

## **NORTHERN PLANNING COMMITTEE – 10 August 2022**

### **UPDATE TO AGENDA**

#### **APPLICATION NO.**

21/6431M

#### **LOCATION**

Catherine House, Catherine Street, Macclesfield.

#### **UPDATE PREPARED**

08<sup>th</sup> August 2022

#### **CONSULTATIONS**

**Senior Commissioning Manager – Learning Disabilities & Mental Health, Adult Social Care & Health** - expands on the description of “complex needs” *‘In terms of commissioner support we have been working with the care provider Alternative Futures and the housing provider Halo Housing to ensure that the service and accommodation meets the needs and demands of people with complex needs. For this particular development this would be people with learning disabilities and/or Autism. This accommodation would meet the needs of individuals with a range of support needs ranging from some who may be independent but require some 1-1 support to others who may be a bit more complex in terms of the support required and therefor require additional levels of support. People living in the accommodation would be supported by staff on site at all times, during the day and at night’.*

**Cllr Braithwaite** - Raises the following concerns

- Potential disturbance from staff shift changes, residents/visitors/support workers coming and going etc. within feet of existing residential properties. Conditions were placed on the Picturedrome so same should apply.
- Potential for disturbance from residents/staff gathering outside in the extremely limited space available, close to existing properties.
- Concern about the specific complex needs, what are they and how may this affect the residential amenity. Although the report says low-level support for adults with learning disabilities, the letter of support from the Adults Commissioning Team refers to learning difficulties and other complex needs.
- The dimensions shown on the revised plans for the proposed ground floor are incorrect, they all say 42 sq m when some are not.
- There are a couple of applications missing from the Relevant History, which are relevant in terms of historical use. They are 82902P and 02/0574P and have conditions relating to hours of use.

- It appears that the only positive regard to amenity in the report is that given to the proposed development and is disregarded for existing residents despite conditions in previous applications to protect them.
- It should be noted that the public open space presumably Christ Church grounds, has recently been designated as being within a PSPO boundary
- There is no evidence that site has been marketed for any length of time. There are three businesses registered as active at the property (Companies House website) and mail is collected regularly (as observed by neighbour).
- HOU 2 is referred to but not how the specific criteria is met – not knowing the type of resident makes it impossible to take a balanced view.
- There is also no regard given to housing mix, there is already supported living round the corner.
- Some of the bathrooms have no windows, what are the extract arrangements? Is it acceptable in terms of health (risk of mould etc)
- Are bins domestic or industrial? Collection arrangements in either case?
- The report states that there will be 2 members of staff on site at all times, however no staff amenity area other than the office. E.g., toilets, kitchen area etc.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

2 Additional objections have been received and are summarised below;

- People living within supported living accommodation are protected by DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) Catherine House is not a suitable accommodation, where there are not suitable gardens.
- Some of the proposed windows opaque which will not allow residents to look outside their surroundings,
- This a speculative, poorly thought out building.
- Catherine House, is suitable only for its current use (an office building)
- Canalside View, consists of and provides 7 shared apartments for 16 Tennants and was purpose built with unrestricted views from the majority of the apartments looking out onto Macclesfield Canal.
- The committee report is a selective reading of the Design Guide. It actually states that “the minimum residential amenity standards for property fronts to fronts (18 metres) and back to backs (21 metres), A more precise measurement should be made to numbers 13, 15 and 24 George Street West and reconsidered in light of the letter of DC38 and the spirit of the design guidance.
- With no outdoor space and some upstairs rooms with limited windows or opaque glass, it would be naïve to believe that the external landing and stairs will not be used by residents for smoking (as this is likely to be banned indoors) and fresh air.
- Lack of on site amenity space contradicts the fact and/or spirit of local plans which underline the importance of private outdoor amenity space.

- There is no indication of how long the user would commit to housing their vulnerable clients in assisted living accommodation without outside space.
- It seems likely that this will be seen as poor accommodation by quality providers with high aspirations for their residents.

#### Macclesfield Civic Association

Within the committee report the following comments from Macclesfield Civic Society have been reported as a representation of support. However, for clarification this is a representation of COMMENT only.

The comments are repeated below for reference.

*‘The surrounding area is largely residential in character and the proposal would be consistent with such. Minor changes to the external appearance of the building will allow for the provision of 8 small units of accommodation close to the facilities of the town centre. Existing parking provision would be available though perhaps some reduction could be secured to allow for the provision of some external amenity space’.*

### **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

#### **Amenity**

##### Separation distances

The amenity section of the report deals with the impact on residents with particular regard to privacy and privacy distances. Properties to the south east of the site along Pierce Street are below the 21m separation distance outlined with the Cheshire East Design Guide (vol 2) at approx. 13-14m from the first floor window on the rear elevation that is proposed to serve a bedroom. However, the rear elevation and the first floor windows of the building are at oblique angles to the existing properties along Pierce Street. Para 111 of the CE Design Guide (vol 2) states ‘rear distances between properties where habitable rooms face one another should not drop below 21 metres to ensure privacy and good levels of light internally and some degree of privacy to rear gardens. Where the rear of properties sit at oblique angles to one another...then these distances can potentially be reduced.’

##### Lack of outdoor amenity space

This is the change of use of an existing building within a town centre location. It is not uncommon for residential accommodation within town centres to have no private amenity space. The report outlines the distances to local open spaces.

A resident has raised concern about the use of the external stair case as an amenity space, however whilst this is to be repositioned along the rear elevation, this is an existing emergency access only.

##### Obscure Glazing

There are to be 2 windows at first floor that would serve habitable rooms and that are obscure glazed. However, these are secondary windows and not the main window for the room and in this instance are considered appropriate.

#### Noise and Disturbance

This site is located within the town centre where a certain level of noise and disturbance can be expected. The additional noise from 2 members of staff changing shift and visitors to the building is not considered to result in an increase in noise and general activity such that would be considered unreasonable in this location.

#### Other Matters

##### Complex Needs

The commissioning manager has confirmed that the accommodation will provide assisted living accommodation for residents with learning disabilities and/or autism. The applicant has confirmed that the individuals suited for this support model are those who do not have highly complex needs and who are more suited to living independently with background support and some 1:1 hours. The proposals are considered to meet a specific need and therefore comply with policy HOU 2 in this regard.

##### Housing Mix

With regard to housing mix, the site provides for individual one bed units for supported living and so would not warrant the provision of a mix of unit sizes on site.

Cllr Braithwaite has queried the ventilation for bathrooms without windows. Bathrooms can be mechanically ventilated and a matter for Building regulations.

It has also been raised that there is no evidence of the property being marketed. No evidence has been submitted to support the statement that the applicant has made in regard to marketing of the site for alternative occupiers. It is acknowledged within the report that the proposals do not fully comply with CELPS policy EG3.

All floor areas have been checked and are correct as labelled on the plans (all being a minimum 42sqm). This does not include communal hallways.

The application form states there is no trade waste from the site and there is to be a refuse store on site.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

As in the original report a recommendation of approval is made.