

Committee date 10/10/2023

Application No: 08/23/00307

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Case Officer: Liam Evans

Registered Date: 09/08/2023

Expiry Date: 03/10/2023

Parish: Bridgwater

Division: Bridgwater South

Proposal: Change of use of dwelling to form an 8no. bedroom HMO (Home in Multiple Occupation).

Site Location: 52 North Street, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3PN

Applicant: Mr E James



Committee decision required because

The views of the Town Council are contrary to the officer's recommendation.

Background

52 North Street is a mid-terrace three storey property located on North Street and set back from

the adjacent highway behind a small garden and low stone wall. The site has a vehicular access to the rear, which is served by a service road and leads to an existing garage. The property in its current form is given as a 5 bedroom dwelling.

It is proposed to change the use of the property to a 7 person HMO. No physical alterations are proposed to the exterior of the property with the interior reorganised with one bedroom subdivided into two and the lounge and sitting room at ground floor level providing a further two bedrooms. 6 bedrooms would have en-suite bathrooms with a communal shower room and WC also retained. The dining room and kitchen would be available as a communal space to the rear of the building.

The existing garage to the rear would be retained to provide a parking space as well as storage for bicycles and recycling/refuse.

Relevant History

None.

Supporting information supplied by the applicant

Planning Statement

Consultation Responses

Consultee Name	Summary of Response
Bridgwater Town Council, Bridgwater Town Hall	Objection. "Object on the grounds of an overdevelopment of the site and lack of provision for general rubbish and recycling storage. There is a lack of internal communal space for so many bedrooms which would be detrimental to living conditions."
Environmental Health - Somerset Council (Sedgemoor Area), Email Address Only	No comment.
Somerset Highways	Standing advice.
Strategic Housing, Email Address Only	Will create a 'house in multiple occupation', therefore recommend informative to contact private sector housing team.

Representations

None received.

Most Relevant Policies

National Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

Sedgemoor Local Plan (2011-2032)

S2 Spatial Strategy for Sedgemoor

D14 Managing the Transport Impacts of Development

D25 Protecting Residential Amenity

D26 Historic Environment

Main Issues

Principle

Policy S2 of the Local Plan states "To create the most sustainable pattern of development, Bridgwater will be the focus of the district's housing, employment and retail growth. As the principal town in the district it will accommodate the majority of new development."

The proposal will not result in any alterations to the building and therefore the character and appearance of the terrace and surrounding street scenes will remain unaffected. As the use of the building will remain residential the use is compatible with adjoining buildings in the area, which are predominantly residential on this edge of town centre site.

It should be noted that the change of use of a dwelling (C3) to a house in multiple occupation (C4) can be carried out without the need for planning permission provided the resultant HMO is not occupied by more than 6 persons as defined by Class L of the General Permitted Development Order 2015.

In this case while the property is stated as being a 5 bedroom the assessment of the application could therefore be centred on the increase in the number of occupants over that potentially permitted as a 6 bedroom HMO (1 additional bedroom to become a 7 bed HMO).

Residential Amenity

Policy D25 of the Local Plan states that "Development proposals that would... unacceptably impact upon the residential amenity of occupants of nearby dwellings and any potential future occupants will not be supported."

In this case, the proposal is for 7 persons and therefore an assessment would be made as to the impact incurred by the occupation of 1 additional person to that which potentially could exist on site if used as a 6 bedroom HMO. In the respect of impact on residential amenity this will be fairly

minimal given the use of the building overall remains similar to other properties nearby and that no additional openings or extensions are proposed to the building.

In respect of the Town Council's comments, each of the rooms would provide adequate space and meet the minimum HMO requirements (minimum 27.5sqm total communal space, 11sqm kitchen, 6.5sqm minimum bedroom space) and as noted by the statutory consultee responses no objections have been received in this respect. The amount of amenities provided (communal living/kitchen space, 1 shower room/WC, all but one bedroom served by an ensuite bathroom) will cater for the number of occupants proposed and in the interests of ensuring this continues it is proposed to include a condition to control any further subdivision.

In respect of rubbish/recycling storage this is shown on the plans as being located within the existing garage to the rear of the property and this is accessible from the service road, which leads onto Camden Road to the east. Taking into account the size of the garage the storage needs generated by the HMO can be easily accommodated within the existing building without having to block adjacent footpaths or impact on nearby properties.

The proposal will comply with Policy D25 of the Local Plan.

Parking

The existing property, which had the potential to be occupied by a large family would have in itself required 3 parking spaces according to the County Highway Parking Strategy. Converting the property to a 6 bed HMO would not in itself require further parking as this could be carried out as 'permitted development'.

Turning to the site itself, this is on North Street, which is a main route through the town linking with the strategic road network in the town centre. The site is within easy walking distance of the local bus stop as well as the shops and facilities within the commercial aspect of North Street and West Street. It is also within a short walking distance of the town centre and therefore, being a sustainable location there would not be an automatic assumption in needing a private vehicle for the day to day needs of the occupiers of the building. While occupiers could potentially have their own cars this would be down to personal preference and like others in the street they are not guaranteed spaces as North Street is double yellow lined and any ownership of vehicles would be at their own risk.

Cycle storage would be provided to encourage sustainable forms of travel.

Taking into account the size of the property and sustainable location it is considered that the proposal is acceptable on highways grounds.

Summary

The proposal will make use of an existing building close to the centre of the principle town of the district and therefore is it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy S2 and D14 of the Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in schedule A.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The accommodation hereby permitted shall be for up to 7 persons only and there shall be no internal subdivision to provide additional bedrooms.

Reason: In the interests of clarity as to the extent of the planning permission.

Schedule A

Existing Site Location Plan (1:2500) Drg No. A6/230615

Existing Block Plan (1:250) Drg No. B1/230615

Existing Block Plan (1:500) Drg No. B2/230615

Existing Floor Plans Drg No. C7/230706

Existing Floor Plans & Elevations Drg No. C10/230725

Existing (Garage) Floor Plan & Elevations Drg No. C3/230609

Proposed Site Location Plan (1:1250) Drg No. A7/230615

Proposed Site Location Plan (1:2500) Drg No. A8/230615

Proposed Block Plan (1:250) Drg No. B3/230726

Proposed Block Plan (1:500) Drg No. B4/230726

Proposed Floor Plans Drg No. C8/230725

Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations Drg No. C10/230725

DECISION