

NEWBURY 18/02200/FUL Pins ref: 3222796	39 Cresswell Road Newbury Berkshire RG14 2PQ	Conversion of TV room into bedroom with shower.	Dele. Refusal	Allowed 18.06.2019
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Decision

The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of TV room into bedroom with shower at 39 Cresswell Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2PQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 18/02200/FUL, dated 31 July 2018, subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: CRB/01 Rev A; CRB/02; CRB03; CRB/06; CRB/07 & CRB/08.
- 3 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted details of the cycle parking and storage space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use shall not commence until the cycle parking and storage space has been provided in accordance with the approved details and it shall be retained for this purpose at all times.
- 4 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicle parking shall have been provided in accordance with the approved plans and shall have been surfaced in bonded material. The parking spaces shall thereafter be kept available for parking (of private motor cars and/or light goods vehicles) at all times.

Main Issue

The main issue is the effect of the proposal on local parking demand with consequent considerations of highway safety and convenience.

Reasons

Parking

The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling of a family style in a mid-density area of suburban character with relatively generous road carriageway and footway widths, private driveways and parking for most properties and additional road-side lay-bys. The appeal proposal is as described above; effectively it is to add a seventh bedroom to an existing 6 bed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Policies P1 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD, CS13 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) and TRANS.1 of the Saved Policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (1991- 2006 (Saved Policies 2007)) are all of some relevance to this case. Policy P1 sets out minimum parking standards; 1.25 spaces for a 1 bed flat in this 'accessibility zone' plus a percentage of shared visitor parking. Policy CS13 encourages a shift from single occupancy car use to more sustainable travel. Policy TRANS 1 calls for development to meet parking standards albeit with an inherent degree of flexibility and the policy being based in a previous era of maximum not minimum parking standards.

As the Council acknowledges, conversion of a dwelling to a 6 bed HMO is normally 'permitted development'.

There are no Council referenced or policy adopted parking standards for HMOs above or below this figure within this District.

The Inspector found it difficult to assimilate that an HMO bedroom should anywhere near equate to a 1 bed flat in terms of parking requirements. Whilst the Council is prepared to indicate some flexibility he agreed with the Appellant for the reasons he gave that the scope for this should be greater. Added to this, he noted that the Officer Report indicates that the site is in a sustainable location in Newbury and thus reliance on car ownership is not an essential pre-requisite of living here.

The current application gives an opportunity to unequivocally ensure the provision and retention of 3 suitably surfaced car parking spaces and new cycle parking provision. The latter would encourage sustainable travel. The scheme would provide a place to live in a situation which, other than parking, raises no concerns from the Council over a range of planning issues. It is located in an area with a fairly loose and generous arrangement of street pattern, kerb-side opportunities and width of carriageway and is not on a heavily trafficked route. A lay-by lies opposite although due to drives it is not usable by all for its whole length. The Inspector was not at all convinced that any slight additional on-street parking demand arising from this scheme would have a material effect on road safety, ease of movement or the convenience and amenity of local people. The Inspector added that he was dealing solely with the individual circumstances of this case, its planning background and its precise location. The Council need not fear of cumulative impacts as each case will have to be assessed on its merits.

Given the nature of the scheme and this location he concluded that the appeal proposal would not run contrary to the policies which he cited in paragraph 4 above.

Conditions

There should be the standard commencement condition and also a condition that works are to be carried out in accordance with listed, approved, plans; to provide certainty. The Inspector agreed with the Council's suggestion on cycle parking provision in the interests of encouraging more sustainable travel. Ensuring the provision and suitable surfacing of the car parking area to the front is appropriate in the interests of maximizing on-site parking usage to lessen any reliance in on-street provision. The two conditions suggested by the Council in this regard can usefully be broadly combined and he had altered some wording of the suggested conditions to aid clarity and align with national guidance.

Overall conclusion

For the reasons given above, the Inspector concluded that the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on the on local parking demand and there would not be consequent undue impacts on highway safety or convenience. Accordingly the appeal is allowed.

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