

**Oxford City Planning Committee**

24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Application number:** 25/02880/FUL

**Decision due by** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026

**Extension of time** 30th April 2026

**Proposal** Change of use of dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4. Alterations to existing single storey rear extension flat roof eaves detail and amendments to the doors and windows in the rear elevation. Insertion of four windows in the North side elevations at ground and first floor. Provision of bin and bike stores. Part retrospective. (Amended Description) (Amended Drawings)

**Site address** 2 Steep Rise, Oxford, OX3 9QG. – see **Appendix 1** for site plan

**Ward** Headington Hill and Northway

**Case officer** Tim Hunter

**Agent:** Mr Robin Akers      **Applicant:** Mr Proko

**Reason at Committee** Delegated Application called in by Councillors Chapman, Clarkson, Lygo, Pressel, Taylor and Munkonge for reasons relating to proliferation of HMOs in the local area and lack of communal and cooking areas.

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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. Oxford City Planning Committee is recommended to:

- i approve the application for the reasons given in the report and subject to the required planning conditions set out in section 12 of this report and grant planning permission; and
- ii agree to delegate authority to the Director of Planning & Regulation to:
  - finalise the recommended conditions as set out in this report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as requested by the Lead Local Flood Authority and as the Director of Planning and Regulation considers reasonably necessary; and
  - and issue the planning permission.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1. This report considers the minor amendments to the previously approved development of the site under planning permission 24/01687/FUL to include

alterations to the existing single storey rear extension flat roof and eaves detail and amendments to the doors and windows in the rear elevation, insertion of four windows in the North side elevations at ground and first floor and the provision of bin and bike storage, all in association with a proposed change the use of the dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4). Some works have already been undertaken and therefore the application is part retrospective.

- 2.2. The development would make the best and most efficient use of the site and provide a high quality and sustainable development. The principle of the use on this site in this location is acceptable. It would meet the demand for high quality shared accommodation.
- 2.3. The amendments to the design and appearance of the development would not materially alter or diminish the previously approved development.
- 2.4. There would be no change in car parking, sufficient cycle parking would be provided and there would be no adverse impact on the highway in terms of traffic generation subject to condition.
- 2.5. In terms of impact on residential amenity, there would be no detrimental impact on neighbours in terms of overbearing or loss of privacy, outlook or sunlight and daylight.

### **3. LEGAL AGREEMENT**

- 3.1. This application is not subject to a legal agreement.

### **4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

- 4.1. The proposal is not liable for a CIL payment.

### **5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 5.1. The site is located in the Northway residential area of Headington, Oxford on the western side of Steep Rise, see figure 1 below. A passageway along the northern boundary gives access to the rear gardens of 50 Foxwell Drive. The site slopes downwards from the southern side to the northern side. Extensions to the side and rear of the house have been constructed under permission granted by 24/01687/FUL and at the time of a site visit were approaching completion.
- 5.2. The site is in a sustainable location with good public transport into and out of the city and access to Headington.
- 5.3. The house is semi-detached and has a two-storey side extension, along with a single storey rear extension with a smaller first floor extension above constructed and substantially completed under planning permission 24/01687/FUL.

5.4. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of residential properties.

