

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

DATE: **23RD MARCH 2016**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT)**

SUBJECT: **FULL APPLICATION – CHANGE OF USE FROM A GUEST HOUSE TO A SMALL GROUP RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN’S HOME AT GERDDI BEUNO, WHITFORD STREET, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **054594**

APPLICANT: **MR. JAMES O’LEARY**

SITE: **GERDDI BEUNO,
WHITFORD STREET, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **16TH NOVEMBER 2015**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR P.J. CURTIS**

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **HOLYWELL TOWN COUNCIL**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **MEMBER REQUEST**

SITE VISIT: **YES**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This application is for change of use from a guest house to a small group residential childrens home at Gerddi Beuno, Whitford Street, Holywell. The main issues to be considered are the principle of the development, highway implications effects upon the amenities of adjoining residents and the effects upon existing health facilities in the area.
- 1.02 As the site is located within the settlement limit of Holywell as defined by the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan, it is acceptable in principle in planning policy terms. Given the use of the existing

vehicular access to the site and existing provision of off road parking within the site, it is considered that there will be no detrimental impact upon highway safety. In relation to the effects upon the amenities of adjoining residents, it is considered that there will be no significant detrimental impact given existing and proposed screening, level of supervision of the young adults and no additional windows upon the building proposed in terms of noise disturbance and overlooking. In terms of health facilities they will not be used in the area.

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

2.01 Conditions

1. 5 year time limit on commencement of the development.
2. In accordance with approved plans.
3. Prior to commencement of development, fence to be erected along part of the northern boundary. Details of location, type and height to be submitted and approved. Approved details to be implemented in full thereafter.

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member

Councillor P.J. Curtis

No response received to date.

Adjacent Local Member

Councillor G. Roberts

Preliminary view is that this application would result in a negative effect on Ysgol Gwenffrwyd and that perception is a material consideration in this case. It not only adjoins Ysgol Gwenffrwyd which is a primary school, but adjoins the 'smaller childrens play yard'.

Therefore request that the matter be referred to the Planning Committee for determination and for a site visit to take place so that the actual location can be appreciated.

Holywell Town Council

Supported, subject to the proposal being in accordance with national guidelines, incorporating safeguards for the welfare of residents and that any identified highway/traffic management issues relating to the proposed change of use are satisfactorily resolved.

Head of Highways (Development Control)

No observations to make.

Head of Public Protection

No adverse comments to make regarding this proposal.

Children's & Workforce Services

Own understanding is that the proposal is specifically to accommodate girls who have been sexually exploited. Already a small unit in Flint providing this service. Contend that there is no local need for additional service provision. Do not support the application.

Also be an impact for BCUHB (Health) as local therapeutic interventions would be needed with potential implications for CAMHS (Community Adolescent Mental Health Services).

As application does not set out intended provision for the care home it is difficult to comment on the location of the Home and its impact.

Further discussions with the applicant are due to take place and these will be reported as late observations at the committee meeting.

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru

Requests that if minded to grant planning consent that the suggested advisory notes are placed upon any planning permission granted.

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

Five letters of objection received. The grounds of objection are summarised as below:-

- Not been contacted and had to seek information about the application for themselves.
- Children could display extreme behaviour patterns and concerned about impact on nearby residents and school children.
- Noise and hours of use of the property.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 **97/0525**

Change of use to religious guest house – Granted 5th September 1997.

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

STR1 – New Development.

GEN1 – General Requirements for Development.

GEN2 – Development Inside Settlement Boundaries.

EWP13 – Nuisance.

The site lies within the settlement boundary for Holywell as defined by the adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan. As such the principle of the use is considered acceptable in planning policy terms. What needs to be considered are the detailed aspects of the proposal.

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Site Description & Proposals

The site comprises of the former religious guest house of Gerddi Bueno, Whitford Street, Holywell. It is a large detached building with a garden to the rear which slopes downwards towards Ysgol Gwenffrwd. At the front is the access, double single storey garage, parking and manoeuvring space to serve the property. The building is located in between the property of Affallon and a footpath leading to Ysgol Gwenffrwd. Beyond the footpath lies the property of Bryn Bueno. It is located in a residential area with two schools to the rear. Immediately to the rear lies a playground belonging to Ysgol Gwenffrwd. There is screen cover upon the boundaries to the rear of hedgerows.

