
TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

PLANS BOARD – 14TH JANUARY 2009

Schedule 1 : Planning Applications for determination by Board

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Agenda Type : A

W2008/0676 Erection of single storey 5 bedroomed self contained living unit Land adjacent to, Standford Villa, Sambrook.

Recommendation Code: FG

Ward: Edgmond

APPLICANT:
LDGC Limited

RECEIVED ON:
05/06/08

PARISH
Chetwynd

WARD
Edgmond

CASE OFFICER:
Phil Baker

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes.

MAIN ISSUES: Design, Appearance, Access, Parking, Effect on Residential Amenities.

THE SITE AND THE PROPOSAL:

This planning application relates to the erection of a self-contained independent living unit within the grounds of an existing Care Home at Standford Villa at Sambrook.

Standford Villa is a large detached two storey property set in 1.5 acres of grounds. The site slopes upwards towards the eastern boundary of the site where the neighbouring dwelling of Byre Cottage is located.

The application site lies at the junction of the A41 (Chester Road) and the minor road that leads to the village of Sambrook. The hamlet of Standford Bridge lies immediately to the south of application site.

The Care Home, which opened in 2006, provides accommodation and care facilities for adults aged 18 to 65 who have moderate learning difficulties. The applicants operate other Care Homes in Newport, Hinstock, Prees, and Stoke-on-Trent

At present the Care Home accommodates 5 adults, and the proposed unit would accommodate another 5 people. The new unit would comprise 5 separate bedrooms, each with an en-suite bathroom, together with a communal lounge, kitchen/dining room, laundry, storeroom, and office. Room sizes and internal space within the proposed unit have been designed to be in excess of the National Care Standard minimum requirements.

The proposed building would be mainly 5 metres in height (but rising to 6 metres in the middle), and constructed in traditional brick and tile that matches the materials used on Standford Villa. The new unit would be situated within a large area of open space to the east of Standford Villa, approximately 17 metres from the existing building. (This is closer to the main building than shown on the originally submitted plans). A total of 10 parking spaces would be provided for the entire site.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FROM THE APPLICANTS:

The applicants have stated that they specifically chose this location to operate a Care Home because it was in a rural location, but highly accessible to all the facilities available in Newport and Telford. They feel the Care Home has been operating very satisfactorily since it opened in 2006.

The applicants want to establish another care unit on the site because there is apparently a big demand for such facilities in this part of the country, and a severe shortage of such accommodation.

The residents of the Care Home are in their 20s and 30s, and this type of accommodation helps prepare them for independent living. However, if they want to stay there for the rest of their lives they would be able to do so. Their stay at the Care Home is quite voluntary, and they could request to leave at any time.

The applicants are at pains to point out that the whole ethos is to make this an ordinary home for the residents, where they can lead a full and active life, not an institution where they are restrained and restricted.

The residents would come from another Care Home or from their own homes, and would be referred to the Home by a Primary Care Trust or a Social Services Department, who would pay for their accommodation. The applicants would decide if a prospective resident was a suitable person to live there, and they would be fully assessed as to whether they would fit in with the other residents of the Care Home.

The applicants have stressed that they do not contemplate accommodating anyone with a history of violence or anybody who has been to prison. Neither would they take anyone who is a known paedophile, arsonist, or criminal.

At the moment the existing 5 residents are looked after by 5 staff who are on duty between 8.00am and 10.00pm, and by 2 staff at night between 10.00pm and 8.00am. In addition to this there are emergency back-up staff if any situation warranted it. There is, therefore, never a time when the residents are there alone in the Care Home by themselves. The proposed care unit would have a similar number of staff. Staff integrate with the residents at all times and therefore do not have their own rest rooms or staff quarters.

When entering the Care Home a Care Plan is drawn up for each resident. This usually includes what training and tuition is required to meet their individual needs, and to allow them to lead active and fulfilled lives. Many attend colleges, day centres, or voluntary work placements.

The Care Home has 2 minibuses which transport the residents to their colleges and day centres, and also take them shopping and to recreational facilities. Staff are required to accompany the residents at all times (although one existing resident is able to come and go as he likes).

