APPLICATION NUMBER: 19/00453/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
19/00453/FUL	Neil Harkin	17 June 2019

Address: 6 Bethel Street Heywood OL10 1HU

Proposal: Change of use from funeral directors to 4 no. bedroom House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Use Class C4 including installation of single window to first floor rear elevation and reinstatement of ground floor side window together with erection of 1.5m high boundary fencing - Resubmission of 18/01439/FUL

PUBLICITY	**Weekly list expired?**	Yes	**Site notice expired?**	Yes
	Neighbour letters expired?	Yes	**Press Notice expired?**	Yes

DELEGATION	**Significant departure from local plan?**	No	**Contrary to national policy?**	No
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	No	**Contrary to previous decision?**	No
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	No	**Called in or Planning Panel objection?**	No

COMMENTS	**Planning Panel comments received?**	Yes
	Neighbour comments received?	Yes

EIA	**Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?**	N/A

CONDITIONS	**Pre-commencement conditions proposed?**	No
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	Grant Subject to Conditions

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: AT **DATE: 28.06.2019**

SITE

The application relates to 6 Bethel Street, a two storey building within the Heywood Town Centre, which has previously been used as a chapel of rest for the adjacent funeral directors; however the building is now currently vacant.

Surrounding land uses are mixed, with funeral directors and associated car parking to the south with a number of newly constructed dwellings beyond this. There is also a Methodist church to the south west and a variety of commercial premises to the north

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the property to a House in Multiple Occupation with 4 bedrooms. The internal layout would comprise:

- Ground floor: Three bedrooms, one ensuite, one bathroom, one WC;
- First Floor: one bedroom with ensuite, kitchen/dinning, living room, WC;

The application also proposes the reopening of an existing ground floor blocked up window within the the southern side elevation and the replacement of the existing fire escape door with a single bathroom window.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – February 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1	**Delivering a more prosperous economy**
E1	Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
SO2	**Creating successful and healthy communities**
C1	Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3	Delivering the right type of housing
SO3	**Improving design, image and quality of place**
P2	Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3	Improving design of new development
SO5	**Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport**
T2	Improving accessibility
DM1	General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

A number of policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan have been saved following the adoption of the Core Strategy. The following saved policies are relevant:

G/D/1	**Defined Urban Area**
G/S/1	Hierarchy and Role of Centres

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

92/D27818 – Change of Use from chapel of rest with self-contained flat to gymnasium – Grant STC – March 1992

03/D41813 – Change of Use from gymnasium to funeral directors to chapel of rest – Grant STC – Jul 2003

18/01439/FUL – Change of use from funeral directors to House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) Use Class C4 including the installation of single window to first floor rear elevation and reinstatement of ground floor side window together with the erection of 1.5m high boundary fencing – Withdrawn – January 2019

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering
We have no objection to the construction of a HMO at this location.

Whilst the proposal is short of parking the site is in a highly sustainable location adjacent to Heywood Centre.

The development is unlikely to have any negative impact upon the surrounding highways.

We have no highways objections to these proposals.

Env Health - Noise/Odours
This section has no objection to the proposal.

Strategic Housing - Marlene Murphy
The new plans fit within HMO requirements, they are fine for us.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent out to all surrounding neighbours and one objection has been received:

- We have concerns that such a development would compromise the privacy of our operational business whereby the deceased we bring in and out of our property will be viewed by residents of the HMO.

  Prospective residents of the proposed HMO may have a negative impact on our customer perception by producing noise pollution, an excessive build-up of waste and an increased number of vehicles parked around our property.

  In addition, any building works associated with the conversion would likely affect our day-to-day business in terms of disruption, in particular to families viewing deceased.

ANALYSIS

Principle of development

Policy E1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy states that the Council will focus retail, leisure, cultural, office, residential and other development to promote the viability and vitality of all the Borough's town centres to maintain them as thriving and sustainable centres and the preferred shopping and leisure destinations. Specifically, the CS notes that centres have the potential to play an important role in providing new quality housing in sustainable locations.

Although the proposal would result in the loss of existing commercial floor space, the NPPF and Core Strategy are both clear that residential development within existing centres is to be encouraged, where it does not explicitly damage the viability and vitality of the centre or detract from the provision of other employment space. It should be noted that the property is currently vacant and the proposal would bring the property back into a viable use within this location. Given the location of the site in a well-established town centre, it is considered that the development would benefit from sustainable access to services and employment opportunities.

