

PROOF OF EVIDENCE ON BEHALF OF STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING

VOLUME 2: APPENDICES

Planning Appeal Reference:

APP/Y3425/W/23/3315258

**Stafford Borough Council Application
Reference: 22/35765/FUL**

Proposal: Change of use from student
accommodation to asylum seeker
accommodation

Site: Former University Halls of Residence,
Stafford Education and Enterprise Park, Weston
Road, Stafford

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1

**Extract from gov.uk website providing advice to
asylum seekers**

[Home](#) > [Seek protection or asylum](#)

Asylum support

1. Overview

You may be able to get housing and money to support you and your family while you're waiting to find out if you'll be given asylum.

This also means your children will go to a free state school and you may get free healthcare from the National Health Service (NHS).

You can still [apply for short-term support](#) if you've been refused asylum and are preparing to leave the UK.

Call an [asylum helpline](#) for free help with asylum support or short-term support.

2. What you'll get

You can ask for somewhere to live, a cash allowance or both as an asylum seeker.

Housing

You'll be given somewhere to live if you need it. This could be in a flat, house, hostel or bed and breakfast.

You cannot choose where you live. It's unlikely you'll get to live in London or south-east England.

Cash support

You'll usually get £45 for each person in your household. This will help you pay for things you need like food, clothing and toiletries.

Your allowance will be loaded onto a debit card (ASPEN card) each week. You'll be able to use the card to get cash from a cash machine.

If you've been refused asylum

You'll be given:

- somewhere to live

- £45 per person on a payment card for food, clothing and toiletries

You will not be given:

- the payment card if you do not take the offer of somewhere to live
- any money

If your accommodation provides your meals

You'll get £9.10 for each person in your household instead.

Extra money for mothers and young children

You'll get extra money to buy healthy food if you're pregnant or a mother of a child under 3. The amount you get will depend on your situation.

Your situation	Extra payment per week
Pregnant mother	£3
Baby under 1 year old	£5
Child aged 1 to 3	£3

Maternity payment

You can apply for a one-off £300 maternity payment if your baby is due in 8 weeks or less, or if your baby is under 6 weeks old.

If you've been refused asylum

You can apply for a one-off £250 maternity payment if your baby is due in 8 weeks or less, or if your baby is under 6 weeks old.

Applying for the maternity grant

You apply for the maternity grant in the same way whether you're still an asylum seeker or you've been refused asylum.

You'll need to request form MAT B1 from your doctor to apply for the payment. You can apply for the maternity payment at the same time you apply for asylum support.

If you get pregnant after you've applied for asylum support, you can apply to [the support team](#) that dealt with your application for asylum support.

Healthcare

You may get free National Health Service (NHS) healthcare, such as to see a doctor or get hospital treatment.

You'll also get:

- free prescriptions for medicine
- free dental care for your teeth
- free eyesight tests
- help paying for glasses

Education

Your children must [attend school if they are aged 5 to 17](#). All state schools are free and your children may be able to get [free school meals](#).

3. Eligibility

You can apply for asylum support if you're homeless or do not have money to buy food.

If you've been refused asylum

You can ask for the following if you're homeless, do not have any money to buy food and you can show that there's a reason why you cannot leave the UK yet:

- short-term housing
- help with prescriptions for medicine, dental care for your teeth, eyesight tests and glasses
- a payment card for food and toiletries

You will not be given the payment card without the housing and you will not be given any cash.

4. How to claim

Housing and cash support for asylum seekers

Apply using [form ASF1](#) to claim housing and cash support.

Send the form to the asylum support casework team.

Asylum Support Casework Team
PO Box 471
Dover
CT16 9FN

You might be able to apply for additional support if the general allowance will not cover your needs. You'll have to show that you cannot meet your needs in any other way.

Read the [guidance on additional support](#).

Fill in form [ASF2](#) and contact the Asylum Support Application Service. The details are on the form.

Call an [asylum helpline](#) for help with applications.

If you're refused asylum

You must return to your country as soon as possible if you're refused asylum.

You can apply for short-term support using [form ASF1](#).

You'll need to [complete a 'section 4\(2\)' medical declaration](#) if you have a specific medical issue.

You can also [apply for additional help \(section 4\(2\) support\)](#), for example:

- medical appointments
- getting your new baby's birth certificate
- maternity payments

Read the [guidance on section 4\(2\) support](#).

Send all forms to the asylum support casework team by email or post.

Asylum Support Casework Team
PO Box 471
Dover
CT16 9FN

Education for children

Contact your local council if you have children and want to:

- [apply for a primary school place](#)
- [apply for a secondary school place](#)

Healthcare

Contact the free National Health Service (NHS) 111 service for help and advice with health problems when it's not an emergency.

[NHS 111](#)

Telephone: 111

Textphone: 18001 111

Phone NHS Help With Health Costs for help with prescriptions for medicine, dental care, eyesight tests and buying glasses.

NHS Help With Health Costs

Telephone: 0300 330 1343

[Find out about call charges](#)

Help and advice

Call one of the [asylum helplines](#) to get free help with filling in forms.

You can get more information about asylum support from the customer contact centre. Email for an ARC appointment.

Asylum support customer contact centre

If you're seeking asylum, email:

S95NewApplications@migranthehelpuk.org

If you're refused asylum, email:

S4@migranthehelpuk.org

Telephone: 0808 801 0503

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

(24-hour service for emergencies)

[Find out about call charges](#)

5. Further information

Appeal

You can [appeal to the First-tier Tribunal \(Asylum Support\)](#) if:

- you've applied for asylum support and been turned down
- you were claiming asylum support and it's been stopped

Contact asylum support

You can contact Migrant Help if your application for support has been refused or you have questions about your appeal against the decision.

Migrant Help

Telephone: 0808 801 0503

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

(24-hour service for emergencies)

[Find out about call charges](#)

OGI

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APPENDIX 2

**Email sent to appellant's planning agent dated
27 March 2023**

From: Matthew Wedderburn
Sent: 27 March 2023 17:12
To: 'Mark Jackson/GBR' <mark.jackson@cushwake.com>
Cc: 'Ugne Staskauskaite/GBR' <Ugne.Staskauskaite@cushwake.com>; 'Simeon Manley' <SManley@staffordbc.gov.uk>; Sushil Birdi <SushilBirdi@cannockchasedc.gov.uk>; Simeon Manley <SimeonManley@cannockchasedc.gov.uk>; Simon Turner <sturner@staffordbc.gov.uk>; Carl Copestake <Carl.Copestake@knightsplc.com>
Subject: RE: APP/Y3425/W/23/3315258: Stafford Education and Enterprise Park, Weston Road, Stafford: Serco Appeal (STA45/1)

Good afternoon Mark,

Further to the email below, Knights are acting as planning agent to Stafford Borough Council in respect of the above referenced planning appeal by Serco Ltd at Weston Road, Stafford.

