

Agenda Item A6	Committee Date 28 September 2009	Application Number 09/00523/CU
Application Site Summerfields Care Home, White Lund Road, Morecambe LA3 3NL	Proposal Change of use of existing 19 bedrooms and common room to form six self-contained sheltered flats and a new level entrance	
Name of Applicant Maureen MacKay	Name of Agent Trevor Bone	
Decision Target Date 18 August 2009	Reason For Delay Awaiting consultation replies	
Case Officer	Peter Rivet	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Approval	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The property concerned is a nursing home on the west side of White Lund Road, on the south side of Morecambe. Part of it was converted from a house but the eastern end of it is the result of a later extension.
- 1.2 Immediately to the north of the site is a small development of ten sheltered flats known as Grove Gardens, which is in the same ownership. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, but the land on the east side of White Lund Road is occupied by the City Council's White Lund Depot.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 At present the east wing of the building, which has two storeys, accommodates a series of bedrooms with en-suite bathroom facilities. It is proposed to rearrange it internally to provide six self-contained flats for the elderly. Most would be one bedroom units, but there would be a two bedroom one at first floor level. This will be achieved with only minimal alterations to the external appearance of the building, to provide a new canopy roof over the entrance and a level entrance. A "community room" for the use of all the residents is to be provided on the ground floor.
- 2.2 The submitted plans show a parking layout but no spaces are at present laid out on the forecourt. It is not clear from the drawings how, if at all, the spaces are to be allocated between the flats and the remaining nursing home accommodation.
- 2.3 The entrance to the flats will allow wheelchair access to the ground floor flats, but not to the upper floors. The bathroom layouts shown have not been designed with wheelchair users in mind, and the existing lift in the building is not within the part of it included in the conversion scheme.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 The most recent applications involving the site are as follows:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
02/00850/FUL	Erection of a conservatory extension to the south elevation	Approval
06/00305/FUL	Erection of sheltered housing on land adjoining Regency Rest Home site, comprising ten 2-person one-bedroom flats	Approval
06/00306/FUL	Erection of an extension on to land previously occupied by Regency Rest Home	Approval

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory consultees:

Consultees	Response
Morecambe Town Council	No observations received within the specified timescale.
Lancashire County Council Highways	No objections in principle - the proposed use is less intensive in highway terms than the existing one. Within the existing car park, two parking spaces plus one mobility space should be reserved for users of this development. In addition secure cycle parking should be provided for at least one bicycle.
Lancashire County Council Social services	No observations received within the specified timescale.
Environmental Health Service	No objections subject to the standard hours of construction condition.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 A letter from a resident of Broughton Grove is concerned about possible overlooking problems, and has asked for clarification whether the whole building will be converted into flats.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 "Saved" Policy **H17** of the Lancaster District Local Plan states that proposals for sheltered housing (either new build or conversions), will only be permitted where the site is convenient to the Primary Bus Route or other major bus route, local services and facilities. Policy **R21**, also saved, requires that development proposals should where appropriate make provision for people with disabilities.

6.2 Appendix 2 of the Lancaster District Local Plan is relevant, in that it sets out amenity standards for self contained flats.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The building will continue to fulfil the same function as before, in that it will provide for the needs of the elderly, though clearly it will accommodate a smaller number of people.

7.2 A supporting statement explains that when consent for the extension was granted in 2006, the applicant's other homes in Morecambe had reached capacity. However, since then the market has changed and there is a fall off in demand for this kind of accommodation. Conversely, demand for the adjoining sheltered flats at Grove Gardens is strong, with a waiting list of nine people.

7.3 The distance between the part of the building concerned and the nearest neighbouring property is sufficient to minimise the risk of overlooking problems.

7.4 The proposed flats all meet the space standards set out in Appendix 2 of the Local Plan. The use of this end of the building means that the accommodation will relate well to the adjoining sheltered accommodation in Grove Gardens.

- 7.5 With regard to Policy R21, the layouts shown for the bathrooms have not been designed with the needs of wheelchair users in mind but those of the ground floor flats could easily be modified by moving the wash basins. This point can be addressed through an advice note on any grant of consent. The Building Regulations legislation will ensure that the proposal satisfies mobility requirements.
- 7.6 With regard to the provisions of Policy H17 of the Local Plan, there is no bus service along White Lund Road. However there is a frequent one along Westgate, which also has a substantial local shopping centre. The site is therefore deemed to be an appropriate location for this form of development.
- 7.7 Whilst there is no current demarcation of parking spaces, the reduction from a proposal involving 19 bedrooms to one involving 6 self-contained sheltered flats is one that will have no adverse impacts upon traffic and parking. The County Highways Department have no objection.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposal is driven by changes in the market for accommodation for the elderly. The scheme will offer a good standard of accommodation and there are no policy objections. It is therefore to be supported.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard three year condition.
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
3. Materials used in construction of porch to match the existing building.
4. Accommodation to be occupied by people over 55 only.
5. Reserved car parking spaces to be marked out.
6. Secure cycle parking to be provided.
7. Building work to take place only between 08:00-18:00 Monday to Friday; 08:00-14:00 on Saturdays and no work on Sundays or officially recognised public holidays.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

None.