

ITEM NUMBER: 5e

20/00593/FUL	Change of use from dwellinghouse (use class C3) to children's care home (use class C2)	
Site Address:	27 Eight Acres Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5DB	
Applicant/Agent:	Mr Stacey	
Case Officer:	Sally Robbins	
Parish/Ward:	Tring Town Council	Tring Central
Referral to Committee:		

1. RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED**

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The application property is located in a residential area of Tring, wherein appropriate residential development is acceptable. A care home facility for 4 school-aged children is considered to be compatible with the local character and is in a prime location for accessibility to public transport, facilities and local amenities. There would be no physical alterations to the property and minimal intensification of use in comparison to the existing use as a dwellinghouse. There is policy support for this type of social infrastructure, particularly in residential locations. The proposal is compatible with the surrounding area and in accordance with Policies CS4, CS12, CS18 and CS23 of the Core Strategy (2013) and Saved Policy 15 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (2004).

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site is located on the southwest side of Eight Acres in Tring. The site comprises a two storey semi-detached dwelling with a private garden and garage to the rear. The surrounding area is residential and characterised by two storey terraced and semi-detached dwellings.

4. PROPOSAL

4.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use from dwellinghouse (C3) to residential care home for children (C2). The Ofsted registered care home would cater for 4 school-aged children (from age 8 up to 18) who are in the care of the local authority. The children would be looked after by team of care staff working in a shift rota with 3 members of staff at the home during the daytime and 1 member of staff sleeping at the care home overnight. The care home would be managed and staffed at all times.

4.2 There would be no external alterations to the building. Internally, the existing 4 bedrooms would be used by the resident children and the study would be repurposed as a staff bedroom.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

4/01962/00/FHA - Two storey side extension
GRANTED - 26th January 2001

6. CONSTRAINTS

Parking Accessibility Zone (DBLP): 4
CIL Zone: CIL2

Parish: Tring CP
RAF Halton and Chenies Zone: Green (15.2m)
RAF Halton and Chenies Zone: RAF HALTON: DOTTED BLACK ZONE
Residential Area (Town/Village): Residential Area in Town Village (Tring)
Town: Tring

7. REPRESENTATIONS

Consultation responses

7.1 These are reproduced in full at Appendix A.

Neighbour notification/site notice responses

7.2 These are reproduced in full at Appendix B.

8. PLANNING POLICIES

Main Documents:

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)
Dacorum Borough Core Strategy 2006-2031 (adopted September 2013)
Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1999-2011 (adopted April 2004)

Relevant Policies:

NP1 - Supporting Development
CS1 - Distribution of Development
CS4 - The Towns and Large Villages
CS10 - Quality of Settlement Design
CS11 - Quality of Neighbourhood Design
CS12 - Quality of Site Design
CS18 - Mix of Housing
CS23 - Social Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:

Accessibility Zones for the Application of Car Parking Standards (2002)
Site Layout and Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (2011)

9. CONSIDERATIONS

Main Issues

9.1 The main issues to consider are:

Principle of Development
Quality of Design / Impact on Visual Amenity
Impact on Residential Amenity
Impact on Highway Safety and Parking.

Principle of Development

9.2 The application site is located in a residential area of Tring, wherein appropriate residential development is encouraged under Core Strategy (2013) Policy CS4.

9.3 Regarding housing mix, paragraph 14.26 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will permit appropriate schemes for new accommodation, stating that the County Council has indicated that there will be accommodation needs for people in younger age groups, particularly for supported housing (e.g. special needs housing, short term hostels etc).

9.4 Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy (2013) goes on to highlight the need to provide a choice of homes, to include a range of housing types, sizes and tenure.

9.5 Children's care homes are classed as social infrastructure. Policy CS23 of the Core Strategy (2013) states that social infrastructure providing services and facilities to the community will be encouraged.

9.6 With respect to the loss of a dwelling, Saved Policy 15 of the Local Plan (2004) seeks to retain housing, however one of the exceptions to the loss of dwellings in residential areas is where essential small scale social facilities would be provided.

9.7 Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposed change of use to children's care home in this location has policy support and is acceptable in principle.

Quality of Design / Impact on Visual Amenity

9.8 There are no external alterations proposed. The surrounding area is residential in character and, as there would be no physical changes to the dwelling, the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the existing house or surrounding area. The proposal complies with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013) in that regard.

Impact on Residential Amenity

9.9 Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy states that developments should avoid disturbance and loss of privacy to the surrounding properties. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2019) seeks to ensure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users.

9.10 Objections have been received from two local residents in relation to a number of issues, including: noise and disturbance; loss of privacy; potential anti-social behaviour; location close to a school; potential to devalue neighbouring properties; and access and parking. One of the objectors also stated that the site is the wrong location to put an institution for boys/men and that there is a lack of housing within Tring so this should remain private accommodation. Tring Town Council has also objected to the proposal on the grounds that the location is unsuitable and would result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.

