

Development Control  
(North Sunderland) Sub-Committee

## SUPPLEMENT

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Number: S2

Application Number: 09/04452/FUL

**Proposal:** **Erection of 3 storey building to provide young persons immediate access facility, to include boundary enclosure, parking area and hard and soft landscaping.**

**Location:** **Junction Between Liddell Street and Dundas Street Sunderland**

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As stated in the main report, the principle of using the site in question for the development proposed by the application is considered to be acceptable. However, at the time of writing the main report, a number of matters remained outstanding, including an assessment of the details of the scheme in respect of the impact of the proposed use on the amenity of surrounding residential dwellings and highway and pedestrian safety matters. This report sets out additional background information and clarification of matters referred to in the main agenda as well as the assessment of highway and parking issues. The impact of the development on residential amenity is still under consideration as the views of Northumbria Police are still awaited.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Residents' Petition**  
The main report referred to a petition, signed by local residents in objection to the proposed development, which, at the time of writing that report, had not been received by the Development Control office. However, a copy of the said petition had, in fact, been presented to the Council meeting of 25th November 2009. The petition has been signed by 167 residents in the vicinity of the development site and its heading requests that Council officers abandon plans for the proposed development on grounds that the facility would be located within an area of existing high deprivation, that there are already unaddressed anti-social behaviour problems in the locality and excessive multi-agency supported projects in the area. The heading states that, if successful, the project will have a detrimental effect on the current supported projects and put in jeopardy the very

people it aims to help.

It must be noted, however, that the petition was submitted to the Council prior to the receipt of the formal planning application, which was made valid on 2nd December 2009. As such, signatories would not have seen the specific terms of the application, but the petition does provide evidence of the local residents' views in relation to the general proposal for the use of the site as accommodation for homeless young people.

- **Site Selection**

As stated in the main report, the site at Dundas Street had been identified as being potentially suitable for a young persons' immediate access facility by a steering group including staff from Centrepont and the City Council's Health, Housing and Adult Services Directorate and Office of the Deputy Chief Executive. The site was considered to meet a series of siting criteria established by the group, which were listed in the main report., subject to further consideration through the planning process. A number of other sites (listed in the Cabinet report of 7th October 2009) had also been assessed by the group but were not considered to be suitable for the proposed facility as they did not meet one or more of the established criteria.

Member involvement took place when the land proposal was reported to Cabinet on 7th October 2009, the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee on 20th October 2009 and the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee on 12th November. The latter referred the matter back to Cabinet on 2nd December 2009 so that it could be advised of the concerns of the Committee in relation to the choice of the Dundas Street site. The concerns of the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee were set out in the report to the Cabinet meeting, along with a response from the Executive Directors of Health, Housing and Adult Services and Children's Services. The Cabinet was informed that a rigorous risk assessment of the selection of the site for the proposed facility had been undertaken by officers. The Cabinet resolved that the views of the Scrutiny Committee and the response of the Executive Directors be noted.

## **IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON HIGHWAY AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

In a written statement submitted on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2010 the applicant has confirmed that the proposed parking provision of seven spaces is more than adequate to serve their requirements and can cater for the expected levels of full-time and part-time staff and visitors as detailed in the submitted management plan and working/shift arrangements for staff. The management plan for the operation of the Dundas Street facility allows for a total of ten staff to supervise and run the supported housing scheme. However, the service will only be staffed by five personnel at most at any one time, with a minimum of two depending on the time of day with the remainder being made up of visitors to the hostel by, for example, the regional manager. At no time is it proposed that the entire staff team be within the service, and so the level of parking provided at the site is argued to be adequate.

Additionally, it should also be taken into account that the development site is suitably located with regard to access to bus services available on Dundas Street and North Bridge Street, whilst St.

Peter's Metro station is within reasonable walking distance.

