

**Application Number**

P/2015/0229

**Site Address**65 St Marychurch Road  
Torquay  
Devon  
TQ1 3HG**Case Officer**

Mr Scott Jones

**Ward**

St Marychurch

**Description**

Change of Use to form Supportive Living Accommodation for Adults with Learning Difficulties (Use Class C2); External alterations (retaining existing caretakers flat)

**Executive Summary**

The application is for conversion of the building to supportive living accommodation for adults with learning difficulties. The proposal would provide 10 bedrooms for supportive living for adults with communal kitchen, dining living and activity rooms. A three bedroom managers flat would be provided at first floor level. A small number of external alterations are proposed to remove two garage doors and to provide disabled access to the building. These are considered acceptable and would not affect the visual amenity of the area.

The principle of this use within an area that is predominantly residential would be acceptable and would be consistent with Policy CF15 of the Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011. The applicant has been requested to submit details about the operation and management of the premises in order that an understanding of staffing levels and movements to and from the site can be considered as part of the application.

A number of conditions are suggested to ensure satisfactory implementation of the proposal including provision of a landscape scheme to improve the amenity space within the curtilage of the site.

**Recommendation**

Approval; Subject to; achieving planning contributions as considered necessary in-line with adopted and emerging policy, and appropriate planning conditions as considered necessary to ensure a suitable form of development, Subject to the submission and approval of a business and operational statement to the satisfaction of the LPA in accordance with Emerging Policy H6 of the Submitted Local Plan.

**Site Details**

The site is the former St Johns Ambulance station, which sits adjacent to and overlooks the St Marychurch Road between the Plainmoor shopping area that

lies to the north and the top of Torquay town centre that lies to the south. There is a residential character to the immediate area.

The building is a large detached two-storey Victorian Villa that has been extended. There is a parking area to the front of the building and pockets of landscape/garden to the front side and rear. The plot is enclosed by fencing.

There is a residential flat to the rear at first floor level (No.65a) which does not form part of the application.

There are no built or landscape designations over the land.

### **Detailed Proposals**

Change of use of the building to an assisted care facility providing 10 bedrooms, communal space and staff accommodation. The proposed use sits within Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions) whereas the previous St Johns Ambulance use is within the Use Class D1 (Non-Residential Institution).

The ground floor will provide 6 bedrooms along with a large day/activity room and further lounge, kitchen and dining rooms. The upper floor provides 4 further bedrooms, an office, and a 3-bed flat for staff accommodation.

The proposal includes alterations to the front elevation to provide disabled access and to replace the two large double garage doors with a set of bi-fold doors, sliding sash windows and a doorway. An area of deck is also detailed on the floor plan adjacent to the proposed day room and activity room.

### **Summary Of Consultation Responses**

*Highways:* Pending observations.

*South West Water:* No objections.

*Green Infrastructure Officer:* Pending observations on any necessary planning obligations.

### **Summary Of Representations**

7 letters of representation received, including a petition with 10 signatures, objecting to the proposals. Concerns raised include:

- Support, provides a suitable use, retains amenity and will provide jobs;
- Impact upon amenity of the existing flat, noise and disturbance;
- Traffic and impact upon Locksley Close;
- Impact upon property value (not a planning issue);
- Amenity impact if not properly managed/controlled;
- Overdevelopment;
- Noise disturbance;

- Overlooking;
- Use is not compatible with the residential character;
- Lack of detail on the use.

### **Relevant Planning History**

P/2012/0467 - Change of use to a dwelling – Approved.

### **Key Issues/Material Considerations**

Policy CF15 of the Saved Local Plan states that proposals for the provision of accommodation for the elderly or other people in need of care should:

- i) provide premises that are well related to the local residential community and public transport, and within walking distance of local shops and other amenities,
- ii) not conflict with landscape or nature conservation policies,
- iii) have adequate amenity space within the grounds to permit appropriate landscaping and attractive surroundings for residents,
- iv) provide appropriate parking and access in-line with local plan policies,
- v) not supply an over-concentration of uses within the area and not be detrimental to the character or amenities of the neighbourhood, and
- vi) supply appropriate accommodation for staff whether on site or with direct communication with residents, to ensure that there is proper care and management of the facility.