We have reviewed the planning application and the Statement of Case on behalf of Serco Ltd. In view of the matters likely to be debated at the inquiry we have a number of queries and would be most grateful if I could put these to you:

1. The appellant's statement of case says at para 47 that "*The site is similar to other IA operations elsewhere in the UK*".
 -Please could you confirm the location of these sites referred to as similar?
 -Could you also confirm how many initial accommodation bedspaces and/or dispersed accommodation bedspaces each provide?
2. The appellant's planning statement says at para 3.48 "*For health care access within IA, the asylum seekers are registered with a health care provider on site and local services will only be required in the event of a medical emergency. Serco is working with the Home Office to understand if this health provision can be extended to the DA community*". -Could you confirm whether it is proposed the on-site care be extended to the occupants of the dispersed accommodation?
3. Please can you provide details of the likely demographic mix of the people who would occupy the building? (i.e. male or female, single or couples/families, age)?
4. Can you please give further details of the normal daily routine of occupants not having any appointments off-site?
5. Please could you supply examples of site operational management plans that apply to similar Serco facilities?
6. Could you confirm whether there are examples of similar Serco sites where there are Local Community Forums providing a liaison mechanism between the site operators and the local community and if so, please could you provide name of any such liaison group?
7. Please can you confirm whether the appellant is proposing a planning obligation?

We would be most grateful for your response on these points.

If we can be of any other assistance in this matter please let me know.

Kind regards,

Matthew Wedderburn
 Senior Associate

Knights
M 07824 862262
D 01244 896603
T 01244 896600
W www.knightsplc.com

APPENDIX 3

Appeal decisions

**Appeal decision ref. APP/P4604/C/04/1151510
323 Hagley Road & 479 Gillott Road, Edgbaston,
Birmingham, B17 8ND, dated 18 March 2005**

**Appeal decision ref. APP/E5330/A/00/1036918
Cambridge House, Cambridge Row, Greenwich
London SE18, dated 28 July 2000**

**Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/W/21/3285830 Former
Nightclub, Bank Street/White Horse Yard,
Wakefield WF1 1EH, dated 21st July 2022**



Appeal Decisions

Inquiry opened on 1st March 2005
Site visit made on 2nd March 2005

by **Clive Whitehouse BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the First Secretary of State

The Planning Inspectorate
100 Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN
Tel: 01452 835820
0117 372 6372
e-mail: enquiries@planning-inspectorate.gsi.gov.uk

Date

18 MAR 2005

Appeal A: APP/P4605/C/04/1151510

323 Hagley Road and 479 Gillott Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B17 8ND

- The appeal is made under section 174 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991.
- The appeal is made by Mr Khalid Rashid against an enforcement notice issued by Birmingham City Council.
- The Council's reference is ENF/0716/03/S.
- The notice was issued on 26th April 2004.
- The breach of planning control as alleged in the notice is: without planning permission the making of a material change of use of the premises to use as a hostel.
- The requirements of the notice are to cease the use of the premises as a hostel.
- The period for compliance with the requirements is two months.
- The appeal is proceeding on the grounds set out in section 174(2)(a) and (g) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
- The inquiry sat for 2 days on 1st and 2nd March 2005.

Summary of Decision: The appeal is allowed, the enforcement notice is quashed, and planning permission is granted in the terms set out below in the Formal Decision.

Appeal B: APP/P4605/C/04/1157055

325 and 327 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B17 8ND

- The appeal is made under section 174 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991.
- The appeal is made by Mr Khalid Rashid against an enforcement notice issued by Birmingham City Council.
- The Council's reference is ENF/2508/03/S.
- The notice was issued on 28th June 2004.
- The breach of planning control as alleged in the notice is: without planning permission, the making of a material change of use of the premises to use as a hostel.
- The requirements of the notice are to cease the use of the premises as a hostel.
- The period for compliance with the requirements is two months.
- The appeal is proceeding on the grounds set out in section 174(2)(a) and (g) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed and the enforcement notice upheld.

Procedural Matters

1. The appeals on ground (g) were withdrawn at the inquiry.

Background

2. Appeal A relates to a hotel and hotel annex being used as hostel accommodation for asylum seekers. Appeal B relates to an adjoining pair of semi-detached houses, also used as part of the hostel. The premises are currently used as short term emergency accommodation for women and children asylum seekers referred by the Refugee Council. The appellant has had the use of the properties on a series of short term tenancies since 2002. Before that the hotel had been vacant for several years. Outline planning permission was granted in 2001 for residential redevelopment of the hotel site (now lapsed), and the landowner regards the hostel as an interim use pending redevelopment, but no timescale has been indicated.
3. When the hostel use was first drawn to the Council's attention in 2003, the premises were considered to be overcrowded, and the City's Housing and Environmental Services Departments became involved and took action that resulted in the number of asylum seekers being progressively reduced. The Council's position as presented at the inquiry is that it now has no objection in principle to the change of use of the hotel and annex to a hostel, subject to conditions, including one to limit occupancy in accordance with the restrictions imposed by the Housing Department. In respect of the change of use of the adjoining pair of semi-detached houses, the Council maintains its opposition in principle.

Planning Policy

4. The development plan is the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan, adopted in 1993 (UDP). Paragraph 8.29 applies to hostels and residential homes and the relevant criteria seek to avoid demonstrable harm to the amenity of neighbours by reason of noise and disturbance and to minimise any adverse cumulative effects on the residential character and appearance of the area. Adequate outdoor amenity space is also required. An area-based policy (16.20) describes the neighbourhood north of Hagley Road as including many flats, bedsits and hostels and states that further expansion of such uses will be resisted if it has an adverse effect on the character of the area.
5. The deposit draft UDP is at a post inquiry stage and I accord significant weight to its policies, although it does not have development plan status. Paragraph 5.19A is relevant to appeal B since it states that the loss to other uses of housing that could be restored to good condition at reasonable cost will normally be resisted. Good planning justification or identified social need is required to overcome the policy restraint. Paragraph 5.19B deals with the effects on some residential areas of concentrations of hotels, hostels, flats etc. and refers to defined Areas of Restraint, although the appeal site is not within such a defined area. The draft revisions make some amendments to adopted paragraphs 8.29 and 16.20; for instance, a minimum amenity space requirement of 16sq.m per person is added to 8.29.
6. Supplementary Planning Guidance issued by the Council in 1991 sets out guidelines for hostels and student accommodation. This states that standards of internal accommodation are principally controlled by Housing and Environmental Health agencies.