7.02 The proposal is for change of use from a guest house to a residential children's home. It is the intention that up to 5 young people and up to 5 staff would reside at the property. It will accommodate girls aged from 10 to 17 years. These young people that will be residing at the home may have experienced some trauma and/or neglect and are unable to live within their family homes. They will require a safe, nurturing environment to enable them to recover from any trauma they may have experienced and encourage them to engage with health and education services. All the young people will be attending school. They will be supported to be active members of the community, and will be encouraged to access community based activities and groups to make a contribution to the community. Staff support levels for community interaction would be continually assessed on an individual basis. The home will be staffed at a minimum level of 1:1 to allow support for such supervision and support.

7.03 No works are proposed to the interior or exterior of the building.

7.04 Issues

The main issues to be considered within the determination of this planning application are the principle of the development, the highway implications together with the effects upon the amenities of the adjoining residents.

7.05 Principle of Development

The site is located within the settlement limit of Holywell as defined by the Adopted Flintshire Unitary Development Plan.

- 7.06 As such the principle of the development is acceptable in planning policy terms. The need for the development is not a requirement in this case. What needs to be considered are the detailed issues of highways, effects upon the amenities of adjoining residents and the strain upon health resources in the area.
- 7.07 Highway Implications
The existing vehicular access and off road parking within the site for 7 vehicles will be utilised as part of the development.
- 7.08 Given the above, the Head of Highways has no observations to make upon the application upon highway safety grounds.
- 7.09 Amenities of Adjoining Residents
Up to 5 young people together with up to 5 staff would be residing at the property. The young people may have experienced some trauma and/or neglect and are unable to live within their family homes. The home will be staffed at a minimum level of 1:1 to allow for supervision and support.
- 7.10 The site is located within a residential area with two schools to the rear. Immediately to the rear is a playground. Upon all boundaries at the rear there are high and thick hedgerows. There is however a small gap in the hedgerow upon the northern boundary which overlooks the playground. The Applicant proposes to erect a fence within this small gap to prevent any overlooking from the rear garden of the property. The requirement for this to be undertaken prior to occupation has been placed upon the recommendation to grant planning permission.
- 7.11 Given the level of supervision of the young people, the amount of existing and proposed screening of the rear garden area immediately adjacent to the school playground, it is considered that there will not be a significant increased detrimental impact upon the amenities of adjoining residents compared to its previously uses in terms of noise, overlooking etc.
- 7.12 I have considered the concerns of neighbouring residents about the potential impact of the behaviour of the residents of the home on neighbouring land, including children and staff at the schools (Gwenffrwd Primary School and St. Winefrides Primary School) and those concerns are also referred to by Councillor Roberts in his response during the consultation period. However, given the level of supervision that will be afforded to the children and existing and proposed screening of the site it is considered that they will not have a significant detrimental impact in this respect. As a result this has been afforded limited weight in my consideration of the application.

7.13 Health Resources

The consultation response from the Senior Manager: Children & Workforce mentions that there will be an impact for BCUHB (Health) as local therapeutic interventions would be needed with potential implications for CAMHS (Community Adolescent Mental Health Services).

7.14 The applicant, however, states that the proposal may not be necessarily used by females who have been subject to CSE. If however it was, they would not be using any therapeutic input from either CAHMS or BCUHB as they do not provide the level of specialist input. As in homes elsewhere, they would buy in external specialist therapeutic services which would be funded directly by the placing authority.

8.00 CONCLUSION

8.01 For the above reasons, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms.

8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention, and has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Planning Application & Supporting Documents
National & Local Planning Policy
Responses to Consultation
Responses to Publicity

Contact Officer: Alan Wells
Telephone: (01352) 703255
Email: alan.wells@flintshire.gov.uk