

Application Reference Number:		2026/0361	
Application Type:		Change of Use.	
Proposal Description:		Conversion of 2no units into 1no unit and the change of use from C3 (dwellinghouse) to C2 (residential institution) for three children (Amended Description).	
Location:		Ship Hotel, Midland Road, Royston, Barnsley, S71 4AY.	
Applicant:		Mrs Ana Kosar.	
Third-party representations:	None.	Parish:	
		Ward:	Royston.

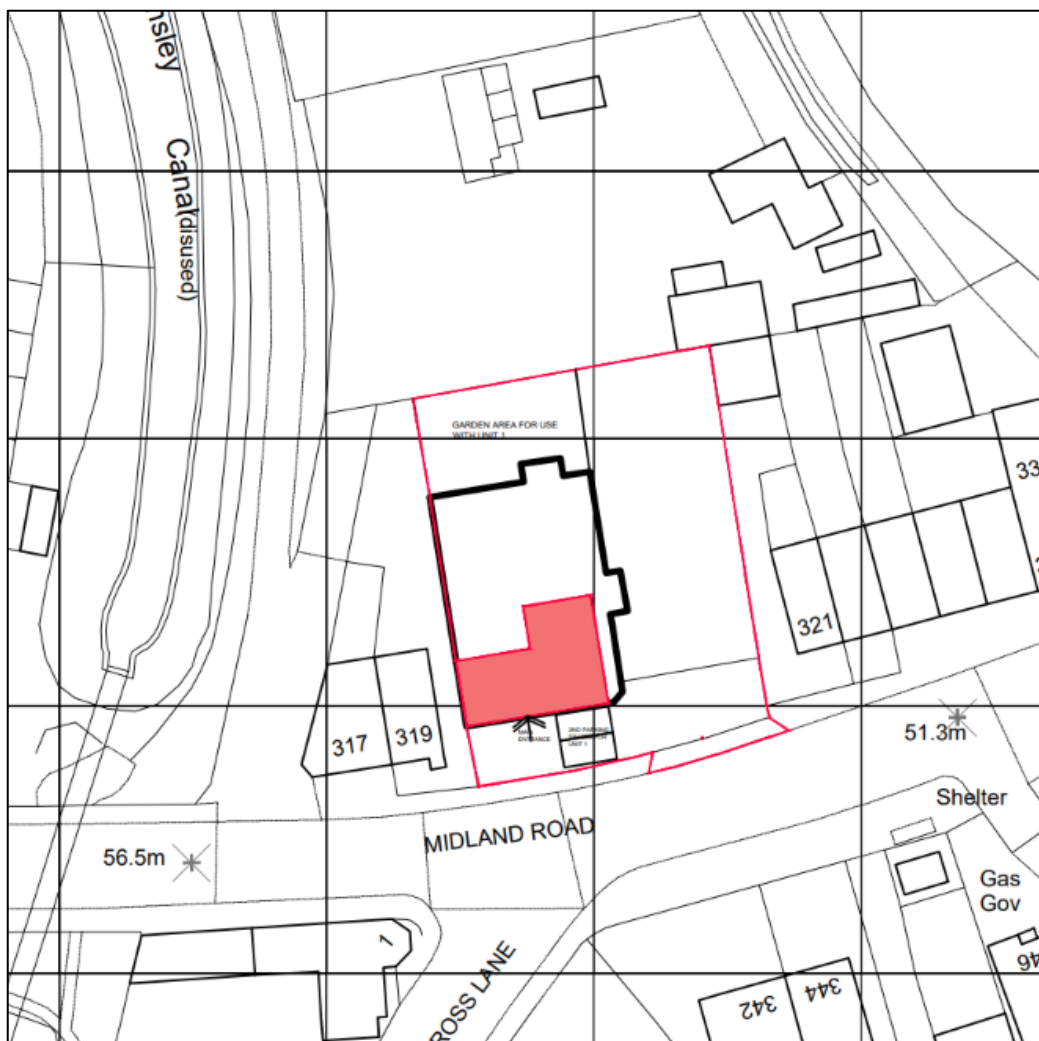
Summary: The applicant is seeking planning permission for the conversion of two units comprising one ground floor and one first floor unit into one unit and a change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) for three children. Whilst there are some positive elements to this proposal which include compliance with the minimum internal space standards established by the SYRDG, reasonable access to shared private amenity space and local services and amenities and green spaces, and anticipated limited impact by way of overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy, and reduced outlook, which are attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal, there are other negative elements such as intensification of the use of the application building which could lead to potential increased noise and disturbance impacts for existing residents, which is attributed moderate weight against this proposal, and conflict with the aims of paragraphs 96(b) and 135(f) of the NPPF in that by placing vulnerable children near to areas of known criminality that experience high baseline levels of anti-social behaviour and street crime it could put them and others at unnecessary risk and could undermine the quality of their lives and the lives of existing residents should a potential for criminality become realised. It could also affect future community cohesion and resilience and could result in further implications for the quality of the lives for existing and future residents. As such, this proposal is also considered to be in conflict with Local Plan Policy GD1 in that it is not considered that the proposed use (Class C2) would be compatible with the existing apartments and could lead to adverse effects on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents in this instance. Significant weight is therefore attributed to this element against this proposal. This proposal is also considered acceptable regarding its potential impact on highway safety, visual amenity, and biodiversity and geodiversity, and is therefore, attributed moderate and modest weight in favour of this proposal accordingly. Considering the above, on balance, this proposal is considered unacceptable and despite a number of positive elements, these are not considered enough to outweigh other material considerations in this instance. Recommendation: Refuse.
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Site Description

