

**Application Number:** 20/10938 Full Planning Permission

**Site:** 110 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, RINGWOOD BH24 1DP

**Development:** Change of use for short term residential accommodation;  
minor elevational changes

**Applicant:** New Forest District Council

**Agent:** KSA Architects Ltd

**Target Date:** 30/10/2020

**Case Officer:** Judith Garrity

**Extension Date:** 13/11/2020

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## **1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES**

The key issues are:

- 1) Principle of development
- 2) Impact on local character and appearance of area
- 3) Conservation Area and Listed Building impacts
- 4) Residential amenity
- 3) Parking and highway matters
- 4) Habitats mitigation matters and ecology.

This application is to be considered by Committee because of a contrary view by Ringwood Town Council.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

This site is located in a prominent corner position in the Ringwood Conservation Area. The building is currently vacant having previously been used as an accountancy office and a barber's shop. The building is predominantly 2 storeys with a single storey pitched roof extension to the south and of brick and render construction. It is not of any particular architectural merit. There a large area of hard standing around the building with a block of 3 flat roof garages to the rear accessed from Coxstone Lane. A terrace of two storey residential properties are located adjacent to the site fronting Christchurch Road. On the opposite corner of Coxstone Lane is a car sales business.

The site is located in close proximity to a number of Listed Buildings. Nos 3, 4 ,5 and 6 Coxstone Lane are Grade II listed building all being timber framed with thatched roofs. No 3 Coxstone Lane adjoins the northern boundary and the access to the site.

## **3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The proposal is to change the use of the existing vacant building with office/retail use to form 7 bed sui generis House in Multiple Occupancy comprising 7 bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms a shared kitchen on each of the two floors and a laundry room on the ground floor. This would be used for short term housing accommodation for those seeking permanent homes. The proposed layout would provide flexible accommodation to suit the needs of a range of different households and families. One of the garages to the rear would be retained for storage use with 5 car parking spaces provided on the site. A car parking space would also be retained for No 3 Coxstone Lane.

The proposed external changes would be modest. These would include the reduction in the size of some of the large ground floor windows openings, new timber frame casement windows and door and use of a white rendered finish on all elevations. Landscaping would be provided on the front and corner of the site; two new trees are indicated with a new low front boundary wall enclosure. Provision is shown for external bin and cycle storage as well as a small paved area and drying space to the rear.

#### 4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description	Status
82/NFDC/22452 Change of use from launderette to retail shop.	24/08/1982	Granted	Decided
80/NFDC/18324 Change of use of 1st floor flat to office.	17/02/1981	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided

#### 5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

##### **Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy**

Policy ENV1: Mitigating the impacts of development on International Nature Conservation sites

Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

Policy ECON2: Retention of employment sites and consideration of alternative uses

Policy IMPL2: Development standards

Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel

##### **Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014**

DM1: Heritage and Conservation

##### **Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents**

SPD - Mitigation Strategy for European Sites

SPD - Parking Standards

SPG - Ringwood - A Conservation Area Appraisal

SPD - Ringwood Local Distinctiveness

##### **Relevant Legislation**

##### **Relevant Advice**

##### **Chap 12: Achieving well designed places**

NPPF Ch.12 - Achieving well-designed places

NPPF Ch.16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

#### 6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

##### **Ringwood Town Council**

Refusal (4) Recommend refusal. The Committee felt that the number of units proposed was excessive. The space within each unit was insufficient and provided no amenity space for the occupants. The intensification of use, increased footfall and vehicle movements would have a detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and the tandem parking provision would create additional vehicle movements and potential conflict.

#### 7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

## 8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

**Conservation Officer:** No objection.

**HCC Highways:** No objection subject to conditions. Comment that parking is a matter for NFDC to assess.

**Ecologist:** No objection.

**NFNPA Archaeologist:** No objection or conditions.

## 9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The following is a summary of the representations received.

Objection: 7

- Lack to water quality checklist and no habitat mitigation S106 has been submitted;
- Lack of biodiversity net gain on the site;
- Sub-standard accommodation which is too cramped for habitable accommodation;
- No account taken of wellbeing of residents;
- No managers accommodation is provided;
- No transport statement submitted and deficient of car parking and turning space on the site;
- Parking layout is likely to lead to disruption and there is a lack of visibility;
- Parking issues in the area;
- Impact on privacy due to removal of garages;
- Overlooking from new windows;
- Impact on living conditions and amenity of existing residents;
- Noise and disturbance close to existing residential properties;
- Noise and activity generated will increase relative to previous use with an increase impact on amenity particularly during evenings and weekends;
- Potential for 7 households to live at the premises;
- Lack of outside amenity space could lead to anti-social behaviour;
- An appropriate scale of residential use could be acceptable, but this is too dense
- Accommodation could be for 13 people and how can this be Covid safe given numbers to be accommodate;
- Impact on Conservation Area;
- Fire risk;
- Effect on property values.

