



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 08 January 2026

by **D Cleary MTCP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/W/25/3373241

7 Paul Street, Bewsey and Whitecross, Warrington WA2 7LE

- 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 Magowan, of Magowan Property Group Limited, against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/00888/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as the Conversion of existing C3 Dwelling to Sui Gen (9 people) HMO, including L shaped Dormer to rear, removal of Garage, minor elevational changes and installation of velux.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. On my site visit I observed that works to the appeal property were being carried out, but the development was not substantially complete. The garage to the rear of the property had been demolished. As the development is not substantially complete, I have considered the appeal based on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the development would be adequately served by on and/or off-street parking and the effect of the development on highway safety.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey, mid-terraced dwelling set within a linear plot. A narrow alleyway is positioned to the rear which connects Arthur Street and Froghall Lane. This alleyway is accessible for both pedestrians and vehicles, proving access to parking areas for a number of properties. Tall boundary walls are positioned on either side of the rear garden of the appeal site. The wall to No.9 Paul Street (No.9) is constructed up to the edge of the alleyway, while the boundary wall with No.5 Paul Street is set away slightly from the alley. It is understood that a garage was positioned to the rear of the property. This has subsequently been removed, and the site currently has no rear boundary facing the alleyway.
5. The site lies within a small network of predominantly residential streets¹. These streets comprise a mix of terraced and semi-detached properties of varying ages, while Gladstone Street includes several apartment buildings. The wider

¹ Paul Street, Arthur Street, Walker Street, Eustace Street and Gladstone Street

surrounding area has a greater mix of uses indicative of the sites edge of town centre location.

6. The immediate network of residential streets have double yellow parking restrictions along much of their length. Some dwellings have off street parking, while the nearby apartment buildings appear to be served by parking courts. Bewsey Road and Froghall Lane are busier streets and also have double yellow parking restrictions along both sides of the street. On-street parking in the area is limited, and the designated parking locations are within clearly marked bays. Those on-street parking spaces are subject to residential permitting which is effective during match days when games are held at the nearby Halliwell Jones stadium.
7. The appeal proposes the change of use of the dwelling to a 9-bedroom (9 person) House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The Warrington Borough Council Standards for Parking in New Development, March 2015 (the SPD), states that parking standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation in this location are to be determined on a case-by-case basis². I note that there is some disagreement between the main parties regarding the likely car ownership for HMOs in general terms. In the absence of a set standard, I consider that 9 adults living independently in the same building would likely result in a higher vehicle ownership than the existing dwelling, or any lawful HMO use of the building. Therefore, I agree with the Council that the development would lead to a greater parking demand than any lawful existing use.
8. Given the existing restrictions in the surrounding area and limited number of on street parking spaces, a small increase in parking demand would have the potential to increase on-street parking pressures in the area. This could lead to inconsiderate or unsafe parking which would lead to highway safety concerns.
9. The scheme proposes two off-street parking spaces which would be accessed from the rear alleyway. This would represent an uplift of the existing off-street parking availability. Notwithstanding this, the tall boundary wall adjacent to No.9 would be positioned immediately adjacent to one of the parking spaces. This would severely limit visibility of the alleyway in views towards Arthur Street. Given the limited width of the alleyway, any vehicle exiting this parking space would not have clear sight of vehicles or pedestrians using the alleyway.
10. In addition, the alleyway exit onto Arthur Street is similarly constrained by tall walls on either side. These are built up to the highway edge meaning visibility is below an accepted standard. The increased use of the alleyway, along with the poor visibility on egress would lead to a greater risk of conflict between users. The development would exacerbate this substandard relationship which would be to the detriment of highway safety.
11. The SPD advises that developers will need to demonstrate that sufficient on or off-street parking is available³. As I have observed above, the off-street parking in the manner proposed would be unsafe. At the time of my site visit there were no available on-street parking on Paul Street. However, I did identify a number of spaces available, in various locations, within the marked bays of the nearby network of streets. These were in reasonably close walking distance of the appeal site and could be used by future occupiers.

² Appendix A – Row 18 - Area B (All other areas)

³ Appendix A – Row 18 - Other considerations

12. However, my observations represent only a very small snapshot in time. These occurred during the working day when residents' vehicles may have been elsewhere. My observations therefore may not reflect typical parking conditions. The appellant has not provided a parking beat survey or other robust evidence to demonstrate the level of on-street parking capacity in the area. As a result, I cannot be satisfied that sufficient on-street capacity exists to accommodate the likely increase in parking demand. In this regard, I am particularly mindful of the limited number of designated spaces in the area and the Councils general observations regarding on-street parking capacity.
13. The site is at an edge of the town centre location and has good access to services and facilities. This includes good access to other modes of public transport. Therefore, the site can be considered to be a sustainable location, and this would reduce the reliance on the use of a private motor vehicle. I also note that there would be space within the site to deliver cycle parking for future occupiers. I acknowledge that these sustainability credentials may reduce parking ownership. However, they are not so compelling to overcome the effects of the proposed 9 person HMO. In this instance, I have identified that the development would provide substandard off-street parking and result in an increase in on-street parking, which may add to the parking stresses of the area leading to highway safety concerns.
14. For the above reasons the development would not be adequately served by on and/or off-street parking, and would have an unacceptable effect on highway safety. Therefore, the development is contrary to Policies DEV2, INF1 and ENV8 of the Warrington Local Plan (December 2023). Together, amongst other things, these require that development have regard to car parking and highway safety, and confirms that HMOs should provide off-street parking provision having regard to the existing parking situation, existing highway network and the impact on safety.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

D Cleary

INSPECTOR