Report of the Chief Officer Economy and Planning

Application Reference
P/2025/0847

Applicant
Mrs Barbara Griffiths

Agent

Site Address
18 THE BEECHES, WREXHAM, LL12 7BL

Description of Development
NEWID DEFNYDD ADEILAD O DDOSBARTH C3 (ANNEDD) I DDOSBARTH C4 (TŶ AMLFEDDIANNAETH) / CHANGE OF USE OF BUILDING FROM CLASS C3 (DWELLING) TO CLASS C4 (HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION)

Ward
Acton and Maesydre/Gwaunyterfyn a Maes-y-dre

Community
Acton/Acton

Recommendation
Grant

Officer Report

Site Description

A mid-terrace 2 storey, 3 bed dwelling located within a predominantly residential area. The site and its adjoining properties are accessed via a separate lane which runs alongside Price's Lane. Playing fields lie directly opposite the site across Price's Lane and a row of mature trees lie on an area of grassland that separates Price's Lane from The Beeches.

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Proposal

The application seeks approval for the change of use of an existing dwelling to a HMO.

Internally on the ground floor, the existing longe/diner would be converted to a kitchen/lounge/diner and the existing kitchen and existing living room would be converted to 2 separate bedrooms, each with an en-suite. The first floor will remain as having 3 bedrooms and a bathroom but with 2 of the bedrooms each having an en-suite. There would therefore be a total of 5 bedrooms, an increase from 3.

Externally, no changes are proposed to the front elevation. However, to the rear a single glazed door would replace an existing window to provide external access between the rear garden and the proposed kitchen/lounge/diner.

The rear garden would remain unchanged as would the area to front of the property which provides parking for 2 cars.

The applicant has confirmed the property will be occupied by 5 tenants. The proposed use therefore falls within Use Class C4.

Reason for Committee Determination

Objections from 3 or more individuals
Objection from Community Council
Local Member requests the application be reported to Committee.

Site History

None

Development Plan

Wrexham Unitary Development Plan
PS1 - Location of Development (Settlement Limit)
PS2 -Location of Development (Material Detrimental Affect)
PS3 - Location of Development (Brownfield)
PS4 - Location of Development (Maintain Settlement Pattern)
PS11 - Biodiversity
GDP1 - General Development Principles
H4 - Sub-division of Dwellings
EC6 - Biodiversity Conservation
EC14 - Protection of Controlled Waters
T8 - Parking

Local Planning Guidance Notes
LPG5 - Housing in Multiple Occupation
LPG16 - Parking Standards
LPG21 - Space Around Dwellings
LPG32 - Biodiversity and Development

Consultation Responses

Community Council:
Objects. Comments that the proposal is out of character and not in keeping with the area. The proposal is an over development of the property. Raises concerns over highway safety due to the additional vehicular traffic to be generated by this change of use. The plan indicates a lack of parking for 3 to 4 cars within the site curtilage. Wrexham Planning Guide note 5 states that a vehicle should be able to enter or leave each parking space even if other parking spaces within the parking area are occupied. There is limited on street parking in the vicinity of the property.

Local Member:
Councillor Becca Martin
Requests application to be considered at committee. Raises concerns over the size of the property in comparison to the number of people they are hoping to home there, issues with parking with a potential for additional cars ending up parking on the grass verges where roots of trees protected by TPO's could get damaged and, with the property being a terraced property the potential for noise complaints from either side of the property.

Councillor Corin Jarvis
Raises the following concerns:

1. The access street is very narrow with the current driveway only accommodating 2 vehicles. With the potential of 5 vehicles being parked at the location I have concerns on the highway and pedestrian safety impacts that the additional parking needs could have - it should be noted that there is no path currently for pedestrians along the row of houses.
2. The potential increased noise for surrounding residents - the property is a terrace house with adjoining walls to neighbours on both sides, the

application states that no consultation has been conducted with surrounding residents.
3. The impact on residential amenity, character of the area and community cohesion is a concern along with the increased risk of antisocial behaviour. This application is outside of the current model of accommodation for the area.
4. Waste management and storage for 5 people is a concern and management of this detailed in the application does not address the additional household waste arrangements, only that the waste should be kept to the rear of the property.

