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Our ref: BLD

Dear Sirs

Planning application for the change in use from Class C3 (dwellinghouses) to Class C2 (care home), the conversion of the existing five-bay garage to residential accommodation, and material alterations to the external appearance of the existing two-bay garage, at Hullah Farm & 1-8 Terrace Cottages, Cefn Road, Abenbury, Wrexham, LL13 9TT

I am instructed to submit the above application for planning permission. Along with the completed planning application forms, please also find accompanying this submission the following plans and information

- 3513-19 - Location Plan
- 3513-10.5 – Site plan existing
- 3513-10 – Site plan proposed
- 3513-17 - Farmhouse - Existing elevations
- 3513-17.5 - Farmhouse - Existing elevations
- 3513-18 - Farmhouse - Proposed elevations
- 3513-18.5 - Farmhouse - Proposed elevations
- 3513-08 - Farmhouse and Office - Proposed ground floor
- 3513-20 - Ty Newydd - Existing elevations
- 3513-11 - Ty Newydd - Existing and proposed floor plans
- 3513-21 - Ty Newydd - Proposed elevations
- 3513-12.1 - Ty Hen – Existing floor plans
- 3513-12.2 - Ty Hen - Existing elevations
- 3513-12 - Ty Hen – Proposed floor plans
- 3513-12.3 - Ty Hen - Proposed elevations, and
- Image of proposed bin store.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Fairpark Care is a health and social care provider monitored and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (in England). This will be their first home in Wales, and it will be registered with Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru (Care Inspectorate Wales).
- 1.2 Fairpark Care delivers integrated care to people with autism and learning disabilities. They specialise in the support of people who present with behaviour defined as challenging.

- 1.3 Fairpark Care have a wealth of experience in supporting people living with autism and learning disabilities. They help the people entrusted to their care to develop independent life skills, to improve communication and to resolve environmental issues (such as noise and lighting) to reduce anxiety. Their aim is for people to self-direct their support as much as possible, to give them a greater sense of control over their own lives. They take lots of time to get to know each person and to understand what does and doesn't contribute to positive outcomes. They spend time with family members and care professionals close to the individual, to gain an understanding of the challenges the person may have already overcome and their hopes for the short and long term. They employ support techniques which encourage focus and routine, and emphasise the importance of creating calm and ordered environments. They also encourage each person to be part of their local community in whatever way suits them, whether that's getting out and about to do shopping, meeting new friends or taking up a volunteering opportunity.
- 1.4 Fairpark Care are dedicated to providing solution focused care that makes a real and lasting difference to an individual's quality of life. The individual care plans for each person are delivered by bespoke teams. Where required, this commitment includes providing each person with continuous one-on-one, 24/7 support.
- 1.5 Fairpark Care intend to develop an outstanding service at Hullah Farm, which will provide exceptional care and treatment for people with autism and learning disabilities. Working with local adult social care services, the primary role of Hullah Farm will be to provide Welsh residents with the care they require, at a place local to their home, family and social connections. In doing so, Hullah Farm will support family and community service involvement, as well as providing local employment opportunities.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 Hullah Farm lies on the eastern outskirts of Wrexham, on the east side of Cefn Road and almost opposite Hullah Lane. Although close to the built-up area of Wrexham the site feels self-contained, quiet and even mildly secluded.
- 2.2 The site is bordered by well-defined boundaries on its north, east and south sides, and by Cefn Road on its west side. The north and east sides are mix of mature trees and hedgerow. The southeast corner retains some trees and otherwise the southern boundary is defined by a low field hedge.
- 2.3 The land beyond to the north and east is open recreational land and currently is not formally laid out for any particular use, though in the past the land to the east has been used as an athletics track. The land to the south is a large field in agricultural use. Opposite and to the northwest are the grounds to Ysgol Morgan Llwyd, the nearest part of which is set out as a football pitch. The other land to the west is the eastern side of Caia Park, with residential properties overlooking the junction of Hullah Lane and Cefn Road.
- 2.4 Hullah Farm is comprised of the following buildings
- The farmhouse, a white rendered 4-bed property, adjacent and side on to Cefn Road
 - 1-8 Terrace Cottages, an L-shaped row of red brick dwellings, sited to the northeast of the farmhouse. Nos 1-5 present their largely blank rear elevation to the farmhouse, with their front elevation overlooking a lawn in the northeast

corner of the site. No.6 sits in the corner, also overlooking the lawn. Nos 7 & 8 have their front elevation on to the courtyard that separates the farmhouse from the cottages, and backs on to the northern boundary.

- At the end of the row of cottages, adjacent to no 8 and appearing as a continuation of the original building, is a storeroom and then two garages. These lie next to one of two points of vehicular access to the site.
- Alongside the east elevation of the farmhouse is a single storey brick built building.
- A short distance to the east of the farmhouse is a brick built five-bay garage.