Policy H6 of the Submitted Local Plan also covers that new care facilities should:

- i) Present clear evidence of need;
- ii) Should not add undue pressure on local healthcare or social services.

The key policy issues above are discussed below.

#### **Location:**

The site is well related to the local residential community and public transport, and within walking distance of local shops and other amenities. Plainmoor shopping centre sits to the north and the site is within walking distance of the town centre to the south. It is considered an appropriate and sustainable location and one comfortably aligned with the aspirations of criterion "1" of Policy CF15.

#### **Landscape and nature conservation:**

The site is not sensitive in landscape or nature conservation terms and the land is not covered under any relative planning designation. There is also no increase in footprint of the building into soft-scaped land. The proposal does not conflict with criterion "2" of Policy CF15.

#### **Amenity space:**

The site is relatively restricted and the curtilage offers limited quality outdoor

space. There is space to the front, side and rear of the building however the amount and quality of the space raises a degree of concern.

There would be scope to improve the amenity space adjacent to the proposed deck where there would appear to be a redundant area of tarmac past the proposed designated parking. The potential of this space along with wider enhancements around the building should be explored in order to capture improvement to the amenity provision. This could be achieved by condition of a landscaping scheme expressly detailed to secure improved provision of outdoor amenity space.

With a condition to achieved improvements to the landscaping, on balance, the proposal is considered consistent with criterion "3" of Policy CF15.

Parking/Access:

Emerging Local Plan parking policy suggests the supply of one space per eight residents for care facilities. In regard to HMOs it suggests one space per two bedrooms.

Although yet to be formally detailed as such via the requested business plan / operations statement it has been expressed that the proposal is a bespoke form of care that is in some ways close in character to a shared building / House in Multiple Occupation. The parking standards expected from both have been outlined above and the proposed provision would appear more than adequate for either.

Cycle parking has not been detailed and this should be secured by condition.

The proposal appears comfortably aligned with the aspirations of criterion "4" of Saved Policy CF15.

Impact on neighbouring living conditions:

Having considered the relationship with neighbouring occupiers and the relevant planning policy the scheme is considered acceptable in terms of neighbour amenity.

The use/occupancy of care facilities generally sit quite comfortably within residential areas, as the character is principally residential in nature.

The proposal would appear to be suitable when considering the scale of the building and the plot. The intensification of the use is unlikely to present noise and disturbance that is any different to either the established use or a flatted scheme for building.

The proposal is considered acceptable on planning merit when considering Criterion "5" of Saved Policy CF15.

Appropriate management on site:

In respect to the management proposals there is an office and staff accommodation detailed.

It is considered essential that the proposal is supported by suitable on-site management and supervision and this should be assured via a restrictive condition.

With a suitable condition attached the proposal is considered consistent with criterion "6" of Saved Policy CF15.

Evidence of need and likely impact upon local healthcare or social services

Emerging Policy H6 of the Submitted Local Plan requires consideration of the need of the care facility and the impact upon local healthcare provision or social services to be addressed in the determination of application for housing for people in need of care.

On the information provided the need and impact cannot be considered.

Greater understanding is required and a business model / operations statement has been requested from the Agent.

Subject to the detail of this, if considered acceptable the operations statement should be a condition of any grant of permission.

**S106/CIL**

The proposal will provide a use of the site that would result in greater pressure upon the local physical and social infrastructure. With regard to the Authority's adopted guidance obligations may be required.

With mitigation for the previous use transport provision would not be sought.

Greenspace obligations may be necessary subject to a local scheme being identified. This is to be confirmed.

**Conclusions**

The proposal, subject to consideration of the business model and operational statement, is considered to be a suitable use of the building and one consistent with Saved Policy CF15 and Emerging planning policy H6.

**Condition(s)/Reason(s)**

01. Subject to the submission and approval of a detailed business plan to the satisfaction of the local planning authority.
02. Subject to the provision of approved cycle storage.

03. Subject to landscape scheme that improves the level of outdoor amenity space.
04. Subject to the raised deck being no more than 0.3m high.
05. Subject to on site management at all times.
06. Subject to bins being retained within demarcated area.
07. Parking spaces demarcated prior to use.
08. Maximum 10 bed care facility.

**Relevant Policies**

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