



**NORTHAMPTON**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
Planning Committee

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
**DIRECTORATE:** Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning  
**HEAD OF PLANNING:** Peter Baguley

**APPLICATION REF:** N/2017/0250

**LOCATION:** 2 Gray Street

**DESCRIPTION:** New 3 bedroom student accommodation annex to the rear of 2 Gray Street

**WARD:** Castle Ward

**APPLICANT:** Clayson Country Homes  
**AGENT:** CC Town Planning

**REFERRED BY:** Councillor D Stone  
**REASON:** High volume of HIMOs, refuse and parking

**DEPARTURE:** No

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**APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposed development, subject to conditions, would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the historic environment, neighbour amenity and the highway system. The development is therefore in conformity with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies BN5 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policies E20 and E26 of the Northampton Local Plan.

**2. THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 The applicant seeks planning permission to erect an outbuilding for use as student accommodation for three people. This building would be single storey and would feature a combination of a flat roof and a mono-pitched roof design. The building would be constructed in bricks.

2.2 The building has a maximum height of 3m, which is a reduction of 1.5m from the highest point of the previously submitted application proposal, which was refused by the Council under officer delegated authority.

**3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The application site is currently used for student accommodation. To the rear of the site is an area which is currently used for car parking. The site is surrounded by brick walls. The wider area is predominantly used for residential accommodation, with the most prominent house type being terraced houses. The site is within the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 08/0074/FULWNN – Conversion of existing building into five apartments, including single storey extension and second floor extension – Approved.

N/2016/1139 – New three bedroom student accommodation annexe – Refused.

#### **5. PLANNING POLICY**

##### **5.1 Statutory Duty**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) and the Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies,

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

##### **5.2 National Policies**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

- 5.3 Paragraph 17 seeks to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for existing and proposed occupiers.
- 5.4 Paragraph 49 requires that housing applications are considered with presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.5 Paragraph 50 states that planning should deliver a wide choice of high quality homes; widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive, and mixed communities; should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends, and the needs of different groups in the community.
- 5.6 Paragraph 132 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

##### **5.7 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)**

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

- 5.8 Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles - requires development to satisfy a range of sustainable development principles including through achieving the highest standards of sustainable design; maximising opportunities for reuse and recycling; and promoting walking and cycling and protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings.
- 5.9 Policy BN5 – designated heritage assets & their setting will be conserved and enhanced. Designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced in recognition of their individual and cumulative significance and contribution to west Northamptonshire’s local distinctiveness and sense of place.

5.10 **Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)**

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policies are material to this application:

- 5.11 Policy E20 – new development should adequately reflect the character of surroundings and ensure adequate standards of privacy, daylight and sunlight.
- 5.12 Policy E26 – allows for new development in the Conservation area providing the proposed development preserve or enhances the character and appearance of those areas

**6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **Conservation (NBC)** – The annexe would not be prominent in the streetscene or affect importance views within the Conservation Area.
- 6.2 **Councillor D. Stone** – Requesting that the application be determined by committee as the area is already under pressure due to the number of house in multiple occupation, refuse and a lack of parking.
- 6.3 **Double H Residents Association, 56 Hervey Street, 20 and 22 Hunter Street**, and one unaddressed letter.
- The proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site.
  - There is a shortage of car parking within the vicinity.
  - Concerns are raised regarding refuse storage.
  - The development would generate excessive noise
  - The proposal would lead of a loss of light to surrounding residents.
  - Concerns are raised regarding the impacts on wildlife

**7. APPRAISAL**

- 7.1 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and, as a consequence, the principle of a residential type use is considered appropriate within this context.

7.2 Of particular note is this application was stimulated by the planning refusal N/2016/1139 (under delegated powers) of a taller building on the same site in January 2017. The reason for refusal was:

*“By reason of its height and siting, the proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding residential properties due to the development forming an enclosing and overbearing feature resulting in a significant loss of outlook. The development therefore fails to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.”*

7.3 Given the very limited passage of time since the consideration of this application, the most significant matter for consideration is whether the revised proposal, with its reduced height, would have a significant adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties.

7.4 The proposed building has been reduced in height by 1.5m. As a result, the development would not have a significant adverse impact in terms of overshadowing of adjoining properties. The design of the development, combined with the existing boundary treatments would prevent there being a significant adverse impact upon the privacy levels of surrounding properties.

7.5 Given the reduction in height of the proposed building from that previously deemed unacceptable, the proposed building would not be taller than the existing substantial brick walls to the rear, which serves as boundary treatments. The proposed development would not adversely impact upon the levels of outlook that the occupiers of existing residential properties currently enjoy. Therefore the proposal is unlikely to form an incongruous or strident feature to the detriment of the amenities of existing properties.

7.6 The development would not be readily viewed from Gray Street, the only view would be via an arch through the northern façade of the building. Given that views of the proposed building would be only at an oblique angle, it is considered that any impacts on the character of the area, including the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area would be minimal and in line with the requirements of national and local planning policies. Notwithstanding this conclusion, a condition is recommended that would enable the Council to approve details of the final building materials, which is necessary to create a good standard of development.

7.7 It is recognised that the development may increase the demand for car parking spaces within the vicinity, which are in relatively short supply. However, given the scale of the development and the fact that it is sited in a sustainable location in close proximity to the allocated Kettering Road centre, the town centre and the Racecourse, it is considered that car ownership might not necessarily be a requisite of those residing in the proposed development. It is considered that the development would not result in a significant adverse impact upon the highway system. In reaching this conclusion, weight has also been given to the fact that a number of appeals for HIMOs, which were originally refused by the Council on parking grounds, have been allowed by the Planning Inspectorate.