2.5 The western boundary, to Cefn Road, is demarcated by a low stone wall. The main garden to the farmhouse is on its' south side, and that garden is screened from Cefn Road by a hedge which sits behind and atop of the low stone wall. There is a second, conifer hedge behind the first, for a short distance closest to the farmhouse itself.

2.6 There are two points of vehicular access: a northern access, close to the pair of garages, and a second in the southwest corner of the site. This southern entrance gives access via a short drive to an area of open parking at the eastern end of the cottages, to the five-bay garage and to an area of open parking opposite this garage block. It also connects to the yard area between the farmhouse and the cottages, and thereby to the northern access.

3. Proposal

3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change in use of the land and buildings, and for various building works.

3.2 The current use of the site is for Class C3 (dwellinghouse) purposes. The application seeks permission to use the site for Class C2 purposes, namely, use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care.

3.3 Please note, the proposal is *not* to create a residential or nursing home. Rather, it will provide individual homes for adults with care needs, with the farmhouse providing a shared accommodation facility, for those slightly less able to be so independent.

3.4 The existing buildings would be used as follows

- the farmhouse would provide accommodation for three residents
- following internal adaptations, the eight cottages would be reconfigured as five, with one resident per cottage and one cottage reserved for use as a visitors' cottage (see below)
- the converted five bay garage would provide accommodation for two residents
- the single storey building on the east side of the farmhouse would be used as office space, and
- the two existing garages close to Cefn Road would be used as communal meeting spaces; the existing store would remain a store.

- 3.5 The visitors' cottage will help facilitate family visiting, providing space for visiting families to relax, refresh and, if required, stay overnight.
- 3.6 The building operations comprise the following elements
- Material alterations to the external appearance of Ty Newydd, in association with its conversion to provide residential accommodation, to replace the garage doors on the south elevation with two pedestrian doors (with porches added) and three windows, and to make good the surrounds with brick to match the existing, and on the north elevation to replace three windows with three doors and add two windows either side.
 - Material alterations to the external appearance of Ty Hen, in association with its conversion to provide a communal meeting space, to replace the existing garage door openings with a new pedestrian door and a window, and to make good the surrounds with brick to match the existing. A bin store would be added to its west elevation.
- 3.7 In addition, the following minor alterations to external appearance are proposed and for the sake of completeness are included in the application
- insertion of door in north elevation of farmhouse
 - insertion of ground floor window in east elevation of farmhouse.

4. Relevant planning history

- 4.1 From the results of a Local Authority Search, there is a record of several applications made in the 1980s, with the last in 1991. These references are to the conversion of outbuildings to form residential accommodation, to the creation of additional parking and new means of access and, in the case of the 1991 application, to the construction of new garages. No further information is available on the Council website or from a Local Authority Search. It is presumed the application in 1991 relates to the modern five-bay garage on the eastern part of the site.

5. Planning Policy Assessment

- 5.1 The relevant development plan for the area is the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011. The application should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 A replacement plan has been in preparation for some years and a draft version is currently at examination. A number of matters remain to be addressed and it is not yet clear whether the replacement plan will be able to proceed to adoption. Therefore, only very limited weight can be given to its draft policies. This weight is so limited, no direct reference is made below to its draft policies.
- 5.3 No reference to specialist housing provision of the type proposed could be found in any of the policies in the Unitary Development Plan. Policy H11, on residential and nursing homes, is not considered to be relevant because the proposed use does not conform to either of those two models of provision. Nonetheless, paragraph 2.1 of the Plan says the Plan reflects the Council's corporate vision for the Borough based on, amongst many other things, providing care for the more vulnerable in society.

