

# TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

**Chairman/Mayor:**

Cllr. Peter Endors

**Vice-Chairman/Deputy Mayor:**

Cllr. Ann Walmsley

**Town Clerk:**

Mrs. C. Benbow



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V.A.T. Reg.No: 164 8707 80

## Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held remotely on Wednesday 30 September 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm.

**Present:**

Cllr. P. Endors – **Chair**

Cllr. Logan, Cllr. Howson, Cllr. Bailey

Cllr. Thomas, Cllr. Handley, Cllr. Walmsley

Mrs. C. Benbow – Town Clerk

**In attendance:**

19 members of the public

**Minute  
Ref:****Agenda No:**

**C20/62 Apologies for Absence**

**1**

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr. Greenway who was on medical leave and Cllr. Hathorn who was attending to family commitments.

**C20/63 Public Participation: Public Have Your Say**

**2**

**Resident 1**

Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6  
(a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

My partner and I object to this planning application on the grounds of the following:

We refer to the Heritage Statement. The introduction states the property is Class C4, which is incorrect; It also states the property is commensurate

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

with No's 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9 Thornfield Road. This is also incorrect as none of these properties are HMO's.

Reference has been made to the five 'Challenges' of the Neighbourhood Plan including "less availability of dwellings for those with local connections." Yet this proposed development is not aimed at locals, as assuming it is, there would be a case for a 'Local Occupancy Clause' to be attached. It is not aimed at 'locals' because there is no market locally for this kind of residence.

It is stated that the proposed development will be 'inclusive to all'. This cannot be the case as there is no wheelchair access, and the internal layout will not be suitable for persons who have a sight impairment or other physical disability.

Access Issues - Item 8.2 - It is implied that if they convert the rear garage into living space, there will be no requirement for rear parking; this conflicts with 8.6 which states that there is car parking to the rear.

Access Issues - Item 8.3 - a further conflict is assuming there will be 'no reliance on car ownership' by incoming residents; this I think we can safely say will not be the case. Following on from this, they say cycle storage can be provided; do we really think 7 (or 14) new residents are going to turn up with a bike and no car? In fact Grange Town Council have stated that "the access road is already heavily congested with vehicles and the plans mean that it would potentially need 7 spaces"; indeed I have supplied photographic evidence of such congestion.

Number 6 Thornfield Road has never been an HMO, and indeed the Housing Strategy has confirmed that it does not have an HMO Licence.

This type of residence is not in keeping with Thornfield Road or this area, and we hope that once you have taken all the points into consideration that you will reject this application. Thank you for listening.

### Resident 2

Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6 (a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

- The house is within a conservation area positioned in the centre of a quiet row of Victorian terraced houses housing mainly elderly retired people. Turning it into what will be a busy multi occupancy house will massively impact the neighbouring properties with increased noise, people traffic and exacerbated parking issues.
- The applicant proposes to convert the garage at the back to a communal living room. The back of the row of terraces, as well as the front, has always maintained its period seaside charm so converting the garage will create a discordant blemish that will

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE – OVER – SANDS

look completely out of character and could also set a precedent for the other neighbouring garages to be converted.

- On road parking space is already at a premium with a constant fight for space.
- There is no mention of sound proofing for the garage conversion, or indeed for the main house. As the property will have rooms for residential purposes the performance standards should be met as per building control regulations, part E – resistance to the passage of sound. With 7 bedrooms and up to 14 people residing there, protection against sound from other parts of the building and adjoining properties is vitally important to ensure there is sufficient resistance.
- Having many years' tenancy management experience and being a member of several landlord associations, I know that undue noise disturbance from HMO's without doubt can have a huge mental health impact on its individual tenants, neighbours and indeed often on the entire street. Therefore, good sound proofing and exemplary management of the tenancies within the building is paramount. I see no mention of, if or how, either will be done, which is very worrying.
- Off street waste and recycling storage. They have said it will be within the main curtilage of the site and remain as it currently is. Large HMO's do generate far more waste and recycling than a family home does and therefore this remark in their application is questionable. Additional bins will be required and there is no space for their storage at the back. The back yard is relatively small for such a big property and 2 of the 3 exit doors open on to it. Placing the bins there will block any fire escape route. Also, the refuse wagon does not come down the back of the row because it is not wide enough so how will the refuse even be collected from the house?

