Farrar Bamforth Associates Ltd

Chartered Architectural Technologists

51 Trinity Street Huddersfield HD1 4DN
Tel: 01484 424008 Fax: 01484 512305
E-mail: design@farrarbamforth.co.uk
Website: www.farrarbamforth.co.uk

PROPOSED CONVERSION TO FORM ADDITIONAL RESIDENT'S LIVING ACCOMMODATION

AND

OWNERS REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS

AT

THORPE HOUSE SPECIALIST ADULT MENTAL HEALTH UNIT LTD
22 FINTHORPE LANE
ALMONDBURY
HUDDERSFIELD
HD5 7TU

PLANNING STATEMENT

18/C24 March 2019

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 In 1988 planning approval was granted to convert Thorpe House from a dwelling to a specialist adult mental health unit. The conversion was competed in 1989 and has been owned by the same family ever since.

1.02 In 2009 approval was granted to convert part of the former coach house into four semi-independent living units which have proved successful.

1.03 There is a proven need for more of these units to be provided, so the first part of the accompanying planning application is to convert the remaining part of the former coach house into five additional units.

1.04 This area to be converted is currently divided up into a pair of dwellings which has been occupied by the two separate parts of the same family who have owned and run the home since its inception.

1.05 There is a separate justification included in the application as to why it is essential that the family lives on site, so the second part of the application concerns the provision of a new build pair of semi-detached houses situated within the grounds as replacement accommodation.

2.00 SITE DECRIPTION AND LAND ALLOCATION

2.01 Thorpe House was originally constructed in the early part of the 19th century and set in extensive grounds which are situated predominantly to the south of the house, whose front elevation also faces south. The house is accessed from the east off Fleminghouse Lane along a tree lined drive which curves round towards the House.

2.02 Attached to the main house to the east is a former gardener's cottage which is in separate ownership. To the west of the house and detached from it is the former coach house which currently houses the owners and contains the initial phase of self-contained units.

2.03 A separate area of land is situated to the west of the former coach house and is separated from the remaining land and car park area by a 6ft screen fence. The nature and character of this land is undoubtably different from the parkland setting of the residual land within the site curtilage. It is wholly domestic in character with extensive paving, timber decking, outbuildings, garden walls with planting set in top and a central lawned area, and is used by the owners as their garden area having access to it from their current accommodation.

2.04 Regarding the land allocation of the site. The entire curtilage of Thorpe House is in Green Belt, being part of a much larger expanse to the south as shown on the new Local Plan.

2.05 The main house is also Grade 2 listed and the detached application site of the former stables is classed as a curtilage building.

3.00 PLANNING POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DEVELOPMENT

3.01 The following local and national policies are relevant to this application:-

Kirklees Local Plan

PLP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.
PLP2 - Place shaping
PLP21 - Highway safety and access
PLP22 - Parking
PLP24 - Design
PLP52 - Protection and improvement of environmental quality
PLP68 - The reuse and conversion of buildings

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
Chapter 12 - Achieving well designed places
Chapter 13 - Protecting Green Belt land
Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

3.02 The principles of the development are to be applied to the two facets of the application, namely, the conversion of the former coach house and the replacement new build dwellings for the owners to live on site.

3.03 Regarding the conversion of the existing dwellings. A separate heritage statement provides justification for their conversion under PLP60 of the Local Plan.

3.04 With regard to the conversion of the existing buildings in the Green Belt, the proposals accord with paragraph 146(d) of the NPPF.

3.05 Whilst the replacement new build houses are to be situated in the area of land described in paragraph 2.03 with its domestic character, it is still designated as Green Belt so chapter 13 of the NPPF is still relevant.

3.06 Paragraph 144 of the NPPF requires that 'substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposals, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'

3.07 As the proposal does not fall under any of the exceptions listed in paragraph 145 and 146 it is therefore considered inappropriate development unless special circumstances exist which will outweigh the harm to openness of the Green Belt.

3.08 Before proposing the special circumstances which exist to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt it is worth mentioning how the proposed positioning of the houses in the 'garden' area of land goes some way to mitigating the harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

3.09 This self contained area of land displays a wholly domestic character as previously described and is clearly defined by the 6ft high screen fencing to the south, the former coach house to the east and the high wall fronting onto Finthorpe Lane to the north which forms part of the northern boundary of the Green Belt. The western boundary also contains a stone wall with a screen fence on top restricting any open views beyind the boundary.

3.10 Because the application site is physically and visually contained on all four sides, any new buildings situated in this enclosed area would not adversely affect the openness of this part of the Green Belt, unlike if the building was situated further south in the parkland setting of the grounds.