This application relates to a converted public house comprising seven residential apartments located on the north side of Midland Road opposite the junction with Cross Lane. The immediate surrounding area comprises a mix of residential and commercial uses that comprises two-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellinghouses and semi-detached bungalows, the Royston Railway Sports Club, and a metal products storage business. To the north of the development site is an area of land that appears to accommodate several detached structures and containers and numerous motorised vehicles. Further residential properties are located beyond.

The development site is located approximately 445 metres to the east of the Royston District Centre and is serviced by regular east and westbound public transport links with bus stops nearby. Barnsley Canal is located to the west, Monkton Playing Field to the southeast, and Rabbit Ings Country Park to the east. The section of Midland Road fronting the development site is not subject to any on-street parking restrictions. Consequently, there is the occurrence of some on-street parking particularly on the eastbound side of the road.

The building in question is a two-storey building constructed of brickwork with gable pitch and pitched concrete tiled roofs. The development site is accessed off Midland Road and benefits from extensive areas of hardstanding that provide off-street parking to the front (south) and side (east). The grounds surrounding the application building are somewhat unkept and untidy with overgrown vegetation and household waste. The development site is bounded by brick walls of various heights.



Planning History

There are several planning applications associated with the development site, but the most relevant applications are as follows:

2009/0876	Conversion of first and second floors into 4 no. flats and part conversion of ground floor to one bedsit.	Approved.
2010/0311	Conversion of Public House into 7 no apartments and 1 no Bedsit.	Approved.
2015/0762	Conversion of a public house to 7 no. residential apartments.	Approved.

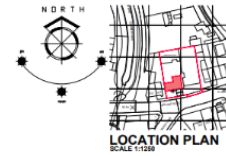
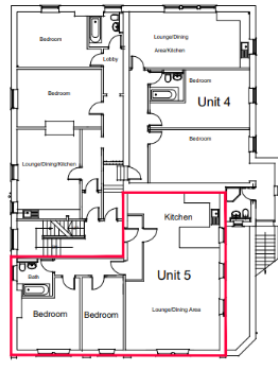
Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking planning permission for the conversion of two units comprising one ground floor and one first floor unit into one unit and a change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) for three children.

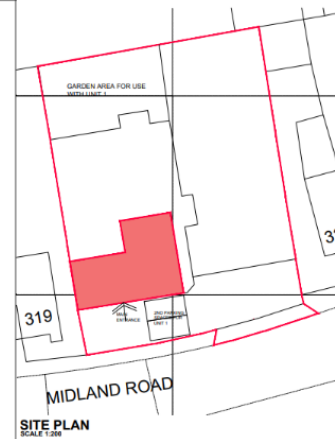
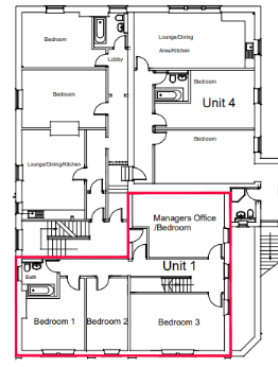
The proposed development includes internal alterations to allow the amalgamation of two residential units. A submitted amended planning statement and management plan establishes that no external alterations or extensions are proposed to the application building or its' surrounds. A garden area to the rear would be allocated to the combined units.

