Mr S Brodrick
Northbrook College

WB/08/1188/FULL
GAI
RJS

Location : 98 Broadwater Road

Proposal: Change of use from residential care home to student accommodation for a maximum of 12 students.



Not to Scale

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1. THE PROPOSAL AND THE SITE

This application by Northbrook College is for the conversion of the existing vacant residential care home (Jacaranda) into non self-contained student accommodation for up to 12 higher education students.

The site is located on the south-west corner of Georgia Avenue at its junction with Broadwater Road. Georgia Avenue is predominantly residential comprising mainly of detached inter war houses, mostly with off-street parking. There is a nursery school on the opposite side of Georgia Avenue to the east of the site (No. 3 Georgia Avenue), and a guest house to the north

and south of the site at Nos. 100 and 96 Broadwater Road. Although this section of Broadwater Road is mainly residential in character, there are also commercial premises directly opposite Georgia Avenue and Broadwater local shopping centre lies close to the south and Northbrook College and Broadwater village shopping centre close to the north.

The property itself is adjacent to a two storey house to the east, a large guest house to the south and is faced by another large guesthouse to the north on the north east arm of the Georgia Avenue and Broadwater Road junction. To the west, across Broadwater Road (A24) is a garage and other commercial uses. There are double yellow lines by the junction but no other parking restrictions.

The property is an inter-war, large detached two storey house in characteristic period style with pitched roof, angled bays, white render and Tudor style beams. It was built as a house and is dual fronted and has been extended to the side and rear with single storey extensions. Vehicular access is from Georgia Avenue and there is a tarmac forecourt with parking for three cars.

The rear garden has been largely built over with the extensions and the principal amenity area is now the grassed area facing Broadwater Road. The property is bounded by a 1 to 1.5 metre high brick wall or timber fence and, in places, a low hedge.

The proposal utilises the existing room arrangement providing five bedrooms at ground floor level and 7 bedrooms at first floor level, 5 of which would have either their own en-suite shower or toilet facilities. Shared bathroom and toilet facilities would be located on both floors with a communal kitchen and lounge on the ground floor. The use is regarded as *sui generis* under the Use Classes Order (i.e. not falling within any specified use class).

No external alterations are proposed to the building. The existing vehicular access would remain as would three car parking spaces, one of which is indicated to be a disabled parking space. Additional storage is proposed for bicycles and motorcycles.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

The property was converted to a residential convalescence home in 1963 following grant of permission providing accommodation for 12 elderly residents. More recently, in 2006, permission was granted to convert the care home into 6 self contained flats (WB/06/1155/FULL refers). This permission has not been implemented and the building currently stands vacant.

3. APPLICANT'S DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The applicant has submitted a Design and Access Statement in support of the application which is summarised below:-

"Location
The location of the site, which is within an area of Worthing which is predominately residential, is in the immediate vicinity of Northbrook College's Broadwater Campus. The detached property is on the South Eastern corner of the junction between Broadwater Road, Queen Street and Georgia Avenue.

The Site
The existing building is in a fair state of repair. The plot is level and has a north/south depth of 25 metres and an east/west width of 20 metres. The property is accessed from a main front door in Broadwater Road to the west and vehicular access and a secondary door (which has become the most frequently used access) in Georgia Avenue to the north.

Proposals
The property is currently vacant but was previously used as a Residential Care Home with a User Class C2. The proposal is to carry out minor internal alterations and a change of use to residential accommodation for Northbrook College Higher Education students. The maximum number of students that will be accommodated at any one time is 12.

Scale
The external scale of the proposed development remains the same and no alterations are being made to any of the elevations.

Access
The existing external accesses to the property will not change and no further accesses will be made.

Summary
This is a straightforward change of use application from Use Class C2 to Sui Generis – Student Residential Accommodation.

Assessment of context
This proposal will have minimal effect on the economic needs and benefits. It is not envisaged that there should be any reason why this alteration would be of any benefit or detriment to land or housing values.

It is believed that this proposal complies with all relevant planning policies.

Design Principles
The required use is specific to the college and any other use would not be of benefit to the College. This proposal is not associated with the proposed redevelopment of the College sites. The College has a requirement to accommodate Higher Education students within the town and as near as possible to a Campus. Therefore, even though it is expected that the new Campus developments will proceed, this proposal would be needed if no other development was taking place. On the assumption that this

application is successful, it is not anticipated that there would be any other proposals of this nature.

Existing landscaping will be retained."

4. CONSULTATIONS

The **Highway Authority's** comments are summarised as follows:

"Given the former use, the proposed change of use to student accommodation should not result in any significant intensification of use of the site. The former care home site would have resulted in a number of vehicle movements and demands for on-street parking from staff and visitors as only three spaces are provided within the site. Whilst clarification would be sought over the age range of the proposed students, which may influence car parking demands, it is not anticipated that this proposal would result in any detriment to highway safety.

The site is sustainably located, hence should encourage the use of passenger transport as well as walking and cycling in accordance with Policy DEV4 of the West Sussex County Council Structure plan. Details should be secured by condition of the cycle storage facilities which should be capable of storing one cycle per student.

It could be argued that visitors should use more sustainable transport choices given the location, however, for what is being proposed I think that 5 parking spaces would be acceptable, given that visitors may be travelling from a variety of locations."

Following receipt of clarification that the students would be aged 19 and over, the Highways Authority commented further:-

"No highway objection would be raised to this application. Given the age of students accommodated at the dwelling, it is possible for some additional demand for on-street parking to be generated. However with due consideration of the former use of the building (as a care home) and the lack of parking provided for that use, the change of use to student accommodation should not result in any significant increased parking demands beyond which may have previously been generated. On that basis, I would not anticipate highway safety to be any worsened as a consequence of this proposal."

