

<b>Parish:</b>	<b>King's Lynn</b>	
<b>Proposal:</b>	<b>Conversion of St.James Medical Centre to 11 Flats (Change of Use)</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	<b>NHS St James Medical Practice County Court Road King's Lynn</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Ruby Circle Ltd</b>	
<b>Case No:</b>	<b>24/00622/FM (Full Application - Major Development)</b>	
<b>Case Officer:</b>	<b>Mrs Jade Calton</b>	<b>Date for Determination: 17 July 2024 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 9 September 2024</b>

**Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Relation of Cllr Ring**

**Neighbourhood Plan: No**

**Case Summary**

The application relates to St James Medical Centre (currently vacant), a two storey detached building, situated on the western side of County Court Road, King's Lynn.

The site lies within King's Lynn's Conservation Area and the building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.

Full planning permission is sought for the change of use of the building to 11 flats.

**Key Issues**

- Principle
- Design / Impact upon Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Flood Risk
- Other Material Considerations

**Recommendation**

**APPROVE**

**THE APPLICATION**

The application relates to St James Medical Centre (currently vacant), a two storey detached building, situated on the western side of County Court Road, King's Lynn.

The site lies within King's Lynn's Conservation Area and the building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The building is also directly adjacent to The Walks, a Grade II registered Park and Garden.

There are a mix of other surrounding uses, including residential to the east and south-east, a day-care nursery to the south-west, a cemetery to the south, a health centre and offices to the south.

Full planning permission is sought for the change of use of the building to 11 flats, comprising;

2 X 1 bed / 1- person  
1 X 1 bed / 2- person  
6 X 2 beds / 3- person  
2 X 2 beds / 4- person

One flat would utilise two floors, and the remainder ten would be on one level.

There is no affordable housing requirement for conversion of existing building and therefore all proposed units would be open market housing.

There are minimal external alterations proposed, including replacement and new windows and doors.

It is proposed to provide a small communal outside amenity area to the south-west of the building and provision of on-site car parking and cycle parking is also included.

## **SUPPORTING CASE**

A Planning Statement and Applicant's Statement accompanies the application, making the following case:

### **Applicant's Statement:**

'St James House has been modified many times over the last 50 years and the original house is barely recognisable. It has been used as a medical practice where large air con condensers were added to the external walls which look unsightly and certainly not in keeping with the area. These units will be removed during the redevelopment.

We have had no interest from the open market while advertising the building as a community asset. The hopes of another Medical Practice taking the building on are extremely slim as we understand that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) regards the building as 'no longer fit for purpose'. The only interest we have had, is from developers looking to convert to residential.

King's Lynn town centre is in desperate need of more residential accommodation, both for main occupancy and for the visitor economy. This conversion will create 11 such properties that will all have a parking space too. This will take cars off the road, where patients at the surgery used to park.

We need, in Kings Lynn, to celebrate and use our public open spaces, like the Walks. These 11 properties will help to do just that, whilst removing a large amount of daily traffic and restoring St James House back to a home for King's Lynn residents'.

## **Planning Statement:**

### AIM OF APPLICATION

It seeks to obtain planning permission and conservation area consent for alterations which are virtually all internal plus minor changes externally by adding new windows and changing the type of doors.

### PREVIOUS AND CURRENT USE

St. James Medical Centre formerly St. James House, was we believe built between about 1820 as explained in the Heritage Statement which also accompanies this application. It is assumed built as a private house it enjoyed a setting within what is now St. James Park before being altered internally and extended externally for a Doctors Surgery.

Internally the building is to be carefully altered and refurbished to form 11 flats (10 single storey, five at ground floor and five at first floor and one two storey flat) in compliance with the latest building regulations.

All flats will have space standards in accordance with the BCKLWN and Breckland Council There is ample parking of 10 spaces to the north side and at least two spaces to the east side.

### LAYOUT

The internal layout is a change from the dominating doctor rooms into a building converted for 11 flats and will involve provision of new walls and upgrading existing walls to provide well heated and acoustically sound flats. The proposals are to convert the building to 11 flats.

Eleven flats in total, one of which is of two floors, the other ten being on one level.

### LANDSCAPING

Despite sitting within the large public amenity area of St. James Park the site has its own much smaller amenity garden space. Currently it houses a large 12 x 2.4m container used by the doctors for storage which will we trust be removed when the surgery moves to South Wootton.