A submitted amended planning statement and management plan establishes that there would be a team of four staff working in rotation with at least one staff member in attendance at any given time. It is understood that staff would work in 15.5-hour shifts so staff members that commence their shift at 07:30am on Monday would finish at 11:00pm on Tuesday at which point there would be a change over. It is understood that personal and professional visitors would be allowed. Personal visits would need to be arranged and agreed in advance with none allowed to stay beyond 10:30pm. Professional visits would be on a less frequent basis and could occur once a month. Visits would be arranged so that personal and professional visits would not occur in the same day.

The floor plan shows a building with three units. Unit 1, located at the bottom center, is highlighted with a red outline. It contains a Lounge/Dining Area, Kitchen, Bedroom, Bath, and a Staircase (St). Unit 2, located at the top center, contains a Lounge/Dining Area, Kitchen, Bedroom, and a Staircase (St). Unit 3, located on the left, contains a Room, Kitchen, and Storage. A central Lobby connects the units. The building also has an external Staircase (St) on the right side.



The floor plan shows a three-unit residential building. Unit 1, located at the bottom right and outlined in red, contains a Kitchen, Dining area, Living area, a Staircase, and a Bath. Unit 2, at the top right, features a Living/Dining area, two Bedrooms, and a Bath. Unit 3, in the middle left, has a Kitchen, a Bedroom, a Room, and a Storage area. Common areas include a central Lobby, multiple Staircases, and various Storage spaces throughout the building.

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Relevant Policies

The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

The Local Plan review was approved at a full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering on its objectives. This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review, which is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

The development site is allocated as urban fabric within the adopted Local Plan which has no specific allocation. The following Local Plan policies are relevant in this case:

- *Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.*
- *Policy LG2: The Location of Growth.*
- *Policy H1: The Number of New Homes to be Built.*
- *Policy H4: Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites.*
- *Policy H6: Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land.*
- *Policy GD1: General Development.*
- *Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection.*
- *Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel.*
- *Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety.*
- *Policy D1: High quality design and place making.*
- *Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance

In December 2024, the Government published a revised NPPF which is the most recent revision of the original Framework, first published in 2012 and updated several times, providing the overarching planning framework for England. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The revised document has replaced the earlier planning policy statements, planning policy guidance and various policy letters and circulars, which are now cancelled.

Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10) and plans and decisions should apply this presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; each of these aspects are mutually dependent. The following NPPF sections are relevant in this case:

- *Section 2: Achieving sustainable development.*
- *Section 4: Decision-making.*
- *Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes.*
- *Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities.*
- *Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport.*
- *Section 11: Making effective use of land.*
- *Section 12: Achieving well designed places.*
- *Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.*

The National Design Guidance (2019) is a material consideration and sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places based on planning policy expectations. A written ministerial statement states that local planning authorities should take this guidance into account when taking decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty-eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019. The following SPDs are relevant in this case:

- *Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Adopted March 2024).*
- *Design of Housing Development (Adopted July 2023).*
- *Parking (Adopted November 2019).*

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

Other Material Considerations

- *South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide 2011 (SYRDG).*
- *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).*

Representations

This planning application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Any neighbour sharing a boundary with the site has been sent written notification and the application has been advertised on the Council website.

A site notice was posted nearby that expired 10th July 2026.

No representations were received.

Consultations

Children and Adolescent Care Homes BMBC	<i>Objection(s).</i>
Head of Children in Care	<i>No comment(s) received.</i>
Head of Children in Care Homes BMBC	<i>No comment(s) received.</i>
Highways Development Control	<i>No objection(s).</i>
Pollution Control	<i>No objection(s) subject to condition(s).</i>
Local Ward Councillors	<i>No comment(s) received.</i>
South Yorkshire Police	<i>Objection(s).</i>

While questions were received from Councillor McCrum no formal written comments were received. A response was issued in respect of the questions raised.