### **Resident 3**

Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6 (a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

- The proposed development for this property could have 7 -14 residents which could incur considerable noise caused mainly by the difficulty in parking and by people arriving and departing from the property. Parking is already difficult in this road.
- A house converted to an HMO is not conducive to this area. All the properties are either individual houses or 2 or 3 self-contained flats.
- We also object to the development of an HMO because employment is very limited in the Grange area.

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

**Resident 4** Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6 (a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

- The proposer is saying the property is a brownfield site (6.2 in the planning application). How can a family home which is not derelict be classed as such?
- This property was also misrepresented as an HMO.
- In the adopted Grange-over-Sands Neighbourhood Plan. There is no mention of needing HMO style properties.
- The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 14 states 'Presumption in favour of sustainable development **unless** it causes demonstrable harm or **adverse impact**.'
- Street parking in Thornfield Road is already at capacity. The probability of extra cars would cause '**adverse impact**'.
- The garage at the rear of the property would be converted into a living room, this is also where the kitchen & laundry room is situated. Up to 14 people will be sharing these facilities, it is also one of the entrances to the property. The noise **will** impact on the neighbours because this is where their bedrooms are. This would cause '**adverse impact**'
- There is also an issue with noise travelling through the old chimney voids. Therefore, this would cause an '**adverse impact**' to adjoining properties.
- HMO's are far more suited to large towns & cities. Grange is well known for its quieter pace of life which is enjoyed by the residents & visitors. We enjoy the peace & harmony of Thornfield Road. Introducing an HMO would seriously upset this balance, therefore causing '**adverse impact**'.
- This change of use would also set a precedent if allowed to go ahead.

**Resident 5** Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6 (a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

- It has already been proved that the parking congestion on the road makes access for emergency vehicles difficult with attending vehicles being unable to access the road or turn round. A possible 14 extra cars would make this situation even worse than it already is.

**Resident 6** Made representation to members regarding objection to Planning Item 6 (a) SL/2020/0534, 6 Thornfield Road:

- This is a relatively quiet residential road in a Conservation Area, made up of a mixture of private and social housing.

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE – OVER – SANDS

- The property, which is the subject of the application, is situated on an attractive terrace. This property and one other are still complete dwellings, the other properties in the terrace have been split into two or three flats.
- I think it has now been established that the property is not a house of multiple occupancy and does not have a licence. The property has been a family home since at least 1997 until it was sold earlier this year. I am rather surprised that the application has not been immediately rejected on this basis.
- Such a property would be completely out of character in this area, and I can think of no similar property in the whole of Grange. These properties would be more suited to a city location for the use of students or young professionals.
- Parking has become an increased problem on Thornfield Road over the years, which is a narrow road with a cul de sac at the bottom. The problem of parking is particularly difficult at evenings and weekends. There is a potential with a 7-bedroom property of multiple occupancy to create the need for 14 additional parking spaces which is unsustainable.
- I have previously raised the issue of parking congestion with Cllr Robin Ashcroft and Tim Farron, our MP, this should be documented with both SLDC and South Lakes Housing. Much of the parking congestion is caused by vehicles owned by South Lakes Housing residents who have their own designated parking area. However, it may well be insufficient for their parking requirements, or they find it inconvenient. The existing parking problems have not been resolved and creating the need for additional parking is irresponsible and damaging.
- Parked vehicles make it impossible to pass when there are vehicles approaching in both directions. A continuous line of parked vehicles results in nowhere to go! This is not only inconvenient for residents, delivery vehicles etc, but raises the issue of access for emergency and refuse collection vehicles. There is no parking available behind the terrace which is basically an unmade track. Currently 6 Thornfield Road, has adopted two off road parking spaces, attached to the garden area. However, there is no dropped kerb and I suspect the arrangement does not fit the criteria set out by Cumbria County Council.
- Thornfield Road has a difficult junction to exit and enter, visibility splays are poor and joining B5277 (Kents Bank Road) is hazardous with vehicles travelling at 30 mph and more. Any further vehicle movements compound this situation with an increased chance of accidents and near misses.

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE – OVER – SANDS

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 10 August 2020 were accepted as a true record and that physical signing by the Chairman would take place in due course.

**C20/65**      **Declarations of Interests and Dispensations**      **4**

**NOTED**      There were no declarations of interest or dispensations.

**C20/66**      **Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 – Excluded Item**      **5**

**RESOLVED**      That no items should be considered without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Section 2.

**C20/67**      **Planning Report**      **6**

Members considered Planning Applications as below:

**a. SL/2020/0534 6 Thornfield Road**

Change of use and alterations of 6 no bedroom House in Multi Occupancy (Class C3) to form 7-bedroom HMO (Sui Generis).

