

PLANNING STATEMENT

**CHURCH MISSION
SOCIETY: 244-246
IFFLEY ROAD,
OXFORD**

February 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Carter Jonas in support of a full planning application on behalf of the Church Mission Society ('the Applicant') ('the Mission') change of use from Class C1 Boarding Houses (use restricted by condition) to two Class C3 residential dwellings at 244 - 246 Iffley Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1SE ('the site').
- 1.2 The site is identified in the Location Plan at Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Location Plan



- 1.3 This Planning Statement sets out a reasoned justification as to why the planning application should be permitted by reference to the proposed development in relation to its site context, planning history and the relevant planning policy framework.
- 1.4 The application demonstrates that the site is sustainably located and entirely suitable for the proposed development; that the proposed development accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and is on the whole consistent with Oxford City Council's Development Plan.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site consists of a pair of three-storey semi-detached building providing short stay accommodation to members of the Church Mission Society. The access to the property is via Iffley Road.
- 2.2 The building is of red brick construction and is of a similar design to the majority of the large Victorian villas on the west side of Iffley Road. The property is served by a large front driveway. Tenancy at the property is not advertised or marketed and remains unavailable to the wider public.

- 2.3 The site is within St. Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Area. The property is not listed. The nearest listed building, Grade II Church of SS Edmund and Frideswide, lies approximately 168m north-west of the property.
- 2.4 Iffley Road is a busy two-way street which serves as the one of the main arterial roads providing access into and of out the city.
- 2.5 Several amenities and services are located in close proximity to the site, including shops, restaurants and convenience stores. The site is also served by public transport facilities, with the closest bus stop being located in front of the property.
- 2.6 The site is in Flood Zone 1 according to the Environment Agency Map, meaning that it has a low probability and negligible risk of fluvial (river) and coastal (sea) flooding.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 A focused planning history search was carried out for '244/246 Iffley Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1SE' on the 18 January 2024, as available on the Oxford City Council's online planning register of all planning applications (all time). The relevant planning history is set out in Table 1 below.

3.2 Table 1: Relevant Planning History

Application reference	Validation Date	Decision
224-246 Iffley Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1SE		
15/01255/CAT	Crown thin 1 no. Prunus Pasardiai De Ivy, Fell 1 no. Judas Tree and replant in St Clements and Iffley Road Conservation Area.	GRANTED 29 May 2015
07/00891/FUL	Proposed front porch (to 244) and single storey rear extension (to 246). Conversion of 244/246 from homeless persons hostel (sui generis) to Boarding House (class C1). Use of forecourt for parking.	GRANTED 24 Aug 2007
87/00442/GFH	Single storey rear extensions (244/246 Iffley Road)	GRANTED 23 Jun 1987
246 Iffley Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1SE		
86/00984/GFH	Single storey rear extension, incorporating courtyard area (Amended Plans)	REFUSED 19 Dec 1986
85/00590/GFH	Change of use from single family dwelling house to accommodation for homeless families	REFUSED 29 Aug 1985
85/00367/NFH	Change of use from private house to guest house and private residential unit. Provision of 6 car spaces at front.	WITHDRAWN 12 Aug 1985
64/14686/A_H	Vehicular access	GRANTED 24 Mar 1964
244 Iffley Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 1SE		
85/00119/GFH	Change of use from guest house to accommodation for housing the homeless	GRANTED 03 May 1985
81/00786/U	Application for an Established Use Certificate for boarding house	GRANTED 17 Nov 1981

Application reference	Validation Date	Decision
77/00231/A_H	Widening of access.	GRANTED 19 Oct 1977
57/06360/A_H	Vehicular crossing.	GRANTED 24 Sept 1957