- 5.4 No specific reference to this proposed form of development could be found in Planning Policy Wales. Future Wales does offer some recognition, in the section on Managing Growth, Policy 22 (green belts in the north), which requires Wrexham (and others) to ensure (amongst many things) that specialist housing provision is considered and planned for.
- 5.5 Notwithstanding the absence of explicit planning policy support, both Future Wales and the Unitary Development Plan are considered to offer support in principle for the provision of Class C2 care homes of the type proposed in this application.
- 5.6 The site is located on the boundary of and just within the designated green barrier on the east side of Wrexham. The land opposite the site, on the west side of Cefn Lane, is within the built-up area but the site itself is outside of the settlement limit. Accordingly, the following policies from the Unitary Development Plan are applicable
- Strategic Policies PS1, PS2, PS3, PS4
 - GDP1 – Development objectives
 - EC1 – Green barriers
 - EC4 – Hedgerows, tree and woodland
 - T8 – Parking.
- 5.7 Policy EC1 (green barriers) supports development in the green barrier, if it would maintain the openness of the barrier and does not conflict with the purpose of including land within it. The proposed development would re-use existing buildings within the existing boundaries of Hullah Farm. There would be no expansion of built form and no enlargement of the overall site area. Both the existing and the proposed use are forms of residential use and there will be no change in the nature and character of the occupation of the site which would affect the status of the green barrier. As such, the openness of the green barrier and the purpose of the land being included within it, would both be maintained.
- 5.8 In respect of Policy GDP1 (development objectives) the following in particular should be noted.
- 5.9 The building works proposed will use materials to match the existing buildings on site. No enlargement or rebuilding is necessary. The only form of addition will be a weather-proof structure to shelter the bin storage area. The changes proposed are therefore considered to accord with the character of the site and will ensure it continues to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
- 5.10 The nearest neighbouring properties are on the west side of Cefn Road, on Hullah Lane. The nearest neighbouring house faces south on to Hullah Lane and has only a blank gable elevation facing Cefn Road and the site. Given this arrangement and the separation distance, the proposed changes would have no impact on the residential amenity of this, or any other neighbour.
- 5.11 Residents will have access to the enclosed and private communal space in the northeast corner of the site and or to the garden on the south side of the farmhouse. Having regard to the existing and proposed patterns of fenestration, each property will retain adequate existing levels of privacy.
- 5.12 The site sits within a 20mph zone on Cefn Road. It has two existing points of vehicular access. No alterations are proposed to the means of access. The site is

located on a bus route, with the nearest stops opposite on Hullah Lane (just east of the junction with Ernest Parry Road).

- 5.13 There are no proposals to remove any existing trees or hedgerows as part of the proposed development. As such there is no conflict with Policy EC4 (hedgerows, trees and woodland).
- 5.14 Paragraph 10.10 to Policy T8 (parking) sets out that the Council's guidance on parking standards is to ensure development does not affect road safety or local amenity. It recognises that, occasionally, full compliance may neither be practicable or appropriate. The Council Local Planning Guidance Note No.16, on Parking Standards, sets out the maximum amount of car parking appropriate to various uses. The Guidance stipulates that garages are not counted towards on-site parking provision.
- 5.15 For the current use the maximum number of car parking spaces would be calculated as follows
- 1.5 spaces per 1-bed unit – there are 5no 1-bed units
 - 2 spaces per 2-bed unit – there are 3no 2-bed units
 - 3 spaces per 3 or 4 bed unit – there is 1no 4-bed unit.
- 5.16 Therefore, cumulatively, there should be no more than 16 spaces on site. There are in fact 9.
- 5.17 For the proposed use the maximum number of car parking spaces would be calculated as follows
- 1 space per 2 bed spaces – there would be 10 bed spaces – therefore there should be no more than 5 spaces on site associated with these.
- 1 space per 30sqm gross floor space for Class B1 uses – the proposal includes 37sqm of office space and this is analogous with Class B1 (office) use – therefore there should be no more than 2 space on site associated with these.
- 5.18 The Council parking standards would suggest there should be no more than 7 seven spaces on site, of which one should be suitable for use by those registered disabled.
- 5.19 The application proposes to provide 9 standard car parking spaces, plus one space suitable for use by the disabled. This higher level is considered to be acceptable because it includes three 'home' vehicles, which are used to ferry residents to other locations. These vehicles need to be based at the site and are additional to and separate from staff and visitor parking.
- 5.20 Alternative modes of travel to the site will be promoted and it should be noted the site has good accessibility to a large resident population, from which it is hoped the majority of the work force can be recruited. For some staff it will be realistic to walk to the site. There are also bus stops close by and provision will be made on site for secure cycle parking.
- 5.21 The scheme will provide cycle parking at a minimum rate of 1 per 10 bedspaces plus 1 per 10 employees. There will be 8 cycle parking spaces in total.

- 5.22 The approach proposed to parking will maintain both road safety and local amenity. Therefore, the proposals comply with UDP Policy T8.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed use will provide a high quality and supportive residential environment for adults with specialist care needs. It will offer independence and privacy at the same time as care and support. It will help meet the Borough's need for specialist accommodation of this type, to meet the needs of this particular segment of the area's overall demand for housing.
- 6.2 The site lies outside of the defined settlement boundary but makes use of previously developed brownfield land with no detriment to the green barrier, surrounding countryside, the landscape / townscape character of the immediate area, to any area of open space or to the quality of the natural environment. It will provide an excellent residential environment for the proposed residents, with no impact on existing neighbours. Adequate means of access are existing and parking will be provided consistent with the operational needs of the use and the Council policy on parking.
- 6.3 As such the proposed development is in overall compliance with the Strategic and other policies of the Unitary Development Plan. Accordingly, the Council is respectfully requested to grant planning permission.

Yours sincerely



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RTPI

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