

APPLICATION NO: 21/00853/COU	OFFICER: Michelle Payne
DATE REGISTERED: 20th April 2021	DATE OF EXPIRY: 15th June 2021 (extension of time agreed until 18th June 2021)
DATE VALIDATED: 20th April 2021	DATE OF SITE VISIT:
WARD: Pittville	PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Cheltenham Borough Homes Ltd
AGENT:	n/a
LOCATION:	37 Robert Harvey House, Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Alterations to ground floor to facilitate a change of use of guest room to an additional flat

RECOMMENDATION: Permit



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1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Robert Harvey House is located on the eastern side of Winchcombe Street, just north of Belmont Road, within the Old Town character area of the Central conservation area. The building provides sheltered housing over five floors, and comprises 37 self-contained flats and a guest room. The building benefits from ramped, disabled access.
- 1.2 The application proposes alterations at ground floor level to facilitate a change of use of the guest room to provide an additional flat with disabled living facilities, utilising part of an existing flat. The existing lounge area of Flat 37 will become the lounge/kitchen area of the new flat, creating two equal size flats. The proposals for the new flat will include an electronic front door opening mechanism, a widened entrance hall area, and an extended shower room with wheelchair access.
- 1.3 The application is before the planning committee as the applicant is Cheltenham Borough Homes, and Cheltenham Borough Council is the landowner.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Airport Safeguarding over 45m
Conservation Area
Principal Urban Area
Residents Association
Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

None of any relevance to this proposal

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 2 Achieving sustainable development
Section 4 Decision-making
Section 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
Section 11 Making effective use of land
Section 12 Achieving well-designed places
Section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Adopted Cheltenham Plan (CP) Policies

D1 Design
SL1 Safe and Sustainable Living

Adopted Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Policies

SD4 Design Requirements
SD10 Residential Development
SD14 Health and Environmental Quality
INF1 Transport Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Old Town Character Area and Management Plan (2007)

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Property Services

15th April 2021

Property Services have no objections to these proposals.

Building Control

6th May 2021

No comments to be made.

GCC Highways Development Management

7th May 2021

Gloucestershire County Council, the Highway Authority acting in its role as Statutory Consultee has undertaken a full assessment of this planning application. Based on the appraisal of the development proposals the Highways Development Management Manager on behalf of the County Council, under Article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order, 2015 has no objection.

The justification for this decision is provided below.

The proposal seeks the alterations to ground floor to facilitate a change of use of guest room to an additional flat at 37 Robert Harvey House Winchcombe Street Cheltenham. The proposal is not perceived to result in any harm. The Highway Authority has undertaken a robust assessment of the planning application. Based on the analysis of the information submitted the Highway Authority concludes that there would not be an unacceptable impact on Highway Safety or a severe impact on congestion. There are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained. The Highway Authority therefore submits a response of no objection.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 Given the nature of the proposals, individual letters of notification were not sent out; however, a site notice was posted and an advert was published in the Gloucestershire Echo. No representations have been received in response to the publicity.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 6.1 There is no policy in the development plan which would preclude the provision of an additional flat in this location. Indeed, JCS policy SD10 requires residential development to achieve maximum densities appropriate to their context, whilst Section 11 of the NPPF sets out the need to ensure that developments make an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 The Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application sets out that the existing guest room, which is not self-contained, has been continually underutilised and, following consultation with residents, the creation of an additional flat with disabled living facilities is considered to be a more beneficial use the space.
- 6.3 Externally, only minor alterations to the building are required to implement the proposed works; namely, the replacement of an existing door in the side elevation with a window to enable the provision of a new dividing wall between the flats.

- 6.4 The proposed works will therefore not result in any harmful impact on the building or the wider conservation area, nor result in any harm in terms of neighbouring amenity.
- 6.5 Whilst the application does not propose any additional parking for the flat, the site is sustainably located within the town centre, and no highway objection has been raised.

Other considerations

- 6.6 As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED). There are three main aims:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and
 - Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.
- 6.7 Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage, the duty is to have “regard to” and remove OR minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the PSED.
- 6.8 In the context of the above PSED duties, this proposal is considered to be acceptable.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The proposed development accords with relevant national and local planning policy, and the officer recommendation is to grant planning permission.

8. CONDITIONS

- 1 The planning permission hereby granted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The planning permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in Schedule 1 of this decision notice.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

INFORMATIVE

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the provisions of the NPPF, the Local Planning Authority adopts a positive and proactive approach to dealing with planning applications and where possible, will seek solutions to any problems that arise when dealing with a planning application with the aim of fostering the delivery of sustainable development.

At the heart of this positive and proactive approach is the authority's pre-application advice service for all types of development. Further to this however, the authority publishes guidance on the Council's website on how to submit planning applications and provides full and up-to-date information in relation to planning applications to enable the applicant, and other interested parties, to track progress.

In this instance, having had regard to all material considerations, the application constitutes sustainable development and has therefore been approved in a timely manner.