Planning Assessment

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application, the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale unless the NPPF establishes a specific weight:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant

- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of Development

The applicant is seeking planning permission for the conversion of two units comprising one ground floor and one first floor unit into one unit and a change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) for three children.

Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of new homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is required and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet identified housing need with an appropriate mix of housing types for local communities.

Paragraph 73(d) of the NPPF establishes that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes and are often built out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should: support the development of windfall sites through their planning policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst also safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs that can make as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' Land.

Paragraph 125(d) of the NPPF establishes that planning policies and decisions should: promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF sets out Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs.

Local Plan Policy H4: Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites states proposals for residential development on sites below 0.4 hectares (including conversions of existing buildings and creating dwellings above shops) will be allowed where proposals comply with other relevant policies in the Plan.

Local Plan Policy H6: Housing mix and efficient use of land establishes that housing proposals will be expected to include a broad mix of house size, type and tenure to help create mixed and balanced communities. Homes must be suitable for different types of households and be capable of being adapted to meet the changing needs of the population.

Paragraph 9.17 of the adopted Local Plan supports Policy H6 and establishes that various housing types capable of accommodating a range of needs are required across the borough such as family housing and older persons accommodation. In addition, supported housing is required for vulnerable households – for example those with physical or mental disabilities and young people with support needs. Such proposals will be supported where they are consistent with this and other policies within the development plan, or where robust supporting evidence can be provided that would be a material consideration of sufficient weight to take precedence.

The applicant has stated that after meetings with the care team at Barnsley Council, it is evident that there is a desperate shortage of places for children in care. Barnsley currently has 60 children placed outside of the town because of a lack of available homes. These children can often be a long distance from family, friends, school and anything else that is of a familiar comfort to them, coupled with that, there is a drain on social workers and associated staff who have to travel between placements and Barnsley. There are also, on average, 10 children entering care on a monthly basis. There is a need for care homes in the town to give these children the best chance. Although there are children leaving care, the fact that there are 60 children placed outside of Barnsley demonstrates a massive need to bridge that gap in order to protect the rights of vulnerable children.

Whilst these points raised by the Applicant are acknowledged, no demonstrable evidence has been submitted to corroborate the claims made in respect of local need.

Children and Adolescent Care Homes BMBC were consulted and the Head of Service of Children's Commissioning provided a response that stated that current sufficiency planning and needs analysis do not identify a requirement for additional supported accommodation provision in this locality which is subject to consideration.

Again, no demonstrable evidence has been submitted to corroborate these claims made in respect of local need. As such, limited weight is attributed to comments from both the Applicant and Children and Adolescent Care Homes BMBC.

Whilst the local requirement for additional supported accommodation is disputed, it is acknowledged there is a broader general requirement for such provisions in order to meet the needs of vulnerable households as part of an appropriate housing mix and is supported in general by national and local planning policies.

Considering the above, this proposal would involve the amalgamation of two residential units within an existing settlement to provide supported living accommodation for three children (Class C2). The re-use of existing buildings within a sustainable location and existing settlements to meet the needs of groups of people with specific housing requirements is actively supported by national and local planning policies such as those outlined above. In addition, whilst this proposal would result in the loss of one residential planning unit, it is not considered this would prejudice the Council's deliverable housing land supply position or its aims as established by Local Plan Policy H1 in the adopted Local Plan to achieve the completion of 21,546 net additional homes during the period 2014 – 2033.

Great weight is given to using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes in accordance with paragraph 73(d) of the NPPF. In addition, despite a disputed local need, there is a broader need for the provision of supported living accommodation. As such, on balance, moderate weight is attributed to the principle of development in this instance – which is supported by national and local planning policies – in favour of the proposal.

Considering the above, the principle of development is considered acceptable subject to assessment of the following matters.

Impact on Residential Amenity, Health and Pollution Control

It is not considered that this proposal would contribute to significant increased overshadowing levels, overlooking and loss of privacy or reduced outlook. This proposal would use existing apertures which would maintain existing separation distances and achieve reasonable access to natural daylight in all habitable rooms. As such, this proposal is considered acceptable in this regard with this element attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal.

It is acknowledged that there could be some disruption and nuisance caused to people in the locality during construction works. However, any impact is anticipated to only be temporary and construction hours could be controlled by condition should this application be approved.

