

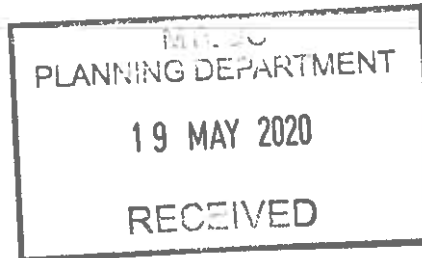
13 May 2020

Our Ref: 20.185

Planning Department
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Unit 5
Triangle Business Park
Pentrebach
Merthyr Tydfil

200102

9 Oaktree Court
Cardiff Gate Business Park
Mulberry Drive
Cardiff
CF23 8RS



Dear Sir/Madam,

16 THE PARK, TREHARRIS

CHANGE OF USE OF THE PROPERTY FROM A CLASS C3 RESIDENTIAL DWELLING TO A CLASS C2

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOME

PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-08717045

Asbri Planning Limited is instructed by Rise Care Limited, in respect of the above property.

On behalf of our client, I herein submit an application proposing the change of use of the property from a Class C3 residential dwelling to a Class C2 children's residential home.

The application package submitted via the Planning Portal comprises the following:

- Site Location Plan
- Block Plan – confirming 4 parking spaces will be provided
- Floor Plans (existing and amended confirming the changes undertaken to the house without the need for planning permission)
- Completed Application Forms
- Payment of the application fee of £380

The application site

The property is a detached home nestled away from the main road, comprising of five bedrooms over two stories, with a large garden. The home is decorated and furnished to a high standard and will provide care for up to 4 children and young people between the ages of 11 and 18 years.

The home is designed to be a friendly, warm and safe environment to help nurture and support each individual. It is fully equipped to ensure the young people's needs are safely and respectfully met.

There is a large kitchen which the young people will have full access to and there is a large dining area where staff and young people can enjoy spending time with each other over dinner.

There is a spacious lounge for relaxing and socialising. There is also a room in which direct work/study can be done. A large private garden can be found to the rear and side of the property. Staff teams will maintain the garden with assistance from the young people.

Off road parking is provided for staff and visitors with 4 dedicated parking spaces.

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is located within Treharris. As existing, the property comprises a Class C3 detached residential dwelling. The property benefits from a recently built extension, resulting in a total of five bedrooms.

The predominant character of the area is residential. The site is well served by the local public transport infrastructure, with a bus stop found approximately 200m to the south-east along the B4254 / Bargoed terrace.

Following a review of NRW's Development Advice Map, the site is located within Flood Zone A and is therefore at little or no risk of fluvial or tidal/coastal flooding.

Mission Statement

Rise Care Ltd are a provider of residential children's home placements to Welsh local authorities. The Directors of Rise Care have over 20 years of experience in supporting Young People in residential settings. Rise Care is committed to providing the highest standards of care and support for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Rise Care strive for excellence in every aspect of their work by providing highly trained and skilled staff to deliver the services they provide. Their aim is to create a nurturing environment to meet the needs of Young People who find themselves outside mainstream care.

Rise Care Ltd and their homes are registered and inspected with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). They work with Welsh local authorities and the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru to provide support and care to Young People who do not have the privilege of living in a family setting. Their Young People may have suffered severe abuse or neglect prior to becoming looked after by their local authorities. Rise Care believe it is never too late to improve Young People's lives with the right level of commitment, dedication and support.

Merthyr Tydfil has been identified by Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru as being an area in severe need of additional accommodation for local Young People. Often, care experienced Young People are placed in homes far outside of their local area, through no fault of their own. It is common for Young People from South Wales to be placed as far afield as Essex, Manchester and even Scotland. The Welsh Assembly are committed to placing Welsh Young People in Welsh homes where possible, however the current reality is there is an insufficient number of homes available for this to happen. Rise Care is dedicated to providing placements for Welsh Young People and employment opportunities to local carers.

For Young People to flourish in adulthood it is imperative they are given every opportunity to interact in a community setting. The manager of the home ensures that young people engage positively in the local community. Rise Care Ltd seek employment or volunteering opportunities locally and support the community their Young People live in. An example of this in one of their current homes was the manager, staff and Young People clearing the grounds of the local community centre in preparation for an event. Such events have improved the perception of the local community to having a children's home in their locality. They welcome interaction with local residents and will always be on hand to help their neighbours. Whether it be carrying something in from the car, signing for a parcel or assisting in the garden, there's always a member of the team or Young Person nearby.

Proposed Development

The application proposes the change of use of the property from a Class C3 residential dwelling to a Class C2 children's residential home.

The proposed development will provide residential care for 4 young people, and will result in the employment of 3 staff at the property.

For the purposes of clarity, no physical alterations requiring planning permission are proposed to the property, either internally or externally.

Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (December 2018) is the principal document of the Welsh Government which sets out the context for sustainable land use planning policy, within which Local Planning Authorities' Statutory Development Plans are prepared and development control decisions on individual planning applications and appeals are made.

