

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

DATE: **4TH OCTOBER 2017**

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

SUBJECT: **FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF 4 STOREY
EXTRA-CARE BUILDING TO ACCOMMODATE 44
NO. SINGLE BED APARTMENTS & 11 NO. TWO
BED APARTMENTS WITH SUPPORTING
ACCOMMODATION AT YSGOL FABANOD PERTH
Y TERFYN, HALKYN ROAD, HOLYWELL.**

**APPLICATION
NUMBER:** **057261**

APPLICANT: **WALES & WEST HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

SITE: **YSGOL FABANOD PERTH Y TERFYN, HALKYN
ROAD, HOLYWELL**

**APPLICATION
VALID DATE:** **16TH JULY 2017**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR T. PALMER**

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

**REASON FOR
COMMITTEE:** **SCALE OF PROPOAL EXCEEDS DELEGATED
POWERS**

SITE VISIT: **NO**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This is a full application for the erection of an extra care facility comprising 55 apartments and associated parking at the site of the former Ysgol Perth-y-Terfyn, Holywell.
- 1.02 The proposals have been the subject of the statutory Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) process and the application is accompanied by a PAC report which summarises this process.

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

2.01 That conditional planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit on commencement
2. In accordance with approved plans
3. All external materials to be submitted and approved
4. Boundary details to be submitted and approved
5. Landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved
6. Implementation of landscaping scheme.
7. Drainage scheme to be submitted and agreed.
8. No development shall commence unless and until a scheme has been submitted and agreed that satisfies the policy and planning guidance requirements relating to the retention of affordable housing.
9. No development shall commence unless and until a scheme has been submitted and agreed to satisfy the policy and planning guidance requirements relating to public open space and recreation.
10. Tree and hedgerow protection measures to be implemented before any other work is undertaken.
11. All trees works to be undertaken in accordance with scheme to be submitted and agreed. Ecologist to be present during all tree and demolition works. If any protected species discovered, works to cease and suitable scheme of mitigation to be submitted, agreed and thereafter implemented.
12. Visibility sight lines as per approved plan to be provided for duration of site works and thereafter retained.
13. Parking and turning to be provided prior to first use and retained thereafter.
14. Scheme for closure of existing access to be submitted and agreed prior to first use.

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member
Councillor T. Palmer
No response at time of writing.

Holywell Town Council
No objection. Considers that some improvements to footways linkages and road crossings to Town Centre would be beneficial.

Highways DC
No objection subject to the imposition of conditions.

Pollution Control
No adverse comments

Housing Strategy Manager

Fully supports the proposals and advises that the Council are supporting the scheme through the provision of grant funding from Welsh Government to assist in delivery of the scheme.

Public Open Spaces Manager

No response at time of writing.

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water

No objection subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission and agreement of the proposed drainage scheme. No surface water to discharge to the public system.

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust

Advises that there are no archaeological implications as a consequence of the proposal.

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 The application has been publicised by way of a press notice, site notice and neighbour notification letters. At the time of writing, no letters have been received in response to the above consultation.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 No previous relevant history. Previous site history relates to the previous use of the site as a school and concerns the siting of a mobile classroom and formation of external play areas.

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

Policy STR1 - New Development

Policy STR4 - Housing

Policy STR8 - Built Environment

Policy GEN1 - General Requirements for Development

Policy GEN2 - Development inside Settlement Boundaries

Policy D1 - Design Quality, Location and Layout

Policy D2 - Design

Policy D3 - Landscaping

Policy TWH1 - Development Affecting Trees & Woodlands

Policy HSG3 - Housing on Unallocated Sites within Settlement Boundaries

Policy HSG8 - Density of Development

Policy HSG9 - Housing Mix and Type

Policy HSG10 - Affordable Housing within Settlement Boundaries

Policy AC13 - Access and Traffic Impacts

Policy AC18 - Parking Provision and New Development

Planning Policy Wales
TAN12 - Design

Supplementary/Local Planning Guidance Notes:

SPGN9 - Affordable Housing

SPGN11 - Parking standards

SPGN12 - Access for All

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Site and Surroundings

This 0.9 hectare site occupies a prominent position on Halkyn Road which is one of the main approaches to Holywell town centre from the east. It is presently the site of the former Ysgol Perth-y-Terfyn which, as a consequence of the development of Ysgol Maes-y-Felin elsewhere in the town, has been declared surplus to requirements by the Local Education Authority.