3.11 Regarding the special circumstances which exist to outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

3.12 The proposal is to provide further semi-independent living units has been justified by the success of the existing units and the need for additional units as verified by Kirklees Adult Services when a pre-application enquiry was submitted in September 2018. Separate justification for the proposal was also provided in written evidence by the owners of Thorpe House. This justification is also submitted again in support of the application. (Appendix A)

3.13 The proposal also accords with Chapter 8 of the NPPF – Promoting healthy and safe communities.

3.14 As the owner's current accommodation is to be converted into the semi-independent living units to form a block of this type of accommodation when combined with the existing units, alternative accommodation needs to be provided for the owners, to enable them to continue living on site. Justification has also been provided by the owners as to why it is essential that they live on site. (Appendix A)

3.15 The need to provide all the semi-independent living accommodation in one detached block which facilitates supervision and the fact that there are no other areas on site where it can be provided due to the listed building status, validates converting the owner's accommodation for its provision.

3.16 Similarly, as the owners have provided valid justification as to why it is essential that they live on site, and there is no scope for any further conversion or extension, new build accommodation is the only viable option.

3.17 The location for the two new build semi-detached houses in the enclosed garden area as previously described is the optimum position which minimises the harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

4.00 CONCLUSION

4.01 In order to accord with the guidance set out in paragraph 144 of the NPPF and in the absence of any of the exceptions listed in paragraphs 145 and 146, very special circumstances need to be put forward to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness.

4.02 We propose the very special circumstances are as follows:-

i. It has been established that there is a proven demand for the semi-independent living units, evidence both by the success of the existing units and the Council's confirmation of the need for such units in the area.

4.02 ii) The owners have justified as to why it is essential that their replacement accommodation remains on site as a 24 hour back up to staff and deal with unforeseen circumstances and emergencies, when they inevitably arise.

(iii) The listed status of the main house precludes it being extended or altered to provide the required accommodation. The only available area is to use the existing owner's accommodation.

(iv) The replacement owner's accommodation therefore needs to be a new build and the location proposed mitigates as much as possible any harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the setting of the listed building.

4.03 We maintain that the above very special circumstances can be considered to outweigh the harm of inappropriateness and harm to the Green Belt.

APPENDIX A

JUSTIFICATION OF PROPOSALS

Thorpe House Specialist Adult Mental Health Unit Ltd
22 Finthorpe Lane
Almondbury
Huddersfield
HD5 8TU

Brief history

Thorpe House was a private dwelling and was converted into a specialist adult mental health unit in 1989. It is still being run by the family that opened it and it is a well-respected and in demand service. The home provides 24-hour care to 21 service users offering both long term and short-term placements with an emphasis on promoting independence and rehabilitation. The unit offers care and support for people with a range of mental health issues. Whilst the unit is set in a tranquil environment it is also close to the local village and the amenities this offers. The grounds are well maintained and the gardens include a herb and sensory garden, a pond with fish and various sitting areas for service users.

Type of care

The home caters for individuals with a range of mental health issues such as schizophrenia, bi-polar and depression. It provides a safe and caring environment whilst ensuring respect, dignity, choice and consent. There are some service users with physical health complications and these are managed as far as possible whilst observing the restrictions that come from being a listed building. Service users are supported to develop their cooking skills, budgeting skills, and other activities of daily living. The home is unique to the area and is an in-demand placement. There are often individuals waiting for a bed. The majority of the service users are from Kirklees with 17 out of the 21 individuals being from Kirklees (16) and Calderdale (1).

If the proposal is successful the type of service users it would cater for is those who are ready to make the move to a more independent type of living whilst still being on site and having access to staff to provide any support they require.

There has already been a successful conversion of an out building on site which has made 4 bedsit type rooms which cater for those individuals who have been building on their skills for more independent living.

There is a shortage for support or people with mental health needs and there has been lots of public awareness raising on this issue.

Proposal

The proposal is to provide semi-independent accommodation with the benefit of being on the premises and with staff available 24 hours a day. This will allow service users to live in a less communal setting whilst still providing the support they require. The proposal would be be for 4/5 bedsit type rooms which would have their own ensuite and some basic cooking facilities. There would also be a shared kitchen and lounge area/s.

Owners requirements

The home is currently run by the family that opened it who have always lived on site. To ensure continued effective running and support to staff the family wish to continue living in site. The main time that this support is used is during the night when staffing levels are lower and situations may arise. The proposal would mean the family giving up their homes and therefore they need alternative accommodation on site.

Thorpe House Specialist Adult Mental Health Unit Ltd
22 Finthorpe Lane
Almondbury
Huddersfield
HD5 8TU

To whom it may concern,

Regarding the application for planning permission to build on the Shareholders property within the grounds of Thorpe House.