The seven car parking spaces proposed to be accessed via Dundas Street are therefore considered a satisfactory level of provision to accommodate on-site parking for staff and visitors for a housing scheme of this nature. Parking provision for residents is not considered necessary in this instance given that prospective clients of the facility are unlikely to be vehicle owners. A minimum of one space should be provided to cater for disabled parking and accordingly designed to accommodate wheelchair users and it is suggested that this could be dealt with by means of an appropriately worded condition should Members be minded to approve the proposal.

With regard to the above, the proposed development is not considered to raise any significant concerns with regard to pedestrian and highway safety. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of policies T14 and T22 of the City Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan.

## IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Since the preparation of the main report, Centrepoint have elected to submit a statement, received 12th January 2010, responding to the concerns raised by objections received in relation to the consultation exercise carried out by the City Council in respect of the proposed development. The statement attempts to address three of the main concerns raised by objectors as follows:

Concern 1 - 'Monkwearmouth has reached saturation point with support services, Centrepoint will add to this sense of the community being 'dumped on' by the local authority'.

Centrepoint response - 'It is important to acknowledge that there is still a great need for support services for homeless young people in Sunderland and though there are support services in Monkwearmouth there is not one for homeless young people. In delivering a service, Centrepoint will work closely with the community, the residents, other support services, the council and the Police to ensure that the service planned for Dundas Street works for not just the young people in our care but the community as a whole. Centrepoint will support the community by attending local forums and getting involved in campaigning for local issues that will improve the quality of life for people in Monkwearmouth, such as improving street lighting in the surrounding tunnels. We intend to become a service that the community can look to for support and guidance rather than a problem.'

Concern 2 - 'there is already significant anti-social behaviour in Monkwearmouth emanating from the various support services, the Centrepoint service will add to this'.

Centrepoint response - 'To tackle anti-social behaviour from Centrepoint young people, we have put a number of control measures in place, these are:

- Young people have to sign a licence agreement, which means adhering to house rules relating to behaviour inside the service. If they do not stick to the house rules they have to leave the service.
- Young people sign a Police and Local Authority 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement'(ABA)

regarding their behaviour outside of the building. If a young person receives three strikes against their ABA, they have to leave the service.

- We have CCTV cameras placed at various strategic points, both inside and outside of the building, so staff can monitor and respond to Centrepont young people's behaviour.
- There are always two staff members as a minimum on duty at any one time so one member of staff can respond to challenging behaviour both inside and outside the building.
- To enable staff to respond effectively to challenging behaviour they receive training in 'Managing Violence and Aggression' within first 6 months of work.
- To learn from and develop our practice we review incidents in supervision and team meetings; we look at a) how we dealt with the incident b) what learning we can glean from the incident and c) what if any policy and procedure changes we need to make because of this learning.
- Centrepont has a Warnings and Eviction Policy and Procedure which works in tandem with our Incident Management Policy and Procedure giving staff clear guidance on how to respond to and manage challenging behaviour.

Concern 3 - 'The community have expressed a concern that Centrepont young people will have a negative impact on Children from the Children's home and visa versa, creating a greater sense of chaos in the community'.

Centrepont response - 'In responding to similar concerns raised by the Children's home we have developed a 'managing anti-social behaviour risk-assessment'. The risk assessment is detailed in a spreadsheet submitted with the statement.

At the time of writing the comments from the Northumbria Police Planning and Architectural Liaison Officer in response to consultation carried out by the City Council have not been received.

## CONCLUSION

As stated in the main report, the principle of the use of the land for the proposed development is considered generally acceptable on planning grounds. Furthermore, as detailed above, the impact of the proposed development on highway and pedestrian safety is also considered to be acceptable. However, the details of the scheme in respect of the impact of the proposed use on the amenity of surrounding residential dwellings is still being considered awaiting the comments of the Northumbria Police Planning and Architecture Liaison Officer is awaited.

**RECOMMENDATION: DEFER pending the receipt and consideration of the views of the Northumbria Police Planning and Architecture Liaison Officer.**

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