9.11 Some of the concerns raised seem to result from a misunderstanding of the proposal. The proposal is to provide a care home for school-aged children (rather than young adults in supported housing, as suggested by one of the objectors). The Ofsted age group for residential homes is from age 8 up to the young person's 18th birthday. In terms of the location of a residential care home for school-aged children, it is considered that a residential area is the most appropriate location. Furthermore, the location close to a primary school is seen to be a benefit. There may be a lack of housing in Tring, however there is also a need for a caring home environment for children who are the responsibility of the local authority. The devaluing of neighbouring properties is not a material planning consideration.

9.12 Regarding noise and disturbance, in terms of people and vehicle movements, the applicant anticipates that the shift rota will work as follows: 3 care workers will work from 7.30am until 3.30 pm; followed by 3 further care workers covering 3.30pm until 11pm. Overnight there would be 1 care worker sleeping at the care home, who will then work until 3.30pm the following day. The care home

will receive ad hoc visits from a variety of care professionals, such as social workers. The responsibility of managing the care home will lie with a 'Responsible Individual', who is currently the Responsible Individual for two other children's care homes. The applicant has provided the details of these two other care homes (located in Buckinghamshire), along with the Ofsted reports for the care homes. Due to the sensitive nature of the proposal, this information has not been made publicly available.

9.13 It is considered that there will not be a significant increase in the level of people or vehicle movements and the proposal will therefore not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding residential units with respect to noise. Nor would it be markedly different to the typical movements of a family home.

9.14 In terms of noise and disturbance, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted and, following the provision of a Planning Statement outlining further details of the proposal, has raised no objection. The provision of a care home to accommodate 4 school children is not considered to be incompatible with the surrounding area.

9.15 Taking all of the above into account, it is considered that the proposed development will not detrimentally impact the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, thus is considered acceptable in terms of the NPPF (2019) and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013).

Impact on Highway Safety and Parking

9.16 Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013) seeks to ensure that developments have sufficient parking provision. Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy (2013) and Saved Policies 57, 58 and Appendix 5 of the Local Plan (2004) promote an assessment based upon maximum parking standards.

9.17 The parking requirement for residential institutions (C2) is 1 space per 5 residents' bed spaces plus 1 space per 2 staff (non-resident). Parking for resident staff is based on the general needs standard.

The requirement would be:

4 residents' bed spaces = 0.8 space
3 non-resident staff = 1.5 spaces
1 resident staff general needs = 1 space

9.18 The total maximum car parking requirement is therefore 3.3 spaces. The development proposes 2 off-street car parking spaces, to be retained as existing. There is therefore a shortfall of 1.3 spaces.

9.19 The existing parking requirement for a 4 bedroom dwelling in this location is 3 spaces. It is therefore considered that there is not a significant difference between the parking requirement for the existing use as a dwelling and that of the proposed use as a care home (difference of 0.3 spaces). Furthermore, the application site is considered to be in an accessible location, situated close to the town centre of Tring, in close proximity to local public transport routes and all of the amenities that the town centre offers. As such, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a negative impact on local parking provision.

9.20 In terms of highway safety, no changes are proposed to the existing parking or access. The proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on local parking provision, nor will it have a severe impact to the safety and operation of the adjacent highway. Thus, the proposal meets the requirements of Policy CS8 and CS12 of the Core Strategy (2013) and Saved Appendix 5 of the Local Plan (2004).

Response to Neighbour Comments

9.21 These points have been addressed above.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

9.22 Policy CS35 requires all developments to make appropriate contributions towards infrastructure required to support the development. These contributions will normally extend only to the payment of CIL where applicable. The Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was adopted in February 2015 and came into force on the 1st July 2015. This application is not CIL Liable as there would be no additional residential floor space.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The impacts of the proposal have been considered in relation to the impact on residential amenity of surrounding units, parking and highway safety. The proposal for the change of use to a residential care home for children in this location is considered to be acceptable and is in accordance with Core Strategy (2013) Policies CS1, CS4, CS8, CS12, CS18 and CS23 and Dacorum Borough Local Plan (2004) Saved Policies 15, 57, 58 and Appendix 5 and the NPPF (2019).

11. RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order amending or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the use hereby approved shall be restricted to that of a children's care home for children up to the age of 18 and no other purpose within Use Class C2.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over the development in the interests of safeguarding the residential amenity of the locality in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013) and Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

3. The maximum number of children occupying the premises at any one time shall not exceed 4.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the residential amenity of the locality in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy (2013) and Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents:

Location Plan
Site Plan
Ground Floor Plan

First Floor Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

1. Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.