## 10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The site is located in the built up area and Ringwood Conservation Area and is for conversion of an existing building. The main issues to consider in the planning assessment are:

1. The principle of development
2. Impact on local character and appearance of area
3. Conservation Area and Listed Building impacts
4. Residential amenity
5. Highway safety, access and parking
6. Habitat Mitigation matters and on site ecological enhancements.

These issues are considered in turn below

## Principle of Development

The site is located in the built up area the application seeks a change of use from an employment use to a residential use Policy ECON2 which seeks to retain employment sites that remain suitable for employment uses with other uses supported provided they meet the criteria set out in Policy ECON2 For uses that are non-employment uses it is necessary to demonstrate that the employment site is no longer suitable or viable for continued employment use. One of the ways this can be demonstrated is through the submission of evidence that the site has actively unsuccessfully marketed for employment purposes.

In support of the application a statement has been submitted that states that the property was vacated in April 2018 and formal marketing for office use commenced in August 2018, although informal marketing by the previous owner took place during the intervening months which was unsuccessful. By February 2019 a number of viewings had taken place but virtually all were seeking a residential conversion. In light of the marketing exercise and the fact that the building has been vacant for some time it is considered that it has been demonstrated that the building is no longer suitable or viable for continued employment use. The principle of the use is considered worthy of support having regard to the significant need for the type of temporary accommodation proposed.

## Impact on local character and appearance of area

There would be minimum changes to the external appearance of the building. The changes are to existing fenestration with the reduction of window openings and use of new timber casements along with rendering of the external walls. The proposals would significantly improve the appearance of the building and site and have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Landscaping proposals which show hard surfacing, tree planting and front boundary treatments have been submitted with the planning application. This scheme is acceptable in principle and would ensure the visual enhancement of the site and in particular its frontage with Christchurch Road.

There are some trees close to the boundary of No 116 Christchurch Road with the application site are self-seeded ash trees. The current surface adjacent to these trees is graveled and is already used to access the garages and for parking/turning space. The proposal is for a paved permeable surface in this area. Although these trees offer some amenity value to the area the amenity value does not render these trees suitable for preservation under a Tree Preservation Order.

## Conservation Area and Listed Building impacts

The site is located in a sensitive and prominent position in the Ringwood Conservation Area and in close proximity to Listed Buildings. No 3 Coxstone Lane being sited immediately to the west of the site and adjoining its boundary. The principle of the changes proposed are acceptable and would preserve the character of the Conservation Area. Given the proximity of the driveway to the listed building further details have been provided of the proposed paving to be used. This would be Flagstone paving in sandstone finish and the proposed shared surface for the parking court would be Tegula block in Slate finish which is considered to appropriate and would ensure that the setting of No 3 is preserved. These details are shown on the landscaping plan their use can be secured by condition.

## Residential amenity

In considering the impacts of the change of use on residential amenity consideration must be given to how the building could be used for existing uses against the way the building could be used for the new use proposed.

The most direct relationship is with No 3 Coxstone Lane. There are existing windows on the west elevation of the application property that face No 3 with a large single window which served the previous barbers use on ground floor and two windows that served the accountancy offices above. These existing windows face onto the front elevation of this neighbour where there are ground and first floor windows and a front door with a limited separation from the application property across the access drive. The new windows in the west elevation would serve bed sit rooms and a first floor shared kitchen. There would be one additional ground floor window at ground floor. All the proposed window openings would be smaller than those in the existing building and whilst there would be an additional window this given the relative location of the new window and existing relationships on the site no harmful additional impact on residential amenity could be demonstrated.

The proposed layout would remove 2 of the garages that adjoining the boundary with No 7. Concerns have been raised about additional noise and disturbance and amenity impacts that would result from this. The rear wall of the two existing garage which are to be demolished would be retained. This would provide screening to this boundary and the parking spaces are set away from this boundary which would limit any amenity impact. Furthermore No 7 has a relatively long garden and so any additional noise and disturbance would not have a direct impact on their amenity. Again, considering the existing uses against the proposed the garages and forecourts could be used in connection with the office and barber shop use with a constant flow of traffic coming to and from the site.