3.3 Planning Application 07/00891/FUL establishes the lawful use of the building as C1 use. However, Condition 4 of the planning permission restricts the premises to be occupied as a boarding house and no other use within that use class.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This planning application seeks planning permission for the change of use from lawful Class C1 'boarding house' to two Class C3 semi-detached residential properties providing six bedrooms over two storeys.
- 4.2 The site originally comprised two residential properties which were converted into one single property and used as a homeless hostel. Following the grant of planning permission in 2017, the property was utilised as a boarding house by the members of the Mission.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the site will no longer be utilised as a boarding house by the trainee members of the Mission due to the changes being introduced in the training structure. To make efficient use of the land and best use the site capacity, it is proposed that the property is reconfigured and converted back into two dwellings as originally built.
- 4.4 The only external changes proposed to the property are the insertion of velux windows to the roof of the single storey rear extension. No alterations are proposed to the access arrangements. The parking area will be reduced from 3 car parking spaces per property to 2 spaces per property.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and section 70(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the applications and appeals are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Development Plan for Oxford City Council comprises of Oxford Local Plan 2036 (adopted in June 2020).

Oxford Local Plan 2036

- 5.3 Policy DH1 'High quality design and placemaking' states that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.
- 5.4 Policy DH3 'Designated heritage assets' states that planning permission will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality. For all planning decisions, great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset and to the setting of the asset, where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.

- 5.5 Policy V5 'Sustainable tourism' states that planning permission will only be granted for the change of use from holiday and other short-stay accommodation when any of the following criteria are met:
- no other occupier can be found following a realistic effort to market the premises as set out in Appendix 8.1, for continued use as holiday and other short stay accommodation (whether or not of the same form the existing use); or
 - evidence of non-viability is submitted; or
 - the accommodation is in a location unsuitable for the use as demonstrated by being contrary to the location requirements or any of the criteria above.
- 5.6 Policy H14 'Privacy, daylight, and sunlight' states that Planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for occupants of both existing and new homes.
- 5.7 H15 'Internal space standards' states that planning permission will only be granted for new dwellings that provide good quality living accommodation. Oxford City Council's Technical Advice Note 1A: Space Standards for Residential Development details the requirements.
- 5.8 Policy H16 'Outdoor amenity space standards' states that planning permission will only be granted for new dwellings that have direct and convenient access to an area of private open space as well as detailing a number of other requirements.
- 5.9 Policy RE2 'Efficient use of land' states that planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land. Development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, the surrounding area and broader considerations of the needs of Oxford. The development proposal must have a density appropriate for the proposed use, with an appropriate scale and massing, maximise the appropriate density with a built form and site layout appropriate to the capacity of the site.
- 5.10 Policy RE7 'Managing the impact of development' states that planning permission will only be granted for development that ensures that standards of amenity are protected including the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours. Developments must also not have unacceptable unaddressed transport impacts. Where developments do impact standards of amenity then appropriate mitigation measures should be provided where necessary.
- 5.11 Policy M5 'Bicycle Parking' of the Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted for development that complies with or exceeds the minimum bicycle parking provision as set out in Appendix 7.47.3. Bicycle parking should be, well designed and well-located, convenient, secure, covered (where possible enclosed) and provide level, unobstructed external access to the street. Any proposed development is required to deliver cycle spaces as per the parking standards.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.12 The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework was adopted on 19 December 2023 and sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The policies contained in the NPPF are a material consideration for the determination of planning applications. The Government published the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in 2014 and has since updated relevant parts as appropriate.
- 5.13 To achieve sustainable development, paragraph 8 confirms the three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
- **Economic Objective**

to build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy.

- **Social Objective**

to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities; and

- **Environmental Objective**

to protect and enhance of natural, built, and historic environment.

5.14 Paragraph 10 states: “so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.15 For decision-taking, paragraph 11 confirms this means:

- c. approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d. where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

5.16 Paragraph 11, and other relevant provisions of the NPPF, are set out in more detail and used to analyse the Proposed Development in Sections 6 and 7 of this Statement.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of development