FULL PLANNING (SLDC target decision date: 7 October)

**To note:** the below response was sent 2 September 2020, under delegated authority, as there is no scheduled Town Council meeting during September.

**To consider:** revising this response in light of further information, specifically that the house was not previously an HMO (House of Multiple Occupancy).

Sent 2 September:

*NO OBJECTION with the following comments:*

*(i)      **Parking***

*Grange Town Council requests that the applicant is required to provide at least one extra off-road parking space. This is because the access road is already heavily congested with vehicles. The property currently has 3 parking spaces, but the plans mean that it would potentially need 7 spaces.*

*(ii)      **Subsidence***

*It appears that the building has subsidence problems and there seems to be no underpinning or other remediation proposed in the application.*

Members considered this matter and Cllr. Tricia Thomas presented as below:

Statement from Grange-over-Sands Town Council re Planning Application SL/2020/0534

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

- Grange Town Council gave the SLDC Planning Department a response of ‘No Objection’ to this application.
- Grange Town Council is consulted (same as residents are) on planning applications – it does not make the decision – that is made by SLDC.
- The Council made two comments regarding concerns about inadequate parking for potential residents and the possibility of subsidence to the building.
- This decision was made using the information put forward in the Planning Application documentation from SLDC.
- This stated that the building was a registered 6-unit HMO.
- Councillors responded to the application based on this information and decided that should the application be successful, the alterations to the building would provide an improved environment for future residents.
- This was because it appeared that there would only be one extra resident.
- Information subsequently came forward that the building might not in fact already be a licensed HMO.
- Following concerns raised by residents, the Town Council requested clarification from SLDC, and it would appear that the building is **not** a licenced HMO.
- Realising that the decision of ‘No Objection’ was made based on erroneous information, we need to consider amending our response.
- The Town Clerk had contacted SLDC today and there was no further update on the status of the application.

### RESOLUTION

### OBJECTION

Grange Town Council voted unanimously to OBJECT to this planning application.

This response supersedes the response sent 2 September 2020.

The Town Council objects on the following grounds:

#### **1. Inaccurate Application**

The property is not currently an HMO as stated in the application.

#### **2. Inappropriate Change of Use**

The proposed development would be an inappropriate change of use in a quiet residential street.

#### **3. Noise Nuisance**

A multi-occupancy house could affect the neighbouring properties with increased noise.

#### **4. Parking Congestion**

Vehicles for a proposed 7 dwellings could seriously exacerbate parking problems in a road that is already congested.

#### **5. Emergency Services Access**

## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE – OVER – SANDS

The parking congestion means that access for emergency vehicles is already compromised; this development could exacerbate this.

### **6. Loss of Parking and Over-intensification of the Site**

The proposal to convert the garage to the rear to living space would mean the loss of existing parking provision and represent over-intensification of the site.

### **7. Inadequate Service Infrastructure and Access**

There is no provision made in the application for the storage, or access for collection of, waste and recycling for 7 dwellings.

### **b. SL/2020/0549 Lower Flat Gordon House, Grange Fell Road**

Works to flat-roofed annex: Remove large, double-glazed window and replace with patio doors (to front). Add small canopy over door (to front), Add small balcony beneath door (to front). Replace existing old wooden casement window with new double-glazed window (to side).

FULL PLANNING

**RESOLVED**

**NO OBJECTION**

The Town Council suggests that the plastic canopy will look out of place as neither the materials or pitch match the building and that alternatives be considered.

### **c. SL/2020/0415 Highfield Cottage, 25 Highfield Road**

Demolition of existing building and erection of single unit, 1 bed bedsit.

FULL PLANNING

**RESOLVED**

**OBJECTION**

#### **1. Inadequate Parking**

There is no extra parking included in the plans for residents of the bedsit.

#### **2. Use**



## TOWN COUNCIL OF GRANGE-OVER-SANDS

Due to the lack of parking, this development would only be appropriate as part of the main residence, not for use as holiday accommodation.

### 3. Inappropriate development

The plans show extremely small living spaces; the Council is concerned that these appear unrealistic.

### 4. Precedent

This proposed development is so tiny; it raises concerns that permission granted would set a precedent for the conversion of other sheds and garages into living space.

**C20/68**

**Next Meeting**

**7**

Members noted that the next Full Council Meeting would be held remotely:

Monday 12 October 2020, 7pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.05pm.

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Chair, Grange-over-Sands Town Council**