Once removed the garden will be utilised for a lawned area together with provision of external quality tables and chairs for the new owners / tenants' top use.

### APPEARANCE

The building will not change its elevations except for addition of new windows and changes in door style as aforementioned.

### HIGH STANDARDS OF SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (PLANNING POLICY - CS08)

In respect of Air Quality, we confirm the development will be converted to achieve high standards of sustainable design as guided by Core Policy CS08-sustainable Development.

Proposals are for low carbon (zero or low NOx emission sources) / renewable energy options (heating / ventilation / PV etc.) to be designed and implemented within this conversion. Final details to be provided by an Energy Assessor.

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Proposed As Built Standards will be in excess of the requirements of the current Building Regulations and achieve higher levels as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes. The development being more than 10 flats it is also proposed to reduce the predicted CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by 10%. based upon using decentralised and renewable and low carbon sources. Final details to be provided by an Energy Assessor.

The development is to provide a cycle space for each flat by way of a secure locked up room within the building as shown by amended drawing 2583-03E.

#### **ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS**

Electric charging points will be provided in accordance with guidance for electric vehicle parking as per revised parking guidelines for new developments in Norfolk.

#### **VEHICLE AND TRANSPORT**

**LINKS** The site is central to Kings Lynn and is within walking distance of all town centre shops, the bus station, the railway station and sits in St. James Park and on the edge of the Walks.

#### **INCLUSIVE ACCESS**

The flats will be designed where possible to provide access for everyone. However, being an existing building a variation of levels inside and out, steps are unavoidable.

#### **SECURED BY DESIGN**

Our client intends to enter discussions with the local constabulary regards ensuring the property meets the 'Secured by Design' standards'.

#### **PLANNING HISTORY**

2/98/1095/F: Application Permitted: 29/09/98 - Extensions and alterations - St James House Surgery

09/01259/F: Application Permitted: 10/09/09 - Siting of pre-fabricated building for storage of paper records - St James House Medical Practice

07/02622/CA: Application not required: 02/01/08 - Conservation area consent - demolition of structures prior to construction of extensions - St James House

07/02621/F: Application Permitted: 25/03/08 - Single storey extension - St James House

2/98/0780/F: Application Permitted: 23/07/98 - Creation of extra access and exit doors - St James Surgery

07/00596/F: Non-determined Invalid now returned: 10/10/07 - First floor extension to existing medical practice - St James House

2/02/1564/F: Application Permitted: 15/10/02 - Construction of replacement entrance lobby - St James Medical Practice

2/99/0056/F: Application Permitted: 17/03/99 - Extension and alterations to surgery (amended design) - St James House Surgery

## **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

**Parish Council: N/A** – King’s Lynn is unparished

**Highways Authority: NO OBJECTION**

**Anglian Water: NO OBJECTION** – subject to a condition regarding details of surface water disposal and informatives relating to affected assets and connection to the public sewer.

**Environmental Health & Housing – Environmental Quality: NO OBJECTION** subject to a condition relating to the submission of a sustainable energy report.

**Norfolk Constabulary: NO OBJECTION**

**Emergency Planner: NO OBJECTION** subject to standing advice regarding preparation of a Flood Evacuation Plan.

**Historic Environment Service: NO OBJECTION** - There are no known archaeological implications.

**Historic England: NO OBJECTION** – Advises to seek the views of the LA’s specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

**Conservation Team: NO OBJECTION** conditionally.

**Natural England: NO OBJECTION** subject to securing appropriate mitigation relating to European designated sites (GiRAMS).

**Strategic Housing:** The conversion of existing buildings does not require an affordable housing contribution.

**Environment Agency: NO OBJECTION**

**Environmental Health – CSNN: NO OBJECTION** subject to conditions relating to a scheme for internal noise protection; details of air source heat pumps; and site construction hours.

**Environmental Health – Env. Quality: NO OBJECTION** - there are amendments to the Design and Access Statement in favour of a more sustainable design, which is recommended to be conditioned. The dedicated and secure room to store bicycles is welcomed.

