

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
COMMITTEE**

5 NOVEMBER 2015

**REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR LEGAL AND
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Agenda Item No.5

**SITE MEETING
APPLICATION NO. 15/0946 – CHANGE
OF USE FROM POLICE STATION TO A
SUPPORTED LIVING HOME OFFERING
BOTH A SHARED 3 BEDROOM
BUNGALOW AND 2 SELF CONTAINED
FLATS CONNECTED VIA A STAFF ROOM
– CYNON VALLEY CRIME REDUCTION
SERVICES, WINDSOR STREET,
TRECYNON, ABERDARE**

Author: Mrs.Z.Maisey, Principal Officer, Committee Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the outcome of the site inspection in respect of the above-mentioned proposal and to determine the application, as outlined in the report of the Service Director, Planning, attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the application in accordance with the recommendation of the Service Director, Planning.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Minute No.74 (Development Control Committee, 15 October 2015), a site inspection was undertaken on Tuesday, 27 October 2015 to consider highways concerns regarding the proposed development.
- 3.2 The meeting was attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee (County Borough Councillors G.Stacey and M.Griffiths) and Committee Members - County Borough Councillors (Mrs) S.J.Jones, S.L.Rees, G.Smith and E.Webster.

- 3.3 Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members - County Borough Councillors L.M.Adams, P.Jarman, R.Lewis, S.Powderhill, G.P.Thomas and M.J.Watts.
- 3.4 Members viewed the application site and the Development Control Manager advised them that full planning permission was being sought to convert the former Police Station (currently used as offices for Cynon Valley Crime Reduction Services) into a home for people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or sensory impairments. One shared three bedroom bungalow and 2 self contained flats would be provided. A Warden's office with connections to all three properties was also proposed and there would be staff support provided on a 24 hour basis. The main external alterations would be a new front entrance and minor changes to the size and position of windows within the single storey element of the building.
- 3.5 Members noted that that the site was located on a very busy narrow road with a high level of on-street parking. The Local Member highlighted the traffic problems currently experienced in Windsor Street and in response the Chairman asked the Transportation Officer to comment on the proposal.
- 3.6 The Transportation Officer confirmed that, there was concern regarding the substandard nature of the local highway network leading to the site which was further exacerbated by on-street parking demand. The Highway Officer also stated that considering the current use has a satisfactory access, circulation and parking within the curtilage and that the proposal would generate less traffic and requires less parking, on balance, there was no objection subject to a number of highway conditions.
- 3.7 The Local Member made reference to the concerns that had been by neighbouring residents regarding the proposed use of the premises in view of circumstances surrounding the death of the Vicar of St.Fagan's Church, located at the rear of the site, back in 2008. In this regard, Members noted that the dwellings proposed would be for occupiers who might have learning difficulties, physical disabilities or sensory impairments and the issue raised would not warrant a reason to refuse the application.

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION NO: 15/0946/10 (GW)
APPLICANT: Mr D A Davies
DEVELOPMENT: Change of use from Police station to a supported living home offering both a shared 3 bedroom bungalow and 2 self contained flats connected via a staff room.
LOCATION: CYNON VALLEY CRIME REDUCTION SERVICES LTD, WINDSOR STREET, TRECYNON, ABERDARE, CF44 8LN
DATE REGISTERED: 14/08/2015
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Aberdare West/Llwydcoed

RECOMMENDATION: Grant

REASONS:

The development is within the settlement boundary and in a predominantly residential area.

The proposal would result in the loss of some employment space. However the site was previously partially used as a 'Police House' and the current office use of the building has become surplus to their requirements. Notwithstanding this, the proposed use would still have some employment aspect in terms of the staff support. It would also provide an active use in what is a vacant building. As such, it is considered, there would be some regeneration benefit to the application.

The dwellings proposed would be for occupiers who may have learning difficulties, physical disabilities or sensory impairments. Some concern with regard to who would be occupying the property has been voiced by local residents. It is however considered this issue would not warrant a refusal reason.

There would be little physical external alteration and the impact on residential amenity would be acceptable. There would be no significant impact on parking and highway safety.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Full planning permission is being sought to convert the former Police Station, currently used as offices for Cynon Valley Crime Reduction Services, into a home for people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or sensory impairments. It is detailed the home would be run by Planned Residential Support Services Ltd (PRESS) and that they have been operating this type of residential service for over 20 years in South East Wales.