7.8 In addition, it is noted that the development would provide bespoke student accommodation (Sui Generis use), which would be secured by condition. It is likely that the development would reduce demand (albeit on a small basis) for house in multiple occupation in the area, thereby assisting in ensuring the provision of a varied housing stock as required by the NPPF.

7.9 It is appreciated that the existing development at 2 Gray Street (which is also in use as student accommodation) was approved on the basis that 5 car parking spaces be provided. Should this particular application be approved, the number of spaces at the property would be reduced to four. Given the sustainable nature of the application site, it is considered that the broad principle of this is acceptable, but it should be noted that the applicant would be required to submit an application to vary the relevant condition of planning permission 08/0074/FULWNN which

requires the provision of 5 parking spaces on site. This would need to be assessed on its own merits at the appropriate time.

7.10 In order to secure a good standard of development, a condition is recommended that would secure the provision of refuse storage, prior to the first occupation of the development and their retention thereafter.

7.11 Whilst it is noted that some representations have been submitted regarding the potential for anti-social behaviour, it should be noted that the potential future conduct of residents of the development is not a planning matter and cannot form a reason of resisting this planning application.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 It is considered that the proposed development represents an appropriate land use and has a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the highways system and the surrounding Conservation Area.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan; 1550/3c; and 1550/4.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

3. Full details of all proposed external facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that the development will harmonise with its surroundings in accordance with Policy E20 of the Northampton Local Plan.

4. Notwithstanding the details submitted, full details of refuse and cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of securing a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the requirements of Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

5. The development hereby approved shall be used as student accommodation only for a maximum of three residents only.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

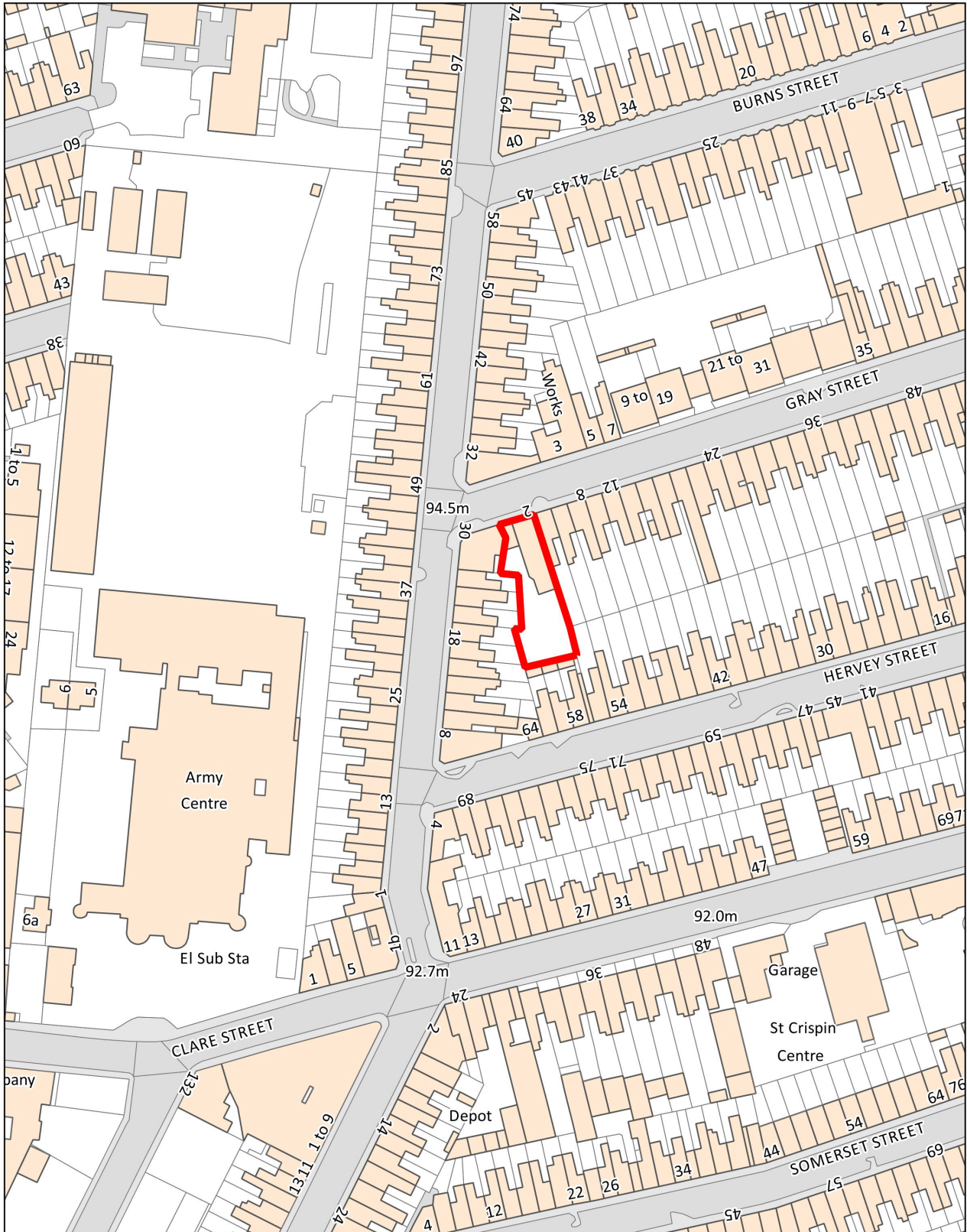
10.1 None

**11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

**12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN**

12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



Title: **2 Gray Street**

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Date: 01-06-2017

Scale: 1:1,250

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