



Report to West Area Planning Committee

Application Number:	22/08177/FUL
Proposal:	Construction of part single, part two storey side extensions to both sides, conversion of integral garage with internal alterations in connection with change of use of existing building to from Offices (E) to residential (C3) comprising 3 x 2-bed flats and 2 x studio flats (5 in total).
Site Location:	Stuart Lodge Stuart Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 6AG
Applicant:	Ms Manni Chopra
Case Officer:	Heather Smith
Ward(s) affected:	Ryemead & Micklefield
Parish-Town Council:	High Wycombe Town Unparished
Date valid application received:	29th November 2022
Statutory determination date:	24th January 2023
Recommendation	Application Permitted

1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of part single, part two storey side extensions to both elevations of Stuart Lodge, the conversion of the integral garage and other associated internal alterations in connection with change of use of existing building to from offices (use class E) to residential (use class C3) comprising 3 x 2-bed flats and 2 x studio flats (5 in total).
- 1.2 This proposal will conserve the character of the surrounding Conservation Area and would have no adverse effect upon the visual amenity of the street scene.
- 1.3 This proposal will have no adverse effect upon the amenities of adjacent residential properties and would provide a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers.
- 1.4 This proposal will have no adverse effect upon highway safety or the convenience of other road users in the local area
- 1.5 This proposal will have no adverse effect upon flooding, the environment or ecology.

- 1.6 Cllr Knight and Cllr Rana have called this application in for consideration by committee on the grounds that the proposed development would harm the character of the conservation area and that inadequate parking would be provided.
- 1.7 Recommendation – approval

2.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 Stuart Lodge is an existing, unlisted three storey building, situated on the western side of Stuart Road. The application site is situated within the High Wycombe (Town Centre Conservation Area).
- 2.2 At present, the application premises is vacant, but has recently been used as offices and as a Quaker Meeting House.
- 2.3 Prior Notification consent was granted in September 2021 for the conversion of the existing property into 4 flats.
- 2.4 In April 2022, the West Area Planning Committee refused planning permission for a similar development to the one currently being sought, on the grounds that it would have an adverse impact upon the character of the property and the surrounding Conservation Area.
- 2.5 Following pre-application advice from the Council’s Conservation Officer, this revised planning application also seeks full planning permission for the construction of a part single, part two storey side extensions to both sides, conversion of integral garage with internal alterations in connection with change of use of existing building to from Offices (E) to residential (C3) comprising 3 x 2-bed flats and 2 x studio flats (5 in total).
- 2.6 The application is accompanied by:
 - a) Design, Access and Heritage Statement
 - b) Parking Statement
 - c) Ecology and Trees Checklist
- 2.7 Amended plans have been received which remove the proposed boundary treatment alterations from this application.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

Reference	Development	Decision	Decision Date
91/05752/CAC	DEMOLITION OF STORE BUILDING	PER	11 June 1991
91/05847/FUL	ERECTION OF NEW GARAGE, RETAINING EXISTING EXTERNAL WALL AND REAR PARTY WALL	PER	11 June 1991

21/07300/PNP3O	Change of use of existing building from offices (use class B1(a)) to create 4 x studio apartments (use class C3 (dwellinghouses))	DAPP	21 September 2021
21/08599/FUL	Construction of part single, part two storey side extensions to both elevations of Stuart Lodge, conversion of integral garage and other associated internal alterations in connection with change of use of existing building to from offices (use class E) to residential (use class C3) comprising 3 x 2-bed flats and 2 x studio flats (5 in total)	REF	27 April 2022

4.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation

Principle and Location of Development

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP1 (Sustainable Development), CP3 (Settlement Strategy), CP4 (Delivering Homes), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation)

4.1 The application site lies within the High Wycombe Settlement Area. As such the extension of properties and the provision of additional residential accommodation is acceptable, in principle.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM22 (Housing Mix), DM24 (Affordable Housing), DM41 (Optional Technical Standards for Building Regulations Approval)
Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (POSPD)List relevant policies & SPD

