

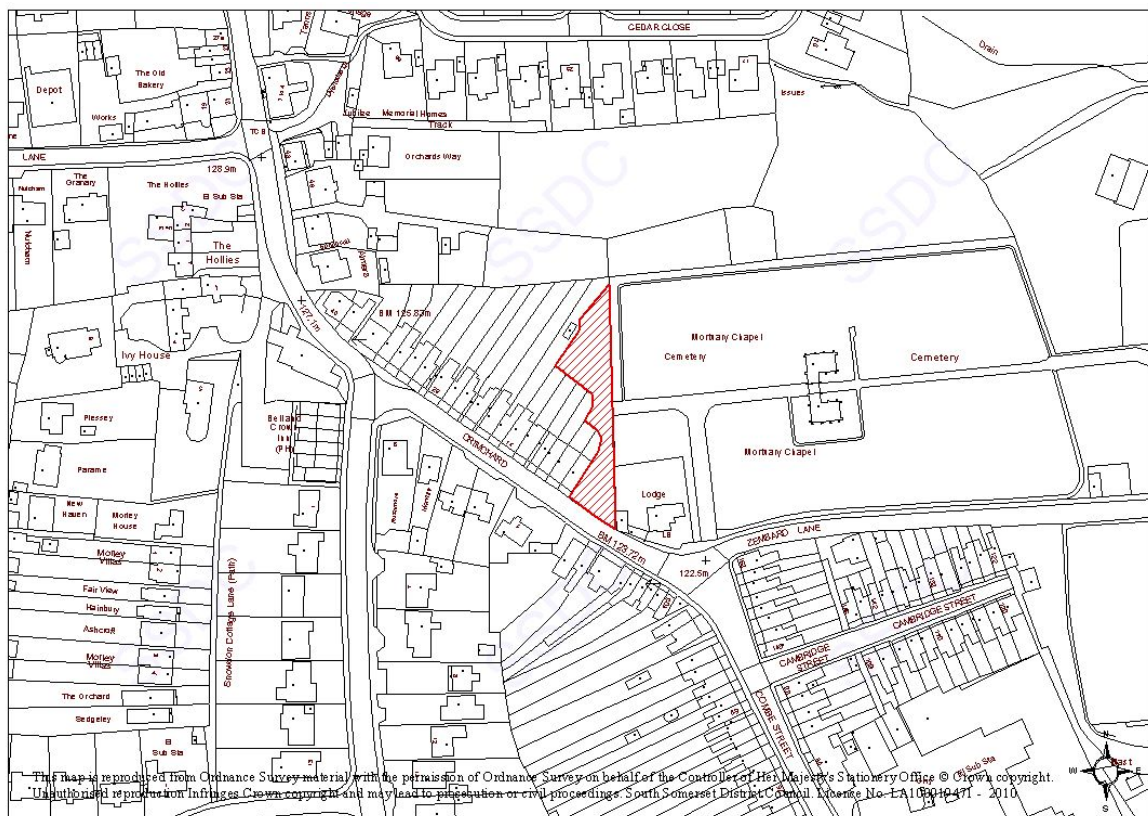
Officer Report On Planning Application: 09/03940/R3D

Proposal :	Change of use of premises to 4 no flats to be used as temporary accommodation for homeless (GR 331907/108906)
Site Address:	2 Crimchard Chard Somerset
Parish:	Chard
Ward	COMBE (CHARD) - Cllr Martin Wale
Recommending Case Officer:	John Millar Tel: (01935) 462465 Email: john.millar@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	18th March 2010
Applicant :	South Somerset District Council
Agent: (no agent if blank)	
Application Type :	Other Change Of Use

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application is before Committee as the proposal involves SSDC as the property owner. There has been objections received and as such, this application may not be dealt with under delegated powers.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The property is a large doubled bayed end of terrace property situated within Crimchard to the north west of Chard town centre.

