



Supporting Planning Statement

118 Northumberland Avenue Welling Kent DA16 2PZ

**Proposal: PROPOSED CONVERSION OF EXISTING DWELLING TO A 3 BED HMO
(HOUSE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION) AND FORMATION 1 X 1 BED FLAT**

Mr. D. Rugless

14 May 2021

Prepared on behalf of Westleigh Design

BARRON EDWARDS
PLANNING & ARCHITECTURE

All plans within this document produced by Barron Edwards Ltd are based upon Ordnance Survey mapping.

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
	Purpose of Statement	
	Proposed Development	
	Accompanying Documentation	
2.0	Site and Surroundings	1
	Site Description and Context	
	Planning History	
3.0	Planning Policy	2
4.0	Planning Considerations	5
5.0	Conclusions	7

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr D. Rugless for the conversion of the existing Class C3 residential dwelling at 118 Northumberland Avenue Welling DA16 2PZ to provide a Class C4 small comprising of 4 letting units for occupation by a maximum of **6 persons**.

1.2 In addition to the application form and certificates the following documents were submitted;

Application plans:

- Drawing No. 270421/1 of 2 (Proposed Ground & First Floor Plans)
- Drawing No. 270421/2 of 2 (Proposed second Floor Plans)

- Site Plan 1:1250
- Planning, Design and Access Statement

2.0 Site Surroundings and Proposal

2.1 The application site is a two storey extended semi-detached property on the northern side of Northumberland Avenue approximately 250m east of its junction with Rochester Way where it links to the main A2 (T) adjacent to Falconwood railway station opposite its junction with Westmoreland Road. The Harris Academy is located on the opposite side of the road which provides education facilities. Shopping facilities are located within easy walking distance at Falconwood Green and Falconwood Station. The area is well served by bus routes linking to the main shopping area in Welling and Bexleyheath.

2.2 The property was extended in 2019 by the addition of a large two storey side extension and conversion of the loft space. The approved drawings showed a large living room, two separate reception rooms, breakfast room/kitchen, utility room and shower room on the ground floor. At first floor level there is a master bedroom with en-suite, three double bedrooms, a single bedroom and family bathroom. Within the loft space is another double bedroom with en-suite

2.3 The four HMO's will be 2 double bedroom and two single bedroom units and each will have its own separate sitting area, kitchen and bathroom and will have access to the rear amenity area. The forecourt of the site has been laid to hardstanding and provides two off-street parking spaces but is also located

within 2 minutes walking distance of Falconwood Station and main bus routes serving the area. The site is considered to be sustainable.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Section 70 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that, when making a determination under the Planning Acts, the determination shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Article 35 of The Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015, requires that, when issuing a decision, councils must also include a statement explaining, whether, and if so how, in dealing with the application, the local planning authority have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with a planning application.

3.2 The development plan for the area comprises the **Council's Core Strategy (2012)** and saved policies Unitary **Development Plan (2004) Policies** and the following policies were taken into consideration in the preparation of this appeal:

Core Strategy

Policy CS1 – Achieving Sustainable Development

Policy CS06 – Welling Geographic Region

Policy CS10 - Housing Need

Policy CS10 refers to housing need within the Borough and acknowledges the need for new housing consistent with the targets set down in the London Plan.

Bexley UDP (2004)

Saved Policies H3, 6 & 7 – Residential Character & design Guidelines

Saved Policies H9 – 11 – Extensions, Alterations and Conversions.

UDP Design & DC Guidelines

D & DCG2 – Extensions to Houses

3.3 The **London Plan 2016 (as amended)** makes comment the requirement about the provision of new residential developments (3.3/3.4) and the need for

them to be of good design (3.5) to meet Lifetime Homes standards and the desirability of providing off- street parking(6.13) in relation to the sites PTAL rating as well as local character (7.4). We are satisfied that the submitted scheme meets these requirements, as stated in the submitted Design & Access Statement, and those policies within the Council's adopted Core Strategy and saved UDP policies and Development Control guidance.

3.4 The following policies have been taken into consideration in the formulation of this application:

Policy 3.3: Increase Housing Supply

Policy 3.4: Optimising Housing Potential

Policy 3.5: Quality and Design of Housing Developments

Policy 3.8: Housing Choice

Policy 5.3: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy 5.17: Waste Capacity

Policy 6.3: Assessing Effects of Development on Transport Capacity

Policy 6.13: Parking

Policy 7.3: Designing out crime

Policy 7.4: Local Character

Policy 7.8: architecture

3.5 There is an Emerging **London Plan 2020** which although not fully adopted is regarded as carrying significant weight. The emerging policies are considered relevant:

- Policy D4 Delivering good design
- Policy D6 Housing quality and standards
- Policy H1 Increasing housing supply
- Policy T5 Cycling
- Policy T6 Car parking
- Policy T6.1 Residential parking

3.6. **It is clear from the published HDT results issued on 13 February 2020 that the Council has failed to reach its targets over the last 3yr period. It was required to provide 1301 new homes during the last 3 yr period but only achieved 1059 (81% of its required target).**

3.7 It is felt that the proposal would make a contribution towards providing small household units to meet this need and is considered to be in accord with policy both nationally and locally. The proposed building is of a good modern design and meets London Plan guidance in design standards and internal room layout and space standards.