The proposed amalgamated unit would comprise a store, lounge, bathroom, and kitchen and dining area at ground level. At first floor level there would be a management office and staff bedroom along with three other bedrooms and a bathroom.

This proposal would mostly comply with the minimum internal spacing standards for 4-bed 5-person dwellinghouses as established by table 4A.1 in the SYRDG. Bedroom 2 would fall below the required 12sqm by approximately 0.2sqm to be counted as a double bedroom as established by the SYRDG. However, such a minimal difference is considered negligible and as such, this proposal is considered acceptable in this regard in this instance with this element being attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal.

This proposal would effectively result in a duplex or maisonette being formed within the application building. It is normally expected that shared private amenity space for apartments or flats should be provided at a minimum of 50 square metres plus an additional 10 square metres per unit as balcony space or added to shared private amenity space. Where private amenity space cannot be provided balconies should be provided and should be a minimum of 3 square metres. The amount of amenity space to be provided would also depend on the quality, quantity and accessibility of local public open space.

In this instance, an existing garden area to the rear (approximately 138.3sqm) would be allocated to the amalgamated unit for use by potential future occupants. Provided this area could be secured, it could offer an acceptable shared private amenity space that accords with adopted design guidance. No details have been provided to demonstrate how this garden area would be secured for the sole use of future occupants of the amalgamated unit. However, it is acknowledged that a fence or other similar treatment could be erected up to 2-metres-high without a requirement to obtain any planning permission.

Notwithstanding the above, the development site is within reasonable walking and wheeling distance of the Royston District Centre and nearby local green spaces. Barnsley Canal is located to the west, Monkton Playing Field to the south-east, and the Rabbit Ings Country Park to the east. This proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this regard with this element being attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal.

Based on a submitted amended planning statement and management plan it is anticipated that there would be a minimum of four people present within the amalgamated unit at any given time and would comprise of three children and one staff member. Within each 24-hour period there would be at least two shift change overs that would occur around 07:30am and 11:00pm. It is noted that there would be no restrictions on the amount of comings and goings of potential future occupants but visits would be pre-arranged and agreed if of a personal nature. Less frequent professional visits would unlikely be pre-arranged depending on the nature of the visit. However, such visits are anticipated on a more sporadic basis or once a month. It is stated that no visitors would be present beyond 10:30pm. While the Applicant argues that this would be commensurate with and would present no material difference in planning terms to the current use of the two existing residential units (Class C3), it is considered that this proposal would present an intensification of the use of the existing building and could lead to increased noise and disturbance impacts beyond those that may exist. The anticipated increased comings and goings on a regular basis would be a contributing factor. This element is not considered acceptable and is attributed moderate weight against this proposal.

Notwithstanding the above, recent planning applications in this area have drawn the LPA's attention to anti-social behaviour and crime concerns. As such, South Yorkshire Police (SYP) were consulted. Their Designing out Crime Officer provided a response objecting to this proposal. It was stated that the open-source sites, Police.uk and ONS websites together with South Yorkshire Police information systems had been used to obtain details of local crimes and incidents. These details have been used to ascertain the possible type and number of crimes, which could impact upon the building and its residents' users or neighbours. Information from both open sources are fully audited Government controlled sites and provide the most reliable sources of information in respect of this local area. The

location itself does not suffer from elevated levels of criminality however the surrounding area does suffer from higher than national average anti-social behaviour and criminality regarding 'acquisitive crime' in particular:- vehicle crime and burglary related offences.

The SYP Designing out Crime Officer stated that this planning application cannot be supported due to high baseline levels of anti-social behaviour and street crime in the area. Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, introducing vulnerable youth into an active crime hotspot can create immediate safety risks and an unsustainable strain on police resources.

The concern of the Police is the impact that children's homes can have on the lives of neighbours, Police resources and the resident children themselves should the home be located in an area where they could become involved with crime.

If there are elevated levels of street crimes (including drug misuse), the children again may become involved in the criminality or become victims of crimes. Areas within Barnsley which have a known reputation for issues around gang culture can affect the lives of children in that area. As children in care can sometimes seek out friendships among local youths who in some cases may be involved in criminality. This could lead to the looked after children being exploited and becoming involved in committing crime. Some looked after children in residential homes are vulnerable, this may be due to medical conditions or an emotional issue. This may be exploited by other criminally minded youths who view the child as a means of conducting criminal behaviour on their behalf. This type of child criminal exploitation is known to lead to children in care looking after weapons and transporting drugs on behalf of more seasoned older youths. This is more prevalent but not exclusive to children who are not originally from the Barnsley area but have been moved from addresses and homes in other parts of the Country.