One shared three bedroom bungalow would be provided and 2 self contained flats. A Warden's office is detailed with connections to all three properties. Support would be provided by staff on a 24 hour basis. It is stated in the application that it would be largely the choice of the person seeking their services to live there and that the properties location to the local surgery, park, coliseum and local shops offers an attractive location. The home would be a 'home for life' and support staff would increase/decrease in line with changes in their needs and abilities.

A small extension/porch type area would be provide on the front and rear elevations. A couple of windows on the rear elevation would be increased in size and an additional window on the side elevation of the single storey part of the building facing the lane would be provided. There would also be some minor changes to the rear of the site to provide level access.

The application is accompanied by the following:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement.

Councillor Rees has requested that the application is reported to Development Control Committee to assess concerns expressed from local residents about the potential use of the premises.

SITE APPRAISAL

The application site is a building that is attached to a residential dwelling on its west side. The buildings together have the form of two semi-detached dwellings with one having a large single storey flat roof extension to its side and rear. Two single garages are located to the rear and accessed via the side lane. A lay-by on Windsor Road is located to the front of the building. St Fagan's Church, Church Hall and Vicarage are located in close proximity to the north and northwest. The church and vicarage use a side lane to the east of the application building to access Windsor Road. On the opposite side of Windsor Road is a row of traditional terraced dwellings.

PLANNING HISTORY (Relevant to application)

05/0604	Police Station, Windsor Street, Trecynon	Proposed change of use from Police Station to offices, conversion of garden to car parking facility	Granted 29/07/05
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PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised via the erection of a site notice and by direct neighbour notification. One petition signed by 28 local residents has been received. This details in principle they do not object to the proposed use. However, given the circumstances surrounding the death of the vicar of St Fagan's in 2008, it would be inappropriate for individuals with mental illnesses to be housed there.

CONSULTATION

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water - no objection.

Flood Risk Management – no objection.

Public Health and Protection – no objection subject to conditions on demolition of existing dwellings, hours of operation, noise, dust and waste.

Transportation Section – no objection subject to conditions retaining the garages and parking areas.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The site is within the settlement boundary as defined by the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and is unallocated.

Policy CS1 - sets out criteria for achieving strong sustainable communities including: promoting residential development in locations which support the role of principal towns and settlements and provide high quality, affordable accommodation that promotes diversity in the residential market; and encouraging a strong, diverse economy.

Policy AW1 - supports new housing inside the settlement boundaries and allocated sites.

Policy AW2 - advises that development proposals on non-allocated sites will only be supported in sustainable locations.

Policy AW5 - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

Policy AW8 - sets out criteria for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

Policy AW10 - development proposals must overcome any harm to public health, the environment or local amenity.

Policy AW11 – sets out criteria for development proposals promoting alternative uses for existing employment sites and retail units.

Policy NSA12 – details criteria for housing development within and adjacent to settlement boundaries.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Access Circulation and Parking.

Design and Placemaking.

Nature Conservation.

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of National Planning Policy which are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where National Planning Policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Planning Policy Wales Chapter 2 (Development Plans), Chapter 3 (Making and Enforcing Planning Decisions), Chapter 4 (Planning for Sustainability), Chapter 7 (Economic Development), Chapter 8 (Transport) and Chapter 9 (Housing) sets out the Welsh Government's policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of the application.

Other relevant policy guidance consulted:

PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design;

PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport;

PPW Technical Advice Note 23: Economic Development
Manual for Streets

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

Main issues:

Principle of the proposed development.

The site is located within the settlement boundary as identified in the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan. The proposal is for a residential development located within a mainly residential area.

The building was formerly used as a Police station (and associated offices) with attached 'Police houses'. However more recently the building became offices for Cynon Valley Crime Prevention Services (approximately ten years ago). The existing plans detail a number of office rooms and its use as a crime prevention centre with a reception area. The use subsequently became surplus to requirements and has been vacant for approximately a year.

In policy terms it could be argued that the office space should be retained for employment uses. To be permitted, Policy AW11 requires change of uses of employment sites to have been marketed for 12 months for employment uses without success. It is stated the property has been vacant for a year, however no marketing has been submitted with the application.