7.02 The site consists of the former school building itself and associated areas of hard surfacing previously used as the school yard. The south western edge of the site contains a large number of mature trees, together with mature trees upon the eastern boundary of the site. Established hedgerows are a feature of both eastern and western boundaries of the site. Stone and brick walls form a further hard boundary to the extreme southern and western boundaries of the site. A low brick wall with metal railing marks the north eastern boundary of the site with Halkyn Road.

7.03 The site slopes downhill from its boundary with Fron Park Road to the south west towards its north eastern boundary with Halkyn Road, with a fall of approximately 11 metres across the site. The site is generally flat across its north western and south eastern axis and is generally reflective of the topography of the surrounding area. The site is bounded to the south, east and west by residential properties. The bungalow, 'Lornell' abuts the northern boundary along with Halkyn Road. The Holywell Evangelical Church and Bodowen doctors surgery area located upon the land beyond.

7.04 The Proposals

The proposed development comprises an apartment block of 55No. 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The accommodation is arranged over 4 floors with the building. The units are intended to provide extra care accommodation and proposed to be available via a social affordable rental scheme through the housing association. The premises also includes provision of communal facilities to support the assisted living arrangements. These include a café with communal space, mobility/buggy storage space and a laundry.

7.05 Vehicular access to the site would be off Halkyn Road with 24No. car parking spaces and 12 No. cycle storage spaces. The principal

pedestrian access to the building is derived from the car park although access to the café will also be facilitated from the street frontage. A pedestrian link between the site and Halkyn Road will provide access to the existing pedestrian linkages between the site and the nearby town centre and its facilities to the north and the surgery and community hospital to the east.

7.06 The Main Issues

I consider the main issues for consideration in the determination of this application to be;

- The principle of development having regard to planning policy;
- Design;
- Impact upon trees;
- Highway Impact;
- Drainage Issues; and
- Ecology Issues.

7.07 The Principle of Development

Within the UDP, Holywell is classified as a Category A settlement where most housing growth is expected to occur. The site is sustainably located with access to bus services and other local services and infrastructure. In addition, the site constitutes previously developed land and both national and local planning policies look to the redevelopment of such sites in preference to greenfield sites.

7.08 Accordingly, the principle of the development of this site is established through a policy presumption in favour of development of this type in this location.

7.09 Design

The building seeks to create a new frontage to Halkyn Road to give this building a greater presence in the street scene than is presently the case with this site. The 4 storey form of the, together with the contemporary design, serves to create a distinctive focal point on the approached to the town centre from the east. The proposals to serve the site in vehicular terms from the site frontage ensures that the massing of that part of the building fronting the street, and its impact upon nearby dwellings is minimised. The street presence of the building is softened by the scheme amendment to retain and respect the established yew trees at the site frontage as part of the overall street scene creation.

7.10 The application was accompanied by a design statement and detailed discussions have taken place with the applicant to arrive at the current design. Whilst the building is four storeys in height, this must be viewed in the context of the topography of the area which slopes significantly from south to north. The building has been designed to take account of the slope and therefore I consider that 4 storey development would not appear incongruous in this location. In

addition, the area has a number of other 'status' buildings which have an element of verticality to them so the proposals would not appear alien in the street scene in this regard.

