

Southampton City Planning & Sustainability
Planning and Rights of Way Panel meeting 21 August 2012
Planning Application Report of the Planning and Development Manager

Application address: Ground Floor Flat 49 Heatherdeane Road SO17 1PA			
Proposed development: Conversion Of Existing Building Into 2 X 1 Bedroom Flats And 2 X Studio Flats With Associated Refuse And Cycle Store (Resubmission Of 12/00403/Ful)			
Application number	12/00914/FUL	Application type	FUL
Case officer	Mathew Pidgeon	Public speaking time	5 minutes
Last date for determination:	09/08/2012	Ward	Portswood
Reason for Panel Referral:	Referred by the Planning & Development Manager	Ward Councillors	Cllr Vinson Cllr Norris Cllr Claisse

Applicant: Mrs M Bajar	Agent: Concept Design & Planning
-------------------------------	---

Recommendation Summary	Refuse
-------------------------------	---------------

Reason for Refusal - Poor residential environment.

The proposed layout of the residential accommodation fails to provide an attractive and acceptable living environment for prospective residents. The conversion of the building to two one bedroom flats and two studio flats has resulted in small scale units which at ground floor level would not enjoy acceptable outlook from habitable room windows; and would not have direct access to suitable private amenity space. In combination these points amount to proposal which fails to provide high quality housing and is considered contrary to Policies SDP1 (i - particularly paragraph 2.2.1 and section 4.4 of The Residential Design Guide 2006 [September 2006]) of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and policies and CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy (January 2010).

Appendix attached	
1	Development Plan Policies

1. The site and its context

- 1.1 The property is located on the east side of Heatherdene Road, an attractive residential street comprising a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings.
- 1.2 The property is located close to the Avenue Campus of Southampton University and within easy walking distance (200m) of Southampton Common. The building is currently occupied as two separate flats.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The application has been submitted following the refusal of an earlier proposal to convert the building into four flats. There are no physical alterations proposed to

the external appearance/structure of the building. Internal alterations are proposed. Refuse and cycle storage is proposed to the rear.

- 2.2 In order to overcome the previous reason for refusal the applicant has changed the makeup of units with the building, by changing one of the one bed flats to a studio flat, along with making alterations at ground floor level with the aim of improving privacy and outlook from habitable room windows.
- 2.3 Amended plans have been received in an attempt to address the concerns raised by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.4 A physical structure (as yet unspecified) is proposed to enclose space around the ground floor unit at the rear. The applicant aims to improve the outlook from habitable room windows at the same time as ensuring privacy.

3.0 Relevant Planning Policy

- 3.1 The Development Plan for Southampton currently comprises the “saved” policies of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and the City of Southampton Core Strategy (January 2010). The most relevant policies to these proposals are set out at **Appendix 1**.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 881110/W - ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION - CAP.
- 4.2 881110/W - ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION - CAP.
- 4.3 12/00403/FUL - Conversion Of Existing Building Into 3X1-Bed Flats And 1X Studio With Associated Cycle/Refuse Storage. REF

Reason For Refusal - Poor residential environment.

The proposed layout of the residential accommodation fails to provide an attractive and acceptable living environment for prospective residents. The conversion of the building to three one bedroom flats and one studio flat has resulted in small scale units which at ground floor level would not enjoy acceptable outlook or privacy from habitable room windows; and would not have direct access to suitable private amenity space. In combination these points amount to proposal which fails to provide high quality housing and is considered contrary to Policies SDP1 (i - particularly paragraph 2.2.1 and section 4.4 of The Residential Design Guide 2006 [September 2006]) of the City of Southampton Local Plan Review (March 2006) and policies and CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy (January 2010).

5.0 Consultation Responses and Notification Representations

- 5.1 Following the receipt of the planning application a publicity exercise in line with department procedures was also undertaken which included notifying adjoining and nearby landowners and erecting a site notice (02/07/2012). At the time of writing the report **one** letter of representation has been received from a local resident. In addition letters of representation have also been received from one local ward Councillor and Highfield Residents Association.