4.2 This proposal falls below the Council's requirements for affordable housing.

4.3 With regard to housing mix, the provision of flats is acceptable in this location.

Transport matters and parking

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), DM33 (Managing Carbon Emissions, Transport and Energy Generation)
DSA: DM2 (Transport requirements of development sites)

4.4 Stuart Road is an unclassified road subject to a 30mph speed restriction. There are waiting restrictions in force on Stuart Road. In the vicinity of the site, these take the form of double yellow lines, single yellow lines ('No Parking from Monday to Saturday between the hours of 8am and 6pm') and residents and pay-and-display parking bays (designated for that purpose between the hours of 9am and 5pm, from Monday to Saturday).

4.5 In terms of trip generation, in order for Highways Development Management to meet legislative requirements when assessing this site, it is necessary to consider and to take into account the maximum levels of movement and occupation associated with the sites

existing lawful use. The Highway Authority has assessed this against the proposals as presented by the applicant. Current and/or historic levels of use and movement are not necessarily reflective of the lawful potential of the site should a different occupier be present.

- 4.6 In terms of parking, the site is located in Non-residential Zone 1 as set out in the Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance (BCPG). In accordance with the BCPG, an office in this location should be provided with 1(no) parking space per 25sqm of floorspace. Therefore, the existing 226sqm of floorspace has a parking requirement of 10(no) parking spaces. The site is located in Residential Zone A. Each of the proposed residential units features 1-4 habitable rooms and therefore require 1(no) parking space each.
- 4.7 The submitted plans demarcate 4(no) parking spaces, although additional parking could be accommodated in a tandem arrangement. Whilst the proposed development would result in a loss of a parking space in the garage, the site would retain a similar level of hardstanding parking area. Given that the proposal to provide 5 residential units would reduce the sites parking requirement, the development would not displace additional parking onto the public highway. Furthermore, the site is located within a reasonable walking distance of public transport options and daily amenities reducing future residents' reliance on private motor vehicles.
- 4.8 Finally, in consideration that the garage is being converted to habitable accommodation and that the area is no longer being used for parking, the access serving the garage must be stopped up as part of the application. This is of benefit to highway safety given the accesses location in proximity to the 90^o bend in the road. This can be secured by way of condition.
- 4.9 It is noted that the matter of parking provision was considered by the Planning Committee in April 2022 where it was resolved that the level to be provided was acceptable.

Raising the quality of place making and design

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP9 (Sense of place); CP11 (Historic Environment); DM31 (Development Affecting the Historic Environment); DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development); DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality)
DSA: DM11 (Green networks and infrastructure), DM16 (Open space in new development)
Housing intensification SPD

- 4.10 The application property is a non-designated heritage asset, within the High Wycombe Conservation Area. The property is also identified in the High Wycombe Conservation Area as a "Building of Interest."
- 4.11 The existing building has a single storey attached garage to the right hand side, with a single storey extension, to the left hand side. The southern part of the site is currently open space which is used for parking. The building itself benefits from feature detailing, including a brick on edge banding detail, details around the window openings and brick head detailing.
- 4.12 The submitted plans show that the existing single storey elevation on the southern side will be demolished and a new two storey side extension erected in its place. On the northern elevation, a new 1st floor side extension is to be erected above the existing single garage structure, together with roof alterations

- 4.13 Following the refusal of the previous planning application for a similar development, the applicant sought the advice of the Council's Conservation Officer regarding design matters. The applicant has incorporated the advice given into the design of the development now proposed.
- 4.14 This current application has been reviewed by the Council's Conservation Officer, who is now satisfied with the design of the extensions proposed. A concern was raised regarding the proposed alterations to the existing boundary wall. However, the applicant has withdrawn this element from the application and now proposes no alterations to the boundary treatment around the site.
- 4.15 In light of the above, it is considered that this revised scheme would have no adverse effect upon the character of the host property or the character of the surrounding Conservation Area.