Appeal A

7. The hotel is on the north side of Hagley Road, which is a very busy route to the west of the city. The nearby area on that side of the road is characterised by a mixture of purpose-built blocks of flats, hotels and a parade of shops. The hotel annex in Gillott Road occupies a Victorian property and adjoins a similar property converted into flats. In that context I agree with the Council that the change of use of the hotel and annex to a hostel has no unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area and is acceptable in principle. However, there was considerable debate at the inquiry about whether or not it is necessary to restrict the number of occupants by way of a planning condition and, if so, what should be the maximum acceptable number of bedspaces. In the light of the evidence given at the inquiry, I consider this matter to be the main issue so far as appeal A is concerned.
8. The Council considers 43 bedspaces to be the maximum for the hotel and annex, whereas the appellant argues that the hostel would function adequately in those buildings with a 50 bedspace limit. At the time of the inquiry about 25 people were being accommodated in the hotel and annex, following a recent reduction in the number of referrals by the Refugee Council.
9. The Housing Department confirms in writing that the maximum permitted capacity of the hotel and hotel annex in terms of housing and environmental health regulations is 43 bedspaces. The appellant maintains that children aged less than 10 count as half a bedspace under housing legislation, and this could permit 50 residents, although I have no documentary evidence for that interpretation.
10. It is clear that the Housing Department has rigorously regulated the numbers of occupants and the standard of accommodation at the hostel and that there is a regime of ongoing monitoring. In my opinion it would only be necessary to impose a planning condition limiting numbers if there were good planning reasons for setting a limit below that permitted under housing and environmental health legislation. In this case there is more than adequate amenity space in the hotel grounds for 43 occupants. The Council considers that in other respects 43 bedspaces is acceptable, when compared to the established hotel use. In my view it would be pointless to set a planning limit that could be interpreted as being above the maximum occupancy level permitted under other legislation, as sought by the appellant.
11. The current Housing Department limit of 43 bedspaces is based on the premises continuing to operate as short-term emergency accommodation where asylum seekers are expected to live for no more than a few weeks before more settled accommodation can be found. The Housing Department considers that if the nature of the accommodation were to change to providing hostel accommodation to homeless persons on a longer term basis, then a lower maximum limit would be imposed. It became evident during the inquiry that this is a distinct possibility. I therefore consider that it would be inappropriate and potentially in conflict with requirements of other legislation to attach a planning condition that specifies a fixed upper limit.
12. For the above reasons I conclude on the main issue that a planning condition limiting the number of hostel bedspaces is unnecessary.

13. A number of other conditions suggested by the Council were discussed at the inquiry. Some unsightly metal fencing and barbed wire has been placed along part of the Gillott Road frontage and fencing on other boundaries has been completely removed. I agree that a scheme is necessary for the replacement and/or restoration of the boundary treatment to the whole site. There is no evidence that children playing in the grounds have been a particular source of nuisance and I do not consider it either necessary or enforceable to attach a condition seeking to limit the numbers of children playing outside at any one time. However, I do agree that it is necessary to ensure that existing amenity space is not used for other purposes. None of the asylum seekers have cars, and the hotel car park is barely used. I do not therefore consider it necessary to attach a condition relating to car parking and circulation space. Although the appellant and the landowner regard the hostel use as a temporary use pending redevelopment, the Council has not suggested a temporary permission and, having regard to the advice in Circular 11/95, I agree that the circumstances do not warrant a time limited permission.

Conclusion – Appeal A

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that appeal A should succeed on ground (a) and planning permission will be granted.

Appeal B

15. I consider the main issues to be:

- (i) Whether the change of use of the houses to hostel use represents a loss to the existing housing stock, and if so, whether there is an identified social need for the conversion.
- (ii) The cumulative effect of the conversion, in conjunction with the hotel site, on the amenity of nearby residents and the character and appearance of the area.
- (iii) Whether there is adequate outdoor amenity space for the likely numbers of occupants.

Loss of Housing.

16. The pair of semi-detached houses at 325/327 appear to date from the 1930s. A local resident has reason to believe that they were previously occupied as bedsits, although planning permission has never been granted for sub-division. I saw that the extent of internal alteration is not great, and there is no dispute that the properties could be restored to good condition at reasonable cost.
17. In the Council's view the "existing housing stock" referred to in draft policy 5.19A should be interpreted as referring to houses and flats. Since hostels are in no use class and always require planning permission, the Council considers that the change of use has resulted in a loss of housing stock. Regional and City-wide studies of housing need indicate that that the loss of good quality housing should be resisted as a matter of policy.
18. The appellant draws attention to national advice in paragraph 13 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3) that states that the assessment of housing needs should include the needs of specific groups, including those in need of hostel accommodation. On that basis the appellant contends that there has been no loss of housing stock in this case. It

is further contended that the hostel is likely to be a temporary and easily reversible use, so that the semis could revert to houses or flats or be redeveloped for flats in the future.

19. Unlike hotels, hostels usually provide accommodation for people with nowhere else to live and it seems to me that that the hostel can be regarded as a form of residential accommodation and a component of overall housing need, as advised by PPG3. I therefore conclude on the first main issue that the change of use of the houses to a hostel does not represent a loss to the existing stock of housing. That being the case, there is no conflict with draft policy 5.19A and it is not necessary for me to consider whether there is an identified social need for the hostel.

Effect on Amenity and the Character of the Area

20. Most communal facilities for hostel residents, such as the kitchen, dining room and lounge are provided on the ground floor of the hotel building, so that the rooms in the adjoining pair of semis have been given over almost entirely to emergency accommodation, mostly for single women or women with young children. Occupancy of up to 37 bedspaces is presently permitted under housing regulations, and the appellant says that this could easily be increased to 42 if an additional bathroom is formed. In the Council's view this is an over-intensive use of the houses, compared to their lawful use as dwellinghouses.
21. At the time of the inquiry the houses were empty, and had been so for about two months. This is because the need for emergency accommodation in Birmingham has reduced sharply since late 2004, when the Asylum Screening Unit at Solihull was closed to single persons. The number of arrivals of asylum seekers in the UK has also fallen and there has been greater dispersal. The Refugee Council states that it does not intend to extend its contract for emergency accommodation with the appellant beyond the end of March 2005. However, the appellant considers that hostel accommodation may be required for other categories of refugee or for homeless persons and he wishes to have the option to negotiate new contracts with other agencies. The appellant's business interests include a hostel for men elsewhere in Birmingham.
22. All hedges and fences between the semi-detached houses and the hotel have been removed and the driveways to the houses have been blocked, so that the combined site functions as a single establishment. The availability of up to 37 bedspaces in the two houses almost doubles the capacity of the site as a whole to 80 people.
23. The local North West Edgbaston Residents' Association has carried out a survey within about half a mile of the appeal site, which identifies a number of other hostels and also several low-budget hotels and other properties where the Association believes that hostel-type accommodation is being provided. The Association says that the change in the character of the area has been very marked over the last four years, although the Council's records show that planning permission has been granted for only one hostel in that area since 1993. The Association considers that the concentration of such establishments has adversely changed the character of the area and has had a negative impact on crime and anti-social behaviour in the locality. This view is supported by the West Midlands Police in their response to the Council on the appeals.
24. Because the asylum seekers have no employment, they tend to stay around the hostel and the local area, so that their comings and goings are more evident throughout the day to those living nearby, than would normally be the case. Nearby residents including those in blocks

of flats overlooking the properties consider that the presence of large numbers of asylum seekers on the site (until recently) has adversely affected the character of the area.

25. Nearby residents also refer to the increasingly shabby appearance of the houses and the unsightly effect of washing hung from windows. There are also complaints of noise and disturbance caused by shouting and unruly behaviour. The appellant explained at the inquiry that it had been necessary to install steel security gates, steel mesh fencing and barbed wire at certain points, apparently to deter women leaving the premises at night and men getting into the premises at unsocial hours and causing a disturbance. I am not convinced that the reasons for these significant security measures have been fully explained. They do not form part of the curtilage of the semi-detached houses themselves, but they are part of the security system for the whole site. The adverse visual effect of the security measures can be dealt with by a condition under appeal A, but the need for such measures to my mind indicates that there must be a degree of noise and disturbance associated with the use at unsocial hours that is inconsistent with the amenity of neighbouring residential properties. I consider that the additional 37 bedspaces available in the pair of houses raises the scale of the establishment and its adverse effects to an unacceptable level, contrary to the requirements of UDP policy 8.29.
26. The appellant accepts that the type of occupant for the hostel may well change in the near future, and he accepted at the inquiry that all male hostels can be a source of greater friction than the present arrangement.
27. I conclude on the second main issue that the cumulative effect of the change of use of the two houses has led to a hostel on an excessive scale that unacceptably affects the living conditions of nearby residents and the character and appearance of the neighbourhood.

Amenity Space

28. The draft revisions to policy 8.29 seek the provision of a minimum of 16sq.m of outdoor amenity space for each hostel resident. The parties conferred and agreed on the measurement of the available space at the inquiry (489sq.m for the pair of houses and about 770sq.m for the hotel site). On that basis, the back gardens of the pair of houses would support about 31 hostel residents. However the hotel site has a surplus of outdoor amenity space for its 43 permitted bedspaces, and the computation for the whole site would therefore support a total of 79 hostel residents. This minor shortfall against total permitted bedspaces is not material in my view and could be overcome by regarding part of the disused car park as a kick-about area. I conclude that outdoor amenity space available on the whole site is adequate to support the use of the semi-detached houses as hostel accommodation.

Conclusions – Appeal B

29. Although I have concluded that there has been no loss of housing stock and that there is an adequate amount of outdoor amenity space, this does not overcome the harm I have identified under the second main issue in terms of the cumulative adverse impacts of the change of use of the houses to hostel accommodation in that location.
30. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that appeal B should not succeed. I shall uphold the enforcement notice and refuse to grant planning permission on the deemed application.

Formal Decisions

Appeal A: APP/P4605/C/04/1151510

31. I allow the appeal, and direct that the enforcement notice be quashed. I grant planning permission on the application deemed to have been made under section 177(5) of the 1990 Act as amended for the development already carried out, namely the making of a material change of use of the premises to use as a hostel at 323 Hagley Road and 479 Gillott Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham referred to in the notice, subject to the following conditions:

1(a) The use hereby permitted shall cease within two months of any one of the requirements set out in (i) to (iv) below not being met:-

- (i) within two months of the date of this decision a scheme for the reinstatement and/or replacement of the means of enclosure to the site boundaries shall have been submitted for the written approval of the local planning authority (the scheme). The scheme shall include provision for the removal of the existing metal security fencing and barbed wire fencing along the Gillott Road frontage and the reinstatement of an appropriate means of enclosure between 323 Hagley Road and the curtilages of 325 and 327 Hagley Road. The scheme shall also include a timetable for its implementation.
- (ii) Within 10 months of the date of this decision the scheme shall have been approved by the local planning authority; if the local planning authority refuse to approve the scheme, or fail to give a decision within the prescribed period, an appeal shall have been made to, and accepted by the Secretary of State.
- (iii) If an appeal is made in pursuance of (ii) above, that appeal shall have been finally determined and the submitted scheme shall have been approved by the Secretary of State.
- (iv) The approved scheme shall have been carried out and completed within the timetable referred to in (i), above.

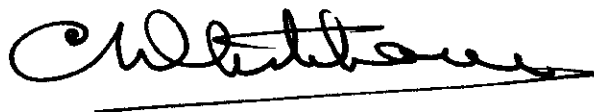
(b) Where reference is made in condition 1(a) above to a use being required to cease, the use may resume should an approved scheme later be implemented in full.

2. The areas allocated for use as outdoor amenity space shall be used for no other purpose.

Appeal B: APP/P4605/C/04/1157055

32: I dismiss the appeal and uphold the enforcement notice. I refuse to grant planning permission on the application deemed to have been made under section 177(5) of the 1990 Act as amended.

INSPECTOR



APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Conrad Rumney
He called

of Counsel, St Philip's Chambers Birmingham
Derek Edge DipTP MRTPI, Planning Consultant
Khalid Rashid MBA MCIM MRICS, appellant.

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Tarndip Singh Sidhu
He called

Senior Solicitor, Legal and Democratic Services
Department
Stephenie Hawkins BSocSc(Hons), MPhil, MSc,
MRTPI, Principal Planning Officer

INTERESTED PERSONS:

Madeleine Ruehl

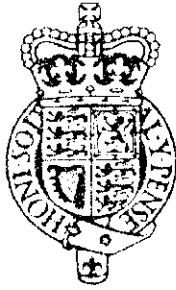
11 Patman Gardens, 451 Gillott Road, Edgbaston B16
9LJ.

Virginia Goulding

4 Melville Hall, Holly Road, Edgbaston B16 9NJ.

DOCUMENTS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Document 1 | Lists of persons present at the inquiry. |
| Document 2 | Council's letter of notification and list of persons notified. |
| Document 3 | Letters from interested persons. |
| Document 4 | Statement of Common Ground (signed version submitted at inquiry), |
| Document 5 | Proof of evidence and appendices of Mr Edge |
| Document 6 | Proof of evidence of Mr Rashid. |
| Document 7 | Proof of evidence and appendices of Miss Hawkins. |
| Document 8 | Letter of 12 February 2004 from Housing Department to appellant. |
| Document 9 | Home Office press release February 2005 on fall in asylum applications |
| Document 10 | Housing Today article on homelessness. |
| Document 11 | Centre for Urban and Regional Studies – draft research report on asylum
seekers and refugees. |
| Document 12 | Memo from John Venables (Housing Dept) to Miss Hawkins dated 23
February 2005. |
| Document 13 | Plan of Edwards Court showing location of objectors' flats. |
| Document 14 | Location plan with quarter-mile radius marked. |



Appeal Decision

Inquiry opened on 20 June 2000

by **ROBERT YUILLE** MSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions

The Planning Inspectorate
Room 1404
Tollgate House
Houlton Street
Bristol BS2 9DJ
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Date
28 JUL 2000

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Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/A/00/1036918
Cambridge House, Cambridge Row, London SE18

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant [outline] planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Cambridge Villas Ltd against the decision of London Borough of Greenwich.
- The application (ref: 99/1608/F), dated 27 July 1999, was refused by notice dated 28 December 1999.
- The development proposed is change of use to hostel.
- The Inquiry sat for 2 days on 20 and 21 June 2000.

Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed.