The property is currently vacant but was last used as a hostel for single parent families. Prior to this the house was in multiple occupation providing accommodation for the homeless

HISTORY

08/03495/COU: Temporary change of use from a house of multiple occupation for the homeless to a hostel for single parent family units - Permitted with conditions.

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise,

Relevant Development Plan Documents

Regional Spatial Strategy:
VIS 2 - Principles for Future Development

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan:
STR1 - Sustainable Development
Policy 49 - Transport Requirements of New Development

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006)
ST5 - General Principles of Development
ST6 - The Quality of Development

Policy-related Material Considerations:

Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (Proposed Changes July 2008):
SD1 - The Ecological Footprint
SD2 - Climate Change
SD3 - The Environment and Natural Resources
SD4 - Sustainable Communities
Development Policy B - Development at Market Towns

PPS's/PPG's
Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy
Goal 1 - Safe, resilient, socially just communities with strong networks and confident people showing respect for each other
Goal 9 - A balanced housing market with a range of low carbon affordable housing with the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the population

CONSULTATIONS

Town/Parish Council - Recommend refusal - overcrowding, too many units in one property and no parking. The committee also noted that there was only one door between the kitchen and the toilet.

SSDC Technical Services - No comment.

County Highway Authority - As the proposal is unlikely to result in an increase in the use made of the access to raise an objection on highway grounds may be unreasonable.

SSDC Environmental Protection Unit - No observations.

REPRESENTATIONS

Six letters of objection were received from local residents. The main point of concern relates to the use of the property as accommodation for homeless people. The property has been used for a similar purpose in the past and local residents experienced problems with anti-social behaviour, noise disturbance, littering etc. At the time Stonham Housing managed the property and local residents are concerned about how the property will be managed if they are responsible again. Other points made relate to impact on highway safety due to limited parking provision and whether the size is adequate for families.

CONSIDERATIONS

The property is owned by SSDC and is currently vacant, although it was last used as a hostel for single parent families. The dwelling is currently divided into five units of accommodation with shared communal kitchen, living room and bathroom facilities. The proposal is made to carry out internal alteration to provide four self-contained units of accommodation to be used as temporary accommodation for homeless households. Once the works have been carried out by SSDC, it is proposed that Stonham Housing will lease and manage the property as the landlord.

Several objections have been received from local residents concerned about the implications of homeless people and families occupying the property. It has been used for similar purposes in the past, which did lead to complaints due to the way it was managed. Concerns have been raised that granting consent will lead to disturbance to residential amenity by way of noise, littering and other anti-social behaviour. There are also objections to the scheme in regard to increased on street parking and overcrowding through small units. The Town Council has also objected on these grounds.

While the concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour are acknowledged, it is not considered that this can justify refusal of the change of use. This is not a material planning consideration as it is not appropriate to take the view that the future occupiers would act differently from those that could occupy the property at present or that they would be likely to generate any additional noise. Ultimately, the management of the property is not a planning matter and will be the responsibility of the landlord to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to properly manage the building and it's occupiers. It is noted that there are at present five units of accommodation within the property and the proposal will reduce this to four. Furthermore, the loss of communal areas may be considered to reduce the potential for conflict between occupiers of the property.

In terms of potential overcrowding and increase in on-street parking, consideration is again given to the fact that the number of possible households occupying the property has been reduced and therefore should lead to reduced pressure than at present. There is a driveway to the side of the property, which should provide some off road parking. It is unlikely that the proposal will result in increased use of the access or on-street parking. The County Highway Authority have considered the proposal and raise no objection.

Overall, the proposed change of use is considered to be acceptable bearing in mind the existing consent, and is not deemed to cause unacceptable harm to the residential amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties or highway safety. Therefore, the recommendation to members is to grant planning permission for the proposed change of use.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant permission with conditions.

The proposed change of use is considered to be an acceptable re-use of the property and is not considered to be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety in accordance with the aims and objectives of policy VIS 2 of the Regional Spatial Strategy, policies STR1 and 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Joint Structure Plan Review and policies ST5 and ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