Amenity of existing and future residents

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality), DM40 (Internal space standards)

Housing intensification SPD

- 4.16 This proposal would result in an acceptable standard of accommodation for future residents. It is unfortunate that the proposed units will not provide any outdoor private amenity space. However, the change of use of this property to residential purposes has been established under a Prior Notification application, where the provision of private amenity space is not required. This current proposal will only add 1 additional unit to the scheme already approved.
- 4.17 The current application proposes extensions to the host property which are of the same size and layout as previously proposed. No material changes in circumstances have occurred since the previous decision and the proposed development.
- 4.18 The submitted plans do show that a habitable room window will be installed in the 1st floor of the southern elevation, overlooking the parking area. Concern has been raised that the proposed extensions will overlook the private rear rooms and private rear garden of the adjacent property, No 25 London Road. This property is a well-used community facility and is used for counselling, mental health, the NHS and Local Authority.
- 4.19 Other residents in London Road have expressed concern that the distance between the proposed extension and adjacent properties in London Road is less than 25m. Therefore overlooking and a loss of privacy will occur
- 4.20 The submitted plans do show that a distance of 10m will be retained between the proposed southern extension and its shared boundary with 25 London Road. The main property at No 25 is set more than 15m from the shared boundary. However, a single storey outbuilding and a private rear garden area are situated immediately adjacent to the boundary. The proposed single 1st floor window will result in a degree of overlooking to No. 25, however, a first floor window already exists in the southern elevation of Stuart Lodge. Although the proposed 1st floor window will be closer to the boundary, it is considered that the level of overlooking and any loss of privacy will not be significantly greater than what may occur at present.
- 4.21 With regard to other adjacent properties, it is considered that this proposal will not result in any significant loss of light, privacy or outlook.

- 4.22 Concerns have been raised by adjacent residents, that the proposed development does not provide sufficient parking for 5 units, in accordance with the current parking standards and that the displacement parking will occupy spaces current used by existing residents.
- 4.23 The submitted plans do show that only 4 spaces will be provided for 5 units. However, when considering parking displacement, the Highway Authority have taken into account the current authorised use of the property as offices. The office use itself has a greater displacement of parking than the proposed 5 residential units. As such, an objection on the grounds of a loss of on street parking for existing residents could not be sustained.
- 4.24 It is noted that the impact of the proposed development upon the amenities of the adjacent residential properties was considered by the Planning Committee under the previous planning application, in April 2022, where it was concluded that no significant adverse effect would occur.

Environmental issues

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth), DM20 (Matters to be determined in accordance with the NPPF).

- 4.25 In accordance with the Council's Air Quality SPD, a total of four electric car charging points should be installed at the extended property, prior to occupation. A planning condition should be imposed to this effect.

Flooding and drainage

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM39 (Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems)

- 4.26 The application site is not situated within Flood Risk Zone 2 or 3 and there is no water course on the site. Furthermore, there are no known surface or ground water issues in this locality
- 4.27 As such, this proposal is not a risk from flooding and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere .
- 4.28 Concern has been raised by the High Wycombe quaker Meeting, at No 25 London road that there is insufficient separation distance between their boundary wall and the proposed extension. They claim that the boundary wall was erected following the advice of a surveyor to manage the "severe drainage issues" caused by the incline in the vicinity.
- 4.29 However, no details of the drainage issues have been submitted by the adjacent occupiers of the adjacent property. Furthermore, this proposal will not affect the position of the boundary wall in question.

Ecology

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM34 (Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development)

DSA: DM13 (Conservation and enhancement of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance), DM14 (Biodiversity in development)

- 4.30 Concern has been expressed by residents that this proposal will have an adverse effect upon protected species such as birds, bats, hedgehogs, and other wildlife.
- 4.31 However, the application property is situated on a developed site within the urban area. As such, the likelihood of protected species being adversely affected is lessened and as

a result a Preliminary Ecological Assessment has not been requested. However, in the event that development is undertaken at the property, the applicant and builder have a statutory obligation to ensure that no protected species is harmed as a result of development. In the event that species such as bats are found, any work must cease and a licence obtained from Natural England. The Applicant should be advised of the statutory obligations.