Background

1. The Appeal was submitted in the names of Henry Smith and Daughters but it was agreed at the Inquiry that the appellant was Cambridge Villas Ltd.
2. Before the Inquiry opened the Council confirmed that it would not be relying on its fourth reason for refusal relating to the loss of a potential employment generating use on the site.
3. The appellant submitted a signed Unilateral Undertaking at the Inquiry. This was superseded by a further Unilateral Undertaking, submitted after the close of the Inquiry, which provides, amongst other things, that the tenants of the proposed hostel would not own motor vehicles.
4. A previous planning application (ref: 98/1796/F) for a 164 room hostel was refused planning permission in 1998. The reasons for refusing that planning application make no reference to the Council's policies for special needs housing groups. In this respect the Council's treatment of that application differs from its treatment of the appeal application.

Main Issues

5. It was not disputed at the Inquiry that the reuse of a brownfield site, such as the appeal site, within a residential area, close to shops and other facilities and reasonably well served by public transport would be acceptable in principle. Discussion at the Inquiry focussed on particular aspects of the appeal scheme.
6. I consider there are three main issues in this appeal. Firstly, the effect of the proposed hostel on the living conditions of adjoining residents by reason of overlooking, noise and disturbance. Secondly, whether the hostel would provide an acceptable form of accommodation for its future residents. Thirdly, its effect on the Council's aim of providing a range of accommodation for special needs groups and securing their full integration within the community.

Planning Policy

7. The development plan for the area comprises the London Borough of Greenwich Unitary Development Plan 1994 (UDP). Policy H5 sets the context for consideration of the proposal by stating that the Council will ensure the provision of a suitable range of dwelling types to meet the various needs of households, particularly those with special needs.
8. A number of policies deal specifically with hostels. Policies H21 and H22 confirm that hostels are an exception to the Council's requirement that residential development should provide self contained units. Nonetheless, they are expected to maintain the individual's privacy and dignity. Policy H32 states that sympathetic consideration will be given to proposals for hostel accommodation having regard to a number of matters including the existence of an identified local need, the impact on the local environment and the character of the area, and the standard and suitability of the provision for the client group.
9. Other policies relate generally to housing. Policy H9 states that residential development is acceptable on environmentally suitable sites. Policy H10 indicates that when considering proposals for housing the Council will give first priority to securing a good environment for residents but also seeks to make best use of land. Policy H11 sets out density ranges for different categories of dwellings but does not refer specifically to hostels.
10. Policy H14 provides that a change to residential use will be encouraged if the development would be in a primarily residential area or appropriate town centre location. Policy H15 is relevant insofar as it deals with backland development which it indicates will only be favourably considered where, amongst other things, there is no loss of privacy from adjoining houses and gardens and the character of the area is maintained. Policy H18, although it does not refer specifically to hostels, also has regard to the privacy of adjoining occupiers and to matters of aspect and orientation. Policy D11 requires all development to be designed to provide and improve personal safety and security in the environment.
11. Attention was drawn to various aspects of government policy, particularly to Planning Policy Guidance 1: *General Policy and Principles* (PPG1), Planning Policy Guidance 3: *Housing* (PPG3) and Planning Policy Guidance 13: *Transport*, (PPG13), which stress the importance of sustainable development, of making efficient use of land, of recycling brownfield sites and reusing existing buildings. They indicate an acceptance of higher density development in specific locations and emphasise the importance of framing policies to meet the housing needs of the whole community, creating mixed communities where possible. These are up to date statements of government policy, particularly the recently published PPG3, and I will accord them considerable weight in determining this appeal.
12. I note the contents of various Issues papers produced in connection with the emerging UDP, however this plan has yet to be placed on deposit and is at a very early stage in its preparation. Similarly the Housing Green Paper -- *Quality and Choice: a Decent Home For All* is a consultation document, as is the draft version of PPG13. Neither are statements of government policy. In addition it was confirmed at the Inquiry that the document entitled *Standards for Housing In Multiple Occupation* is not Supplementary Planning Guidance and is intended to identify minimum rather than desirable standards. I will therefore attach limited weight to the contents of these various documents.

Reasons***Issue 1. Privacy.***

13. The building it is proposed to convert is surrounded by houses. The appellant made the point that the majority of windows in the hostel would be more than 21m from these dwellings, that being the minimum distance between habitable rooms allowed by many Councils. However, Greenwich does not use this standard. I find such a general yardstick unhelpful in this particular location where the differences in height of the various buildings (a four storey building on the site as compared with nearby two storey houses), the position of the building to be converted (in places it adjoins the rear gardens of neighbouring houses, in others it is very close to the boundary) and the large number of windows in the appeal property (130 bedroom windows), combine to create a particularly intimate arrangement of buildings. I will therefore assess the proposal on its own merits.
14. Of particular significance, to my mind, is the fact that 16 clear glazed bedroom windows in the first and second floors of the southern elevation of the proposed hostel would look down over the rear garden of the house at No 10 Bloomfield Road and onto the gardens and rear elevations of houses on Plumstead Common Road. In addition 32 obscure glazed bedroom windows in the first, second and third floors of its eastern elevation would look onto the gardens and the backs of houses on Burrage Road.
15. Whilst there are a number of trees around the site, I saw on my site inspection that even when these are in full leaf it is possible to obtain clear views of the gardens and rear elevations of neighbouring houses from these windows. Where obscure glazing is provided it would protect the privacy of the residents of these houses when the windows were closed, but it would not be effective if the windows were open. There will, I anticipate, be occasions, particularly during warm weather, when at least some of these windows will be open. I consider the vantage points that these windows would afford would lead to an unacceptable loss of privacy in the houses and or gardens of properties on Bloomfield Road, Plumstead Common Road and Burrage Road.

Issue 1. Noise and Disturbance

16. The appellant made the point at the Inquiry that the impact of the appeal scheme on the amenity of nearby residents should be judged against the background of the existing unrestricted industrial (B1) use of the site. However, the site is not intensively used at present and the appellant also made the point, in evidence not challenged by the Council, that the building does not have a realistic future in terms of employment generation. I have no reason to disagree with this and take the view that there is little likelihood of the building being fully used for industrial purposes in the future. I will therefore assess the scheme against the background of the site being located in a generally quiet residential area.
 17. I accept that the hostel would be well managed and that anti-social behaviour by its occupants would not be tolerated. Nonetheless, the proposed bedrooms would be the only private living space available to their occupants, many of whom could be unemployed and, having limited disposable income, they could spend much of their time in the hostel. It is likely, therefore, that these rooms would be intensively used.
 18. The appeal scheme would involve the provision of numerous bedroom windows opening onto neighbouring houses. When these windows were open there would be many
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opportunities throughout the day and into the late evening for noise and disturbance to occur with people watching television, listening to music, entertaining friends and so on. Whilst individually these activities would not necessarily be anti-social, cumulatively the combination of such occurrences emanating from such a heavily used building would, I consider, result in an unacceptable and sustained increase in levels of background noise in this generally quiet area.

