

A meeting of the above Committee will be held remotely on Wednesday 15 July 2020, at 6.00pm and available for the public to watch via the Warwick District Council [YouTube channel](#).

Councillor Boad (Chairman)

Councillor Morris (Vice Chairman)

Councillor M Ashford

Councillor V Leigh-Hunt

Councillor R Dickson

Councillor N Murphy

Councillor T Heath

Councillor N Tangri

Councillor O Jacques

Councillor J Weber

Councillor J Kennedy

Agenda Part A – General

1. Apologies & Substitutes

- (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
- (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

Part B – Planning Applications

To consider the following reports from the Head of Development Services:

3. **W/20/0346 - William Wallsgrove House, 26 Lillington Road, Royal Leamington Spa** (Pages 1 to 15)

Please note:

- (a) the background papers relating to reports on planning applications are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 and consist of all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority in connection with the planning applications referred to in the reports, the County Structure Plan Local Plans and Warwick District Council approved policy documents.
- (b) all items have a designated Case Officer and any queries concerning those items should be directed to that Officer.
- (c) in accordance with the Council's Public Speaking Procedure, members of the public can address the Planning Committee meeting remotely by joining the remote meeting through their personal device on any of the planning applications or Tree Preservation Order reports being put before the Committee. If you wish to do so, please register online at <https://estates7.warwickdc.gov.uk/PlanningSpeaking/> any time after the publication of this agenda, but before 10.00am on the working day before the day of the meeting and you will be advised of the procedure.
- (d) please note that the running order for the meeting may be different to that published above, in order to accommodate items where members of the public have registered to address the Committee.
- (e) occasionally, items are withdrawn from the agenda after it has been published. In this instance, it is not always possible to notify all parties interested in the application. However, if this does occur, a note will be placed on the agenda via the Council's website, and where possible, the applicant and all registered speakers (where applicable) will be notified.

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For enquiries about specific reports, please contact the officers named in the reports. You can e-mail the members of the Committee at planningcommittee@warwickdc.gov.uk

Details of all the Council's committees, councillors and agenda papers are available via our website www.warwickdc.gov.uk/committees

The agenda is available in large print on request,
prior to the meeting, by telephoning (01926)
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Application No: [W 20 / 0346](#)

Town/Parish Council: Leamington Spa
Case Officer: Rebecca Compton
01926 456544 rebecca.compton@warwickdc.gov.uk

Registration Date: 05/03/20
Expiry Date: 30/04/20

**William Wallsgrove House, 26 Lillington Road, Leamington Spa, CV32
5YY**

Application for a retrospective change of use from an 11 bed hostel (use class sui-generis) to a hostel for upto 22 people at any time and upto 30 people during severe weather conditions (use class sui-generis). The associated works include the relocation of the smoking shelter to the rear garden and the retention of a close boarded bin store to the front of the site (re-submission of W/19/1310).
FOR Warwick District Council Housing Services

This application is being presented to Committee due to the number of objections and an objection from the Town Council having been received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee is recommended to grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks retrospective permission for a change of use from a hostel that accommodates up to 11 people to a hostel that will accommodate up to 30 people. The hostel seeks to provide accommodation for homeless people and particularly rough sleepers.

The applicant has indicated that the hostel is intended to be used for up to 22 people at any one time and shall accommodate up to 30 people during severe weather conditions.

The application is accompanied by a management plan which sets out the house rules and protocols associated with the operation of the hostel and also includes other retrospective works associated with the change of use that includes a rear smoking shelter and extension to the existing parking area. The smoking shelter is a clear glazed structure that will be positioned in the rear amenity area of the hostel. Additional hardstanding is to be provided to the existing rear car park to provide an additional 3 off street parking spaces.

At the request of committee members, the grant of temporary permission under application ref W/19/1310 was subject to an Oversight Group being formed to oversee the effectiveness of the management plan and address concerns from local residents regarding crime and anti-social behaviour.

Since the granting of a six-month temporary permission in October 2019, an Oversight Group has been formed consisting of a ward councillor, representative of the hostel management team and representatives of the local community and local residents. The first meeting was held in November 2019 with two further meetings held in December 2019 and January 2020.

Committee members also requested that any future application should be accompanied by greater detail of crime records from the police which has been provided as part of this application.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The application relates to a large detached hostel that accommodates members of the homeless community. The site is situated within a predominantly residential area along Lillington Road between the junctions with Wathen Road and Champion Road. The rear of the site backs onto Waller Street. The site is situated in the Royal Leamington Spa Conservation Area.

PLANNING HISTORY

W/19/1310 - Change of use from an 11 bed hostel (sui generis) to a hostel for up to 30 people (sui generis) (retrospective) - Granted a temporary permission for a period of 6 months. Members requested an Oversight Group to be established and any future applications to provide clear crime data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the management plan.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework

The Current Local Plan

- BE1 - Layout and Design
- BE3 - Amenity
- HE1 - Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets
- TR1 - Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR3 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- DS5 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- HS7 - Crime Prevention

Guidance Documents

- Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Royal Leamington Spa Town Council: Object on the grounds of the impact on neighbouring amenity and the detrimental effect on the Conservation Area.

WDC Environmental Health: No objection subject to the management plan being conditioned.

WDC Waste Management: No objection.

Warwickshire Police: No objection subject to conditions requiring CCTV cameras, there being a strict no drugs/alcohol policy and a register to be kept of people who attend and stay at the premises.

Public response: 34 objection letters have been received from local residents raising the following concerns:

- The hostel is situated in an inappropriate location close to houses, pubs, off licenses, late opening shops.
- The hostel was opened without consultation from the neighbouring residents.
- Following the opening of the hostel in 2018 there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour, threatening behaviour, breakings in to homes and cars in the locality.
- There has been an increase in crime since the opening of the hostel in 2018 including an increase in the reported number of incidents to the police.
- The proposal does not comply with the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017 being situated in a residential area.
- The hostel's strict no drink and drugs policy has led to the residents of the hostel occupying the surrounding streets.
- There is an increased level of disturbance to local residents regarding noise and traffic.
- The size of the hostel is unmanageable for the staff and concerns from residents are not addressed.
- The proposal is detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area arising from the installation of additional parking to the rear, the bin store being located to the front of the premises, the use of bars on windows and the overall deteriorated state of the property and surroundings.
- Increased litter in surrounding area including drink and drugs paraphernalia.
- The reduction in crime is due to reduced occupancy levels.

ASSESSMENT

The key issues considered in assessing this application are:

- The Principle of Development
- Design and impact on the character of the area and street scene, including the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents including Oversight Group Report
- Refuse
- Highways and parking
- Other matters

Principle of Development

Policy DS5 of the Warwick District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework requires consideration of the principles of sustainable development and the application site is located in a sustainable location within the town centre and well located to take advantage of public transport and the services in the vicinity. The direct access nature of the hostel would benefit from being situated in sustainable location as service users and service providers can easily access the site on foot or by public transport. The site is also within walking distance of Leamington Town Centre.

The hostel by its nature provides residential accommodation and so is a residential use. The site is situated in a predominantly residential area; in this context the location of the hostel is considered appropriate.

The proposal would provide a social benefit from the services it offers to the homeless community. Given that there are no policies that would in principle prevent this use in this location, the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development set out in Policy DS5 should apply. Therefore, subject to meeting other policy requirements, the principle of the proposal in this location accords with the development plan

Section 254 of the Housing Act 2004 defines the meaning of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and provides a list of uses that should not be considered as a HMO, this includes buildings that are managed by a Local Housing Authority.

The application site is managed by Warwick District Council and therefore meets this exception. There is therefore no requirement to assess this application against the Council's adopted Local Plan policy H6 which seeks to determine the acceptability of new HMO's.

Design and impact on the character of the area and street scene, including the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty when exercising planning functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage assets, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Policy HE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan states that development will not be permitted if it would lead to substantial harm to or total loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset, unless it is demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or if criteria listed within the policy have been satisfied. Where development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

No external changes are proposed to the building. The application includes retrospective works to the rear garden that includes an extension to the parking area and the erection of a smoking shelter. This application seeks to amend the location of the smoking shelter that was approved under application reference W/19/1310 following concerns from local residents.

Concerns have been raised that these works are detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The rear parking area has replaced an existing paved area, which is not considered to detract from the historic significance of the Conservation Area. In addition, there is an existing parking area to the rear of the building and therefore that change is in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing wider site.

The smoking shelter is situated fully to the rear of the building and there would be minimal views of the structure from the street scene. The smoking shelter is considered appropriate in the context of the use of the existing building and would encourage residents to utilise the hostel grounds rather than occupy the surrounding streets, which has been a concern raised by local residents.

The smoking shelter and parking area are not considered to have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the street scene or the Conservation Area.