- 4.32 However, Policy DM34 of the Wycombe District Local Plan does require that all development provide a net gain in biodiversity. At present, no such information has been provided. Therefore, a planning condition should be imposed on any subsequent planning condition to ensure that ecological mitigation and enhancement measures are undertaken. This could be in the form of the installation of a bat and bird box within the site.

Building sustainability

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): DM41 (Optional Technical Standards for Building Regulations Approval)

- 4.33 It is considered necessary to condition water efficiency in accordance with Policy DM41

Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

Wycombe District Local Plan (August 2019): CP7 (Delivering the infrastructure to support growth)

DSA: DM19 (Infrastructure and delivery).

- 4.34 The development is a type of development where CIL would be chargeable.

5.0 Weighing and balancing of issues / Overall Assessment

- 5.1 This section brings together the assessment that has so far been set out in order to weigh and balance relevant planning considerations in order to reach a conclusion on the application.
- 5.2 In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:
- a. Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material,
 - b. Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (such as CIL if applicable), and,
 - c. Any other material considerations
- 5.3 As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the development plan policies.
- 5.4 Local Planning Authorities, when making decisions of a strategic nature, must have due regard, through the Equalities Act, to reducing the inequalities which may result from socio-economic disadvantage. In this instance, it is not considered that this proposal would disadvantage any sector of society to a harmful extent].
- 5.5 The Human Rights Act 1998 Article 1 the protection of property and the peaceful enjoyment of possessions and Article 8 the right to respect for private and family life, have been taken into account in considering any impact of the development on

residential amenity and the measures to avoid and mitigate impacts. It is not considered that the development would infringe these rights.

6.0 Working with the applicant / agent

6.1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.

6.2 The Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

- In this instance, the applicant/agent was provided with pre-application advice. The applicant was updated of any issues after the initial site visit and was invited to submit amended plans to remove an objection from the scheme. The applicant/agent complied and the application was presented to the planning Committee with a recommendation for approval.

7.0 Recommendation

Application Permitted

Subject to the following conditions and reasons:-

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended).
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the details contained in the planning application hereby approved and plan numbers P101; 103; 104; 105; 202; 301; 302; 401 and 501A unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing.
Reason: In the interest of proper planning and to ensure a satisfactory development of the site.
- 3 The materials to be used for the external surfaces, including walls, roofs, doors, windows and detailing, shall be of the same colour, type and texture as those used in the existing building, unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing.
Reason: To secure a satisfactory external appearance.
- 4 Within one month of the of the development being occupied all other existing access points not incorporated in the development hereby permitted shall be stopped up by raising the existing dropped kerb and reinstating the footway and highway boundary to the same line, level and detail as the adjoining footway and highway boundary.
Reason: To limit the number of access points along the site boundary for the safety and convenience of the highway user.
- 5 The scheme for parking and manoeuvring indicated on the submitted plans shall be laid out prior to the initial occupation of the development hereby permitted and that area shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose.
Reason: To enable vehicles to draw off, park and turn clear of the highway to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the adjoining highway.

- 6 Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, four electric vehicle charging points, with a minimum rating of 32amp must be installed at a point adjacent to the proposed parking area. Thereafter, the electric car charging points must be retained for the lifetime of the development.
Reason: In order to comply with the Council's Air Quality SPD and, to reduce the carbon emissions and the impact on the health of Nitrogen Dioxide emissions from the development.
- 7 Prior to the first occupation of the development, hereby permitted, 1 x bat box and 1 x bird box shall be installed within the curtilage of the site and thereafter retained permanently for the lifetime of the development.
Reason: In order to achieve a net gain in biodiversity opportunities, in accordance with Policy DM34 of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (2019)
- 8 The development, hereby permitted, shall be designed and constructed to meet a water efficiency standard of 110 litres per head per day.
Reason: In the interests of water efficiency as required by Policy DM41 (Optional Technical Standards for Building Regulations Approval) of the Local Plan.