However, we must advise that the updated parking guidelines from NCC refers to one secure cycle space per bedroom where a HMO is concerned. There are 19 bedrooms for the 11 flats being proposed.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

**ONE** letter of **OBJECTION** raising the following concerns: -

- Cycle storage is too small.
- Under-provision of cycle parking.
- Contrary to Norfolk Parking Standards (cycle parking).
- Unclear where the bins have been relocated to.
- Will the bins obstruct access?
- Contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS13 and SADMPP Policy DM17
- Contrary to para. 108 of the NPPF.
- Development will need to demonstrate its positive contribution to tackling the air quality problem.
- Increasing the number of motor vehicles in the town centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

## **LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES**

**CS01** - Spatial Strategy

**CS02** - The Settlement Hierarchy

**CS03** - King's Lynn Area

**CS08** - Sustainable Development

**CS09** - Housing Distribution

**CS11** – Transport

**CS10** - The Economy

**CS13** - Community and Culture

**CS12** - Environmental Assets

## **SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016**

**DM1** – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

**DM2** – Development Boundaries

**DM15** – Environment, Design and Amenity

**DM17** - Parking Provision in New Development

**DM21** - Sites in Areas of Flood Risk

**Policy E1.1** – King's Lynn Town Centre

## **NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)  
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

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## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

The main considerations in the determination of this application are: -

- Principle of development
- Design / Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety
- Flood Risk
- Other Material Considerations

### **Principle of Development:**

The application site is within King's Lynn town centre.

The application will involve the loss of a GP Surgery in the town centre. In line with Core Strategy Policies CS10 and CS13, SAMPP Policy DM9 aims to protect community facilities where possible, particularly where there is no alternative provision within the settlement.

DM9 (Community Facilities) states that: -

'The Council will encourage the retention of existing community facilities and the provision of new facilities, particularly in areas with poor levels of provision and in areas of major growth.

Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that either:

- a) the area currently served by it would remain suitably provided following the loss, or if not
- b) it is no longer viable or feasible to retain the premises in a community facility use'.

It is considered that the loss of this type of use can be accepted in the town centre location, as there are a number of alternative vacant premises currently available for such community facility uses.

Furthermore, residential uses in town centres also contribute to their vibrancy. The NPPF reinforces the need to take a positive approach to the growth, management and adaptation of town centres, recognising that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres (para 90).

Notwithstanding this, the GP practice vacated the building as it was no longer fit for purpose and it was not viable for the NHS to bring it back up to standard. The practice has therefore already relocated only one mile away to Edward Benefer Way, where it provides better services than when at its previous location, resulting in a public benefit. As such there is adequate local provision and an overall improvement, in accordance with the abovementioned policies.

In summary, the principle of the scheme is acceptable in accordance with Policies CS03, CS10 and CS13 of the Core Strategy; SADMPP Policies DM9 and E1.1; and the provisions of the NPPF.

## **Design / Impact on Heritage Assets:**

In regard to the design of the proposed scheme, there are minimal changes proposed to the external appearance of the existing building. The changes include: -

- Construction of external stairs to access ground floor flat 5 to the north elevation.
- Replacement window with a new door on the north elevation to serve flats 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10.
- New window at ground floor north elevation.
- Remove existing door and brick up at ground floor north elevation.
- Re-instate four bricked-up / dummy windows to the west elevation, two at ground floor and two at first floor serving flats 1 and 6.
- Remove door and replace with window at ground floor south elevation serving flat 3 dining room.
- Replace large first floor window with matching sash window at first floor south elevation.
- Half landing window to be removed and replaced with 2no windows serving Bedroom 2 in Flat 4, and the Dining Room in Flat 9 south elevation.
- Removal of a number of air conditioning units.
- Removal of a metal container from the garden area.

In general design terms, section 12 of the NPPF requires the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places through good design and enabling developments to function well, add to the overall quality of the area, are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while maintaining a strong sense of place and creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

At a local level Policies CS03, CS08 (Core Strategy) and DM15 (SADMPP) refer to the general requirements of good design such as: scale, height, massing, materials and layout of the development needing to be appropriate in a given context.

Given the limited nature of the proposed external alterations and the fact that replacement window and door details can be controlled by condition, together with the proposed removal of numerous air conditioning units, it is considered that the works would result in an improvement to the overall quality of the design of the building, in accordance with the abovementioned policies.

St James Medical Centre is a substantial building forming one of a number of historic buildings in this area. It is within the Kings Lynn Conservation Area and marked as an important unlisted building. It is immediately adjacent to The Walks, a Grade II registered park and garden.

As such section 16 of the NPPF is relevant and recognises Conservation Areas as designated heritage assets, stating that 'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (para 205).

Given that the application site is located directly adjacent to 'The Walks' which has the highest significance, being a grade II registered park and garden, any resulting harm to the designated heritage asset would require clear and convincing justification (para 206).

The building has been much extended and altered however, the front of the building, adjacent to The Walks is the oldest part and some historic features remain including



windows, brickwork and chimneys. It has some architectural and evidential value and is therefore considered as a non-designated heritage asset.

The conversion of the building into 11 residential flats would provide an optimum viable use and therefore longer-term preservation of the building, which holds significant weight in the planning balance.

The interior of the building has been much altered through its former use as a medical practise however, some evidence of its former plan form remains in the survival of chimney breasts in rooms 7 and 9 on the ground floor and waiting room and office on the first floor. These were initially proposed to be removed as part of the proposal but amended plans were encouraged to retain those features.

There is also a thick core internally which currently contains a lift which could be in the location of an early extension to the building. Investigations have been undertaken into the construction material of the lift core where it has been identified as modern concrete blockwork and is therefore not historic and its retention is not warranted.

There are a number of existing air conditioning units on all four elevations of the building which are proposed to be removed as part of the scheme. This would result in an improvement to the appearance of the building.

Otherwise, the external appearance of the building will remain unchanged with the exception of replacement doors and windows, where the details of such will be conditioned.

A Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application in accordance with the para. 200 of the NPPF, which contains details of the extensions and alterations of the building over the years to identify the age of each element, as well as pictures showing the investigation of the lift's construction and reference photos for the proposed removal of air conditioning units externally.

Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of The Walks and surrounding Conservation Area. However, this harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal and securing the optimum viable use of the building, in accordance with para 208 of the NPPF.

In terms of the impact of the proposed development on the building itself which as described above is classified as non-designated heritage asset, para 209 of the NPPF states that a balanced judgement should be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

In assessing this, the submitted Heritage Statement provides an understanding of the history of the building and how it has evolved over time with the various extensions and alterations, which lies in the planning balance. The LPA's balanced view takes account of the somewhat unsympathetic alterations to the building over time, which has reduced the significance of the non-designated heritage asset, together with the limited external changes proposed.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the asset. Further, it has been clearly justified that any low-level resulting harm would, again, be outweighed by the public benefits of providing much needed housing in the area, particularly to the town centre, whilst improving the relationship and views to / from the listed park and conservation area.

The Conservation Officer raises no objection to the proposed conversion of the building.

It is considered that the proposed change of use and associated alterations accord with Core Strategy Policy CS12; SADMPP Policy DM15 and section 16 of the NPPF.

### **Residential Amenity:**

Careful consideration has been given to residential amenity within the building. The application proposes to subdivide the building to create 11 individual residential units made up of: -

2 X 1 bed /1- person

1 X 1 bed / 2- person

6 X 2 beds / 3- person

2 X 2 beds / 4- person

The NPPF states that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, and create places which promote health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (para 135).

The National Design Guide states in paragraphs 123- 128 that 'well-designed homes and communal areas within buildings provide a good standard and quality of internal space. This includes room sizes, floor-to ceiling heights, internal and external storage, sunlight, daylight and ventilation. The quality of internal space needs careful consideration in higher-density developments, particularly for family accommodation, where access, privacy, daylight and external amenity space are also important.

Where a need is identified, Local Plans may adopt the Nationally Described Space Standards.'

In June 2020 changes were made to the GPDO requiring all habitable rooms to have the provision of adequate natural light, and in September 2020 the housing secretary announced that homes built under permitted development rules will have to meet the government's Nationally Described Space Standards in order to be allowed. While this application is clearly not permitted development, these recent changes/ statements provide a guide as to what is considered good practice and an acceptable form of development.

The submitted plans demonstrate that the overall size of each flat and the room measurements within them, respectively, accord with the National Described Space Standards and all habitable rooms would have adequate natural light.

The CSNN officer has requested that a condition is attached to the planning consent to require additional information on noise protection measures between flats. While Building Control regulations seek to address this, given the number of separate units within the building CSNN are keen to ensure adequate measures are in place at the Planning stage. An appropriately worded condition will therefore be imposed.

Whilst there would be a small communal amenity area provided within the curtilage of the site, there is no requirement for private amenity spaces given that the site lies within a town centre location in close proximity to areas of public open space.

In terms of the relationship between the proposed residential units and neighbouring uses, there are no concerns regarding the adjacent uses given that this is a town centre location and therefore there is an expectation of some noise/ activity.

The relationship between the proposed flats and the adjacent existing residential developments is also not considered to raise significant concerns in regard to amenity as there is adequate separation distance between the buildings with a road in between.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy CS08, SADMPP Policy DM15 and the general provisions of the NPPF.

### **Highway Safety:**

The Highways Officer has no objection to the scheme. No on-site parking is required as the site is located in the town centre, near to the bus station, train station and public car parking. Furthermore, consideration has been given to the existing use class (GP Surgery – Class E) and the highway related issues associated with that use, such as traffic generation and parking, when comparing against those such issues resulting from a residential use of this nature. Overall, the additional vehicular movements to and from the site and the parking constraints related to the proposed residential use would be no worse than the current use. Furthermore, the immediate vicinity benefits from the control of on-street parking by way of waiting restrictions.

Notwithstanding this, the proposal includes the provision of on-site car parking for 10 spaces. The Planning Agent has confirmed that an Electric Vehicle Charging point will be installed in accordance with Norfolk Parking Guidance and Building Regulations.

Secure cycle storage is proposed within the building for 11 spaces, 1 space per flat. Flats are considered as dwellings for the purposes of cycle parking, and the Norfolk Parking Guidance requires 1-4 bed units to have 2 secure covered spaces per dwelling. The requirement therefore in this case would be for 22 cycle spaces meaning there would be insufficient provision for the proposed development.

However, it also states that 'none are required if there is a garage or secure area is provided within curtilage of dwelling'.

There is space within the curtilage of the building for additional cycle parking but given the heritage context of the site it would not be desirable to locate a covered cycle stand within visually prominent areas of the site. The car parking area would be relatively well screened by way of the existing high-level wall and given that there is no requirement for car parking within town centre locations, it is considered reasonable to provide additional cycle storage within one of the proposed car parking spaces, thus reducing the car parking to 9 spaces. This is likely to provide an additional 6 cycle spaces (approximately).

Whilst the full 22 cycle spaces will not be achieved, a balanced view has to be taken given the site's location and connection to facilities and amenities within walking distance, and in real terms it is unlikely that every flat would need 2 cycle spaces. A condition is recommended requesting details of additional sheltered/ covered area to be agreed prior to occupation of the development.

It is considered that the proposal accords with Core Strategy Policies CS03, CS08 and CS11; SADMPP Policies DM15, DM17 and E1.1; and the provisions of the NPPF.

### **Flood Risk:**

The application site itself lies within Flood Zone 1 but sited adjacent to Flood Zones 2 and 3. A Flood Risk Assessment has therefore been submitted to support the application in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.

The FRA concludes that the site lies 500m east of the Tidal Defence Wall protecting King's Lynn from tidal flooding.

The sequential Test is not required for changes of use development.

Consideration has been given to the Tidal Hazard Mapping taking into account if a breach should occur of the tidal defences during an extreme 1 in 200 year flood event plus climate change.

Flood Risk data shows that should a breach in the defences occur, it could impact the site to a predicted flood depth of 0.25m to 0.50m. Taking this in account with site topography survey indicates that predicated flood level could reach +4.70m AOD.

As such the Flood Risk Design Guidance for water depths of up to one metre has been taken into consideration in relation to 'conversion of existing buildings to residential use'.

a) Precise Flood Risk of the Site – the precise maximum flood level has been determined using the THM along with the site topographical survey indicating a level of +4.70m AOD. The existing internal ground floor level is +4.75m AOD and therefore complies with the requirements of the design guidance.

b) Necessary Mitigation Measures – As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that all pedestrian entrances are fitted with flood resistance protection to a height of +0.6m above the ground floor levels of +4.75m AOD.