A number of concerned residents have objected to the metal bars that been placed on the inside of the windows. Officers note these concerns however the bars are considered internal works and so do not constitute development requiring planning permission.

The proposal is considered to comply with policy HE1.

Impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents

Policy BE3 of the Local Plan and the supporting Residential Design Guide require developments to have regard to the amenities of local residents and this is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework which states that the level of detail and degree of prescription in a Supplementary Planning Document should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.

Policy HS7 requires developments to minimise the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour and improve community safety.

The proposals are part of a service to be run and managed by Warwick District Council as part of the Council's commitment to reduce the level of rough sleeping in the District. A management plan has been submitted with the application that clearly outlines how staff, residents and visitors have to adhere to rules and regulations to ensure a safe and respectful environment is maintained in and around the premises. There are procedures in place to manage behaviours that do not adhere to the rules and procedures.

The key issues relating to residential amenity arising from this proposal are noise and disturbance; lighting; crime and anti-social behaviour, and litter.

Noise and disturbance

Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents regarding the increase in noise and disturbance, resulting from groups of people loitering in the surrounding streets. Concerns have also been raised about nuisance caused by external lighting and blue lighting from the bathroom windows.

The Environmental Health Officer has stated in his response that "we are aware that there have been complaints from local residents since the increase of occupancy in August 2018.". Environmental Health are satisfied that the management plan provides sufficient measures to address noise concerns and as a result they have raised no objection subject to the development operating in accordance with the management plan.

The management plan has several measures put in place to minimise noise and disturbance to residents including: -

- After midnight only one service user at a time is allowed to leave the premises to smoke and only for a period of 15 minutes.
- Complaints about excess noise are addressed in a residents meeting or with individuals so that residents are aware of the effect their behaviour can have on the community.
- Each resident must sign a 'use and occupation' agreement before being allocated a bed space. One of the terms of that agreement is that

residents must not cause noise or disturbance to other hostel residents, staff and residents in the local vicinity. This also includes the playing of music, television, radio etc.

- The Hostel Manager or support staff have a warning and exclusions policy to manage residents that do not respect the hostel rules.
- If an existing or potential hostel resident is acting disruptively or aggressively, they will be admitted into the hostel in order to calm the situation and limit disturbance to neighbouring residents. The introduction of a 'quiet room' assists staff in this.
- Service users are encouraged to return to the hostel by midnight, late arrivals will be offered the quiet room for the evening.

One of the key concerns raised by local residents under the previous application W/19/1310 was that the direct access nature of the hostel can lead to conflict on the doorstep of the hostel in instances where individuals would not be admitted to the hostel. Local residents raised concerns that individuals that were not admitted to the hostel would cause disturbance in the local community. In response to these concerns, the hostel has introduced a 'quiet room' as an alternative to exclusions. The hostel management team have noted that since introducing the 'quiet room' in November 2019 there were 9 exclusions in the 4 months following its introduction compared to 19 in the 4 months prior.

The applicant has stated in the Planning Statement that efforts have been made to reduce nuisance caused by external lighting by altering their position, blinds will also be placed in bathroom windows to again reduce nuisance to neighbours.

The management plan sets out how noise impacts will be minimised including; last entry times, limits on the number of people allowed to exit the premises at night to smoke, restrictions on re-entry at night, restrictions on the playing of music and use of audio devices, restrictions on the use of drugs and alcohol, procedures for exclusion and denied entry, and occupancy conditions prohibiting nuisance behaviour in the local vicinity.

The management plan is supplemented by several supporting documents including the premises' exclusion procedure, licence agreement, and use and occupancy agreement which include additional restrictions in relation to noise disturbance.

The management plan will be conditioned and enforceable and I am satisfied that adverse noise impacts can be suitably controlled through the proposed managerial controls including those that have been introduced since the grant of temporary permission last.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

Concerns have been raised by neighbouring residents regarding the increase in break-ins in the area, criminal damage to properties and threatening and intimidating behaviour towards local residents.

Warwickshire Police have been consulted as part of this application. Their response notes their role as a statutory partner agency under the Crime and Disorder Act to support Warwick District Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-2020. The role of the Police in supporting the Council's strategy recognises the importance of tackling homelessness (and in particular rough sleeping) in addressing crime and anti-social behaviour in general across the District.

