



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Development Control Committee

## 1 October 2015

### **Item 7 – Abbots House, 2 Newmarket Rd, Bury St Edmunds – DC/15/1540/FUL**

1. The following paragraph should substitute paragraph 12 of the published report:

The purchase and conversion of Abbots House goes a long way to achieving aims set out in two key Housing Strategies. The West Suffolk Housing Strategy 2015-2018 sets out that “West Suffolk should increase the amount of temporary accommodation available for individuals and families in crisis housing need, to reduce the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation.” In addition:

*“Within the lifetime of the (West Suffolk) Homelessness Strategy (2015-2018) we aim to:*

- *minimise the use of bed & breakfast to the extent it is only used in an emergency and*
- *ensure that enough suitable temporary accommodation is available and that it is in the right location for homeless households to access support, maintain employment and education.”*

2. The following paragraph should substitute paragraph 18 of the published report:

With the site currently operating as an 11 bed B&B, the existing access and parking arrangements (6-7 spaces) are considered adequate to serve the proposed HMO use. The applicant contends that the 6 car parking spaces shown will be more than sufficient for this HMO. The property will be used to provide temporary accommodation for homeless people. This client group is far less likely to have access to a car and are often reliant on public transport. Newmarket Road is well served by public transport and is within easy walking distance of both the town centre and the Council Offices. In the housing team’s experience of managing homelessness temporary accommodation, (for example, Forest Heath’s former Homeless Hostel at Rockfield House, Bury Road in Newmarket and The Elms, High Street, Brandon) as few as a third of homeless households have access to a car. Abbots House is presently an 11 bedroom B&B. The current parking provision has been sufficient for this number of bedrooms. The proposal to convert the building into 7 units for temporary accommodation will result in less demand for parking than that currently and should therefore result in less traffic movements using the existing access. The Highways

Authority would normally require one parking space per unit of accommodation, but they have confirmed that given location of the dwelling (access to pedestrian/cycle routes and public transport), provision of satisfactory cycle parking and close proximity to local amenities within Bury St Edmunds, they have no objections to the proposals subject to conditions to secure the parking area shown, bin storage provision and improvements to visibility where the access meets the main road.

3. The following paragraph should substitute paragraph 20 of the published report:

The Council's proposals would result in the property being converted into 7 units of temporary accommodation, predominately for families and pregnant women who have become in need of temporary accommodation whilst waiting for permanent rehousing, rather than individuals with complex issues who are understood to make up some of the current residents. It is not anticipated that the proposed client group would be a nuisance to other residents but this can never be discounted, just as disturbance from B & B guests arriving or departing from the property at potentially unsocial hours could likewise never be discounted either. The likely residents however would be families with the usual parental responsibilities, pregnant women or those with medical issues.

4. In addition, further representations have been received from the neighbouring property (4 Newmarket Road). They noted the correspondence on the Council's website confirming no formal noise complaints had been received by the Council in relation to Abbots House. A list of incidents is provided with the letter (16 incidents in total witnessed from July 2014 – September 2015). The point made is that these incidents combined with others that other residents have referred to do make this a significant issue and it is requested that these be taken into account. Whilst Officers recognise the concerns from the neighbours, this matter is addressed in detail within the report (paragraphs 19-22) and does not change the recommendation.