When staff at children's homes have prevented local youths from visiting and influencing the more vulnerable children in their care, these same youths have targeted the property to intimidate the staff and children into allowing them that access. This is known to have taken the form of physical attacks on the property by smashing windows with bricks, and damage in the form of graffiti daubed on walls. The children themselves have also been targeted by having bricks thrown at their bedroom windows. Being subject to this level of intimidation is often enough to force a young vulnerable child to become involved in criminality.

A further issue arises when the home itself relies too heavily on the Police to enforce standards of discipline around behaviour and curfew times. Police have been called to homes where a child had failed to return home by a stipulated time and action from the Police is required to complete a missing person's report. Staff at the home having done nothing to ascertain the whereabouts of the child or made any enquiries at all. Police have been contacted to deal with issues in the home that should be dealt with by staff.

The submitted amended planning statement and management plan lacks the sufficient information about crime prevention and building security measures.

Should this application be approved SYP have suggested a number of mitigation measures such as doors and windows to comply with the enhanced security performance standards of PAS 24:2022 or LPS 1175 SR2 to resist forced entry and physical attacks.

To mitigate the specific risk of bricks being thrown at the property, all glazing units must consist of a minimum of one pane of glass that achieves compliance under the BS EN 356 P1A attack resistance standard. A suitable alternative to laminated glass is the application of a security film that meets the BS EN 356:2000 class P1A standard or higher, which must be installed to the edge of the glass and anchored securely under the window beading.

External lighting must be installed on all facades and controlled by dusk-to-dawn sensors to eliminate blind spots and deter trespassers and must comply with the British Standard for security lighting, BS 5489-1:2013.

A comprehensive CCTV system must be installed to protect the perimeter, deter attacks against the property, and provide vital evidence for prosecution should an incident occur. To ensure the system is fit for purpose, an operational requirements report must be completed prior to installation, following the official guidance that is available on the Government website. CCTV should be legally installed and registered with the Information Commissioners Office.

To ensure comprehensive physical protection, the perimeter must be secured by a robust boundary fence, such as a 1.8-metre minimum height weld-mesh system, coupled with self-closing, lockable access gates to prevent unauthorised local youth from entering the grounds.

Internal access control must be fitted to all staff offices, medication storage, and sensitive file areas, utilising proximity fobs or keypad locks to ensure a secure sanctuary for staff if the building exterior is targeted.

It is acknowledged that some of the concerns raised by SYP are more generalised rather than being site specific. However, it remains the case that while the location itself does not suffer from elevated levels of criminality, the surrounding area does suffer from higher than national average anti-social behaviour and criminality regarding 'acquisitive crime' and in particular:- vehicle crime and burglary related offences. It is accepted that not all vulnerable children would become involved in committing criminal acts or befriend or be exploited by those that commit such acts. However, the risk remains in this area and while it is anticipated that some risks could be lessened through an appropriate staff support and intervention system, such risks cannot be entirely controlled or eliminated. This may be true for all types of risks but is especially important in this instance given that nature of this proposal. Therefore, this location is not considered appropriate for the proposed Class C2 use as it could mean placing vulnerable children in an area which could put them at risk of becoming involved in criminal acts or at risk of befriending or being exploited by those that commit such acts.

Children and Adolescent Care Homes BMBC were consulted and the Head of Service of Children's Commissioning provided a response stating that they agree with SYP and that this proposal does not align with the Council's assessed service need or strategic commissioning priorities.

The Applicant stated in correspondence that they wanted the opportunity to provide some first-hand experience in respect of the location of the proposed children's home. They stated they have resided in Royston since the building was renovated in 2018 and that no crime has been experienced during this time and that they believe that most areas are close to a potential crime hotspot, but that is just the nature of a small town. While the LPA does not wish to dispute the Applicant's lived experience, it must be borne in mind that the comments from SYP were made on an evidential basis and as such are attributed greater weight.