According to data provided by the Police, the total number of incidents relating to anti-social behaviour in a period of 10 months following the opening of the hostel between October 2018 and July 2019 had risen by 72%. Of the 41 incidents reported in focus area of the application site, 14 were directly related to the application site.

Additional data has been received from Warwickshire Police for the period between July 2019 and March 2020 which show that of the 335 incidents of anti-social behaviour reported in North Leamington, 22 were reported in the focus area around William Wallsgrove House and 4 within the immediate vicinity of William Wallsgrove House.

The data shows an overall reduction in anti-social behaviour in the area surrounding William Wallsgrove House and Warwickshire Police raise no objection to this application subject to conditions requiring measures to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour. These measures include the introduction of CCTV, a register of persons who attend and stay at the premises and a strict no alcohol and drugs policy. The management plan submitted states these measures are in place at the premises to reduce opportunities for crime and the management plan will be conditioned to ensure they are retained.

It should also be noted that Warwickshire Police work closely with the Housing Team to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour at William Wallsgrove House. Therefore, whilst there are concerns from local residents that the additional number of people at the hostel will lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour in this area, it is considered that there are sufficient procedures in place as detailed in the management plan to reduce opportunities for such behaviours and that with ongoing cooperation between the applicants and the police, any instances can be effectively addressed.

With regard to on site security, several security measures have been put in place which include electronically controlled doors to the front entrance, alarmed external doors and regular patrols of the internal and external spaces by staff members. A minimum of two staff members are on site at all times. The property benefits from CCTV cameras that cover the internal and external areas of the building so staff members can monitor residents and visitors for their safety. These security measures are considered appropriate to minimise the potential for anti-social behaviour as staff are able to monitor hostel residents and ensure

their behaviours chime with what is expected under the 'use and occupation' agreement. Staff are also able to control and monitor any visitors to the site and ensure they have a valid reason for attending the hostel. The security measures put in place are considered to appropriate in minimising anti-social behaviour and crime prevention in accordance with Policy HS7.

An independent review of the William Wallsgrove House was commissioned by Warwick District Council to review the current practices and procedures in place at the hostel and identify any areas for improvement. A report of their findings was produced in November 2019.

The Homeless Link report noted that exclusions i.e. service users not being admitted to or removed from hostels may create difficulties within the neighbourhood and one of the suggestions within the report was that specific focus should be on reducing the level of exclusions at the hostel.

The report states that greater exclusions can exacerbate levels of anti-social behaviour especially when users are excluded from the door as this may lead to conflict and aggressive behaviour. The hostel management team have therefore introduced a 'quiet room' in order to better manage those persons showing behaviours not acceptable to the hostel and provides a calm space away from other service users and off the street to limit the impact on existing hostel residents and the wider community.

The hostel management team have noted that since introducing the 'quiet room' in November 2019 there were 9 exclusions in the 4 months following its introduction compared to 19 in the 4 months prior. This is considered a positive way forward to reduce the number of exclusions and alleviate the concerns of residents that excluded hostel residents will lead to anti-social behaviour, noise and disturbance in the neighbourhood.

Oversight Group Report

The management plan under application W/19/1310 was amended following the request from members that an Oversight Group should be formed for the purposes of:

- Receiving information on the delivery of the management plan and reviewing the effectiveness of the plans.
- Receiving information on the approach to tackling crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the hostel and review the effectiveness of that approach.
- Promoting a unified partnership approach to meeting the needs of the hostel residents and the needs of the local residents.

The Oversight Group includes a ward councillor, a representative from the hostel management team and a representative of the local residents and the local community. The Oversight Group met on three occasions being November 2019, December 2019 and January 2020. The Oversight Group have produced a report of their findings and experiences since the granting of temporary permission in October 2019.

Their report notes that an internal review of William Wallsgrove House was to be undertaken which was to review the circumstances surrounding the initial identification of William Wallsgrove House as a location for a direct access hostel, steps that can be taken to alleviate concerns from residents regarding the lack of consultation with them and how the Council might improve its internal processes when acting as an applicant in the future. The report also notes that a lack of data or delays in receiving data has impacted on their ability to properly assess the management plan.

The Oversight Group states that current levels of crime are at a more tolerable level for local residents however the continued oversight of crime and incidents and their impact on the amenity of local residents is important. One of the suggestions of the report is that if permission is to be granted, the Oversight Group should be replaced by quarterly meetings chaired by the Housing Needs Manager with a Ward Councillor in attendance along with a greater number of local residents. Discussions are ongoing about how these meetings will evolve going forward.