Other measures will include: -

The main sewage connection beneath the building, which connects externally to an AWS sewer is proposed to be sealed to prevent flooding internally.

There will be a requirement for all residents to sign up to the Environment Agency 'Direct Line Flood Warning Service'.

The Council's Emergency Planner raises no objection to the proposed change of use and supports the mitigation measures proposed as well as requesting the preparation of an evacuation plan.

The Environment Agency also raises no objection to the proposed conversion.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM21; and the provisions of the NPPF and NPPG.

#### **Other Material Considerations:**

*Affordable Housing* - The conversion of existing buildings does not require an affordable housing contribution.

This is set out under the Guidance Note relating to 'Affordable Housing Contributions Secured Through Section 106 Agreements', which explains the Borough's approach towards affordable housing when considering planning applications, under 'applicable development', in conjunction with Core Strategy Policy CS09.

*Drainage* - The proposed conversion will make use of the existing drainage system, including disposing of foul and surface water by way of connection to the main sewer. Due to the age of the building and its drainage system, the application states that further survey

investigation is required once the building is empty and then plans can be prepared to show new connections.

Anglian Water have requested a condition relating to surface water disposal as the preferred method of surface water disposal would be a sustainable drainage system with connection to the sewer as the last option. Although the building is currently connected to an existing mains drainage system, further assessment is required to establish whether network reinforcement is required.

A condition would therefore be imposed.

*Crime and Disorder* - Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires Local Authorities to consider the implications for crime and disorder in the carrying out of their duties. The application before the Committee will not have a material impact upon crime and disorder.

The Norfolk Constabulary Designing Out Crime Officer raises no objection to the proposal, stating that 'Secured by Design' features have been incorporated into the scheme, including secure vehicle parking, adequate lighting of common areas, defensible space and a landscaping and lighting scheme which when combined, enhances Natural Surveillance and safety.

Other such security measures recommended, such as CCTV, visitor door entry system and access control system, standard of window and door systems etc are not within the scope of planning control.

*Waste and Refuse* - There is adequate provision of space on site for waste and recycling facilities.

However, whilst the Council's Waste and Recycling Manager raises no objection to the scheme, it is raised that the entrance to the bin store should be 1.2m wide ideally split between two leaves, whereas the entrance on this application appears to be insufficient width for 1100 ltr wheeled bins.

Full details will be requested via condition to control this.

*Environmental Quality* - The application states that development will be converted to achieve high standards of sustainable design, including zero or low NOx emissions / renewable energy options (heating / ventilate / PV ect) as guided by Core Strategy Policy CS08-sustainable Development.

To secure the proportion of low carbon, renewable energy systems, in accordance with Policy CS08 and the provisions of the NPPF, a condition will be imposed requesting details of such.

Furthermore, each flat will have at least one secure indoor cycle space and an EV charging space will be provided. The EV charge point will be installed as specified in accordance with Building Regulations. This demonstrates commitment towards a more sustainable design, which is welcomed, particularly as the site is adjacent to an Air Quality Management Zone.

*Contamination* - The applicant has provided a screening assessment indicating no known contamination other than the potential presence of asbestos containing material. An informative will be attached to the decision to advise the applicant on this matter.

However, the former use as medical centre means that it's possible that some unexpected contamination could be present. As such, a condition will be imposed in the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development.

*Ecology* - In relation to BNG, the site is of tarmac with a sealed surface therefore it has a zero value within the metric and the de minimis exemption applies.

A shadow habitats regulations assessment has been submitted with the application and has been adopted by the LA as the formal appropriate assessment. This demonstrates that the appropriate GiRAMS fee has been paid to mitigate against any adverse effects of the proposal on the integrity of internationally designated wildlife sites in relation to increased visitor pressure.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The proposed change of use of the building to flats within the town centre location is considered acceptable in principle in accordance with the Development Plan.

It is considered that the proposed conversion and minor external alterations would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset that is St James House itself, and to the designated heritage assets that are The Walks and the Conservation Area in general. Any such harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the provision of additional housing within the centre.

There would be no highway safety or air quality concerns associated with the proposed development given its existing use class, together with its accessible location and provision of vehicle and cycle parking on site.