It is also acknowledged that the Applicant has shown willingness to implement mitigation measures such as an upgraded or expanded CCTV system and the implementation of an external light scheme and boundary treatments. However, such measures, when taken together risk fundamentally altering the character of the application building and the surrounding land.

Paragraph 96(b) of the NPPF establishes that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: are safe and accessible so that crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion

Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF says planning policies and decisions should ensure that development creates 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.

It is considered this proposal would conflict with the aims of paragraphs 96(b) and 135(f) of the NPPF in that by placing vulnerable children near to areas of known criminality that experience high baseline levels of anti-social behaviour and street crime it could put them and others at unnecessary risk and in turn could undermine the quality of their lives and the lives of existing residents should the potential for criminality become realised. This could also affect future community cohesion and resilience and could result in further implications for the quality of the lives for the people who occupy the application building whether that be existing or future residents. As such, this proposal is also considered to be in conflict with Local Plan Policy GD1 in that it is not considered that the proposed use is compatible with the existing apartments and could lead to adverse effects on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. The development site is not considered to promote a safe place for vulnerable children. It is not considered that mitigation measures could resolve this matter as concerns relate to the location of the development site compared with local crime hotspots. This is not considered acceptable and is therefore attributed significant weight against this proposal.

Considering the above, whilst there are some positive elements to this proposal such as compliance with the minimum internal space standards established by the SYRDG, reasonable access to shared private amenity space, and local amenities and green spaces, and anticipated limited impact by way of overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy, and reduced outlook, which are being attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal, there are some negative elements such as intensification of the use of the application building which could lead to potential increased noise and disturbance impacts for existing residents which is attributed moderate weight against this proposal, and conflict with the aims of paragraphs 96(b) and 135(f) of the NPPF in that by placing vulnerable children near to areas of known criminality that experience high baseline levels of anti-social behaviour and street crime it could put them and others at unnecessary risk and could undermine the quality of their lives and the lives of existing residents should the potential for criminality become realised. It could also affect future community cohesion and resilience and could result in further implications for the quality of the lives for existing and future residents. As such, this proposal is also considered to be in conflict with Local Plan Policy GD1 in that it is not considered that the proposed use is compatible with the existing apartments and could lead to adverse effects on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Significant weight is attributed to this element against this proposal.

Considering the above, on balance, this proposal is considered unacceptable in this instance.

This proposal is therefore, on balance, considered contrary to paragraphs 96(b) and 135(f) of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and Local Plan Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection and is considered unacceptable regarding its impact on residential amenity, health and pollution control.

Impact on Highways

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF sets out development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe following mitigation and considering all other reasonable future scenarios.

This application relates to a converted public house comprising seven residential apartments located on the north side of Midland Road opposite the junction with Cross Lane. The immediate surrounding area comprises a mix of residential and commercial uses that comprises two-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellinghouses and semi-detached bungalows, the Royston Railway Sports Club, and a metal products storage business. To the north of the development site is an area of land that appears to accommodate several detached structures and containers and numerous motorised vehicles. Further residential properties are located beyond.

The development site is located approximately 445 metres to the east of the Royston District Centre and is serviced by regular east and westbound public transport links with bus stops nearby. Barnsley Canal is located to the west, Monkton Playing Field to the southeast, and Rabbit Ings Country Park

to the east. The section of Midland Road fronting the development site is not subject to any on-street parking restrictions. Consequently, there is the occurrence of some on-street parking particularly on the eastbound side of the road.

The development site benefits from extensive hardstanding areas that are used to provide off-street parking spaces.

Highways development control was consulted, and it was stated that the Council's Parking SPD sets out that one off-street parking space should be provided for a two-bedroom flat. The requirement for this proposed use (Class C2) changes to one space per two staff members and one space per three daily visitors. A submitted amended planning statement and management plan establishes a pattern of staff rotation that suggests a single staff member would be present most of the time with a change-over occurring twice within a 24-hour period. Aside from organised independent assessors, all other visitors would be expected to arrange their visit in advance. As such, Highways Development Control colleagues consider that it is unlikely that this proposal would increase vehicular parking significantly and could even reduce the overall car use associated with the development site.

Highways development control raised no objections subject to conditions requiring compliance with the amended scheme.

The LPA has no reason to disagree with the professional opinions of highways development control colleagues in this instance.

In addition, the development site is considered to be in a sustainable location with reasonable access to local services and amenities and public transport links. Such access could reduce the overall car use associated with the development site further.