The applicants acknowledge that some residents do get worked up from time to time but they claim that many of the allegations that have been made by local residents are either exaggerated, unfounded or untrue. For instance, to their knowledge, no

resident has been chased across the A41 or has attempted suicide, and there have only been two documented cases of a new resident running out of the grounds. In addition, staff will testify that at no time have residents threatened or abused anyone.

The applicants emphasise that this is Care Home, not a prison or a secure unit, because that is not the type of person being accommodated here. The facility is not an institution or a hospital, but is a household for a group of individuals who live there as a community. This is their home, and the purpose of the staff is to facilitate their lives in order to ensure that they live as 'normal' a life as possible.

The applicants stress that the Care Home is fully registered with all the Social Care bodies, and is subject to the standards as set out in the Care Standards Act 2000. They are also subject to regular inspections by the Commission for Social Care (CSCI). They feel that the new building would provide the highest possible care standards and facilities that a purpose-built unit can provide.

The applicants consider that the proposed development would have a positive knock-on effect by providing employment for up to 17 Care staff at Standford Villa if this proposal was implemented.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

6 letters of objection have been received from local residents, summarised below as follows:

- The existing use of the building causes fear and distress to local people who feel threatened and unable to leave their homes. These feelings would increase if the new unit was built
- Existing residents are regularly heard shouting and swearing, both within the grounds and out in the lane, at all hours of the day and night
- Loud-mouthed offensive behaviour is not wanted in this small quiet community
- Existing residents leave the premises without supervision. An increased number of residents would potentially create more issues
- Carers have to follow the Care Home residents to get them to return (and chase them across the busy A41). One resident was forcibly restrained in the local public house car park and another threatened to commit suicide in the lane
- Current levels of supervision are inadequate
- Could jeopardise the safety of local children
- Absence of any street lighting would cause a hazard to anyone using the road
- Restricted visibility when exiting the site. Increased usage of the access will make this a traffic hazard. Congestion at this point could lead to a serious accident
- The area needs to be kept naturally tranquil
- The size and height of the building is inappropriate, and not in keeping with its surroundings
- A previous application to build on this site was refused on appeal
- Will adversely affect property values in the area

The Parish Council has objected to the application for the following reasons:

- The present use of the property has given rise to problems with neighbouring occupiers. It is alleged that the residents of the Care Home have intimidated local residents by being abusive and using offensive language.
- There are no recreational facilities for the Care Home residents in this area, and there is no regular bus service to Newport
- The floor area of the new unit would be larger than the existing property and would dwarf it.
- The access to the site is extremely dangerous. It is a narrow gateway and visibility for vehicles exiting the site is poor – there have been several near misses with traffic on the Sambrook road. Even fire engines have to park outside the property.
- Concern at the efficient disposal of sewerage and waste from the site
- Planning permission has been refused for a development on this site in the past

The Council's Highways Engineer initially had concerns about the under provision of car parking within the site. However, he has subsequently seen amended drawings which show the provision of 10 parking spaces for the whole complex, and considers this to be an adequate number of spaces for the whole site. He has no objections to the vehicular access arrangements into and out of the site entrance, either now or in the future if this application was approved.

The Council's Geotechnical Engineer - no objections to the application.

The Council's Drainage Engineer - no objections, subject to a condition requiring a soakaway test to be undertaken.

PLANNING HISTORY:

In 2004 planning permission was refused for a single bungalow on the site on the grounds that it would be located in the open countryside, and did not form an extension to a suitable settlement. (Ref: W2004/0381)

In 2007 planning permission was granted for a change of use of a detached office to a self-contained living unit. (Ref: W2007/0857)

PLANNING POLICY:

The following policies are relevant in the determination of this application:-

LDF Core Strategy
CS15 – Urban Design

Wrekin Local Plan
UD2 – Urban Design

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

This application has generated a number of letters of objection from local residents and the Parish Council. The predominant grounds of objection relate to the

behavioural problems of the residents who currently live at Standford Villa, and how these problems would increase if the new unit was built on the site.

Therefore, the main issue is whether the proposed development would cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the locality, and have such an undue impact on the amenity of local residents, as to warrant a refusal.

