mg/kWh. One electric vehicle recharging point per dwelling shall be provided prior to occupation and shall not be removed or altered in any way and shall be kept available for such use by residents at all times.
Reason	<i>To mitigate the impacts of development on air quality in accordance with Policy DS3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.</i>