Consequently, it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety to otherwise justify the refusal of this application on highways grounds in line with paragraph 116 of the NPPF. Therefore, this proposal is considered acceptable in this instance and is attributed moderate weight in favour of its approval.

This proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety and is considered acceptable regarding its impact on highway safety. Nevertheless, a scheme that is considered acceptable regarding its impact on highway safety does not justify the approval of a scheme that is considered unacceptable regarding its impact on residential amenity, health and pollution control.

Impact on Visual Amenity

No extensions or significant external alterations are proposed and therefore, it is not considered that this proposal would significantly alter or detract from the character of the street scene or immediate and broader locality.

Considering the above, on balance, this is considered to weigh modestly in favour of this proposal.

This proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policies D1: High Quality Design and Placemaking and is acceptable regarding its impact on visual amenity. Nevertheless, a scheme that is considered acceptable regarding its impact on visual amenity does not justify the approval of a scheme that is considered unacceptable regarding its impact on residential amenity, health and pollution control.

Impact on Biodiversity and Geodiversity

In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act

2021) and means developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This proposal is exempt from BNG in this instance.

Considering the above, on balance, this is considered to weigh modestly in favour of this proposal.

This proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity and is considered acceptable regarding its impact on biodiversity and geodiversity. Nevertheless, a scheme that is considered acceptable regarding its impact on biodiversity and geodiversity does not justify the approval of a scheme that is considered unacceptable regarding its impact on residential amenity, health and pollution control.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

In accordance with the provision of paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2024), the proposal is considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Having balanced all material planning considerations, this proposal would involve the amalgamation of two residential units in an existing settlement to provide supported living accommodation for three children (Class C2). The re-using of existing buildings located in sustainable locations and existing settlements to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements is actively supported by national and local planning policies. In addition, whilst this proposal would result in the loss of one residential planning unit, it is not considered this would prejudice the Council's deliverable housing land supply position or its aims as established by Local Plan Policy H1 in the adopted Local Plan to achieve the completion of 21,546 net additional homes during the period 2014 – 2033.

Great weight is given to using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes in accordance with paragraph 73(d) of the NPPF. In addition, despite a disputed local need, there is a broader need for the provision of supported living accommodation. As such, on balance, moderate weight is attributed to the principle of development in this instance in favour of this proposal.

Whilst there are some positive elements to this proposal which include compliance with the minimum internal space standards established by the SYRDG, reasonable access to shared private amenity space and local services and amenities and green spaces, and anticipated limited impact by way of overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy, and reduced outlook, which are attributed moderate weight in favour of this proposal, there are other negative elements such as intensification of the use of the application building which could lead to potential increased noise and disturbance impacts for existing residents, which is attributed moderate weight against this proposal, and conflict with the aims of paragraphs 96(b) and 135(f) of the NPPF in that by placing vulnerable children near to areas of known criminality that experience high baseline levels of anti-social behaviour and street crime it could put them and others at unnecessary risk and could undermine the quality of their lives and the lives of existing residents should a potential for criminality become realised. It could also affect future community cohesion and resilience and could result in further implications for the quality of the lives for existing and future residents. As such, this proposal is also considered to be in conflict with Local Plan Policy GD1 in that it is not considered that the proposed use (Class C2) would be compatible with the existing apartments and could lead to adverse effects on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents in this instance. Significant weight is therefore attributed to this element against this proposal.

This proposal is also considered acceptable regarding its potential impact on highway safety, visual amenity, and biodiversity and geodiversity, and is therefore, attributed moderate and modest weight in favour of this proposal accordingly.

Considering the above, on balance, this proposal is considered unacceptable and despite a number of positive elements, these are not considered enough to outweigh other material considerations in this instance.

For the reasons given above, this application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse.

Justification

Statement of compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Development Management Procedure Order 2015.

In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant to find solutions to the following issues that arose whilst dealing with the planning application:

- *Amended description agreed to better reflect the proposals under consideration.*
- *Amendments to the submitted planning statement and management plan to address minor discrepancies.*

Due regard has been given to Article 8 and Protocol 1 of Article 1 of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998 when considering representations, the determination of the application and the resulting recommendation. It is considered that the recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or any objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.