

APPEAL REF: APP/Y3425/W/23/3315258

Stafford Education and Enterprise Park, Weston Road, Stafford ST18 0BC

Change of use from student accommodation to asylum seeker accommodation.

**CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT 2PM ON WEDNESDAY
29 MARCH 2023 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

INSPECTOR'S PRE-CONFERENCE NOTE

1. The case management conference (CMC) will be led by Gareth Jones MRTPI, who is the Inspector appointed to conduct the associated Inquiry.
2. Attached as separate documents are instructions for joining the CMC, a note on the conference etiquette to be observed, and the CMC agenda.
3. During the CMC there will be no discussion of the merits of your respective cases and I shall not hear any evidence. Rather, the purpose is to give clear indications about the ongoing management of the case and the presentation of evidence, so that the forthcoming Inquiry is conducted in an efficient and effective manner.
4. The Inquiry itself is scheduled to open at 10am on Tuesday 16 May 2023, sitting for up to 4 days (16-18 and 23 May 2023).
5. The appellant and the Council will be main parties to the Inquiry. At this stage there are no Rule 6 parties.
6. The main parties are asked to indicate how many witnesses they are likely to call and what those witnesses' evidence would be likely to concern by 11am on the day of the conference.

Main Issues

7. Having regard to the reason for refusal, the main issue is likely to be the effect that the proposed development would have on social inclusivity, on fear of crime and on local public health resources.
8. Wider matters raised by interested parties may also need to be addressed. Whether or not these are dealt with as main issues in my Appeal Decision will depend on the evidence heard in due course.
9. You are requested to give consideration in advance of the CMC as to whether the identified main issue encapsulates the matters most pertinent to the outcome of the appeal.

Format of the Inquiry

10. The Inquiry will be held on a face to face, in person basis. Ideally, allowance should also be made for participation and observation on a virtual, online

basis. I would like to discuss the practicalities of these objectives, as well as any potential venues for the Inquiry, during the CMC.

Dealing with the Evidence

11. The Inquiry will focus on areas where there is disagreement. With that in mind, the CMC will explore how best to hear the evidence in order to ensure that the Inquiry is conducted as efficiently as possible.
12. On the basis of the material currently before me, at this stage my intention is that all of the witnesses are dealt with in the conventional format for Inquiries, by evidence in chief from the relevant witness for each main party, who will then be cross-examined, the Council's case being heard first in its entirety, followed by that of the appellant.
13. Matters raised by interested parties will need to be addressed in one or more of the written proofs on behalf of the appellant. Depending on the nature of the issue and evidence, it may also prove helpful to field additional witness/es at the Inquiry to take questions from local residents and/or myself.
14. You are asked to give the above careful consideration in advance of the CMC. Any request for evidence to be heard other than as currently envisaged will need to be fully justified.
15. All the above points are encompassed within the CMC agenda.
16. The attached Annex sets out the preferred format and content of proofs and other material, which should be observed.

G D Jones

INSPECTOR

27 March 2023

Annex

Content and Format of Proofs and Appendices

Content

Proofs of evidence **should**:

- focus on the main considerations identified, in particular on areas of disagreement;
- be proportionate to the number and complexity of considerations and matters that the witness is addressing;
- be concise, precise, relevant and contain facts and expert opinion deriving from witnesses' own professional expertise and experience, and/or local knowledge;
- be prepared with a clear structure that identifies and addresses the main considerations within the witness's field of knowledge and avoids repetition;
- focus on what is really necessary to make the case and avoid including unnecessary material, or duplicating material in other documents or another witness's evidence;
- where case law is cited in the proof, include the full Court report/ transcript reference and cross refer to a copy of the report/ transcript which should be included as a core document.

Proofs **should not**:

- duplicate information already included in other Inquiry material, such as site description, planning history and the relevant planning policy;
- recite the text of policies referred to elsewhere: the proofs need only identify the relevant policy numbers, with extracts being provided as core documents. Only policies which are needed to understand the argument being put forward and are fundamental to an appraisal of the proposal's merits need be referred to.

Format of the proofs and appendices

- Proofs to be no longer than 3000 words if possible. Where proofs are longer than 1500 words, summaries are to be submitted.
- Proofs are to be spiral bound or bound in such a way as to be easily opened and read.
- Appendices are to be bound separately from the proof.
- Appendices are to be indexed using **projecting tabs**, labelled and **paginated**.