

24/2007/053

MRS E K PURVIS

EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 15 BEDROOMS WITH CAR PARKING FOR 16 CARS AT THE WOODLANDS RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME, WRANTAGE

330904/122629

FULL

PROPOSAL

Woodlands residential care home currently has 12 no. bedrooms, and the proposed two-storey extension is for an additional 15 no. bedrooms with communal lounge facility and an entrance block linking with the existing building. The home offers long-term and respite care and has been offering accommodation for the elderly since 1994. The present staffing level is six full-time and 11 part-time, and the proposal will increase the permanent staff by four. The applicant advises that with new legislation for care: 12 rooms makes the home difficult to economically sustain; the additional 15 rooms making a 27 bed unit will be more economical; and the home gives a valuable service to the vulnerable and elderly and provides substantial employment for local people.

The two-storey extension is 6.9 metres from ground to ridge height; the layout incorporates substantial landscaping between the extension and the neighbouring property Rose Cottage; a large parking area is proposed; and visibility splays are increased to improve an existing dangerous access onto the A378.

A similar proposal, reference 24/2007/012, was withdrawn in May 2007. The current proposal sites the extension further away from the neighbour, additional planting is proposed, and staff accommodation has been omitted.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY - The proposal is located outside development limits although the proposal will foster a growth in the need to travel it will only be increasing the additional movements that are already occurring at the site therefore the proposal accords with Structure Plan Policy STR6 (Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages). The proposal will utilise the existing access, however it should be noted that the site exists onto a Class 1 road (A378), which is designated county route. Therefore suitable visibility splays have been proposed for 2.4m back from the centre line with visibility splays of 70m in both directions in addition a turning area is included within the proposal to allow vehicles safe access to the highway, therefore the proposal accords with Structure Plan Policy 49 (Transport Requirements of New Development).

In terms of the Local Plan the proposal accords with Policy S1 (General Requirements) as there will be additional traffic generated from this proposal but

measures have been taken to reduce its impact on the adjoining highway with the improved visibility splays.

In terms of parking for the site it is proposed to utilise 16 parking bays this is found to be acceptable within the parameters of the Local Transport Plan Two.

Therefore I recommend that planning permission is granted for this proposal and would require that the following conditions be attached to the planning permission.

WESSEX WATER – Recommended notes

PARISH COUNCIL – Does not object in principle to this application except for the height of the buildings and loss of privacy to the adjacent property of Rose Cottage.

DRAINAGE OFFICER – Recommends conditions and notes.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER – I am concerned that the proposals are for a large building in 'open countryside' visible from several Public Rights of Way, that is likely to have a detrimental landscape mitigation.

1 LETTER OF SUPPORT has been submitted on the grounds that: the local environment will be improved visually; extra jobs will be created; residents will have a better and more dignified living space; and extra rooms are needed to make the home viable.

9 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received on the following grounds: Rose Cottage would be overlooked; the development would dominate the skyline; the development would be out of character with surrounding homes; an undesirable precedent would be set for development in open countryside; loss of light would result, and screen planting would add to the problem; the proposal should be designed more sympathetically; noise and light pollution would result; additional traffic is not sustainable and is of concern; and the proposal is contrary to policy.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policies S1 and S2 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan seek to safeguard, inter alia, visual and residential amenity, and road safety. Policy EC2 accepts proposals by existing firms to expand onto land subject to restrictive policies, where relocation to a more suitable site is unrealistic, and where the economic benefit of the proposal outweighs any harm to the objectives of the relevant policy. Mitigating measures will be sought to reduce any environmental impact to a minimum.

ASSESSMENT

Although the development constitutes a large extension, and would be visible from surrounding footpaths, it would barely be visible from the public highway. Furthermore, there would be a substantial and minimum distance of 16 metres between first floor windows and the boundary of the neighbouring property Rose Cottage. Accordingly, there would be no undue loss of privacy. In addition, there is suggested landscaping between the extension and the neighbours, and the

architectural detailing/design is not considered disagreeable with particular regard to the low key ground to ridge height of only 6-9 metres. It is not consequently considered that there would be any demonstrable harm. Having further regard to the improvements in road safety engendered by increased visibility, the increase in employment, and the valuable service that the home provides for the community, I consider that on balance the proposal is acceptable, subject to various conditions, which will include a demand for significant and appropriate landscaping.

RECOMMENDATION

That permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time, materials, landscaping, drainage details, and highway conditions.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:-

The proposed development would not adversely affect the character of the building, the character or appearance of the open countryside, or visual or residential amenity, and does not therefore conflict with Taunton Deane Local Plan policies S1 and S2.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

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NOTES: