



**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

***PLANS PANEL WEST***

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**Subject:** Planning Application 11/04581/FU

**Change of Use from a hostel to student accommodation, at St Anns Lodge, St Anns Lane, Burley, Leeds**

**APPLICANT**  
Hamilton Black  
Developments

**DATE VALID**  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

**TARGET DATE**  
26<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Kirkstall

N

Ward Members consulted  
(Referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**GRANT planning permission, subject to the following conditions**

- 1 3 year time limit
- 2 Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Plan to be submitted and approved of secure cycle and motorcycle spaces, to be implemented prior to occupation of the building

**Reason** On balance, the City Council considers the development would not give rise to any unacceptable consequences for the environment, community or other public interests of acknowledged importance.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The scheme is brought before the West Plans Panel as two of the local Ward Members, Councillor Illingworth Councillor Yeadon have objected to the application.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The proposal is for the change of use of a former hostel into student accommodation. The proposal will provide 43 bedrooms for single person occupancy. There are no physical alterations proposed to the property both externally and internally. This application is solely concerned with the use of the building.

## **3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

- 3.1 The application site consists of a former Victorian Villa and a detached gate house. The original building is stone built, two storey in height, and has steeply pitched roofs, with numerous gable features. The property has been heavily extended, with several major extensions. These extensions are 3 and 4 storey's in height, brick built and flat roofed. The extensions are considered to be very poor additions to the host property, which are overly dominant and do not respect the form, scale or design of the original property.
- 3.2 The property has a large mature garden which lies to the rear of the property (which faces east). The garden contains a number of trees which are subject to Preservation Orders. The front west side of the property is a paved yard area, and a parking area lies to the southern side of the property. There are two vehicular entry points into the site from St Anns Lane, and two parking areas.
- 3.3 The site lies in an established residential area which lies between the main settlements of Kirkstall and Headingley. The locality is mixed in character and is made up of both stone built Victorian properties and increasingly modern 1960's styled, suburban properties. This site lies within a group of Victorian villa's which lie on this eastern side of St Anns Lane. These properties are separated from the road by a stone wall which is approximately 2m in height. Modern detached properties lie opposite the site to the west, these are set back from the highway by grass verges.

## **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

- 4.1 There are no records of any previous planning applications upon this property.
- 4.2 The site does lie opposite the Boston Diner site. Members may recall this site, which has a long and complex planning history. Planning consent was granted for the development of 12 houses upon this site on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010 Planning reference (09/03799), following resolution at Plans Panel West on 17th December.2009.
- 4.3 Prior to this application, an appeal against the refusal of 48 flats and 5 separate dwellings (Planning Reference 24/412/05/FU) was dismissed on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008, following a refusal by Plans Panel West.

## **5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:**

5.1 Pre-application advice was given on this proposal and the applicant was advised planning consent was required for a change of use from a hostel to student accommodation cluster flats.

## **6.0 PUBLIC/ LOCAL RESPONSE:**

6.1 The application was publicised by a site notice which was posted adjacent to the site on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011. To date three objections have been received to the application, one of these objections is from the Leeds HMO lobby. This objection has been supported by Councillor Illingworth and Councillor Yeadon. The points raised in this objection are highlighted below.

- The proposal will add to the imbalance of this neighbourhood in respect of being occupied by transient young adults only
- Contrary to Policy H6 of the draft Core Strategy – would undermine the balance and health of communities
- Contrary to PPS3 which advises to create ‘achieving a housing mix’ and ‘mixed communities’
- Proposal will contribute to an intensification of the present concentration of this development in inner west Leeds.
- The proposal is contrary to policy H15 for a number of reasons, which are highlighted below
  - The building could potentially provide family housing stock
  - The development will impact on neighbours living conditions, there will be an increase in noise and activity from the property
  - The development makes no contribution to improving either the quality or variety of the stock of student housing, only to the quantity where there is a surplus in Leeds

6.2 The points raised in the other two objections received are highlighted below.

- HMO are causing major harm to local communities and believe the application should be refused under delegated powers.
- The proposal will add to the imbalance of this neighbour
- The proposal is contrary to policy H15 of the adopted Leeds UDP.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES:**

7.1 Neighbourhoods and Housing – No objection the proposal is unlikely to result in a significant loss of amenity to adjacent residential occupancies when compared to the previous use.

7.2 Highways – Have raised no objection, subject to conditions relating to secure cycle and motor bike parking.

## **8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:**

### **Local Planning Policies:**

8.1 The Local Development Framework for Leeds is currently in development. In the interim a number of the policies contained in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan

Review (“UDP”), which was adopted in 2006, have been ‘saved’. The most relevant Policies in the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan are listed below: -

- UDP policy GP5 seeks to ensure all detailed planning considerations are resolved as part of the application process including the protection of local residents amenities.
- UDP policy H15 (Areas of Housing Mix) Policy H15 details criteria for student housing within the area of housing mix by maintaining the quality of housing stock, avoiding undue impact on neighbouring living conditions, remaining in character with surrounding buildings, providing adequate parking and improving available student housing stock.
- UDP policy T2 seeks to ensure that new development should be served adequately by existing or programmed highways and by public transport, make adequate provision for cycle use and parking, and be within walking distance of local facilities.

### **Government Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:**

8.2 In addition to the principal elements of planning policy other advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Notes and replacement national Planning Policy Statements (PPS) may be of relevance to the submitted proposal. This includes:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development.

### **9.0 MAIN ISSUES:**

9.1 Having considered this application and representation, it is the considered view that the main issues for consideration are:

1. Principle of Development/ Policy Background (Policy H15)
2. The Stock of Housing Accommodation
3. Impact on Adjacent Occupiers
4. Scale / Character on the Locality
5. Highway Safety/ Parking
6. Improvements to the Quality or Variety of the stock of Student Housing

### **10.0 APPRAISAL**

#### **10.1 Principle of Development/ Policy Background (Policy H15)**

The site lies unallocated within the Leeds UDP, but within the catchment of the ‘Area of Housing Mix’. Policy H15 is concerned with the Area of Housing Mix, and was adopted through the review of the Unitary Development Plan in 2006. This policy aims to ensure the area within this catchment is balanced with regard to the type of accommodation that is to be developed, so that the locality is not dominated by student accommodation. This policy does not aim to halt any development which is aimed at occupation by students, but aims to ensure a ‘mix’ of housing for different groups of people. The principle of this development is concerned with re-using an existing property for student accommodation and therefore to be assessed against

policy H15 of the adopted Leeds UDP, and all other normal development control considerations.

Policy H15 states that within the area of housing mix planning permission will be granted for housing intended for occupation by students, or for the alteration, extension or redevelopment of accommodation currently so occupied, subject to an assessment against the following criteria.

- The stock of housing accommodation, including that available for family occupation, should not be unacceptably reduced in terms of quantity and variety.
- There would be no unacceptable effects on neighbours' living conditions including through increased activity, or noise and disturbance, either from the proposal itself or combined with existing housing similar accommodation
- The scale and character of the proposal should be compatible with the surrounding area;
- Satisfactory provision should be made for car parking
- The proposal should improve the quality or variety of the stock of student housing.

The application will be assessed against these criteria below, and all other normal development control considerations.

#### The Stock of Housing Accommodation

10.2 The existing property is vacant, and its former use as a hostel has now ceased. The property being vacant suggests that the accommodation is no longer appropriate for its former use. The proposal does not result in any loss of family housing. Contrary to the objection received from the HMO lobby, it is not considered likely that the building would be converted, to provide family accommodation. The building is large and has been previously extended with incongruous extensions which are of a utilitarian design and appearance.

10.3 These previous extensions dominate the appearance of the original building, and have an adverse impact on its character, and would most likely need to be demolished for the building to be occupied by a 'family/ families'. This would massively reduced the size of the building and incur large costs for any such conversion works. The building would provide awkward internal layouts due to the different floors levels and irregular internal configuration, which is unlikely to appeal to families. The proposal is thus considered compatible with this paragraph as the availability of currently available private housing stock will not be affected.

#### Impact on Adjacent Occupiers

10.4 It is considered that the proposal is unlikely to introduce significant harm on the living conditions on adjacent occupiers through increased activity, or noise and disturbance when compared to its previous use as a hostel. It is considered the turnover of guests from the previous hostel use would have resulted in a higher level of activity when compared to the proposed use as student accommodation. The property is detached and set in its own grounds which will provide a buffer around the building. The nearest residential properties lie opposite the property across Kirkstall Lane which are located approximately 35m away.

#### Scale / Character on the Locality

10.5 The proposal does not include any external alterations and therefore the appearance of the building remains unchanged and unaltered through this application. It is

considered the proposal misses an opportunity to improve the appearance of the building by not removing the unsympathetic over-dominant extensions which exist. However it is not considered the application could be refused on these grounds. The building and extensions could be re-occupied as a hostel without the need for planning consent.

#### Highway Safety/ Parking

- 10.6 The proposal results in 43 bed spaces. Under UDP guideline's, this coupled with staff provision results in a requirement to provide 11 off-street parking spaces. From conducting a site visit, there are two parking areas at the property which are laid out informally. These two parking areas are more than capable of accommodating 11 parking spaces, and thus there is no objection to the level of parking provision. Again it is not considered the proposed use would lead to an increase the levels of traffic to and from the property when compared to its previous use.