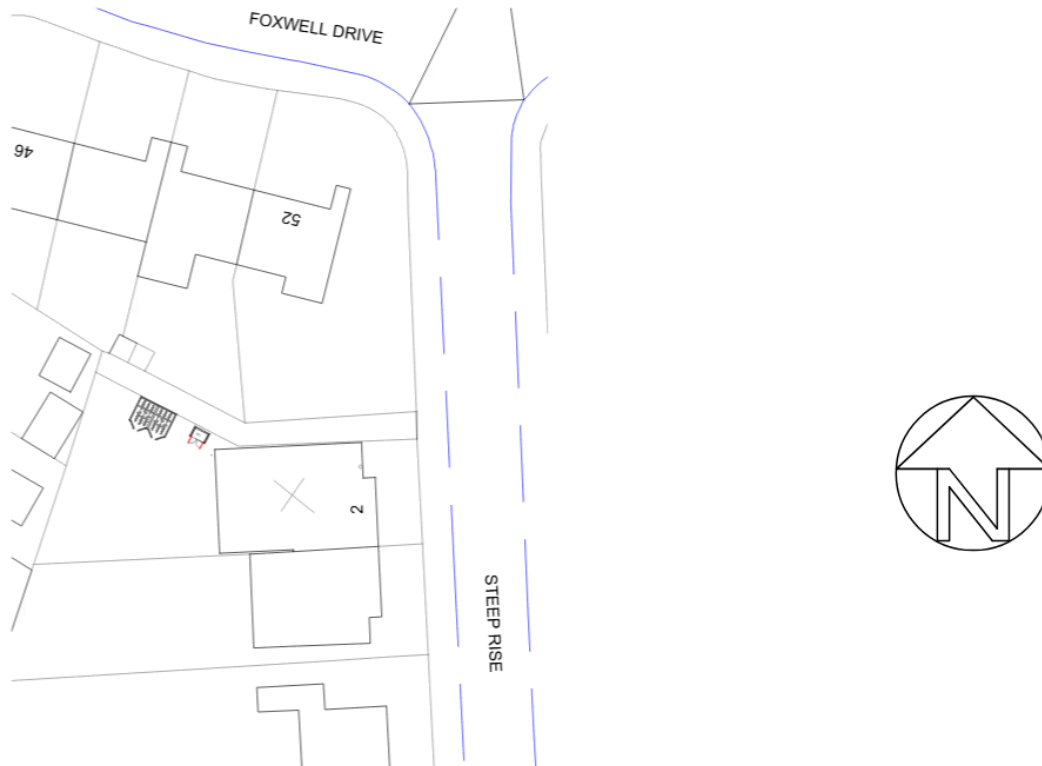


Fig.1 Existing Site Plan

## 6. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

6.1. Oxford City is subject to an Article 4 direction that came into force on 25 February 2012 which removed permitted development rights to change the use from Use Class C3 dwelling house to a Use Class C4 House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Planning permission is therefore required for this development.

6.2. The application proposes change of use from the existing Use Class C3 dwelling house to a Use Class C4 HMO.

6.3. It also proposes amendments to the previously proposed development; these include the proposed bin storage turned through 90 degrees and an enclosed area for bin storage is shown built onto to the rear corner of the house, which has already been constructed. Further changes relate to the windows and doors to the rear extension including reducing two French doors to a single bifold door and changing the shape/ orientation of the window from vertical/ portrait to horizontal/ landscape. In addition four new windows to the side elevations at both ground and first floors have been inserted. The roof detail and eaves of the rear extension have been amended and are also shown as built.

6.4. A detached garden building is also shown on the revised drawings, however the applicant believes this to be Permitted Development under the General

Permitted Development Act 2015 and this element, whilst built, is not included in the application..

6.5. The proposed description of development and the proposed drawings have been amended since first submission to reflect the fact that the proposals include amendments to previously approved development and those changes have been consulted on for a period of 21 days.

## 7. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

7.1. The relevant planning history for the application site is set out below:

24/01081/FUL - Demolition of existing side extension and erection of a two storey side and a part single, part two storey rear extension. Sub-division of existing dwelling to create a 1 x 1-bed dwelling (Use Class C3). Provision of private amenity space and bin and cycle storage. Formation of dropped kerb. WDN 21st June 2024.

24/01687/FUL - Demolition of existing side extension. Erection of a two storey side and a part-single, part two-storey rear extension. Provision of bin and bike stores. Extension of dropped kerb and installation of new boundary fence. (amended description and plans). PER 24th October 2024. Implemented.

24/02905/FUL - Demolition of existing side extension. Erection of a two storey side extension and a part single, part two storey rear extension. Sub-division of existing dwellinghouse to create a 1 x 1-bed dwelling (Use Class C3). Provision of private amenity space and bin and cycle storage. Extension of existing dropped kerb.. REF 29th January 2025.

## 8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

8.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Topic	National Planning Policy Framework	Local Plan	Emerging Oxford Local Plan 2045
Design	131 – 141	DH1 - High quality design and placemaking DH7 - External servicing features and stores	DH1 - Design HD1 – Principle of design
Residential Amenity		H14 - Privacy, daylight and sunlight	R8 – Amenity HD1 –Privacy, light
Natural environment	161 – 186, 187 - 201	RE3 - Flood risk management RE4 - Sustainable and foul drainage, surface	G8 – Sustainable drainage systems
Social and community	86 – 87		
Transport	109 -118	M1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport	C8 – Car parking

		M3 - Motor vehicle parking M5 - Bicycle Parking	
<b>Environmental</b>	187 – 201	RE1 - Sustainable design and construction RE4 - Sustainable and foul drainage, surface	

8.2. Other relevant documents and considerations:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance

## 9. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

9.1. Site notices were displayed around the application site on 18th November 2025. Following changes to the Description and the proposed drawings, further site notice were displayed on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026. No further comments were received.

### Statutory consultees

9.2. Local Highway Authority: No objection, subject to a condition removing eligibility for parking permits.

### Public representations

9.3. Public comments have been received from 2 Steep Rise. These can be characterised as an objection for the following reasons:

- Overdevelopment
- Overconcentration of HMOs
- Impact on hared water supply and infrastructure
- Effect on parking and highway issues
- Effect on adjacent properties
- Effect on character of area
- Effect on existing community facilities
- Effect on pollution
- Effect on traffic
- Increase in noise and disturbance
- Damaging to local community
- Disturbance during construction
- Effect on highway safety
- Poor quality accommodation
- Noise and disturbance

### *Officer response*

9.4. The points raised above are dealt with in the report below.

## 10. PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1. Officers consider the determining issues to be:
- a. Design
  - b. HMO Density
  - c. Facilities and amenities
  - d. Residential amenity
  - e. Flooding and drainage
  - f. Car parking

### a) Design

- 10.2. In relation to design the NPPF emphasises that high quality buildings are fundamental to achieving sustainable development and good design creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. New development should function well, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being
- 10.3. The Council expects new development to enhance the quality of the environment, and with this Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan (OLP) 2036 is central to the purpose. This policy states that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness where this is informed and inspired by the unique characteristics of the site and its setting.
- 10.4. The external changes proposed to the house are limited and already in situ on site. The brick built bin storage would have limited impact on the public domain, being mainly apparent from the alleyway to the side. This element is limited in scale, reflects the rest of the house in terms of materials and is acceptable in visual terms.
- 10.5. The re-siting of the already approved cycle store would marginally reduce its visual impact 48 and 50 Foxwell Drive to the north with the gable siding onto the side alleyway along the northern boundary, thus reducing its visible width about the 1.8m high boundary fence. It is considered that this change would not materially alter the previously approved store, other than orientation, and is therefore acceptable.
- 10.6. The change to the eaves and the roof detail of the single storey rear extension are consistent with the current architectural design of the extension and would not result in unacceptable harm to visual amenity. Similarly, the minor amendments to the number and style of doors and the orientation of the single window in the rear of the extension would not be easily apparent from vantage points outside the site and are acceptable in visual terms.
- 10.7. The newly proposed and inserted windows to the side help to break up the blank expanse of the side elevations, according with the general style and appearance of the extensions, and are acceptable in visual terms.

10.8. It is considered that the proposed amendments to the approved development are minor in nature and would not individually or cumulatively result in materially significant alterations to the approved scheme such that the original design and appearance would be materially diminished. Neither would the proposed changes be visually harmful from the public realm. As such the development accords with PolicyDH1 of the OLP 2036.

**b) HMO density**

10.9. Oxford has a large number of HMOs and in some areas of the city, high concentrations of HMOs are resulting in changes to the character of the local area. These changes in character has been actively addressed by Oxford City Council, firstly by the removal of permitted development rights to change the use of a single dwelling to an HMO, and also by the OLP, which directly addresses the issue of overconcentration of HMOs in Policy H6 and its accompanying text. The OLP states that the Council will prevent over concentration of HMO in areas where there are already significant numbers. Policy H6 states that permission for a change of use to an HMO will only be granted where the proportion of buildings used as an HMO within 100m of street length of the application site does not exceed 20%.

10.10. There are 24 buildings within 100m street length of the site. Of these, licensing records indicate that 1 of these has, or have applied for, an HMO license. The actual number may be higher, due to some HMOs not being licensed, but the figures indicate that 8.3% of buildings in the relevant area would be HMOs, (including the proposed HMO on the application site), below the 20% concentration defined in Policy H6.

10.11. The surrounding area does not therefore show a significant concentration of HMOs, and the current proposal for a change of use to a Use Class C4 House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) would not materially harm the overall mix of housing in the local area and the application complies with Policy H6 of the OLP 2036.