APPENDIX A: CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Consultee	Comments
Environmental And Community Protection (DBC)	<p>Noise Pollution and Housing:</p> <p>I require further information about the proposed change from a noise perspective. I've noted this is planned to become a children's care home. Noise might a be a potential issue noting the site has an adjoining neighbour and so we need to understand the nature of care being offered, for example children with behavioral problems.</p> <p>Further comments received:</p> <p>Thanks for the additional information.</p> <p>I don't require any further detail and no objections from me on noise grounds.</p> <p>Contaminated Land:</p> <p>Having reviewed the application submission and the ECP Team records I am able to confirm that there is no objection on the grounds of land contamination. Also, there is no requirement for further contaminated land information to be provided, or for contaminated land planning conditions to be recommended in relation to this application.</p>
Local Parish	<p>Tring Town Council recommends refusal of this application. The dwelling in question is semi-detached in an area of small residential dwellings. Whilst a road runs along to one side, there are dwellings at the end of the property's garden, next to the property, and three dwellings with gardens ending on the other side boundary. Despite the Council supporting the principle of integrating residential institutions into</p>

	the community, this application would appear to be an unsuitable location and cause a loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.
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APPENDIX B: NEIGHBOUR RESPONSES

Number of Neighbour Comments

Neighbour Consultations	Contributors	Neutral	Objections	Support
8	4	0	2	2

Neighbour Responses

Address	Comments
28 Eight Acres Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5DB	As can be seen my property is the other half of a pair of semi detached houses. I have listed above all the reasons plus it will devalue my property and make it more difficult to sell. This property is for residential not a business and was never designed for such.
27 Eight Acres Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5DB	<p>Following the letter of objection from 53 & 28 Eight Acres, please see my detailed response below.</p> <p>1) this property is right in the middle of a residential Estate</p> <p>This is precisely in line with the current government guidelines for the location of children's care homes. Paragraph 3.9 on page 15 of the Guide to children's home regulations including quality standards (2015) states 'for children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments....homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impressions.'</p> <p>2) Previous experience of a similar institution in the town shows the total lack of control by the "carers" as the residents are seen wandering at all hours around the town. On New Years Eve/Day a resident of this other institution tried to gain access to the Conservative club at 2am</p> <p>We understand the home that is being referred to is a place for adults who have a measure of independent living. In contrast our home will be an Ofsted registered care home for children of primary school age. Therefore a comparison cannot be made.</p> <p>3) it is 500 yards from a school.</p> <p>In the case of the home we are proposing this is ideal as the Government guidelines wants children to be brought up in an environment that is as normal as possible rather than in an institutional</p>

	<p>setting. They are encouraged to have friends living nearby so they can socialise outside of school.</p> <p>4) In 2019 a resident of a similar institute in the town was imprisoned for 14 months for having pornographic images of children being abused on his phone.</p> <p>This comment is in no way relevant at all.</p> <p>5) it will devalue my property (I own my property it is no longer council) and make it impossible to sell as I live right opposite no 27. I reside at no 53.</p> <p>There is no evidence from other locations where such homes exist that the property is devalued. The house is still on a predominantly council house estate which already affects the property prices.</p> <p>6)It is totally the wrong place to put this institution. I understand they want to place 5 boys/men as residents when there are families with young children along this road.</p> <p>Factually incorrect and we have no idea where this information has come from. The only confusion we can imagine is that we currently have 3 sons and a friend who lives here which makes 5 men at this address. This is why the location is ideal as the Government want children to be placed where there are families with young children.</p> <p>7) During the summer children play on the communal green right outside this property.</p> <p>This is ideal for small children although we have a back garden for the children to play in and a park close by.</p> <p>8) This application is backed by Buckinghamshire council when we are Hertfordshire, and there is a lack of housing within Tring so this should remain private accommodation.</p> <p>Over 300 new homes are currently being built in Tring. Where the children are sourced from is not a relevant comment. Currently children are placed out of county all the time due to a lack of care facilities. We are aware that recently children from this area were placed in the North East as it was the nearest home for them to be sent to.</p> <p>We appreciate the concerns of our neighbours and hope these comments have put their minds at rest. Based on all this we still believe this is a suitable home which will better the lives of looked after children and will ensure they are placed in the best location.</p>
<p>28 Chiltern Way Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5JX</p>	<p>Support</p>
<p>53 Eight Acres</p>	<p>I strongly object to this application for the following reasons:</p>

Tring
Hertfordshire
HP23 5DB

1) this property is right in the middle of a residential Estate

2) Previous experience of a similar institution in the town shows the total lack of control by the "carers" as the residents are seen wandering at all hours around the town. On New Years Eve/Day a resident of this other institution tried to gain access to the Conservative club at 2am

3) it is 500 yards from a school.

4) In 2019 a resident of a similar institute in the town was imprisoned for 14 months for having pornographic images of children being abused on his phone.

5) it will devalue my property (I own my property it is no longer council) and make it impossible to sell as I live right opposite no 27. I reside at no 53.

6)It is totally the wrong place to put this institution.
I understand they want to place 5 boys/men as residents when there are families with young children along this road.

7) During the summer children play on the communal green right outside this property.

8) This application is backed by Buckinghamshire council when we are Hertfordshire, and there is a lack of housing within Tring so this should remain private accommodation.

For these reasons I object to this wholly inappropriate planning application

53 Eight Acres