PPW notes that previously developed land should be used in preference to greenfield sites. Paragraph 3.51 states: *"In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles and any constraints can be overcome"*.

PPW also highlights that accessibility is an important factor in the planning process. Paragraph 3.4.5 states:

"Spatial strategies should support the objectives of minimising the need to travel, reducing reliance on the private car and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport"

Paragraph 4.1.1 supports the above, and notes:

"The planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport"

Paragraph 4.2 of PPW states, in relation to the overall requirements of the housing market which need to be provided for that:

"Planning Authorities must understand all aspects of the housing market in their areas, which will include the requirement, supply and delivery of housing. This will allow planning authorities to develop evidence based market and affordable housing policies in their development plans and make informed development management decisions that focus on the creation and enhancement of sustainable places. New housing development in both urban and rural areas should incorporate a mix of market and affordable house types, tenures and sizes to cater for the range of identified housing needs and contribute to the development of sustainable and cohesive communities".

Technical Advice Notes

The following Technical Advice Notes (or TANs) should be read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 and form the basis of national planning policy:

- TAN 18 – Transport (2007)

TAN 18 notes the importance of active travel in the form of cycling and use of public transport:

"Cycling has potential to act as a substitute for shorter car journeys in urban or rural areas, or form part of a longer journey when combined with public transport"

Merthyr Tydfil CBC LDP

The development plan for the purposes of Section 38 of the Planning and Compensation Act (2004) is the Adopted Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) – adopted December 2020.

The proposals map highlights that the site is not allocated for any specific use.

The LDP Vision recognises that the Authority should be a place for people to live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life. LDP Objective 3 recognises that there is a need for a range of housing opportunities. It states that:

"To ensure the sufficient provision of land for the delivery of a range and choice of housing and affordable housing to address local housing need"

Within the LDP Key Diagram Treharris is recognised as being a key local centre in the Authority.

There are no specific Policies regarding care homes or special needs housing. However, the LDP does contain information regarding the Cwm Taff Well-being Strategy 2018-2033 and this is considered to be of relevance

Supplementary Planning Guidance

There is no adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) of relevance to the proposed development.

MTCBC Parking Standards advise that for residential children's homes the parking requirement is 1no. space per resident staff, 1no. space per 3 non-residential staff and for visitors 1no. space per 4 beds.

Planning Considerations

The application proposes the change of use of the property from a Class C3 residential dwelling to a Class C2 children's residential home. The following observations set the context for the assessment:

- The property is currently vacant;
- The application site is located in a highly accessible and therefore sustainable location for the proposed use via a range of transportation options;
- Surrounding uses are largely residential; and
- Rise Care Ltd staff have experience of managing such properties.

Notwithstanding the above, our assessment of the proposal is provided below:

The Principle of Development

Rise Care Ltd are a very experienced organisation which specialise in creating and running children's residential care homes.

The principle of residential use at the property is clearly established by its use as a Class C3 dwelling. Despite its proposed change of use to a Class C2 children's residential home, the property will remain within a use appropriate for the area, and will therefore accord with the established character of the surrounding area.

This application is considered to be policy compliant as the proposal is within development limits and offers safe and convenient access to community facilities and services owing to its location near to the centre of Treharris, as well as good transport links to other centres such as Merthyr Tydfil.

In summary, National Planning Policy supports the provision of housing for all needs and the provision of much needed care facilities for the young should be wholly supported. The location of the property within an established residential area, is an important criteria which Rise Care require in order to provide a home which offers space, whilst meeting the particular needs of the children.

In this respect, it can be seen that the proposed development accords both with policy and the character of the local area and should therefore be considered acceptable in principle.

Highways

A driveway is located to the side of the house and the property has a large garden, including a parking area. Notwithstanding, street parking is widely available and unrestricted immediately outside the property.

The site is well served by the local public transport infrastructure. Therefore, the site is considered to be located in an accessible and therefore sustainable location, with a range of transport services.

Visual and Residential Amenity

No internal/external alterations requiring planning permission are proposed to the property. No issues in relation to overlooking or overbearing impact are anticipated as a result of the proposed change of use, ensuring that the amenity of neighbouring residents is protected.

Therefore, the proposed development can be seen to have no impact in respect of amenity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, on the basis of a comprehensive review of both policy, the physical and locational constraints of the site and the design of the proposed development the application should be approved for the following reasons:

- The proposed development would assist towards meeting a much needed demand for care homes for vulnerable children;
- The location of the home would enable the children to flourish in an established environment, and allowing the carers to provide a high level of care;
- External works would be limited; and
- The proposed Change of Use will ensure the upkeep of the vacant property.

Having regard to the above key considerations, it is considered that the proposed development accords with both National and Local Planning Policy. Accordingly, the proposal should be supported by the Local Planning Authority and we request that planning permission be granted.

The application has been submitted electronically via the Planning Portal and the application fee of £380 will be paid electronically.

I trust that you have the requisite documentation in order to enable you to validate the application. Notwithstanding, if you require any additional information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Jon Hurley
Director
Asbri Planning Ltd