**c) Facilities and amenities**

10.12. Policy H6 of the OLP 2036 also states that permission for a change of use to an HMO will only be granted where the applicant has demonstrated compliance with the City Council's good practice guide on HMO amenities and facilities and the accompanying text makes it clear that adequate provision should be made for refuse storage and collection, whilst cycle and car parking policy for HMOs are set out in Policies M3 and M5.

10.13. The proposed plans show six acceptably sized bedrooms, all of which would be en-suite and provide at least 8.5 square metres of floorspace. A communal area of 24.6m<sup>2</sup> to provide a kitchen diner is provided which would be in excess of the 10m<sup>2</sup> required by the Facilities and Amenities Guide for two storey dwellings with 6 occupants where all single rooms have a floorspace of at least 8.5m<sup>2</sup>.

- 10.14. A further communal space is also proposed along with a utility area off of the kitchen.
- 10.15. The accommodation of the proposed HMO house is acceptable for at least six occupants and the principle of the proposed change of use to a small Use Class C4 HMO (in terms of facilities) is acceptable in accordance with Policies H6 and M5 of the OLP 2036.
- 10.16. There is also an acceptable area of private amenity garden space to the rear. The provision of bin and cycle storage in the rear garden has been approved under the approved permission, currently being implemented, and accords with the HMO guidance. As such the development accords with Policies H6 and M5 of the OLP 2036.

**d) Residential amenity**

- 10.17. Policy H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for occupants of both existing and new homes. Policy H14 sets out guidelines for assessing development in terms of whether it will allow adequate sunlight and daylight to habitable rooms of the neighbouring dwellings. Policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that ensures that standards of amenity are protected.
- 10.18. The proposed external changes are already in situ on site. The brick built bin storage to the rear corner of the house measures approximately 2.5m in height and would from the boundary on to the public alleyway along the northern side. It is set well away from the western and southern boundaries of the site and separated from Foxwell Drive properties by the alleyway. Whilst visible from the alleyway it would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenities of Foxwell Drive in terms of overbearing, overlooking or loss of sunlight/ daylight, privacy or outlook.
- 10.19. The re-siting of the already approved cycle store would marginally reduce its visual impact on adjacent occupiers on Foxwell Drive, with the gable siding onto the alleyway along the northern boundary which divides the properties. As such there would be a reduced width visible on that boundary and as such no adverse impact on neighbouring amenities in terms of overbearing, overlooking or loss of sunlight/ daylight, privacy or outlook.
- 10.20. The change to the eaves and the roof of the single storey rear extension would increase the height by approximately 20cm and includes a soffit detailing. This is a minor change and would not materially result in unacceptable harm to the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers in terms of overbearing or loss of sunlight/ daylight or outlook. The ground floor changes to the windows/ doors to the extension would not result in increased overlooking.

- 10.21. The newly proposed windows to the side elevations would at ground floor face onto the alleyways and are to the lounge and toilet. At first floor these are to be subject to bathrooms. All windows are shown to be obscure glazed and fixed shut to 1.7m high from finished floor level. Subject to a condition securing the obscure glazing and no opening below 1.7m, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable increase in overlooking of occupier on Foxwell Drive to the north.
- 10.22. The development would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring residential amenity and the proposal accords with Policies H14 and RE7 of the OLP.

#### **e) Flooding and drainage**

- 10.23. Policy RE4 of the OLP 2036 states that all development proposals will be required to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) or techniques to limit run-off and reduce the existing rate of run-off on previously developed sites.
- 10.24. The development would add to the level of non-porous surfaces on the site, resulting in an increased level of rain water run-off. However, the increase would be relatively modest (limited to cycle and bin stores) and subject to a condition to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the principles of Sustainable urban Drainage Systems, the development would not result in an unacceptable risk of flooding and comply with Policy RE4 of the OLP 2036.