- 6.1 Policy V5 ‘Sustainable Tourism’ resists the loss of short term holiday accommodation unless it can be demonstrated that it is not viable.
- 6.2 Oxford City Council’s online planning register identifies that the lawful use of the property is Class C1 (boarding house) as approved by application ref. 07/00891/FUL.
- 6.3 Condition 4 of that permission states that “The premises shall only be occupied as a boarding house as set out in Class C1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2005 and no other use within that class. Condition 5 states that “The property shall be managed in accordance with details set out in the applicant’s agents letter dated 23rd April 2007. That letter and Design and Access Statement sets out how the Church Mission will manage the building and states inter alia *“Boarding House, with long term residents and short term visitors. CMS intend to create an international missionary community; the residents of the house will live communally and strive to embrace and interact with their surrounding local community.”*
- 6.4 The property has not been marketed or advertised to the wider public. The Mission only permits its members undergoing training to occupy the property for a period of up to one year without the obligation of paying rent.
- 6.5 Thus, it is considered that the proposal will not result in the loss of a holiday or short stay accommodation as use of the property is currently limited to a boarding house for members of the Mission.

- 6.6 Policy RE2 states that planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land. Development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, the surrounding area and broader considerations of the needs of Oxford.
- 6.7 The delivery of housing is one of the Local Plan's objectives and the proposal will contribute towards Council's housing land supply. The property is located in a predominantly residential area. The site originally comprised two residential properties which were converted into one single property and then to use as a hostel. The proposal seeks to reconfigure the property and converted it back into two dwellings as originally built. Each house will be equipped with its own facilities to support independent living with no shared access through the dwelling. Thus, the proposal accords with Policy RE2 and seeks to make the best use if the site capacity.

Design and Impact on the Historic Environment

- 6.8 Alteration associated with the proposal include 'bricking-up' three walls, partitioning the garden with a fence, dividing the services, and providing capped services for a kitchen on the ground floor of 246 Iffley Road as illustrated in proposed ground floor plan drawing (2327-XX-XX-DR-A-3-200) and proposed site plan drawing (2327-XX-XX-DR-A-3-002).
- 6.9 In line with Policy H15, the proposal will comply with the MHCLG's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard Level 112. The property benefits from a rear garden and the proposal complies with the requirements set out in Policy H16.
- 6.10 The proposal does not involve significant exterior alterations to the property that would lead to the deterioration of its design quality or contribution to the street scene. It is considered that the proposed change of use will have no significant harm to the Conservation Area. Thus, the proposal accords with Policy DH1 and DH3.

Amenity

- 6.11 Policy RE7 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted for development that ensures that standards of amenity are protected including the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours. Developments must also not have unacceptable unaddressed transport impacts.
- 6.12 Policy H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for occupants of both existing and new homes.
- 6.13 The proposed change of use is unlikely to result in loss of daylight or privacy to neighbours and the dwelling would not have an overbearing impact. There are no external alterations and additional built form proposed. Furthermore, the proposal would not generate any significant amount of additional noise.
- 6.14 It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the Policy RE7 and Policy H14.

Highways and Parking

- 6.15 Policy M3 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that in Controlled Parking Zones or employer-linked housing areas where occupants do not have an operational need for a car where development is located within a 400m walk to frequent public transport services and within 800m walk to a local supermarket or equivalent facilities planning permission will only be granted for residential development that is car-free.

- 6.16 The site is located within Magdalen South controlled parking zone and is in a highly sustainable location, being within walking distance to a frequent bus service and local supermarket. The site currently benefits from six car parking bays which will be reduced to 4, 2 per dwelling.
- 6.17 The proposed change of use is unlikely to have detrimental impact on the local highway network in traffic and safety terms. Thus, the proposal complies with Policy M3.
- 6.18 In line with Policy M5, cycle stores have been provided on site as illustrated in proposed site plan drawing (2327-XX-XX-DR-A-3-002).

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is for the change of use from Class C1 'boarding house' to two Class C3 semi-detached residential properties at the site, including minor internal alterations to support independent living.
- 7.2 As set out above, the proposal seeks to reconfigure the property and converted it back into two dwellings as originally built. Furthermore, the proposal would not lead to loss of a holiday or short stay accommodation as use of the property is currently limited to a boarding house for members of the Mission.
- 7.3 This Planning Statement has assessed the proposals against the adopted development plan and other relevant planning policy considerations. It is considered that the proposals comply with planning policy at national and local level.
- 7.4 The proposals meet the aspirations of development plan policies to deliver housing, which indicates that the proposals should be granted planning permission accordingly.

