



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by C Billings BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/W/25/3371846

31 Meriden Street, Coventry CV1 4DL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Daniel Boland of Ellesmere Property Management Ltd, against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2025/0000855/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of 6 bed HMO to 7 bed HMO.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use of 6 bed HMO to 7 bed House HMO at 31 Meriden Street, Coventry CV1 4DL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/2025/0000855/FUL, subject to conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site is lawfully in use as a 6-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), as permitted under Council ref. PL/2024/0002130/LDCE. Also, at the time of my site visit the front ground floor reception room was in use as a bedroom. Therefore, I have determined the appeal proposal having regard to such matters.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - highway safety, with regard to parking provision
 - the living conditions of occupiers of nearby properties in regard to car parking provision and,
 - whether the proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions for its future occupiers with regard to the provision of outdoor garden space.

Reasons

Highway safety

4. The appeal property is an existing house in multiple occupation (HMO) for 6 persons with no off road car parking provision. There are no parking restrictions along Meriden Street and there are good public transport links into the city centre, with bus stops within walking distance of the appeal site.
5. The maximum parking standards in Appendix 5 of the Coventry City Local Plan (December 2017) (LP) set out that a 7-bed HMO would require 6 parking spaces as opposed to 5 spaces for a 6-bed HMO. Therefore, the proposal would require an extra parking space that could add pressure to existing on-street parking provision.

6. The parking survey demonstrates that there is parking capacity to accommodate the required extra parking space on-street within reasonable walking distance of the appeal site. Also, although my site visit represents a snapshot in time and was undertaken in the daytime, I observed on-street parking spaces were available in the local area, including several spaces along Meriden Street. Furthermore, the HMO is likely to be occupied by tenants on low or restricted incomes, who are unlikely to own a private vehicle and so instead would rely on nearby public transport. Consequently, this would reduce demand for and impact on on-street parking provision.
7. While the parking survey is some 2 years old, no substantive evidence to show there have been significant changes in the local area that would affect parking provision has been provided, nor any evidence that the parking survey is not reflective of current parking demand in the area. Additionally, it has not been demonstrated that the requirement for one extra on-street parking space arising from the proposed development would materially intensify parking demand to the extent that it would cause highway incidents or impede the free flow of traffic on the highway network.
8. Consequently, there would be sufficient on street parking nearby to meet the demands of the proposed development and the proposal would unlikely have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
9. In view of the above, the proposal would not have a harmful effect on highway safety, with regard to car parking provision. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with Policies AC2 and AC3 of the LP, which require new development proposals to ensure no unacceptable levels of traffic congestion or highway safety problems.

Living conditions- existing residents

10. The appeal site is on a predominately residential street where many properties lack off-road parking. As a result, existing residents are likely to experience some level of noise and disturbance from vehicles and pedestrians associated with on-street parking, particularly since parking along the road is neither restricted nor limited to residents.
11. The parking survey demonstrates that there is on street parking available nearby. Consequently, the additional one parking space demand for the appeal scheme is unlikely to significantly intensify or unduly displace parking availability for existing residents in the surrounding area. Furthermore, given the existing context of the local area, any noise or disturbance caused by an additional vehicle parked on the street would not likely harmfully affect nearby residents.
12. In view of the above, the proposed development would not have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupiers of nearby properties in regard to car parking provision. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with the guidance contained in the HMO Development Plan Document (HMO DPD) (March 2025) or Policy H11 of the LP, which set out that HMO development will not be permitted where it would materially harm the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties (including the provision of suitable parking provisions).

Living conditions- future occupiers

13. Policy H11 of the LP and the HMO DPD do not set out the specific size of outside garden space needed for HMOs. Although, the proposal would not meet the minimum amount of outdoor private space for houses, as set out in the Council's Design Guidance for New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, this includes standards for houses and the SPD does not stipulate the amount of outdoor space needed for HMOs or for communal outdoor space areas for flats and maisonettes.
14. Also, even if other HMOs in the surrounding area have larger rear garden spaces than that proposed and the examples of HMOs with smaller garden areas were determined before the introduction of the HMO DPD, I have had regard to the individual merits of the appeal proposal in making my decision.
15. Amongst other things, Policy HM04 of the HMO DPD sets out that the design of external space should be safe and secure and include provision for washing facilities and adequate cycle parking and ensure access to useable outdoor amenity space. From my site observations, the rear outdoor space at the appeal property is of a reasonable size. There is enough space within the outdoor area to allow for the drying of washing, including a covered area to the side and further space at the rear of the building. Also, the garden space is large enough to allow for sitting out areas for its residents and there is enough room within the plot to store cycles and bins.
16. Additionally, the rear garden space is an enclosed area, secured by walls with side gate access. Therefore, it would provide an appropriate safe and secure outdoor area that would ensure adequate useable space for the occupiers of the HMO, including the proposed additional HMO resident.
17. In view of the above, the proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions for its future occupiers with regard to the provision of outdoor garden space and so, no conflict would arise with Policy H11 of the LP. This policy sets out that large HMOs will not be permitted in areas where the proposals would materially harm the living standards of future occupiers of the property, having specific regard to internal space and garden/amenity space.

Conditions

18. Having regard to the advice contained within the Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework, I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council and comments made by the appellant on these. In addition to the standard implementation condition, it would be necessary in the interests of certainty to define the plans with which the scheme should accord.
19. A condition relating to the maximum occupancy of the HMO property is necessary to protect the living conditions of existing nearby residents from undue noise and disturbance and ensure acceptable living conditions for future residents of the appeal property. Conditions requiring the provision of cycle parking and appropriate bins storage are necessary, to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel and to provide suitable bin provision and appropriate living conditions for the occupiers of the HMO. Also, in view of previous complaints received about waste management at the appeal property, a bin storage condition would help ensure no harm is caused to the living conditions of nearby residents.

20. However, I have amended the wording of the recommended conditions in view of the lawful use of the existing 6-bedroom HMO and that the proposed additional bedroom is already occupied. This will ensure details of the bin and cycle storage facilities are submitted, agreed and implemented within appropriate timescales and that such facilities are thereafter maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, the appeal proposal would accord with the development plan read as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise.
22. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Billings

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing Nos 10484-301, Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations and 10484-100 Location Plan.
3. Within 2 months of the date of this decision details of bin storage facilities to be provided within the site shall have been submitted for written approval of the local planning authority. The bin storage facilities shall thereafter be provided in accordance with agreed details and timescales and retained for the lifetime of the development.
4. Within 2 months of the date of this decision, details of cycle parking facilities to be provided within the appeal site shall have been submitted for written approval of the local planning authority. The cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be provided in accordance with the approved details and timescales and retained for the lifetime of the development.
5. The development hereby permitted shall be occupied by no more than 7 permanent residents at any time.

End of Schedule