Notwithstanding this, the proposed use would still retain some employment aspect with support staff. It would also bring an active use back to what is a vacant building within a residential area. It is also considered, a residential use would be more appropriate in this pre-dominantly residential area, therefore this would be considered a regeneration benefit.

In addition, the site is located on a narrow road with a high demand for on street parking. Whilst this may not restrict future use as offices it would result in more traffic movements than if the building was used for residential purposes. Therefore in these terms there would be an additional benefit from potentially less traffic and noise and disturbance issues.

Therefore in these terms, it is considered, the principle of residential development is acceptable subject to the following material planning considerations.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The main external alterations are the new front entrance and minor changes to the position of the side entrance and windows. It is considered the changes identified on the submitted plans would sympathetically blend with the design and layout of the existing building.

Therefore, taking into account the above assessment it is considered that the current proposal would be acceptable in these terms.

Impact on residential amenity and privacy.

The building is located in a pre-dominantly residential area. The impact of the use of the building, in these terms, would be broadly similar to the existing use. The additional extensions would not have any significant detrimental impact from overbearing or loss of sunlight. Furthermore as detailed above, potentially, the reduction in traffic and intensity of the use of the building could result in less related noise and disturbance.

Taking into account the above assessment the application would therefore be acceptable in these terms.

Access and highway safety

No objection has been raised by the Transportation Section subject to conditions to secure off-street parking spaces. It is considered these haven't been sufficiently detailed on the submitted plans and a condition requiring these details would be acceptable.

Other Issues

The following other material considerations have been taken into account in considering the application, though were not the key determining factors in reaching the recommendation:

Public Health

Whilst the comments raised by the Public Health and Protection Section are appreciated, it is considered dust and waste matters can be more efficiently controlled by other legislation. An appropriate note can be added to any permission concerning waste and dust issues.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 31 December 2014.

The application is for development of a kind that is liable for a charge under the CIL Regulations 2010 as amended however, the application lies within Zone 1 of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Residential Charging Zones, where a nil charge is applicable and therefore no CIL is payable.

Conclusion

The application is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Local Development Plan in respect of the principle of the development, impact on residential amenity and privacy, impact on the character and appearance of the area and parking and highway safety (Policies AW1, AW2, AW5, AW6 and AW11).

RECOMMENDATION: Grant

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) no(s)

Dwg 6 of 6 - Location and Block Plan received on 8th July 2015.

Dwg 3 of 6 - Proposed Floor Plans received on 8th July 2015.

Dwg 5 of 6 - Proposed Inner Elevation and Sections received on 8th July 2015.

Dwg 4 of 6 - Proposed Elevations received on 8th July 2015

and documents received by the Local Planning Authority on 8th July 2015, unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The premises shall be used for C3 Use Class dwelling houses and for no other purpose; including any other purpose in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order.

Reason: The site may not be appropriate for other uses by virtue of its proximity to residential dwellings in accordance with policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. The external materials of the proposed extensions shall match as near as possible the materials of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the extension is in keeping with the existing building in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies AW5 and AW6 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. Development shall not commence until details for the removal of the Police Parking road markings and any Traffic Regulation Order associated with the proposed from the lay-by located on Windsor Street have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to first beneficial occupation of the

dwellings hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

6. The development shall not be brought into use until space has been laid out within the site for vehicles to be parked in accordance with details to be first submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter spaces and garages shall be retained for the parking of vehicles thereafter unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that vehicles are parked off the highway, in the interests of road safety in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

7. Surface water run-off from the proposed development shall not discharge onto the public highway or connected to any highway drainage system unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent overloading the existing highway drainage system and potential flooding and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

8. Construction works on the development shall not take place other than during the following times:

- Monday to Friday 0800 to 1800 hours;
- Saturday 0800 to 1300 hours;
- Not at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the noise emitted from this development is not a source of nuisance to occupants of nearby residential properties in accordance with policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

As amended by

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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SITE MEETING

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ROOM – CYNON VALLEY CRIME REDUCTION SERVICES, WINDSOR
STREET, TRECYNON, ABERDARE**

Minute No.74 (Development Control Committee, 15 October 2015)

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