19. For all of the above reasons I conclude that the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of the occupants of houses on Bloomfield Road, Plumstead Common Road and Burrage Road by reason of loss of privacy and noise and disturbance. In these respects the proposed development would run counter to the aims of the relevant policies in the UDP.
20. The Council drew attention to a hostel at Catherine Grove where neighbours had complained of noise and disturbance, but I did not see this building and I am not able to form an opinion as to how comparable it is to the appeal site. The appellant on the other hand made the point that it had not had complaints about noise or loss of privacy in connection with its other hostels. I visited one of these hostels, Northumberland House, on my accompanied site inspection. I noted that it is purpose built accommodation set alongside blocks of flats on a busy road. To my mind the character and setting of this hostel bears little resemblance to the appeal scheme which I will therefore determine on its own merits.

Issue 2. Accommodation of Future Residents

21. The appeal scheme would involve the use of obscure glazing, to a height of 1.8 m, in many of the proposed bedrooms. Whilst I accept that this measure goes some way to protect the privacy of nearby residents, I consider it would create oppressive living conditions in these small bedrooms. I do not consider the situation would be markedly better in all of the bedrooms with clear glazing. I refer in particular to the 8 ground floor bedroom windows in the southern elevation that would look directly onto a 3m or so high wall set only some 1.2m away. This wall would largely obliterate any view from these windows and create overcast living conditions within the rooms.
22. I conclude that these rooms would not provide acceptable accommodation for the future residents of the hostel and would not be consistent with the aims of those development plan policies (particularly Policy H22) which seek to provide satisfactory accommodation that would maintain the individual's dignity.
23. In coming to my conclusions I have taken into account advice in PPG3 that a flexible approach to density and overlooking should be taken when considering the conversion of buildings. However, as this document also makes clear, the more efficient use of land should be achieved without compromising the quality of the environment.

Issue 3: Housing Need

24. It was common ground at the Inquiry that there is a need to house the non-priority homeless in the Borough. While the Council takes the view that this need would best be met by the provision of permanent accommodation, it accepts in the UDP that, nationally, the response to such demand includes the provision of small hostels. The appellant, while noting that the relevant policies do not impose an upper limit on the size of hostels, did not dispute that the provision of small hostels is an appropriate strategy on the part of the Council. Similarly, it
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was not disputed that there are a number of small hostels in the Borough and that these operate satisfactorily without causing undue problems to neighbouring properties.

25. The proposed development would not be a small hostel. Whilst there are hostels of a similar size operating satisfactorily in other parts of London, the appeal scheme would be considerably larger than any other existing hostel in Greenwich. In the Council's view such a large unit, which makes no provision for its client's to move on to other more permanent accommodation, would tend to lead to their institutionalisation; that is for people to become dependent on the routines of the hostel and the services it provides, thus making it more difficult for them to move back living independently in the community. Such residents would, therefore, tend to stay in the hostel for a long time.
26. I appreciate the Council's general concerns on this point, but the evidence put forward by the appellant, based on the records of a similarly sized hostel elsewhere in London, indicates that typically residents only stay for a short time. On the evidence before me, there is no reason to conclude, in this particular instance, that the proposed hostel would lead to problems of institutionalisation.
27. I do, however, accept the Council's point, unchallenged at the Inquiry, that the residents of such hostels tend to be stigmatised in the local community. A development of the size proposed would undoubtedly lead to the concentration of a large number of hostel dwellers in one area. Some of these would be drawn from the immediate locality and from nearby Areas of Stress (areas identified in the UDP as experiencing a concentration of social problems). The proposed hostel would however offer direct access to prospective occupiers and this, combined with its size, would mean that, in all likelihood, it would attract occupants from further afield.
28. The sheer numbers of residents at the proposed hostel would make them prominent in the local community and this, together with my findings on the impact of such a scheme on the living conditions of nearby residents, would, to my mind, inhibit their full integration into that community. The Council makes clear in the UDP that the aims of its relevant policies (particularly Policy H32) include the maximisation of such integration. In this respect I conclude that the proposed development would harm the aims of the UDP. The fact that within 150m or so of the site a small hostel on Bloomfield Road is under construction adds weight to my conclusion on this matter.

Other Matters

29. I have also taken into account the points made about parking provision and density in a recent appeal decision (ref: APP/U5360/A/00/1036553) to which the appellant referred. The Council makes the point that the proposed development would exceed the density figures laid down in the local plan. However, I accept the appellant's opinion that it is not particularly useful to seek to apply density figures intended for dwellings when considering a hostel. In my opinion it is more relevant to consider the specific implications of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupants of the hostel and of neighbouring dwellings, as I have done above.

Conditions

30. The appellant put forward a number of conditions that could be attached to any planning permission together with a signed Unilateral Undertaking. The Council agreed that these
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would overcome its concerns about on-street parking, security and the provision of separate accommodation for women. I accept that this would be the case but neither these conditions, nor the provisions of the Unilateral Undertaking, would address the problems identified in my consideration of the main issues in this appeal.

Conclusions

31. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Formal Decision

32. In exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss the appeal.

Information

33. Particulars of the right of appeal against this decision to the High Court are enclosed for those concerned.



INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES
FOR THE APPELLANT:

Mr B Ash QC	Instructed by Adrienne Hill
He called	
Adrienne Hill BA(Hons) MPHIL MRTPI	Adrienne Hill. Development Planning Consultancy Services.

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Mr T Jones of Counsel.	Instructed by the Head of Legal Services.
He called	
Mr I Lloyd BA DipUPI MRTPI	Group Leader Development Control.
Mr M Smith	Head of Community Housing Services.

INTERESTED PERSONS:

Mr Young	34 Bloomfield Road SE18 7JH
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DOCUMENTS

Documents	1.1-1.2	Lists of persons present at the Inquiry.
Document	2	Letter announcing the Inquiry and a list of those notified.
Document	3	Copy of the superseded Unilateral Undertaking submitted by the appellant
Documents	4.1-4.3	Copies of communications (file note, e mail and letter) between the appellant and Hackney Borough Housing Department.
Document	5	List of Hostels in Greenwich – produced by the Council.
Document	6	Memo dated 20 June 2000 from a senior engineering assistant at the Council dealing with the proposed parking arrangements.
Documents	7.1-7.3	Letters from two local residents and the local ward councillor expressing concern about the proposed development.
Document	8.1-8.2	Letters from GML Architects Ltd dated 12 April 1999 and 5 May 1999 requesting information from the Council.
Document	9	Extract from the Housing Act 1996 giving a definition of homelessness.
Documents	10.1-10.2	Appendices to Adrienne Hill's evidence.
Document	11	Appeal Reference APP/U5360/A/00/1036553.
Documents	12.1-12.3	Appendices to Mr Lloyds evidence.

PLANS

Plans	A.1-A10	Appeal Plans
Plan	B	Plan submitted by the appellant showing amended parking provision.
Plan	C	Greenwich UDP, Proposal Map.