The **Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety** comments as follows:-

"No objection, but I recommend condition C12L regarding refuse storage facilities to be provided for the flats, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory facilities for the storage and disposal of refuse in the interests of hygiene and visual amenity."

The **Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager** comments that:-

"Policies that apply are Saved Local Plan Policies - H18: Residential Amenity, H13: Conversions from (non)/residential to HMO, TR9: Parking requirements, Saved West Sussex Structure Plan – ERA1: making best use of land.

Bringing land back into use
As this site was no longer in use as a residential care home this use brings the land (site) back into use.

Parking and access requirements
There are 3 car parking spaces provided at the moment and no changes are being proposed on site. The maximum parking standards are 6 car spaces for an HMO for 12 rooms. There are 4 spaces for cycle storage, two motorcycle parking spaces and one disabled space being proposed for this application. There are no standards set for HMOs for these types of vehicle parking. The four spaces for bicycle storage might be on the low side for 12 students.

Conclusion
There are no objections to this proposal from a planning policy point of view."

5. REPRESENTATIONS

Ten letters of representation have been received from neighbouring occupiers objecting to the application on the following grounds:

i) The area is primarily residential and creating specific student-only blocks would step towards changing the nature of this area, there are already problems with boy racers, drunks, drugs, inappropriate close to a nursery.
ii) Potential noise from loud music where students are unsupervised; late night and excessive noise; alternative properties are available where smaller numbers could live together without causing noise for neighbours, limited garden/buffer zone to protect surrounding residents, main living room accommodation is within rear extension with corrugated roof; noise from students coming and going, particularly from side entrance.
iii) Inadequate parking, limited availability of on street parking/congestion, already used as overflow parking from Broadwater Road, risk of accidents at the junction, increase in pollution.
iv) Increase in litter, concern over cleanliness.
v) Increase in anti-social behaviour.
vi) Reduction in property values.
vii) Loss of privacy.

viii) Inadequate size for 12 students.

One letter of representation has been received from the Worthing Chamber of Commerce who makes the following comments:-

"It is the policy of The Worthing Chamber of Commerce to object to any planning application that proposes a change from commercial to residential use. It is our considered view that such losses of business diminish the commercial viability of the areas involved and the town as a whole and have a significant effect on employment opportunities locally.

We do however recognise the need for student accommodation in the area and wish to support educational opportunities but we question whether the change of use from residential care home to student accommodation might facilitate any future planning application for change of use to residential."

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main issues raised by this proposal are the principle of the development, the impact on the amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers, and parking and access. As such the application should be principally considered against saved Worthing Local Plan Policies BE1, TR9, H10 and H18 and saved West Sussex Structure Plan Policies ERA1, DEV1, DEV4, DEV5 and CH1. Government Policy in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3: Housing and PPG13: Transport is also particularly relevant.

Principle

The principle of making efficient use of previously developed land in the existing urban area, such as this proposal, is supported in both Development Plan policy and Government policy. For the purposes of Policy H10, where the former care home use is assessed as constituting a dwelling, the same would apply to the proposed residential accommodation with its shared facilities and so the proposal would not represent a loss of an existing dwelling. The proposal would provide student accommodation in an established residential area located close to Northbrook College and to local shopping and public transport facilities making a contribution towards achieving the accommodation needs of the college.

Impact on the amenity of future occupiers and of occupiers of neighbouring residential properties

The proposal utilises the existing layout providing 12 study bedrooms some with en-suite facilities and all sharing a communal kitchen and living area and use of the outside amenity space and parking for three vehicles.

A communal area for cycle and refuse storage would also be provided in the front garden area of the property, precise details of which would need to be agreed by way of a condition.

The facilities would be managed by the College, although the applicant has confirmed that a mature student will be charged with daily management of the house with support available from the College. The College would organise the servicing of the rooms and common areas in regards to cleaning and the residents would be responsible for their own laundry.

The proposed use would not represent an intensification of the current authorised use in terms of resident numbers and with potentially fewer staff employed the level of activity at the site in terms of numbers of people would be relatively unaltered. In addition, residents would generally vacate the building outside of term time so the likely period of occupation annually would be between 33 and 36 weeks. However, local residents are concerned that there may be an increase in noise and disturbance from the site due to the nature of the proposed use. Whilst the age of the students might be perceived by local residents as leading to a general increase in activity and subsequent noise, this matter is largely dependent on the individuals occupying the facility rather than this being a genuine planning issue resulting from the use itself. If specific noise issues were to arise from antisocial behaviour there are other mechanisms to deal with such matters. Therefore a refusal of planning permission on these grounds would be unjustified.

Parking and access

The site is considered to be situated in a sustainable location, within walking and cycling distance to local facilities and public transport connections. In terms of parking standards, if assessed against the parking standards for a hostel, which would be most relevant in this case, the maximum adopted standard for a 12 bedroom facility would be 4 spaces whilst the maximum standard for the existing care home use would be 5 spaces.

Three spaces are proposed and the existing crossover retained, giving a shortfall of 1 space. Given that the site is in an accessible location close to the College's Broadwater site, residents need not be reliant on the use of a private car. The Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal subject to the provision of cycle storage on the basis of one space per student, which the applicant has agreed to provide. Subject to these details being agreed, notwithstanding the concerns raised by local residents, it is considered refusal would not be justified on grounds of inadequate parking provision.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-

1. C1AREV Standard time limit
2. C5K Cycle storage details
3. C12L Refuse storage details
4. Restrict use to student accommodation in connection with Northbrook College only.

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Observations of the Highway Authority.
Observations of the Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety
Observations of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager

17th February 2009