Reference has been made in representations that general disturbance will be increased by the proposed use when compared to the previous office use on the site. Whilst it is accepted that there would be some change in the nature of the use and activity associated with the site this would be related to residential activity which would be appropriate in this area.

It is acknowledged that there is limited functional external space for prospective occupiers but that is considered to be acceptable given the nature of the use of this accommodation. No other amenity impacts are identified, and the scheme is considered to be acceptable in this respect.

## Highway safety, access and parking

There is no intended change to the access to the site and Highway Authority are satisfied that the potential traffic generation from the development would not have a severe or detrimental impact on highways safety.

HCC have not fully assessed the proposed parking provision on the site as this is a function of the LPA. There would be 5 spaces and 3 cycle parking spaces provided and there appears to be adequate space for vehicles to turn on the site. It is however noted that some of these parking spaces are shown in a tandem arrangement which can be inconvenient for residents to use. There are no specific parking standards for the proposed use. The site is located in a sustainable location close to the town centre given the nature of the accommodation to be provided it is anticipated that there would be relatively low car ownership by future residents, the parking provision is considered acceptable.

Policy IMPL2 places a requirement on new developments to make provision to enable the convenient installation of charging points for electric vehicles. However, as these proposals are for temporary accommodation where residents are less likely to own cars it is not considered to be a reasonable requirement in this case.

#### Habitat Mitigation

In accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitat Regulations') an Appropriate Assessment has been carried out as to whether granting permission would adversely affect the integrity of the New Forest and Solent Coast European sites, in view of that site's conservation objectives. The Assessment concludes that the proposed development would, in combination with other developments, have an adverse effect due to the recreational impacts on the European sites, but that such adverse impacts would be avoided if the applicant paid a habitat mitigation contribution in accordance with the Council's Mitigation Strategy. In this case, the applicant has agreed to make a payment which secures the required habitat mitigation contribution. This payment will be made before the planning permission is issued.

#### Phosphate neutrality and impact on River Avon SAC

In July 2020, the Council adopted the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy. The Local Plan recognises that the Planning Authorities in the River Avon will work with Wessex Water, Natural England and the Environment Agency to identify suitable mitigation of offsetting measures to enable development to be achieved phosphate neutral, including an update of measures set out in the River Avon Nutrient Management Plan. This work is ongoing. The principle of requiring all new development to contribute to mitigation measures in proportion to its likely impact on the European sites is set out in policies of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy, namely Policies ENV1, ENV3 and ENV4.

The Council has been advised by Natural England and the Environment Agency that existing measures to offset the amount of phosphorus entering the River Avon, as set out in the Hampshire Avon Nutrient Management Plan, will not be sufficient to ensure that adverse effects on the integrity of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation do not occur. Accordingly, new residential development within the catchment of the Hampshire Avon needs to be "phosphate neutral". In order to address this matter, the Council in conjunction with Natural England, the Environment Agency and adjoining local authorities propose to develop appropriate phosphorus controls and mitigation measures to achieve phosphorus neutrality. A Memorandum of Understanding to that effect has been signed by the aforementioned parties. In accordance with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure Decision of 11 December 2018, this Council has ring fenced up to £50,000 of held CIL funds to direct towards a suitable infrastructure project upstream to provide suitable mitigation. However, following the end of the interim period on 31st March 2020, the Council has been advised by Natural England and the Environment Agency that existing measures to offset the amount of phosphorus entering the River Avon, as set out in the Hampshire Avon Nutrient Management Plan, will not be sufficient to ensure that adverse effects on the integrity of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation do not occur.

Accordingly, new residential development within the catchment of the Hampshire Avon needs to be "phosphate neutral" in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitat Regulations').

An Appropriate Assessment has been carried out as to whether granting permission would adversely affect the integrity of the River Avon Catchment, in view of that site's conservation objectives. The Assessment concludes that in consideration of the lawful (previous) use of the site the proposed development would not in isolation or in

combination with other developments, result in a net increase of nutrient from the site, demonstrating phosphate neutrality and so an adverse effect due to the recreational impacts on the European sites would not result. This conclusion is based on the nature of the previous use of the building as a large accountancy office of 220 sq. m and a barber's shop. The office use could have accommodated a large number of staff during office hours who would all have used the facilities provided, together with a separate barber's shop where the 2 dedicated hand basins would have been in almost constant use 6 days a week. The proposed use would be for 7 bed sits with their own facilities and 2 shared kitchens. Although a larger number of facilities would be provided the frequency and nature of their use is unlikely to be greater than the previous use on the site. It is therefore concluded that there would not be a net increase in phosphate impacts which would adversely affect the integrity of the River Avon Catchment.