The perception of local fears has to be balanced against whether verifiable harm was likely to arise, and whether other safeguards are in place.

There is no compelling evidence that the proposed development would be a threat to public safety or lead to an increase in crime and disorder. Neither is there firm and substantiated evidence that the Care Home residents would be a risk to local people. This is due to the relatively small number of people residing at the Care Home; the degree to which they are supervised; and the high staff/resident ratio.

Since the Care Home opened in 2006 no complaints have been received by the Planning Enforcement Officer, and it is understood that no incidents have been reported to the police or to the relevant Social Care authorities.

Whilst recognising the concern and fears of local residents, there is no convincing evidence that the proposed development would undermine the amenity and safety of local residents in the immediate vicinity.

There is a national objective of transferring people from large institutions to smaller, local units. The applicants claim that there is an urgent need for more of these Care Homes, and your planning officers consider that the need for the facility outweighs any possible disturbance or inconvenience that it may cause.

The Care Home, and the proposed new unit, would be properly registered with the relevant Social Care bodies. It is subject to regular inspections by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and has to comply with the standards contained in the Care Standards Act 2000. Any contravention of the vigorous guidelines would be dealt with accordingly. It is felt that this should give adequate protection to neighbours' amenities.

In all other respects it is considered that the development is acceptable. It is felt that the design and appearance of the proposed single storey building, and its location within the grounds of Standford Villa, reflects and respects the character of the locality, and is sympathetic to the visual amenities of the surrounding area. It will to a large extent be screened by an existing roadside hedge, and a condition will be imposed to ensure its retention into the future.

The Council's Highways Engineer has no objections to the proposed access and parking arrangements, believing that the new unit will not generate any substantial increase in traffic.

In short, your planning officers consider that the proposed development would not cause any undue harm to the character and appearance of the area, or have any discernible or significant impact on the residential amenities of neighbouring

residents by reason of its use. In addition, the building itself is considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. A3 – Full permission
2. C120 – Amended plans submitted
3. B15 – External materials
4. C86 – Car parking
5. D138 – Restrictions on use of building
6. Development to be used in conjunction with the existing Care Home facility at Standford Villa at all times, and not occupied as separate independent residential accommodation
7. D131 – No further windows
8. C78 – Retention of hedges
9. C100 – Landfill gas mitigation measures
10. B65 – Soakaway test

REASONS FOR APPROVAL:

There is no compelling evidence that the proposed development would be a threat to public safety or lead to an increase in crime and disorder. Neither is there firm and substantiated evidence that the Care Home residents would be a risk to local people. This is due to the relatively small number of people residing at the Care Home; the degree to which they are supervised; and the high staff/resident ratio.

There is no convincing evidence that the proposed development would cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the locality, or have an undue impact on the amenity and safety of local residents.

The need for the facility outweighs any possible disturbance or inconvenience that it may cause. The Care Home, and the proposed new unit, would be properly registered with the relevant Social Care bodies and be subject to regular inspections. Any contravention of their vigorous guidelines would be dealt with by the authorities.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2008/1252 Conversion of single dwelling into 3 flats
28, Stafford Road, Oakengates, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: FG
Ward: Ketley & Oakengates

APPLICANT:
Mr David Bradshaw

RECEIVED ON:
04/11/08

PARISH
Oakengates

WARD
Ketley & Oakengates

CASE OFFICER:
Anna Robinson

OAKENGATES TOWN COUNCIL HAS REQUESTED THAT THIS PLANNING APPLICATION IS CONSIDERED AT PLANS BOARD

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: Yes.

MAIN ISSUES: Principle of development, scale and design, amenity issues, highways issues.

THE PROPOSAL:

The application seeks planning permission for conversion of an existing two-storey property into 3no. flats, with 1no. unit located at first floor level and 2no. units at ground floor. The conversion requires a number of external and internal alterations and additions, such as the installation of an external staircase at the rear (replacing the existing internal staircase), removal and addition of internal walls. A single storey rear extension is also proposed in order to form adequate accommodation to create 2 ground floor flats.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The application site comprises a vacant four-bedroomed end of terrace Victorian property, with single storey rear extension and lean-to structure. There are two front bay windows and a central door entrance, with further windows and doors located to the side and rear. A sizeable but currently overgrown garden area/informal drive are located to the side and rear of the property, sloping up to the eastern boundary, with the A442 beyond. The garden area is screened by wall, hedging and trees, with a Tree Preservation Order to the rear of the site. There is an existing gap (vehicular entrance) to the side.