National Planning Policy

3.8 National planning policy is enshrined within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in July 2018 and its accompanying revised the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). The PPG seeks to set out how to implement the strategic vision contained within the NPPF.

3.9 With regards to decision-taking, the revised NPPF advises that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development and should look for solutions rather than problems. Decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (paragraphs 186 and 187).

3.10 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that, “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”. It goes on at paragraph 8, that there are three dimensions of sustainable development as: economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that a “presumption in favour of sustainable development’ which is at the heart of the Framework to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way.

3.11 Issued in July 2018 the overarching principle is contained within Paragraph 11 which states that there is a **‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’**. Para.12 goes on that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the status of the development plan and states that where a development that is contrary to an up to date development plan that permission should not be granted.

3.12 Paragraph 59 of the NPPF states that it aims to support the government’s objective to significantly boost the supply of homes and that land is developed without unnecessary delay. It reinforces the principle that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 70 emphasises the need to make the use of windfall sites as they provide a reliable source of supply.

3.13 Section 117 of the revised NPPF (July 2018) encourage the effective use of land and Paragraph 118(c & d) encourage the use of sites that have been previously developed (brownfield land) and the development of underutilised land. It says that planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing reflecting local demand.

3.14 Paragraph 124 says that the Government attaches great importance to the creation of high quality buildings and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, which creates better places in which to live and work. Quality of design is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:-

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- Are sympathetic to local character and history Including
- surrounding built environment and landscaped setting
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings
- to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- create places that are safe, which promote health and wellbeing with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

3.15 Paragraphs 130 emphasise that developments of poor design should be refused but where design accords with plan policies it should not be used as a valid reason to object to development. Paragraph 131 emphasises that considerable weight should be given to innovative designs which raise the standards and lead to an improvement of the character and quality of the area and how it functions.

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 It is our opinion that the main considerations of this case would be whether the loss of existing family accommodation in order to provide much needed small household accommodation in the area and impact of the proposals on the character of the area. It is important to appreciate the applicants fall-back position is that the proposed change of use would normally be permitted

development under Part 3 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) if the council had not issued a Borough wide Article 4 Direction to preclude this change.

Loss of Family accommodation

4.2 There is technically no loss of family accommodation as the internal layout of the property is already as shown having been the subject of applications granted in 2019. The Council's planning records seem to indicate that a number of properties in the area have been converted to HMO's without any impact on the character of the area. So whilst the proposal would result in the loss of family accommodation this would not appear to be detrimental to the overall character of the area. Such conversions appear commonplace in the area

4.3 We are satisfied that the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy CS01 of the Core Strategy and the saved 'extensions policies' of the UDP in that it is well designed and has no adverse effect on Policies H3, 6 & 7 in that the design is in keeping with the scale and character of the host dwelling and is similar in size and nature to numerous other extensions in the immediate neighbourhood. We do not feel that the height, design or external appearance would be obtrusive or have any adverse effect on the amenities of existing residents and has the benefit of planning permission. Overall we are content that the proposal complies with Council's Core Strategy and Development Control Policies and is compatible with the relevant design policies of the NPPF.

Impact on the amenity of future occupiers:

4.4 The proposal is considered to be an improvement on the original layout and that the proposed configuration of each of the units would meet the space standards for individual letting rooms set in Policy 3.5 of the London Plan and its outlook would be typical of properties located within an urban area.

4.5 When the proposal is considered against the elements of Policies ENV39, CS1, C03 & CS10 we are satisfied that the site is within a sustainable location with reasonable public transport links with bus routes and rail connections within easy reach. The density is appropriate for its location and contributes to an efficient use of this urban located site. It is a good design that reflects the character of the host building and provides residential units of a size compatible with the space standards set out in the London Plan and Nationally Prescribed Space Standards (NPSS).

4.6 We are satisfied that the development provides accommodation in accord with the Council's Design & Development Control principles and that the proposal is sustainable and visually attractive. The design of the extensions would have no adverse effect on the character of the area and adds local distinctiveness.

4.7 Overall the changes are modest and, will have little impact on the visual amenities of the host dwelling or street scene generally. We are satisfied that the proposal is in full compliance with the principles outlined in the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF (July 2018) as outlined above and the Council's own criteria

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The appellant has taken on board all the Council's, London Plan and National policies to provide a sustainable solution to the beneficial use of this under-utilised premises within the urban area to provide additional units of small household accommodation for which there is an unfulfilled demand in the area. The site is totally sustainable given its urban location and proximity to local transport bus routes that pass close to the site and that other public transport modes are within easy commuting distance. The prospective layout and design is in keeping with the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and would be in keeping with the character of this urban estate and would be an enhancement to it. The proposal would be in keeping with its neighbours and would comply with national and local floor space standards. It would bring back into beneficial use this otherwise under-utilised urban property that stands out as an anomaly in this terrace and its development as proposed will enhance the distinctive appearance of the area.

5.2 It is a site that fulfils the requirements of the NPPF in supporting a presumption in favour. The proposal would not be out of character or at odds with the area. There would be no adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residents and therefore it is our view that the application should succeed.