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 May 2022

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/W/21/3285830

Former Nightclub, Bank Street/White Horse Yard, Wakefield WF1 1EH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Smith of Helping The Homeless (Wakefield) Ltd against the decision of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00987/FUL, dated 9 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'change of use of vacant nightclub to homeless hostel including associated internal alterations, external alterations and signage'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Signage for the proposal is noted as being subject to a separate application and as such, has not been considered in this appeal.
3. The appellant submitted additional information relating to the problems of homelessness in Wakefield and its associated costs during this appeal. The Council have commented on this information. I am satisfied that no prejudice would occur to any party from consideration of this additional information, and accordingly I have based my decision on the information submitted.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would affect living conditions within the local community with respect to increasing anti-social behaviour, crime and fear of crime in the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site consists of the vacant single storey nightclub building fronted by White Horse Yard, car parking and Albion Court. It is within Wakefield city centre and located in quite a densely developed mixed use area, which includes a variety of commercial units, hotels, public houses, restaurants, a nursery, church, car parks and residential units. The appeal site is noted to be within the Central Wakefield Area Action Plan boundary.
6. The proposal would convert the former nightclub into a referral based homeless shelter, providing 17 individual bedrooms with en-suites. The shelter would provide supervised and secured accommodation for residents between the times of 20:00 to 8:00. It would be closed outside these times.

7. It is evident by the existence of Marsh Way House, that homeless accommodation is not prohibited in Wakefield city centre. However, the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (PALO), with input from the city centre Neighbourhood Policing Team, have raised significant concerns and strongly objected to the proposal. This is based on the issues they experience at Marsh Way House, an existing similar shelter approximately 1km away from the appeal site. The PALO consider that the proposal's proximity to Marsh Way House would, in all likelihood, increase serious crime and anti-social behaviour in the city centre. The PALO identified that many of the proposal's safeguarding measures to reduce issues are also used at Marsh Way House. However, it was noted that these were not successfully tackling the issues identified and further measures, such as security fencing, were being considered. As the PALO is a specialist police crime prevention officer for Wakefield with justified evidence-based knowledge of the crime and anti-social behaviour in the city centre, I give their comments significant weight.
8. While it is appreciated that the proposal would include improvements on the crime and anti-social behaviour safeguarding measures being used at Marsh Way House, the level of detail demonstrating the effectiveness of these to remove the concerns raised by the PALO is limited. Careful consideration of the impacts including the need to formulate robust safeguarding measures and assess impacts from the potential interaction between nearby shelters is required.
9. I acknowledge that there would be a strict referral system and operating hours for the shelter, with an access refusal policy for residents who have previously committed anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, in terms of the on-site operation of the facility, I recognise that staff would be appropriately trained to manage residents including conflict resolution, that a strict no tolerance policy relating to anti-social behaviour would be applied and late resident arrivals would be refused access. I also understand that the facility would be designed to reduce the risk of misbehaviour by including good room and external surveillance monitoring, secure resident bag storage and the provision of a secure outside amenity space for residents. While these are all positive measures in reducing the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour, details on some key operational aspects are limited. This includes how residents waiting and remaining in the area prior to the facility opening at 20:00 and after it closes at 8:00 would be managed and how the facility's management team would deal with onsite uncooperative or anti-social residents, serious crime threats and any resident's associates or any unwanted visitors to the premises, similar to those raised as occurring at Marsh Way House. I am therefore not convinced that these aspects can be satisfactorily addressed and that the proposal would not place further demand and pressure on the local Neighbourhood Policing Team.
10. Although the appellant proposes that the above safeguards could be controlled by a suitably worded condition, no wording has been provided to demonstrate how this would make the development acceptable.
11. I recognise that there are many reasons for homelessness and not all homeless people cause crime and anti-social behaviour. However, as is evident at Marsh Way House, homeless accommodation can have associated difficulties in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour. I appreciate that the proposal would assist in helping vulnerable people to come off the streets and away from using inappropriate shelters such as bins. I also accept that, in all

probability, providing extra accommodation capacity would help to reduce homelessness pressure on the street and within the existing homeless accommodation in the area. Nevertheless, no details have been provided to show that the mix of residents using the proposal would be significantly different to those using Marsh Way House. Therefore, due to the lack of detail regarding the safeguarding measures, there would be no certainty that the proposal would not have similar crime and anti-social behaviour issues to Marsh Way House.

12. In conclusion, the proposal does not demonstrate that there would be sufficient safeguarding measures in place to ensure that the living conditions of the local community would not be adversely affected by an increase in anti-social behaviour, crime and fear of crime in the area. The proposal would be contrary to Policy D15 of the Wakefield Local Development Framework, Development Policies 2009 and paragraphs 8, 92 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These policies seek, amongst other matters, to ensure development would not increase the fear of crime, crime itself, nuisance and anti-social behaviour which would undermine quality of life, community cohesion and resilience. The Council refers to paragraph 12 of the Framework in their decision notice, but this relates to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. As it does not relate to quality of life, I have omitted reference to it.

Other Matters

13. The appeal site is not situated in the Upper Westgate Conservation Area (UWCA) however, there are a number of listed buildings nearby and as such, I am required to consider the proposal under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Section 16 of the Framework. The Council completed this assessment and considered, due to the separation of the listed buildings from the site, the UWCA appraisal making no reference to White Horse Yard and that only minor changes to the fenestration of the building would be completed, that no harm to the setting would occur. The Council concluded that impact on the significance of the nearby listed buildings would be neutral. In reviewing the Council's assessment and following my site visit, I concur with this view and conclude that the proposal would not harm the setting and significance of the listed buildings or the conservation area.
14. It is noted that the Council and the appellant disagree about the need for homeless accommodation in Wakefield. Both have produced evidence to support their case on this matter. However, even if need was proven, it would not change my opinion that there is insufficient detail within the proposal to demonstrate it would not adversely affect the living conditions of the local community by increasing anti-social behaviour, crime and fear of crime in the area.
15. There is support for the proposal with many raising the need for the shelter and for it to be in the city centre. While these points are acknowledged and safety concerns for the homeless are fully appreciated, it has not been demonstrated that adverse effect on the surrounding community from the proposal would be avoided. Furthermore, a number have raised the fact that the site was a former night club which had noise and anti-social behaviour. While this may have been the case, this planning appeal must be considered on its own merits and with respect to its proposed use as a homeless shelter.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