### Managing Air Quality

Since July 2020 the Council is required to ensure that impacts on international nature conservation sites are adequately mitigated in respect of traffic-related nitrogen air pollution (including NOx, nitrogen deposition and ammonia). Given the uncertainties in present data, a contribution is required to undertake ongoing monitoring of the effects of traffic emissions on sensitive locations. A monitoring strategy will be implemented to provide the earliest possible indication that the forms of nitrogen pollution discussed (including ammonia concentrations) are beginning to affect vegetation, so that, if necessary, measures can be taken to mitigate the impact and prevent an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC habitats from occurring. A financial contribution is required towards monitoring and, if necessary (based on future monitoring outcomes) managing or mitigating air quality effects within the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar site, which will be secured by a direct payment before the permission is issued.

### On Site Biodiversity and protected species

Local Plan policy ENV1 requires ecological enhancements to demonstrate biodiversity net gain (BNG) in line with the NPPF. Under the forthcoming NFDC interim guidance note on BNG, this development would constitute a 'minor' development where there would not be an expectation to assess biodiversity net gain using the Defra biodiversity metric. However, minor developments such as this are not exempt from the requirement to demonstrate appropriate ecological enhancement measures on the site, but this can be secured through a condition.

### Developer Contributions

As part of the development, the following contributions will be secured via a direct payment before planning permission is issued:

- Habitat mitigation
- Air Quality mitigation

As part of the development, subject to any relief being granted the following amount Community Infrastructure Levy will be payable:

Type	Proposed Floorspace (sq/m)	Existing Floorspace (sq/m)	Net Floorspace (sq/m)	Chargeable Floorspace (sq/m)	Rate	Total
Dwelling houses	230	265	-35	-35	£80/sqm	-£3,596.92 *

Subtotal:	£0.00
Relief:	£0.00
Total Payable:	£0.00

## 11 CONCLUSION

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle in the built up area and Conservation Area. It would provide urgent temporary accommodation for those in housing need. Parking is provided on the site and access arrangements are acceptable. Habitat mitigation will be dealt with by a contribution and it has been shown that phosphates neutrality would be achieved so that there would be no adverse effect the integrity of the River Avon Catchment. The application is therefore recommended for approval following the appropriate contributions being made and conditions.

## 12 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The site is in an area of known archaeological interest. However due to the limited ground works involved there are no issues raised in this respect.

The following matters raised in representations have not been covered in the above assessment but are addressed as follows:

The accommodation proposed would provide an acceptable space standard for this type of accommodation; the site is not located in the area where nitrate neutrality is required to be demonstrated and impact on property value is not a material planning consideration.

## 13 RECOMMENDATION

Delegated Authority be given to the Chief Planning Officer to **GRANT PERMISSION** subject to:

- i) the identified contribution first being made for habitat and air quality mitigation
- ii) the imposition of the conditions set out below.

### Proposed Conditions:

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1210 PD100 Rev A; 1210 PD100 Rev G and 1210 PD102 Rev B.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.



3. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the spaces shown on plan 1210 PD100 Rev G for the parking of motor vehicles and cycles have been provided.

The spaces shown on plan 1210 PD100 Rev G for the parking of motor vehicles and cycles shall be retained and kept available for the parking of motor vehicles and cycles for the residential use hereby approved at all times.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking provision is made in the interest of highway safety and in accordance with Policies ENV3 and CCC2 of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

4. Prior to undertaking any works to the external areas of the site, the following details shall be submitted to and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority:

- (a) a specification for new trees to be planted (species, size, spacing and location);
- (b) details of biodiversity enhancements;
- (c) a method and programme for the implementation of the approved landscaping scheme and the means to provide for its future maintenance.

The scheme shall be implemented only in accordance with those details prior to first occupation of the residential units hereby approved and thereafter retained.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes place in an appropriate way and biodiversity enhancements are secured to comply with Policies ENV1, ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

5. All external works (hard and soft landscape) shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details prior to first occupation of the residential units hereby approved and maintained thereafter. The paving to be used shall be Flagstone paving in sandstone finish and the proposed shared surface for the parking court would be Tegula block in Slate finish and it shall thereafter be retained such.

Reason: To ensure the achievement and long term retention of an appropriate quality of development and given its location in the setting of a listed building and to comply with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park and Policy DM1 of the Local Plan Part 2 for the New Forest District outside of the National Park .