The application site is in an established predominantly residential street, and is situated in a sustainable location, on the edge of Oakengates District Centre and within easy walking distance to the bus and railway stations, large central public car park and shops.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Oakengates Town Council objects to the application on the grounds that there would be no provision of off-street parking to serve the three flats.

One neighbour letter of objection has been received with the comments summarised below:

- A few small alterations have been made following the previous refusal, but the change of use is still not appropriate in the area
- Only cosmetic changes from the previous refusal
- Problem concerning parking of six vehicles – heard that privately owned car park opposite may be utilised
- Dearth of car parking in the area for the existing residents, and additional vehicles would exacerbate problem
- Change of use would not enhance local area – a house that is part of the heritage of Oakengates.

PLANNING HISTORY:

W2007/1214 Residential development, Full refused

W2008/0965 Conversion to 3no. flats, Full refused

POLICY CONTEXT:

National Planning Policy

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS3 Housing

Core Strategy

CS15 Urban Design

Wrekin Local Plan 1995 – 2006

UD2 Design Criteria

H6 Windfall Sites

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

There have been two previous refusals for residential development/conversion at the property. The initial scheme sought permission to reinstate a two storey element and create a new dwelling. The Local Planning Authority refused the application as there was insufficient evidence of an original two storey element, and it was considered out of keeping and detrimental to adjoining properties.

The recent refusal was for a similar scheme to the current application, with conversion to 3no. flats. Amendments were discussed and requested by the Local Planning Authority, but none were submitted. The application was refused for reasons of unacceptable design, layout, detrimental impact, and loss of amenity space, given over to parking provision within the site. The Agent discussed the refusal with the Local Planning Authority, but did not submit informal drawings prior to resubmission.

The principal changes in the current submission compared to the previous application are relatively minor – the front door has been retained giving access to Flat 1, additional openings on the side elevation have been reduced and now limited to the new door at first floor level (Flat 3) accessed via the new external staircase, and the internal arrangement of Flat 1 has been revised. The staircase is a rather incongruous addition to the property, although it will be screened from the street by the existing frontage of the building.

The amenity space has been retained and the proposal no longer includes car parking provision. The existing informal driveway has relatively poor visibility and the access would not be adequate for 3 individual households to use. If parking provision had been provided within the site, the majority of the amenity space would be comprise parking and turning area, and would have a greater impact on the residential amenity of the adjoining property, No.26 Stafford Road. However, in this central and sustainable location, close to the District Centre and public transport links, it is not considered necessary to allocate parking. There is also a potential issue of overlooking of the adjoining property from the first floor accommodation (Flat 3) in particular, as existing windows would now serve more habitable rooms; however no new windows are being added to the building.

The plans refer to a new single storey extension at the rear of the property as permitted development. The Local Planning Authority has advised that if the property is converted into flats prior to the erection of the extension, the proposed extension would require planning permission. The sub-division to 3 flats appears to be dependant on this single storey extension being included, which would form the bedroom to Flat 2. The Council's Environmental Engineers have requested a shallow mining investigation for the proposed extension. The Local Planning Authority has requested full elevational drawings of the extension to enable consideration of this element as part of the proposed conversion.

The Local Planning Authority has requested that the financial viability of the conversion is established. Officers have advised the Agent that conversion to 2no. units would be more appropriate form of development for this property, and officers have concern that 3no. units would be overdevelopment. The existing 2-storey property could easily be converted to 2 units without the need for as many internal or external alterations, or the need for the additional single storey rear extension. It would create one flat at ground floor and one flat at first floor. The proposed first floor plan demonstrates few alterations are required to create a single 2-bedroomed flat with large living and bedroom accommodation; whereas the ground floor plan identifies more significant changes and limited living and bedroom accommodation to the 2no. ground floor one-bedroom flats.