INFORMATIVE(S)

- 1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF2 Buckinghamshire Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments. Buckinghamshire Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the applicant/agent was provided with pre-application advice. The applicant/agent was updated of any issues after the initial site visit and amended plans were submitted to overcome an objection.

- 2 The applicant is advised that a licence must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway. A period of 28 days must be allowed for the issuing of the licence, please contact Transport for Buckinghamshire at the following address for information.

Transport for Buckinghamshire (Streetworks)
10th Floor,
Walton Street Offices
Walton Street, Aylesbury,
Buckinghamshire
HP20 1UY
Tel: 01296 382416

- 3 The applicant is advised that protected species (including all bats) use buildings. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 provides very strong protection for these species and so you must be certain that they are not present before works begin. If the presence of bats or other protected species is suspected, a licence may be required from Natural England before works can commence. If protected species are found whilst carrying out work, all work must stop and Natural England must be informed.

Buildings should be inspected prior to works commencing and if the presence of bats is suspected advice will need to be sought from Natural England via the Bat Line on 0845 1300228. Further advice on bats is available from The Bat Conservation Trust <https://www.bats.org.uk>. The consent given by this notice does not override the protection afforded to these species and their habitat.

APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations

Councillor Comments

Cllr Knight:

I support the comments on this application brought forward by both local residents and groups - namely the Quakers and High Wycombe Society. The application does not seem to deliver the correct number of parking spaces and they are not up to the required size specifications. Concerns about an existing lack of on street parking are valid, in particular due to many local properties fronting onto the A40 which as a key strategic route cannot accommodate any street parking. The proposed development does not comply with the requirements for separation between properties, which on its own is sufficient reason to refuse planning permission. The proposed development provides a worrying lack of outdoor amenity space. This is a conservation area and requires a more sensitive and higher standard of development. I am concerned that there has not been sufficient consideration of these factors. I request that if officers are minded to recommend approval of this application that it is brought to the Planning Committee for additional scrutiny.

Cllr Rana:

I completely agree with my colleague Cllr Matt Knight and the residents, the Quakers, and High Wycombe Society, the concerns raised are valid. I would also request if officers were approving the application that it is brought to Planning Committee for scrutiny.

Parish/Town Council Comments

High Wycombe Unparished

Consultation Responses

Highway Authority: No objection subject to conditions

Environmental Health: Require 4 electric car charging points

Conservation Officer:

The property is a non designated heritage asset within High Wycombe Conservation Area. The property is shown in the High Wycombe Conservation Area Appraisal as being a 'Building of Interest'.

The proposal seeks the construction of a part single and part two storey side extension to both elevations of Stuart Lodge, conversion of integral garage and other associated internal alterations in connection with change of use of existing buildings from offices (use class E) to residential (use class C3) comprising 2 x 3 bed flats and 2 x studio flats (5 total).

The application site is a two storey red brick building with habitable roof space that was previously used as offices (Use Class E) and was the former Head Office of the Buckinghamshire Federation of Women's Institute. It is located on the western side of Stuart Road, at the junction with Easton Terrace.

The existing building has a single storey attached garage to the right hand side, with a single storey extension previously built to the left hand side. The southern part of the site is currently open space used for parking.

The existing building benefits from feature detailing including a brick on edge banding detail, details around the window openings and brick head detailing.

A previous application sought approval for a similar scheme and has now been amended to address previous concerns, namely window design and boundary treatment.

Whilst I am happy with the proposed windows design, I would have expected a traditional boundary treatment of railings. Whilst the design of the gate brick piers is acceptable, the design of the railings is not appropriate with the flat horizontal bar; also the existing gate is modern and out of keeping. I would suggest that it would be helpful to research this historic detailing from either archive drawing, plans or historic photographs

Representations

Amenity Societies/Residents Associations

High Wycombe Society: objects to this proposal on the grounds of:

- Insufficient separation and overlooking
- Inadequate parking provision
- No amenity space for new flats

