

**Committee date 11/06/2024**

**Application No:** 08/24/00027

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Case Officer:** Liam Evans

**Registered Date:** 12/02/2024

**Expiry Date:** 07/04/2024

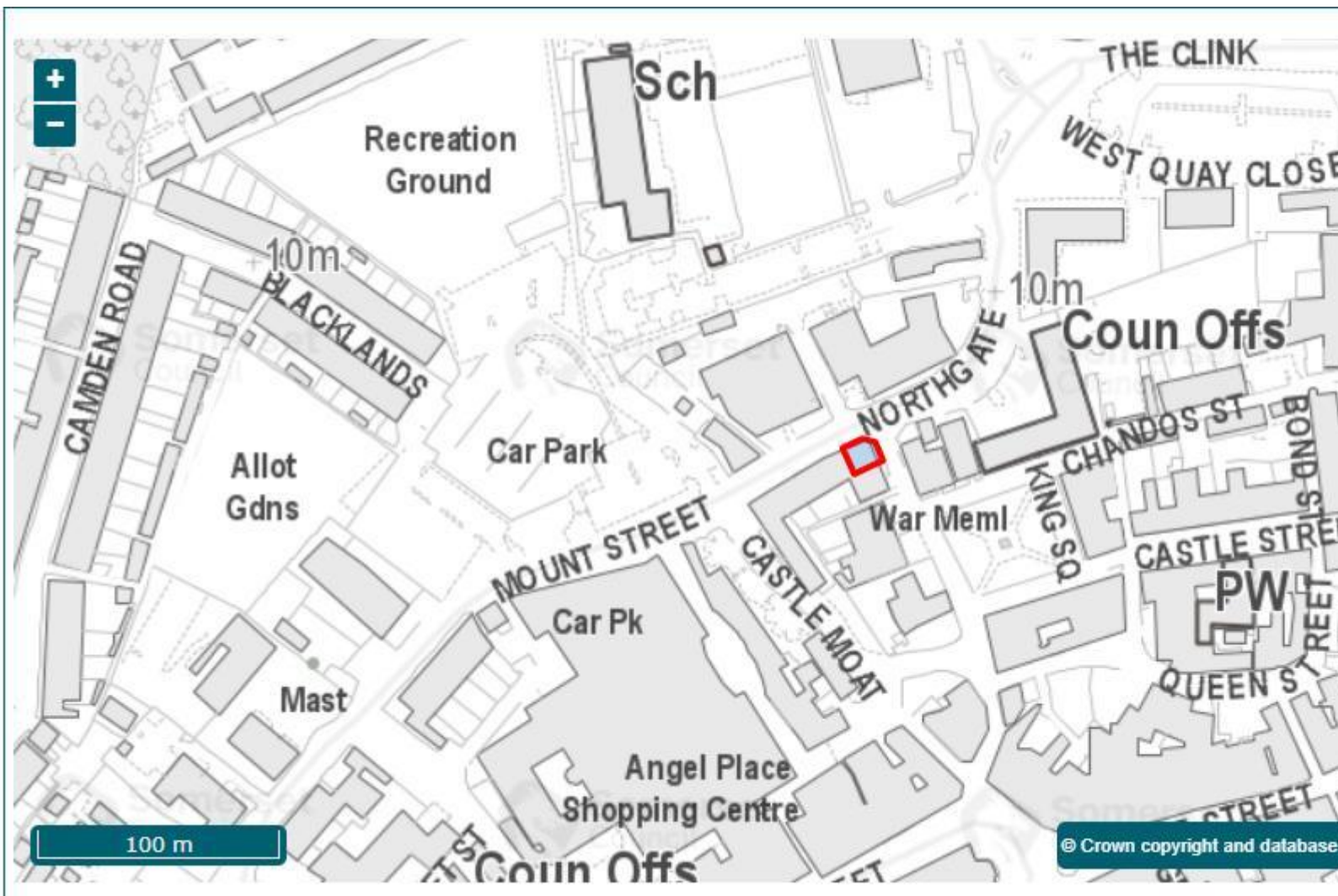
**Parish:** Bridgwater

**Division:** Bridgwater South

**Proposal:** Change of use of existing Offices to 8No. bedroom House of Multiple Occupation.

**Site Location:** 16 Northgate, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3EU

**Applicant:** Mr E James



## **Committee decision required because**

The views of the Town Council are contrary to the recommendation.

## **Recommendation**

Grant Consent

## **Background**

16 Northgate is an end of terrace property located within the town centre of Bridgwater. The property is currently used as offices and is made up of a principle two storey facade with a bay window and sliding sash windows to both the ground and first floor. The property is finished in red brick with stone surrounds to the windows. To the east elevation is a two storey projection with a gable front elevation and arched opening to the first floor.

Consent is sought for the change of use of the building to a 8 bedroom house in multiple occupation. Minor alterations are proposed in the form of replacing a door and glazing to the ground floor of the east side projection, insertion of a window at first floor level and three rooflights.

Bin storage would be provided within an existing hardstanding to the north of the building and enclosed by 1.8m high screening.

## **Relevant History**

None.

## **Supporting information supplied by the applicant**

Planning Statement.