With regard to the proposed extension, (bedroom to Flat 2), it appears relatively modest in size and of an appropriate form and scale in relation to the existing building.

Whilst the scheme is not ideal, and conversion to 2no. units would be more suitable, the resubmission has overcome the previous issues of poor design and layout and loss of amenity space. The external alterations have been minimised, and should have less impact on the character and appearance of the building, maintaining the central door (entrance to Flat 1) facing the street and retaining a greater residential feel and activity on the street, with only one new door and staircase to the side elevation. Whilst officers consider that 2 flats would create a better form of development and 2 better sized flats, the property is in a sustainable location and will provide adequate communal amenity space to the side and rear, maintaining the existing and prevailing character of rear garden areas, not parking area as the previous scheme proposed; and on balance, the proposal is considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to submission of details of financial viability and amended plans, and the following conditions:

1. A3 Timescale
2. C68 Materials to match existing
3. Shallow mining investigation
4. Submission of landscaping scheme

REASON FOR APPROVAL:

The application site is situated in a sustainable location, within walking distance of Oakengates District Centre and the railway and bus stations. The proposal would maintain the character and appearance of the existing building and streetscene, and provide adequate amenity space.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2008/1325 Tree works as per schedule
Land at, Cricketers Lane, St Georges, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: TPG
Ward: Priorslee

APPLICANT:
Telford & Wrekin Council

RECEIVED ON:
27/11/08

PARISH
St. Georges & Priorslee

WARD
Priorslee

CASE OFFICER:
Andrew Mackriell

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: None.

MAIN ISSUES: The need to protect the future health and amenity of the trees, in the interests of safety and the surrounding environment.

THE PROPOSALS:

It is proposed to carry out works to maintain eleven mature Sycamore trees adjoining the highway verge on Cricketers Lane. The nature of the proposed works include crown thinning, crown reduction, cutting back over extended branches, and killing ivy on the trunks. No trees are proposed for felling.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA:

The row of trees are situated to the rear of the highway verge on Cricketers Lane and adjoin the boundary to rear gardens of houses in Crest Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT:

'Saved' Policy OL11 in the Wrekin Local Plan.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objections to the proposed tree works and considers the works necessary. He proposes to supervise the works.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

The mature Sycamore trees provide considerable amenity value in this residential area and contribute significantly to the street scene. The proposed maintenance work is identified by the Council's Woodland Officer as necessary in order to protect the future health of the trees so that they can continue to enhance the environment in the area.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT TREE PRESERVATION ORDER CONSENT subject to the following condition:

1. The extent of the tree works shall be agreed on site with the Council's Woodland Officer and the works shall be carried out by an appropriately qualified and insured arboricultural contractor.

Notes

Agenda Type : A

W2008/1336 Crown lift and shaping of lower canopy to Blue Atlas Cedar tree
Land to the rear of, 21, Priorslee Village, Priorslee, Telford, Shropshire.
Recommendation Code: TPG
Ward: Priorslee

APPLICANT:
Telford & Wrekin Services

RECEIVED ON:
05/12/08

PARISH
St. Georges & Priorslee

WARD
Priorslee

CASE OFFICER:
Andrew Mackriell

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED: None.

MAIN ISSUES: The protection of the tree in order to maintain its public amenity value.

THE PROPOSALS:

It is proposed to carry out minor crown lifting and shaping of the lower canopy to the Cedar tree.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The subject tree is a distinctive and attractive Blue Atlas Cedar situated on a prominent corner site adjoining the highway in an urban residential area. There are many other trees in this residential estate which contribute to the character of the area.

PLANNING POLICY:

'Saved' Policy OL11 in the Wrekin Local Plan 1995-2006.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objections to the proposed tree works.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

This distinctive tree is prominently situated in the street scene where it provides amenity and enhances the local environment. The proposed tree works have been specified by the Council's Woodland Officer as appropriate in order to maintain the health and amenity value of the tree.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT TREE PRESERVATION ORDER CONSENT subject to the following condition:

1. The tree works shall be carried out by an appropriately qualified and insured professional arboricultural contractor.

Notes