#### **f) Car Parking**

- 10.25. Policy M3 of the OLP 2036 states that for development within Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) where the site is within 800m of a local shop and 400m of a frequent bus service, the development should be car free, however the relevant technical Advice Note makes it clear that where existing sites are being redeveloped, there should be no net increase in the number of parking spaces.
- 10.26. The house is within a CPZ but is within 800m of a local shop and 400m of a frequent bus service. The house has one parking space on plot, which is proposed for retention.
- 10.27. Officers note that use of the house as an HMO may result in a larger number of adult residents and the possibility of more cars being associated with the house.
- 10.28. No net increase in parking is proposed to the site. The Local Highway Authority has indicated that they have no objection, subject to the house being removed from eligibility for parking permits in the local Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) to prevent the subdivision and change in use resulting in an unacceptable increase in pressure for on street parking in the area. On this

basis it is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy M3 of the OLP 2036.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1. Having regards to the matters discussed in the report, officers would make members aware that the starting point for the determination of this application is in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which makes clear that proposals should be assessed in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 11.2. The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. NPPF paragraph 11 states that proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, or where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant plans are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted. Policy S1 of the OLP 2036 repeats this.
- 11.3. Officers consider that the proposal would accord with the overall aims and objectives of the NPPF and policy S1 for the reasons set out within the report. Therefore in such circumstances, planning permission should be approved without delay. This is a significant material consideration in favour of the proposal.
- 11.4. Officers would advise members that having considered the application carefully including all representations made with respect to the application, that the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, and relevant policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036, when considered as a whole, and that there are no material considerations that would outweigh these policies.
- 11.5. It is recommended that the Committee resolve to grant planning permission for the development proposed subject to the conditions set out in Section 12 below.

## **12. CONDITIONS**

### **Time**

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

### **Plans**

2. Subject to conditions requiring updated or revised documents submitted with the application, the development permitted shall be

constructed in complete accordance with the specifications in the application and approved plans listed below, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To avoid doubt and to ensure an acceptable development as indicated on the submitted drawings in accordance with policy SR1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

#### Materials

3. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the materials to be used in the external elevations of the new development shall be as specified in the approved drawings and associated submission documents.

Reason: To ensure that the new development is in keeping with existing building(s) in accordance with policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

#### Sustainable drainage

4. All Impermeable areas of the proposed development, including roofs, driveways, and patio areas shall be drained using Sustainable Drainage measures (SuDS). This may include the use of porous pavements and infiltration, or attenuation storage to decrease the runoff rates and volumes to public surface water sewers and thus reduce flooding. Soakage tests shall be carried out in accordance with BRE Digest 365 or similar approved method to prove the feasibility/effectiveness of soakaways or filter trenches. Where infiltration is not feasible, surface water shall be attenuated on site and discharged at a controlled discharge rate no greater than prior to development using appropriate SuDS techniques and in consultation with the sewerage undertaker where required. If the use of SuDS are not reasonably practical, the design of the surface water drainage system shall be carried out in accordance with Approved Document H of the Building Regulations. The drainage system shall be designed and maintained to remain functional, safe, and accessible for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To avoid increasing surface water run-off and volumes to prevent an increase in flood risk in accordance with policy RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

#### Parking permits

5. The use hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the Order governing parking at 2 Steep Rise has been varied by the Oxfordshire County Council as highway authority to exclude the site, subject to this permission, from eligibility for resident's parking permits and residents' visitors' parking permits unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not generate a level of vehicular parking which would be prejudicial to highway safety, or cause parking stress in the immediate locality, in accordance with policy M3 of the Oxford Local Plan 2023.

### Obscure glazing

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or enacting that Order), the ground and first floor side facing windows shall be glazed in obscure glass and be non-opening below 1.7 metres above finished floor levels in the room(s) they serve and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining occupiers in accordance with policy H14 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

### Informatives

1. In accordance with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council tries to work positively and proactively with applicants towards achieving sustainable development that accords with the Development Plan and national planning policy objectives. This includes the offer of pre-application advice and, where reasonable and appropriate, the opportunity to submit amended proposals as well as time for constructive discussions during the course of the determination of an application. However, development that is not sustainable and that fails to accord with the requirements of the Development Plan and/or relevant national policy guidance will normally be refused. The Council expects applicants and their agents to adopt a similarly proactive approach in pursuit of sustainable development.

2. This permission relates only to the granting of planning permission. The use of the property as an HMO also requires a separate Houses in Multiple Occupation Licence.

## **14. APPENDICES**

- **Appendix 1** – Site location plan

## **15. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998**

15.1 Officers have considered the implications of the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to approve this application. They consider that the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8/Article 1 of Protocol 1 is justifiable and proportionate for the protection of the rights and freedom of others or the control of his/her property in this way is in accordance with the general interest.

## **16. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

16.1 Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, Officers consider that the development does not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community.