There would be no significant impact on residential amenity within the proposed development that cannot be controlled by condition, nor between that proposed and the existing neighbouring residential uses due to adequate separation distances involved.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development accords with Core Strategy Policies CS01, CS02, CS03, CS08, CS09, CS11, CS12 and CS13; SADMPP Policies DM1, DM2, DM9, DM15, DM17 and DM21; and the general aims and provisions of the NPPF.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE** subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out using only the following approved plans:
  - \* 2583-03F – Plans As Proposed
  - \* 2583-04B – Elevations As Proposed
  - \* 2583-06A – Site Plan
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Condition: No development over or above foundations shall take place until full details of all new and replacement windows and doors has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include 1:20 drawings of all new windows and doors, joinery details, cross-sections and the opening arrangements. The development shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
- 3 Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset and the Conservation Area, in accordance with Development Plan Policies CS08, CS12 and DM15; and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 4 Condition: No development over or above foundations shall take place until full details of any new / replacement extractors, flues, soil and vent pipes and rainwater goods have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed and maintained in accordance with the agreed details.
- 4 Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the Non-Designated Heritage Asset and the Conservation Area, in accordance with Development Plan Policies CS08, CS12 and DM15; and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 5 Condition: No development above foundation level shall take place on site until a scheme to protect the residents from internal noise transfer (due to the conflicts with the layout – locating bedrooms above, below and adjacent to stairs, entrance doors, living rooms and kitchens) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved before the development is brought into use.
- 5 Reason: To ensure that the amenities of future occupants are safeguarded in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15; and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 6 Condition: Prior to the installation of any air source heat pump(s)/air conditioning units/similar external plant, a detailed scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall specify the make, model and sound power levels of the proposed unit(s), the siting of the unit(s) and the distances from the proposed unit(s) to the dwellings, plus provide details of anti-vibration mounts, and all noise attenuation measures. The scheme shall be implemented as approved and thereafter maintained as such.
- 6 Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15 and the principles of the NPPF.
- 7 Condition: Construction or development work on site, along with collections and deliveries of waste products, material and equipment, shall only be carried out between the hours of 0800 and 1800 weekdays, and 0900-1300 on Saturdays, with no work allowed on Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays.
- 7 Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15 and the principles of the NPPF.
- 8 Condition: In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with current best practice, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in

writing of the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority

- 8 Reason: In the interests of protecting the environment and the future occupants of the development in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15 and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 9 Condition: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a Sustainable Energy Report, detailing the proportion of low carbon / renewable or decentralised energy systems to be incorporated within the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the agreed details.
- 9 Reason: To ensure the development achieves a high standard of sustainable design and helps improve the local air quality, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15 and the provisions of the NPPF.
- 10 Condition: Notwithstanding the details shown on the hereby approved plans, prior to the occupation of the building, full details of an additional cycle store shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle stores shall be implemented as approved prior to occupation and maintained thereafter as such.
- 10 Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of cycle parking in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport, in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CS08 and CS11 and the principles of the NPPF.
- 11 Condition: The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment prepared by ESP Ltd, including the following mitigation measures:
  - All pedestrian entrances are fitted with flood resistance protection to a height of 0.60m above ground floor level of +4.75 AOD.
  - All residents must sign up to the Environment Agency Direct Line Flood Warning Service.
  - An evacuation plan must be prepared prior occupation and made available at all times to each individual flat, including:
    - Actions to take on receipt of the different warning levels.
    - Evacuation procedures
    - Evacuation routes.

These measures will be retained and maintained as such in perpetuity

- 11 Reason: In order to prevent an increased risk of flooding in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM21; and the principles of the NPPF.
- 12 Condition: No development shall commence until a surface water management strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No hard-standing areas to be constructed until the works have been carried out in accordance with the strategy.
- 12 Reason: To ensure that there is a satisfactory means of drainage in accordance with the NPPF.



This needs to be a pre-commencement condition as drainage is a fundamental issue that needs to be planned for and agreed at the start of the development.

- 13 Condition: Notwithstanding the details shown on the hereby approved plans, prior to the occupation of the building, full details of the waste and recycling storage area shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The waste and recycling storage area shall be implemented as approved prior to occupation and maintained thereafter as such.
- 13 Reason: In order to provide adequate on-site waste facilities in the interests of future occupiers of the site and local amenity, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS08; SADMPP Policy DM15; and the provisions of the NPPF.