Natural Resources Wales:
No objection. Based on the email received from the planning case officer dated 26 January 2026, NRW are satisfied that there is unlikely to be a source of additional nutrients and/or a pathway for impacts. Advise it would be reasonable for the Council to screen out this proposal as not likely to have a significant effect on the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC in relation to nutrient inputs.

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water:
No objection

Highway Officer:
No objections provided the addition of conditions requiring the provision of an additional parking space to the front and details regarding cycle parking.

Contaminated Land Officer:
No Comments.

Public Protection Officer:
No Comments. Suggests addition of advisory note about the need to apply for a HMO Licence prior to occupation and the requirement to comply with the Rent Smart Wales Scheme.

Publicity Undertaken:
Notification Letters: Sent to 6 neighbouring properties.

Responses to Publicity:
Total representations received: 51 from 47 individuals objecting to the application.
The **objections** relate to highway safety and parking impacts, harm to residential amenity, safety concerns and fear of crime/antisocial behaviour, conflict with the character and function of a family-oriented residential area, loss of family housing, and infrastructure capacity concerns. A more detailed summary is provided below:

1. Impact on Residential Amenity and Neighbouring Properties. Increased occupancy would result in harm to neighbouring residents' amenity, including increased activity, comings and goings, and general disturbance. Fear that residents would feel less safe and less comfortable in their homes, particularly families and elderly residents. Perceived

reduction in the enjoyment of neighbouring properties due to intensified use of the dwelling.

2. Highway Safety, Parking and Access. On-street parking pressure on a narrow, access-only road with no footpaths. Additional vehicles associated with a 5-person HMO would exacerbate congestion, obstruct driveways and emergency access, force vehicles onto grass verges and cycle lanes. The road is used as a school route, with children walking and cycling daily.
3. Character of the Area and Principle of Development. Out of keeping with the established character of the area which is a predominantly family-oriented residential area. Overdevelopment. Inappropriate intensification of use. Set a precedent for further HMOs, altering the character and cohesion of the neighbourhood.
4. Loss of Family Housing. Will reduce housing availability for families and undermine long-term community stability.
5. Noise, Disturbance and Antisocial Behaviour. Increased noise from multiple unrelated occupants. Late-night activity and disturbance including visitors, transient occupation, and reduced community cohesion. Introduction of a transient population into a stable, long-established family neighbourhood risks increasing perceived and actual anti-social behaviour. A material “fear of crime”, affecting community cohesion and residential quality of life.
6. Drainage, Flooding and Infrastructure Capacity. Existing drainage and flooding problems in the area. Increased occupancy and additional bathrooms would place further strain on sewerage infrastructure, worsening flooding risks. electricity supply insufficient to deal with demand.
7. Environmental Impact and Protected Trees. Potential damage to grass verges and tree roots due to overspill parking harming the Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and biodiversity.
8. Waste Storage and Refuse Management. A 5-bedroom HMO would generate significantly more refuse than a single-family dwelling. Inadequate bin storage will lead to overflowing bins, visual harm, littering and vermin.
9. Safety of Children and Vulnerable Residents. Due to School routes, lack of pavements, increased vehicle movements, fear of personal safety and crime. Increased fire risk.
10. Policy and Procedural Concerns. Conflict with parking standards, highway safety, policies seeking to protect residential character and balanced communities. Concerns regarding statutory notification procedures and compliance with adopted development plan policies.
11. 11.Failure to Comply with Statutory Publicity Requirements. No site notice has been displayed as required under Article 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, undermining lawful public consultation and exposing the application to procedural challenge.

Principle of Development

The site lies within recognised settlement limits where the principle of development is generally considered acceptable. The proposal is therefore compliant with policy PS1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

Policy H4 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan allows for the subdivision of dwellings where:

a) sub-division is possible without major alterations, extensions, or additional new buildings which would significantly alter the character of the original dwelling; and
b) proposals accord with Policy GDP1; and
c) adequate private open space is available;
d) the proposal would not result in the over-concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation to the detriment of crime levels, the social fabric of the area, and the amenity of existing residents.

