



PLANNING BY DESIGN
FROM CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

Design and Access Statement:

**The Hargate Arms, 105 Hargate Lane, West
Bromwich B71 1PH**

New 8 HMO flats

On Behalf of Jatinder Singh

Drafted by **Planning By Design**

Application

Planning By Design (The agent) has been instructed to act on behalf of Jatinder Singh (the applicant) to submit a planning application to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority) for 8 HMO flats on the ground floor at: The Hargate Arms, 105 Hargate Lane, West Bromwich B71 1PH (the site).

In support of this application, the following Design and Access Statement has been constructed to demonstrate the suitability of this site for this proposal and evaluate its accordance with national and local planning policy along with supplementary design guidance.

Site Location

The application site comprises the ground floor of the old Hargate Arms located north of the A41, west of the A4031, opposite Sandwell General Hospital.

The Hargate Arms is a former public house located at the junction with All Saints Way and Hargate Lane. The property is surrounded by residential dwellings and is situated in a prominent position adjacent to the dual carriageway leading into West Bromwich Town Centre.

The property is part single-storey and part two-storey with a large car park accessed off Hargate Lane. The pub has not been trading for about 8 years.

There are 8 HMO units on the first floor accessed via an existing enclosed yard into the building. A fire escape has also been erected leading off the first floor at the side of the building.

The ground floor is vacant (formerly the lounge/bar to the pub) and is the focus of this application.

The Proposal

The proposed development is for the conversion of the ground floor into 8 HMO flats alongside proposed changes to elevation elevations and alterations including a side extension to enclose an existing yard.

Along the proposed south and north elevations the proposed changes will consist of new doors and windows to match existing as well as new brickwork to match existing.

Along the proposed east and west elevations the proposed changes will consist of new doors and windows to match existing.



Fig 1 – proposed floor plan

HMO G1 – 30,71sqm total, bedroom (8.39sqm)

HMO G2 – 28,21sqm total, bedroom (9.12sqm)

HMO G3 – 52,31sqm total, bedroom (8.39sqm)

HMO G4 – 33,59sqm total, bedroom (8.39sqm)

HMO G5 – 32,22sqm total, bedroom (8.39sqm)

HMO G6 – 38,36sqm total, bedroom (9.12sqm)

HMO G7 – 34,34sqm total, bedroom (12.9sqm)

HMO G8 – 33,93sqm total, bedroom (8.17sqm)

All the flats have individual/separate entrances and enjoy private showers as well as a private kitchen/living space.

Planning History

DC/17/61229 | Retention of use of ground floor (part) and first floor as HMO, and external alterations and fire escape staircase to side, granted on 03 Jan 2018.

Planning Policy

The following planning policy and guidance documents are recognised as material considerations for the assessment of this application

- National Planning Policy Framework 2023;
- National Planning Practice Guidance;
- Black Country Core Strategy 2011

The following section will evaluate the proposals in accordance with the relevant policies and supplementary design guidance of the Council to demonstrate why the proposal should be considered as acceptable in principle and in strict accordance with the Councils development criteria.

National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)

The new National Planning Policy Framework was revised in 2023 and the following paragraphs are considered to be relevant.

Paragraph 38 confirms that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed developments in a positive and creative way. They should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 47 confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the Development Plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. This paragraph also states that decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales, unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

Paragraph 54 advises that Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions.

Paragraph 55 advises that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided.

Paragraph 69 of the NPPF states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) Identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;
- b) Use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- c) Support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
- d) Work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

Paragraph 119 advises that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions

Paragraph 124 highlights that Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) The identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) Local market conditions and viability;
- c) The availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d) The desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) The importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning should aim to ensure that developments function effectively and contribute to the overall quality of an area. Development must respond to local character and history, reflect the identity of local

surroundings and materials and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscaping.

Paragraph 130 states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Development should:

- a) Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) Be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) Be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) Optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks;
- f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Black Country Core Strategy 2011

Policy HOU2 Housing Density, Type and Accessibility states that the density and type of new housing provided on each site will be informed by:

- The need for a range of types and sizes of accommodation to meet identified sub regional and local needs;
- The level of accessibility by sustainable transport to residential services, including any improvements to be secured through development;
- The need to achieve high quality design and minimise amenity impacts, taking into account the characteristics and mix of uses in the area where the proposal is located. Each authority will aim to provide an overall mix of house types over the plan period, tailored to best meet local and sub-regional needs.

Policy ENV 3 – Design Quality states that each place in the Black Country is distinct and successful place-making will depend on understanding and responding to the identity of each place with high quality design proposals.