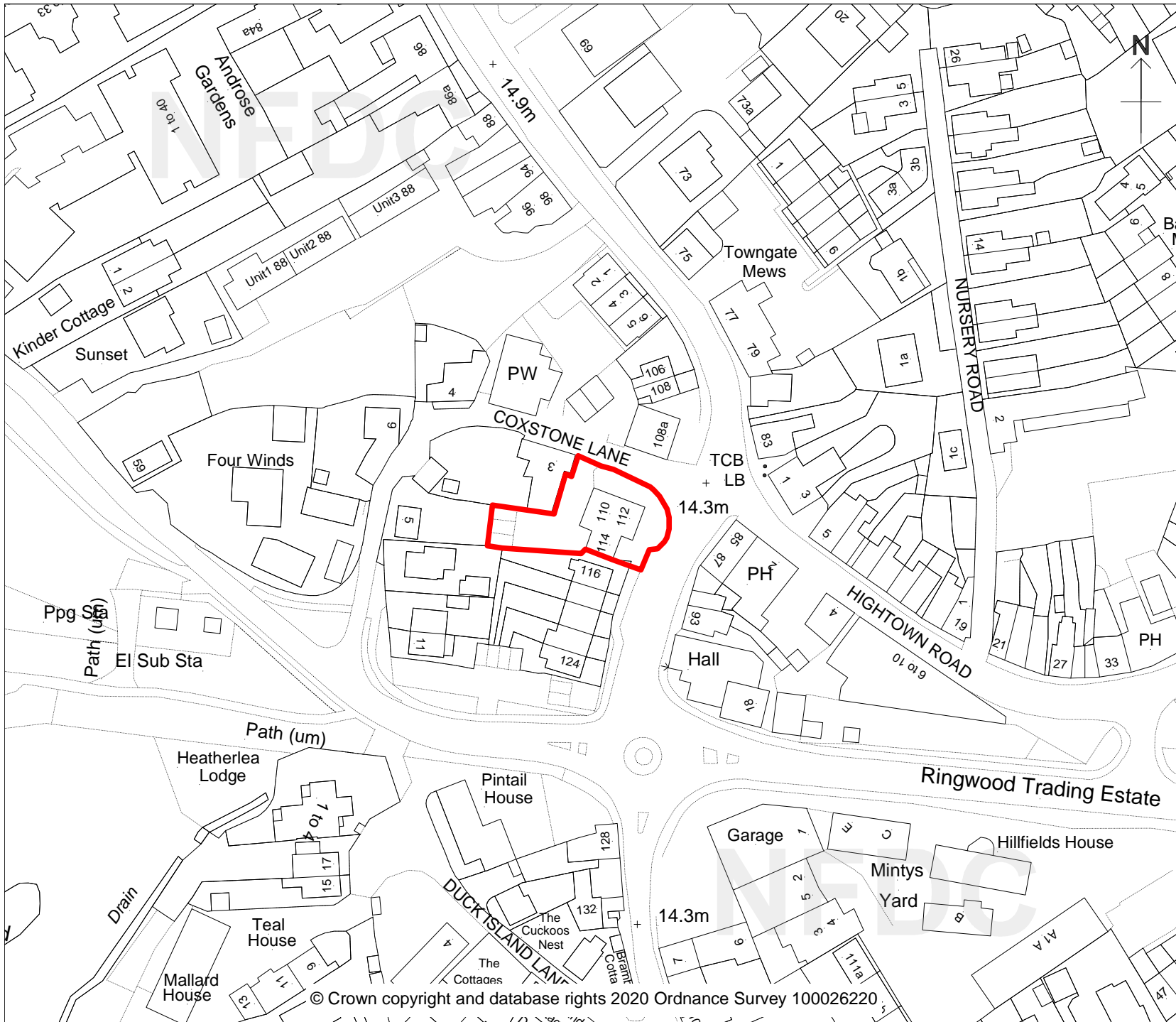
6. The windows and door hereby approved shall be constructed on timber and thereafter retained as such.

Reason: Due to the location of the site in the Ringwood Conservation Area and in the setting of listed buildings in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Local Plan Part 2 for the New Forest outside of the National Park

**Further Information:**

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# New Forest

DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Claire Upton-Brown  
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## PLANNING COMMITTEE

November 2020

110 Christchurch Road  
 Ringwood BH24 1DP

20/10938

Scale 1:1250

N.B. If printing this plan from the internet, it will not be to scale.