The occupiers of both houses are Directors and Shareholders of the adjacent care home business and propose to continue to be so for the foreseeable future. This is their only occupation. With regard to service user and staff ratios there are 21 service users. The staffing levels during the day are a minimum of 2 qualified staff and 4 support workers. They would be supported by 1 or 2 Occupational therapists (Monday to Friday), 1 house supervisor, and Domestic and kitchen staff. There is often at least 2 qualified staff and 5/6 support workers. At night, the level of staff is 4 waking staff.

There are several reasons why we believe that this development is necessary and these are set out below:

1. Due to the listed building status of the main building we are finding that as service user needs change, the building is not able to accommodate specialist equipment. As our service users age and become frailer, some need to use equipment to assist them with their movement and for personal care tasks. Due to this we are finding that some service users who have lived here for a long number of years may be faced with the prospect of having to move to a new care setting if we are no longer able to meet their needs. This could be distressing and detrimental to their well-being as often service users view this as their home.
2. We would make the new rooms big enough to be able to support service users with physical disabilities which would limit having to turn down referrals due to not being able to meet the needs of those with physical disabilities. As we are ageing population we are increasingly being referred people with physical disability. There is also evidence to suggest that people with mental health issues often have physical health complications associated with this.
3. Having the ability to create more rooms would give us the ability to upgrade current facilities as we still have two double bedrooms which could be made into single rooms of a bedsit type with ensuite. Increasingly, people are expecting single ensuite rooms as this is more private and dignified and will also support service users to maintain independence in areas such as meal and drink preparation.
4. There is demand for our service which is evidenced by referral levels. We cater for complex individuals who no longer need an acute placement but may not be appropriate for a typical care home. Having extra beds would enable us to accept more individuals who are referred and would reduce bed blocking on acute wards and reduce the need for individuals to go to a temporary placement to await a long term placement.
5. With the increasing demand for placements, having extra beds could reduce the need for individuals to be placed out of area.
6. The Directors who live on the premises are often called upon, especially during the night for issues such as responding and providing support in emergency situations. We do not want to

remove this unique support system and without being able to provide the new building, this support would not be available.

7. During the night, staff numbers are 4 waking staff. The Directors living on site means that there is extra support available which has been utilised in various situations as set out below:

- If a staff member falls ill and needs to go home during the night, if needed the Directors can attend in order to make the home safe in terms of staff numbers.
- Unless it is a planned drill, if the fire alarm sounds evacuation is carried out. If it is during the night, the Directors can be on hand to assist and can support the speed of evacuation.
- The Directors are often called upon to collect medication from the late night pharmacy.
- The Directors are sometimes called upon to provide escorts to hospital during the night so as not to reduce the numbers of staff on duty
- In times of bad weather, the Directors are sometimes called upon to transport staff to and from work to ensure safe staffing levels.
- Having the Directors on site offers a male presence and reassurance to night staff as it is often all female workers on shift.

The Directors and Shareholders have always out of choice lived on site as they feel the business can be/has been run more effectively and safely with their ongoing support and physical presence on the premises during a large proportion of daytime and almost always at night.

Good morning Farzana,

Please find below a couple of emails received from Mr Croft informing me of an incident at the Home which I would suggest gives an excellent example of why the family need to be on site to react immediately to any incidents which may arise.

"On 9 Nov 2018, at 18:08, david croft <david.croft44@hotmail.co.uk> wrote:

John just to advise of an incident on November 8th.

In the early evening a male resident carried out an aggressive incident on a staff member which resulted in the male resident needing "specialling " on a one to one basis 24 hours a day with immediate effect. This task was carried out by the family living on site throughout Thursday night and all day Friday. This is an example of us being on hand to provide immediate assistance. Regards David and Rachel Croft

Sent from my iPhone

On 10 Nov 2018, at 21:10, david croft <david.croft44@hotmail.co.uk> wrote:

Update. At 8pm today I was advised that 2 night staff had phoned in sick leaving us with a problem due to the continued need to "special" the resident following the aggression of Thursday last. Consequently I am now called on to "special from 8pm until 11pm and am expecting to have to return at 4am until day staff arrives at 8am Sunday morning. Regards David

Sent from my iPhone"

Please add it to the justification information already submitted.

Regards,

John

Farrar Bamforth Associates Ltd
Chartered Architectural Technologists

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists
Registered Practice

John Robinson
Director

Farrar Bamforth Associates Ltd
51 Trinity Street, Huddersfield, HD1 4DN
Tel: 01484 424008 | Fax: 01484 512305
www.farrarbamforth.co.uk