The Oversight Group report makes reference to the recommendations outlined in the Homeless Link report which largely relate to the staffing structure, addressing the needs of service users and in particular supporting entrenched or complex rough sleepers. These recommendations are noted however are not considered material planning considerations in the determination of this application as they do not relate to the operation of the hostel in terms of mitigating impacts to the amenity of the local residents but are more about the service and level of care the hostel provides.

The Oversight Group, in line with the Homeless Link report, suggest that the direct access nature of the hostel and the exclusions can lead to difficulties in the local area. As stated earlier, steps have been taken to alleviate these concerns through the introduction of the 'quiet room' which has also been introduced into the management plan. This enables the hostel staff to de-escalate situations in a safe area that causes less disturbance to the local community. The Homeless Link report states that the police and local representatives feel that greater exclusions can lead to more instances of anti-social behaviour. Data provided by the applicant indicates that the level of exclusions has greatly reduced following the introduction of the 'quiet room' which will reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour, noise and disturbance that may arise from excluded service users.

The report notes that over the past 7 months the hostel has been operating at below 50% capacity and the recent numbers on rough sleeping have also fallen. The Oversight Group therefore feel that a review of the place and purpose of William Wallsgrove House should be subject to review by the Council and planning permission for the permanent change of use should not be granted until this has been completed. The report acknowledged that data available at the time suggested crime rates had reduced but that this may also correlate with the reduced occupancy levels. The report highlights that there was an increase in crime in 10 months following the opening of William Wallsgrove House in 2018.

Whilst that recommendation is noted, the assessment of this application must be undertaken on its planning merits. The likelihood or otherwise of the application site continuing in its current use is not a material consideration in that regard.

The following data has been provided by the applicant relating to occupancy levels at the hostel between the period of October 2018 and March 2020.

Month 2018	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18									
% Occupancy	48.09 %	44.85 %	61.88 %									
Month 2019	Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	Jun 19	Jul 19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19
% Occupancy	73.17 %	89.61 %	80.21 %	75.61 %	67.74 %	58.94 %	50.00 %	47.65 %	52.58 %	59.68 %	58.94 %	45.89 %
Month 2020	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20									
% Occupancy	36.66 %	22.26 %	41.20 %									

It is clear that the occupancy levels have been consistently below 50% since December 2019. In reviewing the police data from June 2019 to March 2020 the levels of crime have been relatively consistent with a noticeable peak in December.

The notable change is that levels of anti-social behaviour have significantly reduced in the vicinity of William Wallsgrove House; in the focus area the levels of anti-social behaviour have also gradually reduced. It is not clear whether this is attributed to the reduced occupancy levels as the hostel had only been consistently operating below 50% for a period of 4 months.

This application seeks to determine whether the use of the building as a direct access hostel and the increase in the number of residents would be acceptable in respect of the amenity of the neighbouring residents. The Oversight Group’s comments regarding a review of the place and purpose of the hostel is understood, however, the Council is committed to providing accommodation for the homeless. Whilst the latest rough sleeping count suggested a reduction in the level homelessness in Warwick District, levels of homelessness can fluctuate. The maximum number of residents that can be accommodated at the site has been determined based on worst case scenario in levels of rough sleeping, in 2017 22

rough sleepers were recorded in Warwick District making Warwick District Council one of the top 83 councils with the highest numbers of rough sleepers.

This site has been identified as being able to accommodate additional capacity to provide accommodation for rough sleepers, the applicant considers it unlikely that this site will operate at full capacity for long periods of time. The occupancy levels provided by the applicant since the opening of the direct access hostel in 2018 support this. However, should there be a peak in rough sleeping in the future as was seen in 2017, this site is currently proposed to provide additional capacity in order for the Council to provide support for rough sleepers. The hostel is suitably located providing means of access on foot or via public transport for people seeking support.

Litter

Several objections have been received regarding the increase in litter in the surrounding areas following the opening of the hostel in 2018.

The management plan states that staff patrol the surrounding streets 3 times a week and remove litter on these patrols. The management plan submitted will be conditioned to ensure the procedures and measures currently in place will be retained going forward.

Overall, it is the view of officers that the management plan will provide an effective means of ensuring that impacts on local amenity can be effectively managed and minimised and that therefore the proposals would be in accordance with Policies BE3 and HS7 of the Local Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Refuse

The existing building benefits from four bins comprising of two 1100L bins and two 240L bins that are situated to the front of the property. Waste Management have been consulted who have raised no objection to the application, they have commented that a further increase in residents will likely require additional refuse storage. There is ample space to the rear of the site to accommodate additional 240L bins should further refuse be required. These can be taken to the front of the site on collection day.