Addressing each of the criteria:

a) Extensions / Alterations

No extensions are proposed and very limited external alterations are proposed. A single glazed door would replace an existing window on the rear elevation.

b) Compliance with policy GDP1

Issues of amenity and parking have been dealt with as set out below in the remainder of the report.

c) Private open space

The property has a garden area to the rear of around 108 sqm. This is considered sufficient to provide space for bins and cycle parking, external drying space and outdoor amenity space for the occupants of the property.

d) Concentration of HMO properties

Local Planning Guidance Note 5 (LPGN5) provides further guidance and advises that to enable HMO developments to take place so that smaller/more affordable units of accommodation can continue to be provided whilst at the same time as trying to avoid over concentrations of HMOs the Council will seek to ensure that proposals for new HMOs do not result in the number of residential buildings in use as a HMOs to exceed 10% within a 50 metre radius of the boundaries of the application site. It further indicates that where the concentration exceeds 10%, planning permission will not normally be granted unless there are relevant material planning considerations to justify doing so.

There are no properties within 50m of the boundary of the site that are currently in use as HMO's. If this property was granted permission to be used as an HMO, this would mean that 3% of the properties within 50m of the site boundary would

be HMOs. On this basis, the proposed development would not result in over-concentration of HMOS within the immediate area. The proposal therefore complies with part d) of UDP policy H4 and also to the guidance set out in LPGN5.

Design

As noted above, only minimal alterations are proposed to the dwelling, involving the replacement of an existing ground floor window with a single glazed door. The external appearance of the property would therefore remain generally the same. The alterations would not have any impact upon the visual amenities of the surrounding area.

Having regard to the above, proposal is in accordance with UDP policy GDP1.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The proposed replacement of an existing ground floor window with a single glazed door would not result in any additional of overlooking.

Whilst the number of bedrooms will increase from 3 to 5, it has been confirmed that the maximum number of occupants will be limited to 5 people. Given that the existing 3-bed dwelling could also potentially be occupied by 5 people, there is unlikely to be a significant increase in activity as a result of the proposal compared to the current lawful use. As such. there is no evidence before the Council to demonstrate that the proposed development would result in an unacceptable level of noise or disturbance.

In addition to requiring planning permission, the proposed HMO will also need a separate licence from the Council's Public Protection Team. Licensed HMOs are subject to conditions that require landlords to take all reasonable steps to control noise and antisocial behaviour. Breaching licence conditions can ultimately result in landlords being prosecuted and their licences being revoked. Accordingly, there are appropriate controls to deal with these matters should they arise.

Taking this into account it is unlikely that the proposal would result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring properties. There are also other appropriate controls in place if issues were to arise. The proposal therefore accords with UDP policies H4 and GDP1.

Highway Considerations

The property currently has as a driveway/parking area for two cars. There is an additional grassed area to the front of the dwelling that could potentially provide space for a third vehicle. It is noted the Highway Officer has recommended this be secured by planning condition. However, doing so would require the removal of the existing hedgerow and front lawn. Given the resulting impact on biodiversity and the visual amenities of the street scene, it is not considered necessary or desirable to require this area to be hard paved in order to provide an additional parking space.

LPGN16 guidance sets out maximum parking provision of 3 spaces for the existing dwelling and maximum of 4 spaces for the proposed HMO. Although maximum parking provision for the proposed development represents an increase of 1 space compared to the existing use, the site is situated in a highly sustainable location with convenient access to local services, amenities, employment opportunities, the city centre, and public transport. In addition, a shed is to be retained within the rear garden to provide storage for bicycles. For these reasons, the shortfall of two parking spaces is unlikely to give rise to any significant impacts and is consistent with national policy in PPW12, which places walking and other sustainable modes of travel at the top of the transport hierarchy.

In addition to the above, data from the 2021 Census shows that 30% of households living in rented accommodation in the Acton/Maesydre Ward have no car or van, 44% of have access to 1 car or van and 21% have access to 2 cars or vans. Only a small percentage, 6% have access to 3 or more vehicles. In relation to the other objections raised on highway grounds, there is no evidence that the proposal would cause of harm to safety, congestion, or emergency access.

The recommendation of made by the Highway Officer for details to secured in respect of cycle parking by planning condition is considered unnecessary. The that the shed referred to above is to be retained for this purpose and as such adequate provision for cycle parking is already on site.

Taking these factors into account, the proposed development is unlikely to result in parking or highway safety issues in the surrounding area and is considered to comply with UDP Policies GDP1 and T8.

Natural Environment

PPW12 requires development to provide a net benefit for biodiversity (NBB) i.e. a better outcome than if the site was left undeveloped. Failing to provide such a benefit is a valid reason for refusal. Every application regardless of size must not only mitigate any negative impacts of the development but also have a positive benefit for biodiversity which will be in place for the lifetime of the development. Enhancements should be onsite, proportional to the size of development, tailored towards features valuable in the area or providing linking habitats in a Green Infrastructure Plan.