#### Improvements to the Quality or Variety of the stock of Student Housing

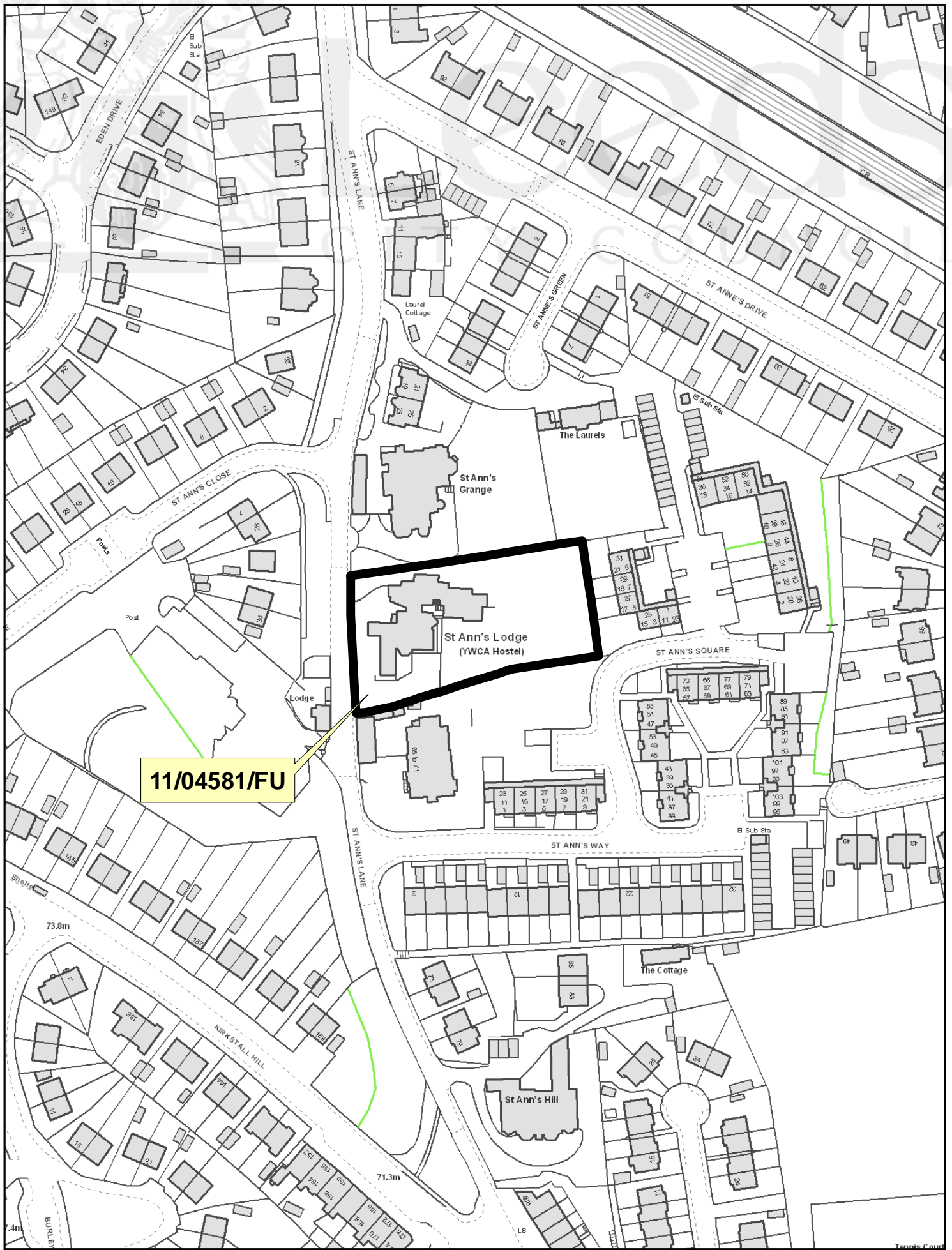
- 10.7 The proposal should improve the quality and/ or variety of the stock of student housing, following the advice of Policy H15. The proposal will result in new accommodation for students, and give a greater choice to them in choosing accommodation. By adding to the quantity of student accommodation, the variety of stock is increased. It is not considered contrary to the objections raised, that a 'surplus' amount of student accommodation warrants grounds to refuse the application. An increase in the variety of accommodation of students does generally improve the standard of such accommodation.

### **11.0 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 To conclude, the application is recommended for approval, as it is considered the proposal meets all the criteria of policy H15. It is not considered, given the previous use of the building as a hostel that the proposed use would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of adjacent residential occupiers in terms of levels of noise, activity and traffic.

#### **Background Papers**

N/A



11/04581/FU

# WEST PLANS PANEL