Development proposals across the Black Country will deliver a successful urban renaissance through high quality design that stimulates economic, social and environmental benefits by demonstrating that the following aspects of design have been addressed through Design and Access Statements reflecting their particular Black Country and local context:

1. Implementation of the principles of “By Design” to ensure the provision of a high quality network of streets, buildings and spaces;
2. Implementation of the principles of “Manual for Streets” to ensure urban streets and spaces are designed to provide a high quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network;
3. Use of the Building for Life criteria for new housing developments, to demonstrate a commitment to strive for the highest possible design standards, good place making and sustainable development, given local circumstances;
4. Meeting Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or above for residential development and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Very Good or above for other development, or the national requirement at the time of submitting the proposal for planning permission, to demonstrate a commitment to achieving high quality sustainable design;
5. Consideration of crime prevention measures and Secured By Design principles.
6. Including design features to reduce the urban heat island effect such as tree cover, green roofs and the inclusion of green space in development.

Policy TRAN2 states that Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that are likely to have significant transport implications unless applications are accompanied by proposals to provide an acceptable level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport to and from all parts of a development including, in particular, access by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing.

Residential design guide SPD 2014

The SPD states that poor quality domestic extensions which require planning consent that do not fit in visually or are clearly out of keeping with their surroundings, by virtue of their scale, architectural design, proposed materials and impact on neighbouring properties, will be resisted.

Extensions must be in proportion to the scale of the existing dwelling and street scene. The over intensification of individual dwellings where it is proposed to extend them to a scale that is considered unreasonable will be resisted.

For example, where proposals impact unduly on neighbouring properties or street scene, where the amount of remaining private amenity or defensible space could be significantly reduced, or where sufficient space for car parking demand could not be provided within plot.

The appearance and size of roof designs, windows, doors and architectural detailing must respect established design codes.

Separation distances between opposing gable walls must be maintained to avoid creating a terracing effect, where opportunities for rear servicing become restricted or where access to natural light cannot be maintained.

Dormer extensions that require planning consent will need to be designed so that their scale and appearance fits into the architectural language of the original dwelling, neighbouring properties and street scene.

Where living space is introduced into roof spaces, whether new build or conversion, main living room areas must have a direct outlook onto external outdoor space.

Proposals to increase the internal capacity of dwellings to provide additional bedroom spaces, must demonstrate that there is scope within the plot structure to cater for increased off-street car parking demand, without diminishing the quality of front garden areas. Hard surfaced areas must not exceed 70% of the exposed garden frontage. Additionally safe pedestrian movement into the dwelling and connections to the public footway must be maintained.

Assessment

Principle of development

The proposed HMO flats are located in an established residential area with very good accessibility and within walking distance to several shops, businesses and services. The proximity of the nearby hospital places a constant demand in the need for affordable, flexible, accommodation space. The proposal will help meet this demand in a sustainable location and given the existing use, the current proposal does not result in the loss of a residential dwelling but rather reuses a vacant site. This is in accordance with Policies HOU1 and HOU2 of the Local Plan.

Furthermore, the proposal represents an efficient use of existing resources, transforming what an underutilised space into functional living areas in accordance with the sustainable development principles in the NPPF.

It is therefore considered the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Design

The proposal results in minor changes to the existing building fabric which will not be overly visible from surrounding viewpoints nor result in changes that are prominent or out of character.

The materials and openings proposed match the existing ones and the form of the proposed extension has been designed in a harmonious way with the remaining building, so that it reads as a seamless extension.

The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the existing property and responds to its identity with a high quality design proposals. It is therefore in accordance with Policy ENV 3 and the design policies on the SPD.

Access and Parking

The external area of the site provides ample opportunity to provide an enclosed amenity space and this can be controlled by condition. The entrances to the HMOs are immediately off Hargate Lane and there is ample space for on-plot parking and cycle parking, which can be conditioned.

The proposal is in accordance with Policy TRAN2 of the Local Plan.

Residential accommodation

The accommodation would provide suitable standard of accommodation, with room sizes that meet the Council's standards listed in (<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/find-home/housing-multiple-occupation-hmo/14>) including ample room sizes, outlook, private shower rooms and living/cooking facilities as well as light and accessibility.

The proposal would provide with high quality design housing, meeting gross internal floor area and built-in storage requirements, providing adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts, providing adequate sunlight and daylight to future occupants and avoiding the provision of single aspect dwellings.

The property has ample provision for waste and recycling storage and that information can be submitted via a condition if required.

The proposal is in accordance with Policy HOU2 and Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan.

Conclusion

For the above reasons, we see no reason for the Council to withhold our request for planning permission and kindly request that the council make a reasonable decision on this submission in line with the developmental objectives and timescales of the National Planning Policy Framework. Should the Planning Authority have any further questions in relation to this proposal or feel that certain conditions would be necessary to accommodate this proposal, Planning By Design would welcome conversation on any of these matters.