- 7.11 A palette of materials has been suggested for the external finishes of the building to enhance the visual impact of the building and to complement the character of the area. These include details such as render panels, a metal cladding system, and slate roofing. Windows are proposed to be grey coloured UPVC set within a zinc clad window surround. The exact specification and finish colours are as yet determined and therefore I propose to condition the submission and agreement of the same prior to their use.
- 7.12 The proposed scheme would redevelop a key site upon the edge of the town centre of Holywell in accordance with development plan policies. The proposed apartment building would not be out of character with the site and its surroundings and is of a modern design using quality materials which would enhance the overall appearance of the area.
- 7.13 Trees
The south of the site contains an area of mixed mature woodland trees comprising a mix of coniferous species including Yew, Scots Pine and a range of broadleaved trees. A large number of specimen trees are located within this area, including tall mature evergreen oaks. Two mature yew trees are located upon the northern boundary.
- 7.14 The scheme has been developed with the intention of retaining the vast majority of trees within the site. Some removal of lesser quality trees upon the north eastern edge of the woodland has been identified as possibly being required. I propose to condition that any tree removal is undertaken in accordance with a scheme of works to be submitted and agreed. Also, I propose that should such works be required, a suitably qualified ecologist be present in order that potential impacts upon birds and/or bats can be avoided and/or mitigated. A condition will also be imposed requiring a scheme of tree protection measures to be submitted, agreed and implemented before any other works are undertaken.
- 7.15 Highway impact
The proposals, being a form of assisted living, fall within Use Class C3. Local Planning Guidance Note 11 – Parking, requires that proposals of this ilk make provision for 1 car parking space per 4 units in addition to visitor spaces and emergency vehicle access. This equates to 24 car parking spaces. The proposals make this provision and therefore are in accord with the policy requirements in this regard.
- 7.16 It should however be noted that the site is located within 100m of the defined town centre and is therefore within easy walking distance of local bus links, leisure and education facilities and the town retail

centre. Accordingly the site is considered to be sustainably located in highway terms.

7.17 The proposals have been to subject of consultation with Highways DC who have assessed the proposals in terms of impact upon highway safety and have advised that there is no objection to the proposals, subject to the imposition of conditions. In coming to this view, regard has been had to the traffic generation associated with the site when the site functioned as a school.

7.18 Drainage Impact

The proposals have been the subject of consultation with both Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water and the Council's drainage engineers. It is not that the previous use of the site as a school generated both foul and surface water flows from the site and these flows were both discharged into the public system.

7.19 Data provided indicates that the proposed low rate per second as a consequence of the proposed development will be less than the flow rate which was associated with the school. In addition, investigation of the existing site drainage infrastructure has established that the existing pipework is in a poor state of repair with a number of fractures and collapses. The proposals will see foul and surface flows arising from the site discharged separately via the installation of a new site drainage system with replacement pipework. Foul water will discharge to the existing public sewer. The precise methods of surface water disposal will require agreement and therefore I propose to impose a condition requiring the submission and agreement of the precise drainage system in respect of both foul and surface water.

7.20 Ecology Issues

During the course of site investigation as a precursor to demolition of the existing buildings upon the site, I has become apparent that the school has bats within its roof space. As all bats are protected species I propose to modify my suggested condition in respect of trees works being supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist. The condition will be written to ensure that an ecologist is to be present before the commencement of and during all demolition work and if any bats are found during the course of works, all demolition work is to cease and an appropriate scheme of mitigation shall submitted for agreement. Thereafter the approved mitigation shall be undertaken in full before the first use of the scheme.

7.21 Other matters

No public open space is proposed as part of the development. Due to the type and size of the proposed development the Authority would not be seeking on site recreation provision. However, the scheme will still be required to address the Council's Policy and guidance requirements in relation to the need for the scheme to provide for the public open and recreation need of future occupiers.

- 7.22 As the Council own the application site, I propose a condition in respect of the above issue such that no development is permitted to commence until a scheme to address the public open space and recreation issue is submitted and agreed.
- 7.23 In respect of affordable housing policies, although the applicant is a Registered Social Landlord and should operate in a manner consistent with the aims of the Council's planning policies in terms of the provision of affordable housing and, in this case, are proposing a scheme of 100% affordable housing, safeguards should still properly be sought to ensure the retention of the same in the future.
- 724 Therefore I propose to condition that no development is permitted to commence until a scheme detailing the methods via which the affordability of these units will be secured in perpetuity is submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

8.00 CONCLUSION

- 8.01 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in principle and detail subject to conditions of the form outlined in paragraph 2.01 above.
- 8.02 Other Considerations
The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the recommended decision.
- 8.03 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.
- 8.04 The Council has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.05 The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 3 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the recommended decision.

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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