5.2 Issues raised are outlined below:

- Significant increase in occupancy
- Loss of a family dwelling house.
- Reduce the stock of properties in the area available to families.
- Intensification, neighbourhood impact in similar fashion to HMO use.
- A number of properties close by are not in operation as family dwelling homes.
- Potential vehicle use, with no off-street parking provision.
- Poor/insufficient amenity space while increasing the likely number of residents.
- Additional noise and disturbance.

5.3 The above concerns are addressed below in section 6.0.

5.4 **SCC Highways** – A parking permit zone is in operation, the highways team do not object to the scheme.

5.5 **Council Tax** - Both flats have been council tax banded since 01.04.1993.

5.6 **Southern Water** – Any new connections to the public sewer will require permission. Public sewer is located below the existing development and therefore prior to any future construction over the sewer a site investigation will be required.

6.0 **Planning Consideration Key Issues**

6.1 The key issues for consideration in the determination of this planning application are:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on the amenities of neighbouring and surrounding residents
- The Quality of the Residential Environment

6.2 **Principle of Development**

6.2.1 There are no policies within the Development Plan which specifically prevent the subdivision of residential units where this would not result in the loss of a family dwelling.

6.2.2 The Policy CS16, which prevents the loss of family dwelling houses, is not relevant to the determination of this planning application. Council tax records confirm that the property has been two separate units of accommodation since 1993 and therefore if an application for a lawful development certificate were to be submitted it is unlikely that it would not be granted by the Council based on available information.

6.2.3 The principle of the scheme is not contrary to the development plan and as such is not opposed in principle.

6.3 **Impact on the amenities of neighbouring and surrounding residents**

6.3.1 Parking is controlled in the area by a parking permit zone. It is unlikely that additional parking pressure in the immediate area will occur as a result of the

proposal.

- 6.3.2 A significant increase in activity associated with the subdivision of the existing flats is unlikely. The number of bedrooms proposed within the building will increase by one.

6.4 The Quality of the Residential Environment

- 6.4.1 The manner in which the plans have been amended means that the occupants of the ground floor flats would no longer suffer from lack of privacy. Habitable room windows now face directly onto areas of the garden which are defended and therefore residents of the other flats would not be able to look into those habitable rooms.

- 6.4.2 The bedroom located at ground floor level which looks onto a small private outdoor space/courtyard will be afforded poor outlook. The ground floor habitable rooms would also be afforded poor outlook as the defensible space formed in front of those windows would need to be created by solid fencing in order to maintain privacy.

- 6.4.3 As such, that element of the original reason for refusal, concerning privacy, has now been addressed. However, outlook has not been improved since the submission of the refused scheme.

- 6.4.4 The element of the reason for refusal regarding outlook remains as the result of subdividing the already small amenity area is occupiers looking out from habitable room windows onto means of enclosure at very short distances. This is judged to create a worse living environment than currently exists on the site.

- 6.4.5 With four separate units of accommodation proposed more pressure will be placed upon the small garden area. Furthermore the garden has been eroded further in the revised scheme due to the refuse store being moved into the space at the rear to accommodate a defensible space serving the rear ground floor unit.

- 6.4.6 The refuse and cycle storage facilities will occupy space within what is currently a small garden thus further reduces the space available for the occupants to use. The amenity space provided is not sufficient in scale and accordingly is not fit for its intended purpose. The position of the dwelling is however relatively close to Southampton Common and therefore amenity space alone should not form a reason for refusal.

The amended plans are judged to be unacceptable and do not fully address the original reason for refusal. A poor and inappropriate living environment would result through the conversion to four units as proposed.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 The development fails to provide adequate private amenity space for future residents and the proposed measures used to overcome concerns regarding privacy have failed to address the concerns raised regarding outlook.

8.0 Conclusion

The points raised above are a manifestation of an over intensive use of the site which has relied upon a contrived design solution to try and address the concerns of the Local Planning Authority. As such the residential environment provided for the occupants of the proposed flats remains unacceptable.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Documents used in the preparation of this report Background Papers

1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 2b, 2d, 4f, 6c, 7a, 9a, 9b.