Under previous application W/19/1310, screening of the bin store to the front of the site was secured by condition, the details were approved and the screening has been implemented.

Highways and parking

Policy TR1 of the Local Plan requires development to cater for appropriate choices in terms of alternatives to the private car whilst Policy TR3 requires development proposals to provide appropriate car parking for their own needs.

Residents have raised concerns regarding the potential increase in traffic associated with the increase in residents. The parking standards sets out the minimum parking requirements for residential uses, there are no minimum standards for hostels or homeless shelters and so the proposal will be considered on its own merits.

The application seeks to provide an additional 4 spaces to the rear of the building for the benefit of staff and visitors and would result in a total of 8 spaces. Based on the number of staff that will be on site at any time detailed in the management plan, the number of spaces is considered appropriate to accommodate staff and visitors. In consideration of the nature of the use of the building as a hostel for the homeless community, the residents would not typically benefit from private vehicles. It should also be noted that being in a town centre location, visitors will have links to public transport and public car parks.

The development is considered to be in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR3 of the Local Plan.

Other matters

Concerns have been raised from residents regarding the hostel being located in a residential area and in close proximity to drinking establishments and late opening shops. The applicant has assessed other alternative sites that could meet the need. These were found to be either not suitably located or not of a sufficient size.

The application site is situated within a short distance of the town centre so current rough sleepers can easily access support and is situated within close proximity of services required for rehabilitation of the current residents. The hostel has a strict no drugs and alcohol policy and procedures are in place to ensure that hostel residents respect the surrounding community detailed in the management plan. Therefore, it is considered that the location of the hostel is appropriate in this case. The Homeless Link report also acknowledges that the location is consistent with other hostels of this nature.

Conclusion

In considering this application, it is necessary to balance the risk of increased anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the hostel against the significant social benefits that the hostel brings to the District and in particular to homeless, rough sleepers.

As set out above, there was an increase in anti-social behaviour and noise complaints since the opening of the hostel in 2018, it is also acknowledged in the Homeless Link report that there were concerns raised at this time about the service delivery and performance of the hostel.

Since that time revised practices have been introduced including the introduction of the 'quiet room', and the most recent crime data also shows a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour in the area. The management plan that has been submitted with the application, provides clear, effective and enforceable measures such as the 'use and occupation agreement', warnings and exclusions policy to handle behaviours that do not comply with the hostel rules, strict no drugs/alcohol policy, which will significantly reduce the risk of ongoing impacts on amenity.

Noting that the applicants have undertaken an assessment of alternative sites which has shown that this is the only available, suitable site that can meet the need for a hostel of this type, it is the view of officers that the wider benefits that the proposal will bring by providing 22 bedspaces for rough sleepers, significantly outweighs the risk of future impacts on amenity, particularly as there are mechanisms proposed to enable the management of those impacts.

The planning statement submitted by the applicants explains the benefits, noting that the facility "plays a major part of Warwick District Council's (WDC) proactive approach to tackling rough sleeping and operates in line with the government's Rough Sleeping Strategy agenda of eradicating homelessness".

The Planning Statement further explains that rough sleepers are often amongst the most vulnerable in our society and that hostel facilities are an important part of the approach to reducing rough sleeping in the District's towns and thereby providing an opportunity to support vulnerable people to improve their wellbeing and quality of life. This includes those who may need relief from rough sleeping in harsh weather conditions, or those who have experience mental health issues, forced marriage or domestic violence.

Taking all these factors in to account, and noting that neither the police nor environmental health object to the application, officers are of the view that the planning balance clearly weighs in favour of granting planning permission subject to the conditions listed below.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission. **REASON:** To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawing(s) AT/WWH/03 - Proposed basement & ground floors, AT/WWH/03 - Proposed first & second floors, AT/WWH/05, and specification contained therein, submitted on 03rd March 2020.
REASON : For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies BE1 and BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved Management Plan submitted on 04th March 2020. **REASON** : To secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policy BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 4 The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied by more than 22 residents at any time, with the exception of during severe weather conditions whereby the number of residents shall not exceed 30 at any one time. **REASON**: To protect the amenity of users and occupiers of nearby properties and to satisfy the requirements of Policy BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
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