It is therefore considered that the principle of the development would comply with the policies contained within the Core Strategy, the Unitary Development Plan and the NPPF and would make a valuable contribution to the supply of affordable housing in the Borough.

Amenity

Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy sets out a number of basic planning considerations that apply to all development. Further to this, paragraph 127 of the NPPF, advises that
Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments 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.

Policy G9 of the Core Strategy sets out that the Council will seek to reduce all forms of pollution by requiring that development does not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.

It is noted that the site lies within an existing identified local centre. As a result, there is mix of uses within the immediate surrounding area with a funeral director and associated car parking to the south with a number of newly constructed dwellings beyond this. There is also a Methodist church to the south west and a variety of commercial premises to the north, some of which include limited residential accommodation at the first floor level.

An objection has been received in relation to the impact upon the adjacent funeral directors from noise pollution, build-up of waste and an impact though a loss of privacy to the sensitive operations carried out by the business. However in light of the context of the surroundings of the site and the associated levels of general activity and noise, it is not considered that the change of use to a HMO with 4 bedrooms, would result in a further increase in activity levels, noise and disturbance associated with residential activities and comings and goings etc. to the extent that would unacceptably impact on the adjacent funeral directors or any other surrounding uses. In relation to concerns relating to build up of waste, the application includes a bin store screened behind a 1.5m high fence which would prevent any visual impacts occurring as a result of refuse bins and litter associated with the HMO. The objection makes reference to the loss of privacy to the sensitive operation carried out by the funeral directors within the adjacent car park. However this car park is visible from the public realm and therefore does not currently benefit from high levels of privacy. Therefore any loss of privacy to the funeral directors from the change of use to a HMO would not be significant enough to warrant a refusal of the application.

As such it is not considered that the proposed change of use to a 4 bedroom HMO would result in a significant negative impact upon surrounding buildings. It is recommended that a condition be imposed on the permission limiting the number of bedrooms to 4, in order to ensure that that levels of activity arising from the property do not increase without due assessment by the LPA.

With regard to the living conditions of future occupiers of the property, it is noted that each single bedroom would be provided with natural light and ventilation, with an outlook to adjacent car park of the funeral directors. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is not an ideal arrangement, it is not considered that this would have an impact upon the amenity of future occupants which would substantiate a refusal reason on this basis. In addition to this a kitchen/dining room and living room will be provided on the first floor and an adequate number of bathrooms would be provided. Consultation with the Council's Housing Service confirms that the space and amenities required for a HMO have been met (with regard to separate licensing provisions).

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposal would meet with the expectations of Policies DM1 and G9 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, along with the relevant requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

An objection has been received in relation to an impact from increased numbers of parked cars. The scheme provides no dedicated off-road parking for the facility and given the specific nature of the use it is considered less likely that all residents will own a vehicle. In addition, the Highways Authority has noted that the facility is adjacent to the Heywood Centre in a very sustainable location therefore will not require dedicated parking. A cycle stand will be provided, in accordance with full details to be provided.

In conclusion, it is not considered that the additional traffic would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding highway network. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of Policies T2 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, along with the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

   Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans:-

   - Location Plan
   - Existing Ground Floor Plan – 18/462/01
   - Existing Elevations and First Floor Plan – 18/462/02A
   - Proposed Ground Floor Plan – 18/452/03A
   - Proposed Elevations and First Floor Plan –18/462/04B

   and the development shall be carried out in complete accordance with these drawings hereby approved.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The number of bedrooms provided in the HMO hereby approved shall not exceed four.

   Reason: To prevent future uncontrolled intensification of the use in order to protect the amenities of existing residents in accordance with Policies G9 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

4. Prior to the occupation of the building hereby approved, full details of the construction and design of the refuse recycling/bin store shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved facility shall be provided and made available for use before the first occupation of the building and retained thereafter.

   Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory and secure facilities for storage of refuse and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy P3 of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. Prior to the occupation of the building hereby approved, full details of the cycle stand as indicated on drawing no. 18/462/03A shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle stand shall be installed in accordance with the details hereby approved before the first occupation of the building. The cycle stand shall be retained and kept available for that use thereafter.

   Reason: To ensure that adequate and satisfactory provision is made for bicycle parking and in order to encourage alternative modes of travel to the site apart from the motor car or other motorised vehicles, in accordance with policies DM1 and T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Notes for Applicant:

Report Author Neil Harkin