

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Planning Committee

Monday, 4 April 2022 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

R D Burrett (Chair)

S Buck (Vice-Chair)

Z Ali, A Belben, I T Irvine, K L Jaggard, S Malik, M Mwagale and P C Smith

Officers Present:

Siraj Choudhury Head of Legal, Governance and HR

Jean McPherson Group Manager (Development Management)

Clem Smith Head of Economy and Planning

Jess Tamplin Democratic Services Officer

Hamish Walke Principal Planning Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor S Raja

Also in Attendance:

Councillor B J Burgess

1. Disclosures of Interest

The following disclosures of interests were made:

Councillor	Item and Minute	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor Irvine	Planning Application CR/2021/0693/FUL – Hedley House, 225 Three Bridges Road, Three Bridges, Crawley (Minute 4)	Personal Interest – Cabinet Member for Housing

2. Lobbying Declarations

The following lobbying declarations were made by councillors:-

Councillor Burrett had received correspondence from a Ward Councillor for Three Bridges regarding application CR/2021/0693/FUL, but had not been directly lobbied and had not expressed views on the application in advance of the meeting.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 8 March 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Planning Application CR/2021/0693/FUL - Hedley House, 225 Three Bridges Road, Three Bridges, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/381a](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Change of use from a six person house in multiple occupation (C4) to a hostel (*sui generis*) for six people to be managed by Crawley Homes.

Councillors Ali, Burrett, Jaggard, and P Smith declared they had visited the site.

The Principal Planning Officer provided a verbal summation of the application for a change of use, which related to a detached two storey, six bedroom house in Three Bridges. The Officer gave detail of the various relevant planning considerations as detailed in the report, which suggested that the proposed hostel would help meet Crawley's need for accommodation for homeless people and would not cause significant harm to neighbouring amenity.

Nikki Hargrave spoke on behalf of the applicant, Crawley Borough Council, in support of the application. Matters raised included:

- There was a growing need for accommodation for those finding themselves homeless; temporary accommodation such as nightly paid hotels were not a sustainable option. Multiple occupancy vacant properties were a good alternative.
- No change was to be made to the building itself nor to the number of occupants. The application sought only a change of use.
- The proposed hostel would be managed by the Council's Hostels Team, who would carry out welfare visits and weekly health and safety checks.

Brenda Burgess, Ward Councillor for Three Bridges, spoke on behalf of residents in objection to the application. Matters raised included:

- Neighbours of the site had described anti-social behaviour at the property under its current use, and had raised concerns that this could be exacerbated under the proposed new use.
- Clarity was sought over the number of occupants housed in each room.
- It was important to neighbours of the site that the property be regularly monitored by the applicant.

The Committee then considered the application. Following a query regarding the possible provision of a seventh bedroom within the property, the Planning Officer highlighted the importance of a large communal space for tenants to use for dining, relaxing, and socialising with one another. The Committee noted that the design of the house lent itself to six individuals sharing communal facilities rather than multiple family units with in-room amenities. It was confirmed that the property was proposed to be used by six people and that this was to be controlled by a condition; if approved, the number of occupants would not be able to be changed without the Local Planning Authority varying that condition. Tenants were not to be allocated a fixed term of residency at the dwelling, but were to be able to stay indefinitely. It was noted that the proposal sought to prevent homelessness.

It was recognised that the management of the proposed hostel by Crawley Borough Council would allow the property to be monitored and any issues addressed more easily and efficiently than under the current use.

The Planning Officer confirmed that no physical changes to the building were proposed as part of this application. Any future changes would require a separate planning application.

RESOLVED

Permit subject to conditions set out in report PES/381a.

5. Planning Application CR/2022/0008/FUL - 45 Shaws Road, Northgate, Crawley

The Committee considered report [PES/381b](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which proposed as follows:

Erection of single storey side extension with pitched roof.

Councillors Ali, Burrett, and Jaggard declared they had visited the site.

The Group Manager (Development Management) provided a verbal summation of the application, which sought permission for the addition of a bedroom and en-suite bathroom to an end-of-terrace house in Northgate. The Officer gave detail of the various relevant planning considerations as detailed in the report, which concluded that the proposed extension was in keeping with the character of the dwelling and was not considered to have a harmful impact on neighbouring properties.

The Committee then considered the application. The proposal's impact on car parking provision was discussed – it was recognised that two off-street parking spaces were proposed to be created on the existing hardstanding along the front of the house (an increase of one compared to the current off-street provision). A query was raised as to whether the space was sufficient for two cars due to the adjacent fence and the steps at the dwelling's front door. The Officer clarified that the fence was to be removed and the resulting space of approximately 11m x 3m was considered sufficient for two cars; standard parking spaces were 4.8m x 2.4m.

In response to a query from a Committee member, it was confirmed that the grassed area of land adjacent to the dwelling (edged in blue on the location plan) was within the applicant's control but was not considered to be within the boundary of domestic curtilage of the property and so functioned as amenity space.

RESOLVED

Permit subject to conditions set out in report PES/381b.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Planning Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.48 pm.

R D Burrett (Chair)