In terms of Green Infrastructure, an email received on 31st January 2026 confirms that the existing garden area to the rear will remain as it currently is. Provision for NBB will be made in the form of a vivara woodcrete box to the rear of the property close to the eaves between the soil pipe and the window to the right. The implementation of the proposed NBB measures could be secured by a planning condition. Additional provision will also need to be made to account for the loss of garden area and hedge to the front of the property to allow for an additional parking space to be provided. Further details have been requested from the applicant.

Having regard to the above, the proposed development complies with paragraph 6.4.5 of PPW12, UDP policy PS11 and LPG32.

Drainage

The proposal has been considered in relation to nutrient impacts on the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Taking account of the 'Flows and Loads – 4 Sizing Criteria, Treatment Capacity for Sewage Treatment Systems - Code of Practice' and based upon the current 3-bedroom dwelling with 5 Persons, the proposed 5 Person HMO would not result in an increase in foul discharge from the site. As such a likely significant effect on the SAC can be ruled out, and no further assessment under the Habitats Regulations is required.

Having regard to the above, the proposed development would not conflict with policy EC6.

Other Considerations

In terms of the other objections raised these are addressed as follows:

- Loss of Family Housing - One dwelling change will not materially affect the overall family housing supply, particularly where there is no evidence of HMO's within a 50m radius.
- Noise & Antisocial Behaviour - Normal domestic noise is not a grounds for refusal and any issues that arise would be managed through other legislation.
- Drainage & Infrastructure - There is no evidence showing the proposal would make existing drainage issues worse. No concerns have been raised by Welsh Water. The electricity supply is a matter for the relevant supplier.
- Environmental & Tree Impacts - No works are proposed near trees.
- Waste Management - The provision of storage for bins can be required by planning condition.
- Safety of Children & Vulnerable People - The Highways impacts have already been discussed above.
- Failure to Comply with Statutory Publicity Requirements - The statutory requirement for publicity for this application is either to put up a site notice or to send letters of notification to the owner/occupiers of adjoining properties. Letters were sent to adjoining neighbours. The Council has therefore complied with statutory requirements regarding publicity.

Conclusion

The proposed development would not result in an over concentration of HMOs in the locality and is unlikely to give rise to any adverse planning policy, design, environmental. highway infrastructure or other concerns. It will also provide a much-needed form of affordable residential accommodation. It therefore accords with the relevant national and local planning policies and guidance.

Condition(s)

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission.

2. The development shall only be carried out in strict accordance with the details shown on the following plan(s) and document(s):

   A038.A011 Revision P01 - Proposed Front Elevation

   A038.A012 Revision P02 - Proposed Rear Elevation

   A038.A010 Revision P01 - Proposed First Floor Plan

   A038.A009 Revision P03 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan

   A038.A004 Revision P01 - Proposed Site Plan

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the measures to deliver net benefit for biodiversity (NBB) as detailed in the email received on 31st January 2026 have been implemented in full. The measures shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

4. The use of the premises shall be restricted to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) occupied by no more than 5 no. individuals.

5. The vehicular parking area as shown on the plan numbered A038.A004 Revision P01 - Proposed Site Plan shall be kept free of any obstruction and made available solely for the parking of vehicles in connection with the approved use at all times.

6. Prior to the first occupation of the dwelling as a House in Multiple Occupation, a bin storage area shall be provided in accordance with a details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bin storage area shall thereafter be retained solely for the storage of bins.

Reason(s)

1. To comply with Section 91(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

2. To comply with Section 71ZA(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

3. To ensure the development delivers net benefit to biodiversity in accordance with paragraph 6.4.5 of Planning Policy Wales 12.

4. To ensure no detriment to the River Dee/Bala Lake as a result of increased foul flows in accordance with Policy EC6 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

5. To provide for the parking of vehicles clear of the highway in the interest of traffic safety in accordance with Policies GDP1 and T8 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

6. To ensure adequate storage for bins if provided in accordance with policies H4 and GDP1 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan.

Notes

It is advised that there is a need to apply for a HMO licence from Wrexham County Borough Council prior to the first occupation of the premises as a HMO. There is also a need to comply with the Rent Smart Wales Scheme.