## **Consultation Responses**

<b>Consultee Name</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
Bridgwater Town Council	<b>Objection</b>  "To object on the grounds that there appears to be no provision shown for the management of waste and recycling, there is an overdevelopment of the site, there seems to be a lack of regard to the strategic plan and there is no mention/evidence of licensing for the

	application."
Somerset Highways	<b>Standing advice</b>
Conservation Officer	<b>Principle could be supported subject to considerations/amendments in respect of visual impact.</b>
Environmental Health	<b>Recommend informative</b>
Somerset Waste Partnership	"There has been no provision made for the storage of waste containers for this property. the only place available at present is the very small frontage of the property which is not suitable for amount of refuse bins/recycling containers required for the number of beds in this HMO."
Strategic Housing	<b>Recommend HMO informative.</b>

## **Representations**

2 received raising the following:

- lack of parking.
- noise nuisance.
- more traffic.

## **Most Relevant Policies**

### National Planning Policies

#### National Planning Policy Framework

#### Local Plan (2011-2032)

#### 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 result in only minor alterations to the building and therefore the character and appearance of the terrace and surrounding street scenes will remain unaffected. The alterations to the building are limited to the infilling of an existing ground floor opening with matching brickwork and a window while the side elevation would contain three rooflights. The remaining appearance of the building and its contribution to the Conservation Area would remain unaffected.

As the use of the building will be residential the use is compatible with adjoining buildings in the area, which are a mix of residential and commercial/office uses surrounding this town centre site.

The site is extremely sustainable in terms of its location, within a short walking distance of the town centre facilities nearby.

With regards the Town Council's comments on the licencing of the property as a HMO, this would be handled outside of the planning application process and it would be advised that the developer contact the Private Sector Housing team within the Council.

### 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 8 persons and therefore an assessment would be made as to the impact incurred by the occupation as an HMO. In the respect of impact on residential amenity this will be fairly minimal given the use of the building overall would be similar to other properties nearby and that no additional openings or extensions are proposed to the building that would impact on the adjacent properties.

The proposed window alterations to the north elevation and additional roof lights to the east roof slope would not overlook any existing properties as these minor works would be separated by the width of the existing highways. In respect of noise the use would be primarily residential and this would be similar to other properties nearby. It is not considered that a HMO format in itself generate noise to the extent that it would impact negatively upon the adjacent dwellings.

In respect of the Town Council's comments regarding overdevelopment the building is of a scale

that can accommodate the proposed 8 bedrooms to the required standards. 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 lounge and dining/kitchen space, 1 shower room and WC, all but one bedrooms 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.

Objections have been received in respect of rubbish/recycling storage as proposed. The details submitted that the existing area for bin storage area of the office would be utilised, which is to the north east side of the building on an existing area of hardstanding. This is shown on the plans as being located within the control of the property and this is accessible from Northgate directly. Amended plans have been provided in order to enclose the bin storage area with screening and accessible gates. This would screen the refuse bins from view and ensure a tidy appearance, improving on the existing situation whereby containers/bins are visible within the street scene. Details of the materials to be used would be subject to condition.

While Somerset Waste Partnership have indicated that this area would be insufficient no details have been provided as to how many refuse bins/containers would be required by them to make the area unsuitable. The area to be enclosed by the fencing/gates would be approximately 2.9sqm (2.9m x 1m) in area and based on the existing use of the building (as an office) it is not considered that the change would result in a significant change to the waste storage demands. Based on the storage area's size as set out on the floor plan and the size of a typical 180l wheeled refuse bin (480mm width x 555mm depth) the area would be able to provide space for multiple bins alongside the smaller recycling boxes and reusable sacks if required. Taking into account the amount of need generated by the HMO the requirements could be accommodated within the existing area 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 office use of the property would have in itself required approximately 4 parking spaces according to the County Highway Parking Strategy.

Turning to the site itself, this is on Northgate, which is a main route through the town linking with 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 Northgate and the High Street. As it is within a very 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 Northgate is

double yellow lined and any ownership of vehicles would be at their own risk.

Local Council car parks are also available for use and these are also a short distance from the site.

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 the an existing building within 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 development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the bin storage area as shown on plan no. Proposed Ground Floor/Site Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(2-)01Rev. D have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bin store shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be maintained for the life of the approved development.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

- 4 If any unforeseen contamination is found during excavations, the Local Planning Authority shall be notified immediately.

Where remediation is deemed necessary by the Local Planning Authority, a remediation scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and then implemented in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: To ensure that the land is suitable for the intended uses and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to human health, controlled waters and other receptors both onsite and offsite.

- 5 The brickwork to be used in the infilling of the existing opening on the north west elevation hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of the character of the building and the street scene/conservation area.

- 6 The rooflights to be installed shall be of a conservation style only and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the building and conservation area.

- 7 The house in multiple occupation hereby approved shall be occupied by no more than 8 persons at any one time.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of future occupants in accordance with Sedgemoor Local Plan 2011-2032 Policy D25.

### **Schedule A**

Location Plan & Block Plan Drg No. 2404-AL(00)01Rev. B

Existing Ground Floor/Site Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(01)01Rev. B

Existing First Floor Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(01)02

Existing North-West Elevation Drg No. 2404; AL(01)03

Existing North-East Elevation Drg No. 2404; AL(01)04

Existing South-East Elevation Drg No. 2404; AL(01)05

Existing Roof Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(01)06

Proposed Ground Floor/Site Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(2-)01Rev. D

Proposed First Floor Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(2-)02

Proposed North-West Elevation Drg No. 2404; AL(4-)01 Rev B

Proposed North-East Elevation Drg No. 2404; AL(4-)02 Rev B

Proposed Roof Plan Drg No. 2404; AL(47)01

DECISION

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