

Harewood Park, Leek Road, Cheadle, Staffordshire ST10 2EE

Erection of three units of accommodation for semi-independent living in conjunction with supported living services provided.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This statement is provided to summarise the proposals and the application of policy to them, and explain why the local planning authority should support the application.
- 1.2. The proposals comprise the location of three converted shipping containers as further accommodation to that provided by the applicants to assist in the rehabilitation of residents preparing to move back into the community. The converted containers provide a bathroom, kitchen and living accommodation and bedroom. The application site is little used at present, except for drying washing, which will be moved to another location.
- 1.3. Legislation requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the local plan is the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, Adopted September 2020, the key material consideration being the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. The Applicant

- 2.1. Harewood Park specialises in the rehabilitation of and provision of care to ambulant younger adults (18+) who have complex needs including enduring mental health issues, acquired brain injuries and / or mild learning difficulties. Typically, residents have low self-esteem and lack in confidence, affecting their decision making.
- 2.2. Harewood Park provides a step-down facility on discharge from hospital as well as accommodation and care for those with a history of repeat hospital admission. Through supporting each individual resident to develop their skills and achieve their goals and aspirations during their recovery, some residents later move on to supported living schemes, residential care or their own residence. For others, longer-term care is required and Harewood Park responds positively to the differing needs of individuals. Length of stay is based on need.



2.3. All residents are offered the following:

- Their own personalised care and support and/or rehabilitation programme that identifies their 'Care Pathway'; helping them to set goals, receive the right support from within their care plans and risk assessments.
- Progress is evaluated utilising the 'Recovery Star' assessment tool, which identifies their strengths and areas for development.
- Decision making is encouraged, and residents are also responsible for shared activities including menu planning / meal preparation and household chores.
- To encourage independence residents are supported to visit their GP at the surgery & self-medicate.
- There are opportunities for residents to go to college and participate in voluntary work.
- Residents also participate in leisure activities such as cinema, theatre / concerts, places of interest and shops. Utilising public transport as much as possible.
- All bedrooms are en-suite and depending on the person's needs and preferences, rooms can be personalised.

2.4. The site presently comprises two types of accommodation for residents:

- i. The main house, comprising 27 bedrooms. Here, all residents have the benefit of the following services and facilities:
 - 24 hour Qualified Nursing staff
 - Trained care staff NVQ / QCF
 - Nurse call system in all rooms
 - Rehabilitation kitchen and laundry
 - In - house transport.
- ii. The Cottages, comprising 7 bedrooms. This is a step-down / transitional unit for residents who have been admitted to the main house and provides a more focused rehabilitation programme for those preparing to move into the community.

Residents in The Cottages benefit from a safe environment and have access to 1:1 staff support. They are given encouragement to achieve more independence through learning and improving all areas of daily living; decision making, social skills and budgeting.



- 2.5. The proposed units will provide an extension to the transitional accommodation for residents. For example, the care home currently has a long term resident who moved to The Cottages from the Main House. Previous attempts with supported living have failed and the single occupancy container proposal provides her with an ideal solution to her current needs, helping her transition back into society.
- 2.6. Harewood Park is presently CQC registered for 37 residents but only has 36 beds and no obvious space at present to increase its capacity within the two buildings (Main and Cottages). If this proposal is successful, the applicants will engage with the CQC to increase its registered occupancy to 39.
- 2.7. All residents have access to the extensive gardens at the site. There is also a communal open plan kitchen / living area where residents can prepare their own snacks and drinks, as well as a dining room and TV lounge.

3. Location of the proposals in the Green Belt and Countryside.

- 3.1. The site lies within the Green Belt. Policy SS2: Settlement Hierarchy states:

“Other Rural Areas – this comprises the open countryside where development is normally unacceptable and green belt where further development is generally inappropriate. Within these areas there are some groups of houses and hamlets which are not identified as ‘smaller villages’ because of their predominantly open character and loose-knit nature. They also contain major developed areas which may be suitable for appropriate development or redevelopment.”

- 3.2. Policy SS10 states, inter alia:

“Policy SS 10

Other Rural Areas Strategy

The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages.

6. Maintain the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands. Strict control will continue to be exercised over inappropriate development within the Green Belt allowing only for exceptions as defined by Government policy.”



3.3. Supporting justification at para 6.67 states:

“The Green Belt serves a number of purposes which are derived from Government policy in the NPPF and the former Staffordshire Structure Plan. The Green Belt keeps land open and free from development over a long period, which extends beyond the plan period, in order to give assurance that its boundaries will endure. National policy on Green Belts is set out in the NPPF and will apply to the whole of the Green Belt. The Green Belt Review assessed the Green Belt in the District against the five purposes of the Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary (as revised) is identified on the Policies Maps.”

3.4. Relevant government policy is set out at NPPF Section 13. Para 152 states:

“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”

3.5. The site comprises brownfield land. NPPF para 155 explains:

“154. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are...

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

– not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development...”

3.6. The proposed location for the container lies within an area towards the rear of the site which is completely enclosed. To the north-east and south east, the boundary wall of the application site measures 2.9m high. The north-western boundary is formed by an adjacent pitched roofed farm building, whose eaves also stand at 2.9m. The south-western boundary is formed by the side wall of the main house. The height of the converted containers measures 2.74m, meaning the proposed buildings will not be visible from outside the application site.

3.7. As a consequence, the proposal meets the test of NPPF para 154(g), being *“limited infilling... of previously developed land”* which will *“not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development”*. Consequently, the proposal comprises appropriate development in the Green Belt and can be supported in this respect..



4. Landscape

4.1. Policy SS10 also states that the Other Rural Areas Strategy will:

“3. Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by:

Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape...”

4.2. Policy DC 3, Landscape and Settlement Setting states:

“The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

- 1. Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;*
- 2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;*
- 3. Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds;*
- 4. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;*
- 5. Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.”*

4.3. The enclosed location, as described above, means that although the appearance of the proposals, being single storey, and of an appropriate appearance are acceptable in themselves, they will have no effect on the wider area, not being visible from the wider area outside the existing enclosing boundaries around the immediate location. The proposals therefore meet the requirements of Policy DC3, and can be supported in terms of landscape impact.



5. Supporting business and health needs

- 5.1. Policy SS10 also states that in areas covered by the Other Rural Areas Strategy such as this:

“These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions...

2. Sustain the rural economy by:

Enabling the limited expansion or development of business for employment uses where a rural location can be justified...”

- 5.2. There are currently 46 employees at Harewood Park. The proposal if approved will provide further employment, of at least two full time workers (an extra 70 hours per week of care).
- 5.3. NPPF para 7 explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. NPPF para 8(b) confirms that the definition of sustainable development includes:

*“b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being”*

- 5.4. NPPF para 97 states planning decisions should, inter alia:

“take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community”

- 5.5. This proposal is in accordance with these principles.



6. Conclusion

- 6.1. These proposals are shown to comprise appropriate development in the green belt, being development on a brownfield site that will not have an impact on openness, as required by NPPF para 154(g), due to being contained within an existing walled area taller than the proposed buildings themselves. For the same reasons, they will have no impact on landscape character.
- 6.2. They are also shown to support employment in this rural area, as well as the provision of much needed health care facilities. Accordingly, the proposals are in accordance with the policies of the development plan, and there are no material considerations that suggest that they should not be supported, and this application should therefore be approved.

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