MP3 for 21/08/2012 PROW Panel

POLICY CONTEXT

SDP1 (Quality of Development)

SDP10

H1,

H2,

Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2010)

CS4

CS5

CS13 (Fundamentals of Design)

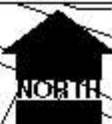
CS16

CS19

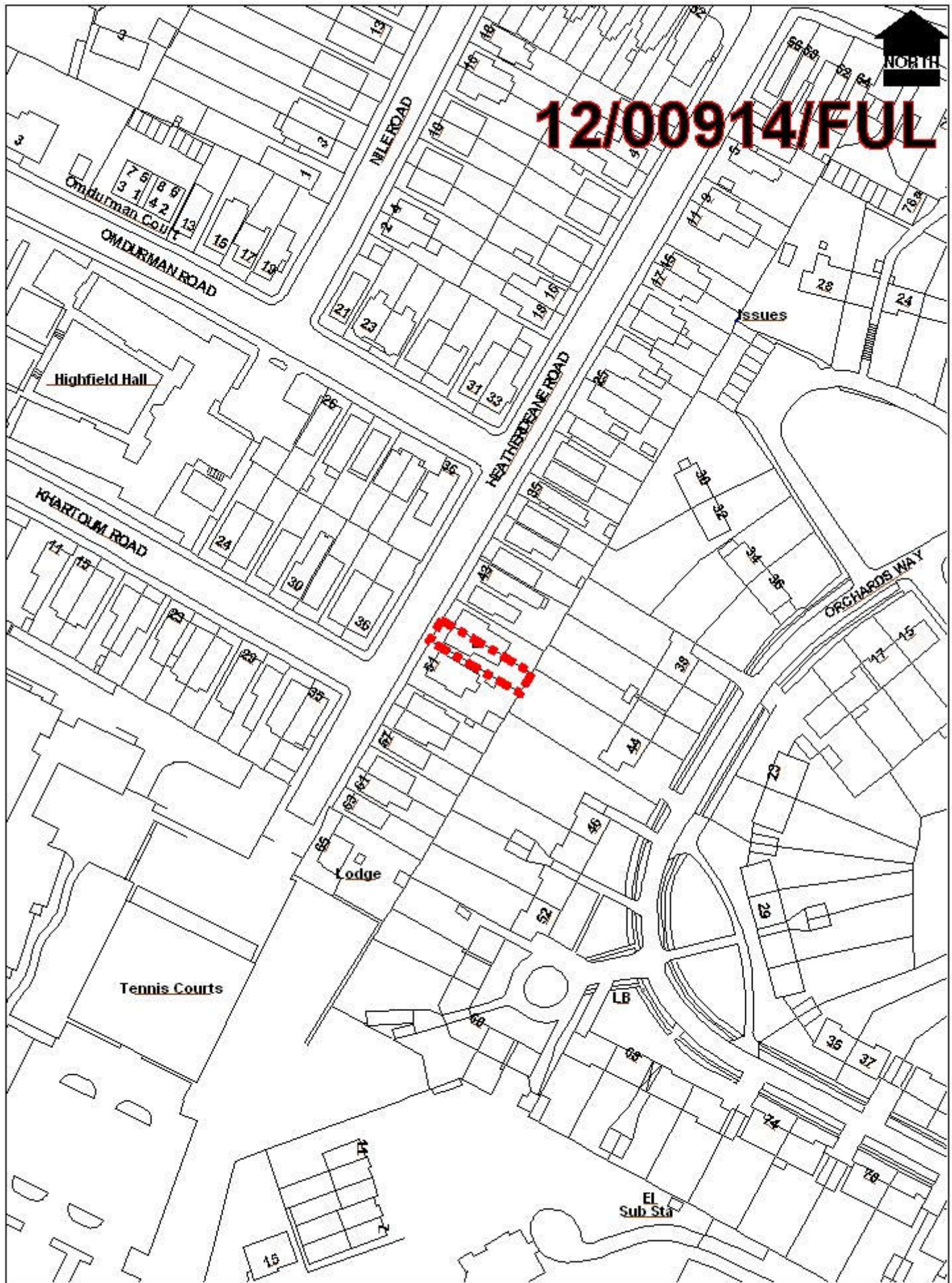
CS20

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Residential Design Guide (Approved - September 2006)



12/00914/FUL



Scale : 1:1250

Date : 09 August 2012

© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Southampton City Council 100019679 2004.