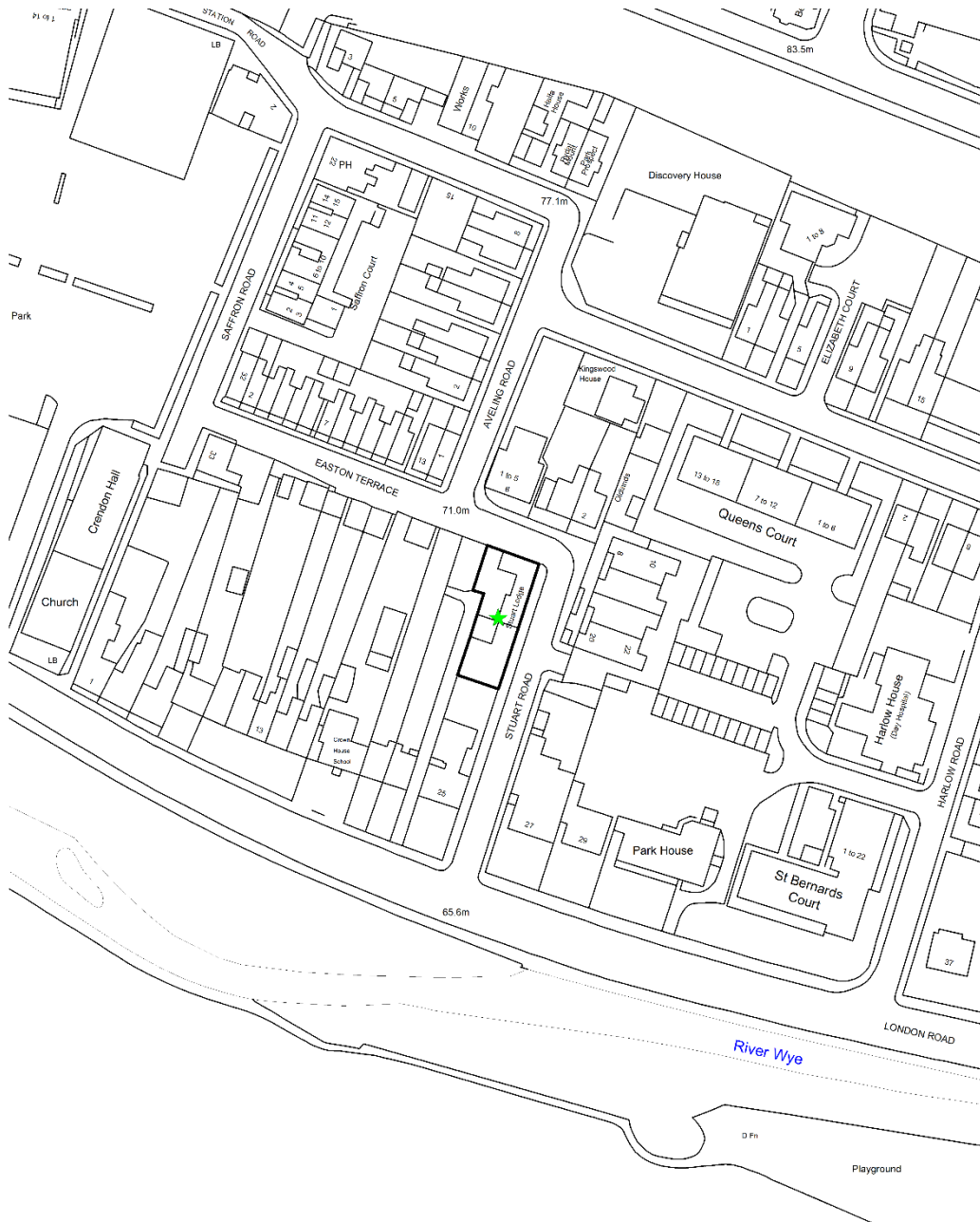
Other Representations

Local residents have objected to this development on the grounds of:

- Lack of parking
- Overlooking
- Lack of separation distances
- Drainage issues

APPENDIX B: Site Location Plan

22/08177/FUL
Scale 1/1250



Planning Committee
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