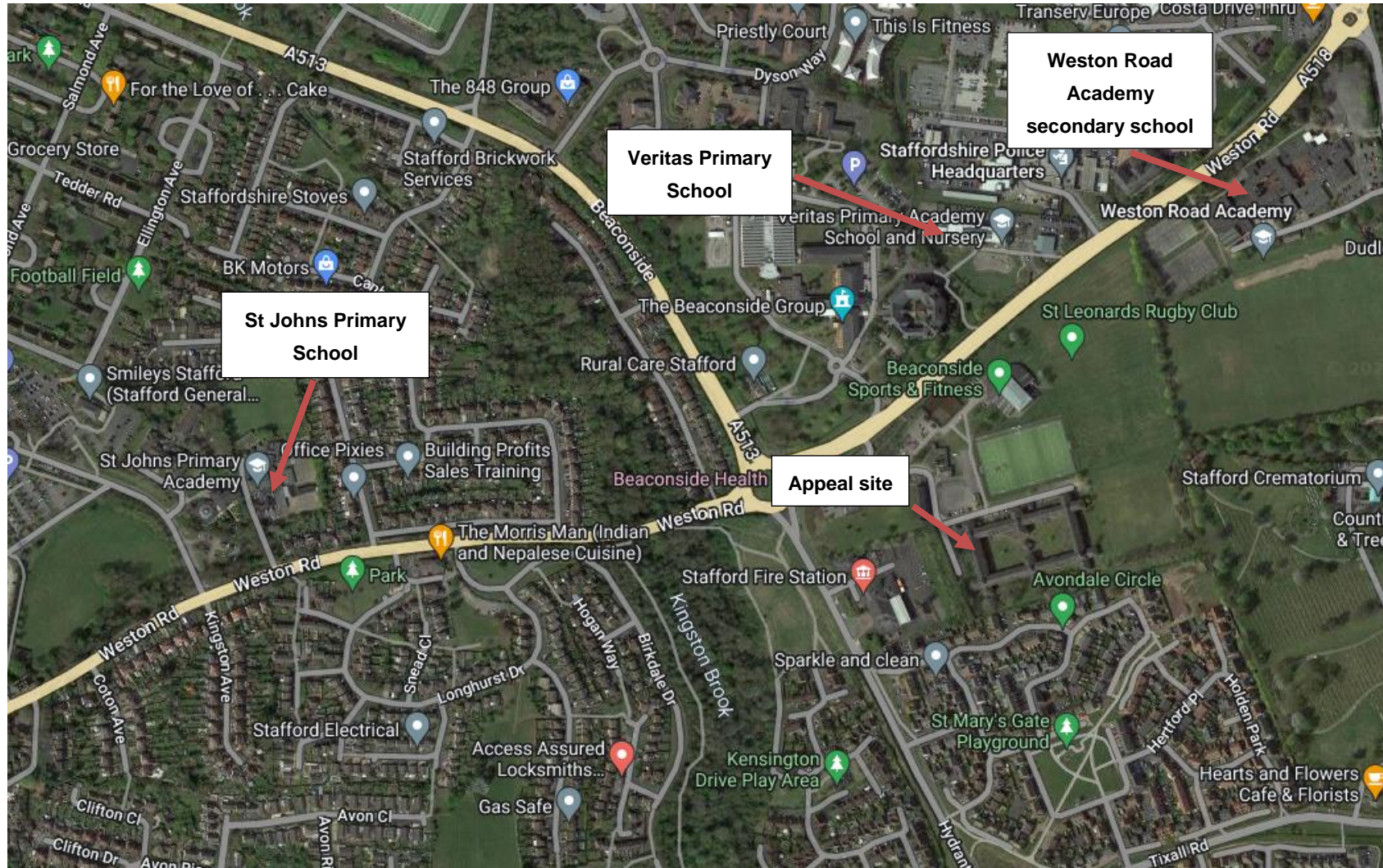
J Symmons

INSPECTOR

APPENDIX 4

Plan showing the location of local schools and other relevant facilities

Aerial image of area surrounding appeal site (source: Google maps)



APPENDIX 5

Extracts from public consultation responses to the planning application referring to fears of crime.

Extracts from 40 public representations in response to the planning application where concern regarding potential increase in crime is raised

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
1	29/03/22	16 Brackenfield Way Parkside Stafford ST16 1TL	Inappropriate for this proposed use in the vicinity of schools, our children and in a residential area. My main concern is the organisation will say they will maintain appropriate standards of care and security but they simply will not . . . penalties be applied in event of their failure to care and the control the site and its occupants
2	29/03/22	23 Merrivale Road Stafford ST179EB	This should not be placed right next to a school and housing estate. Unsafe.
3	29/03/22	9 Bayswater Square Stafford ST180YH	I am strongly opposed to the proposed use of this building. An occupancy of 482 people in such a small space, particularly when there is nothing else to do will invite group gatherings which in turn leads to intimidation of local residents and concerns with regards to increased noise and the possibility of increased crime rates. I also am concerned with regards to the appropriateness of having this development situated within 100m of two schools. Having a condensed population in a small area also encourages "ghetto" like developments, a better option would be to disperse them throughout town to encourage integration into the community rather than segregation on the outskirts of town.
4	29/03/22	11 Constable Close Weeping Cross Stafford ST170WG	My objection is the large amounts if adults congregating in a small area, not being able to work
5	29/03/22	22 Ascot Road Stafford St17 0AG	I object this idea! I have two children who go to schools nearby I fear for my children's safety now!!
6	29/03/22	56 Baswich Lane Stafford ST17 0DA	The area chosen is not suitable for adult male asylum seekers to be housed. It is positioned directly next to schools . . . There is nothing nearby for them to occupy themselves with and a similar scheme in Cannock has led to a spike in crime.

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
7	29/03/22	6 Manor Close Stafford ST180JP	This location is totally unsuitable for the construction of an asylum accommodation. It is directly adjacent to a secondary school and in the vicinity of a primary school . . . asylum seekers in this location safety concerns in my opinion. I am not against an asylum centre in Stafford but this location is unsuitable for numerous reasons . . . around 9am and 3.30pm is already very congested and dangerous with children crossing the roads etc . This will add further to the traffic in this location and the danger it presents to children
8	30/03/22	36 Canberra Drive ST16 3PX	I am deeply concerned about the proposed change of use at stafford court. 482 single men placed next to the veritas Primary School and nursery and Weston Road Acadenmy is likley to be a safeguarding risk to childeren, most of whom have to walk past the site twice dailyboth to and from school. Given the nature of these men means that background checks or even confoimong a peron's identity is problemeatic, amnd may even be deliberately hideen, we shiuld not be taking the risk with our chilredren. I havE worked for 30 years in education and seafeguarding and I consider this risk to nbe unacceptable If any of these men are a risk to children we cannot afford to have them placed in this location.
9	30/03/22	32 Morris Drive Stafford ST163YE	I am deeply distressed that SBC considers this as suitable accommodation for asylum seekers. This is next to a high school and near 2 primary schools and a nursery. It is also near to a community sports centre where many young people / children attend. The majority of asylum seekers are young men . . .
10	30/03/22	13 Lymington Road Stafford ST163SQ	Whilst I appreciate the need for accommodation this site is woefully inappropriate. Its close proximity to 4 educational sites (1 high school, 1 FE college and 2 primary schools). All of these establishments have pupils under 18 years of age, with students walking independently to and from school / college. I realise that the majority of individuals will be genuine asylum seekers, however with no security or background checks being able to be undertaken . . . The location of the planned centre is completely inappropriate in this residential area in very close proximity to several schools . . . Finally institutionalised accommodation is not the best way to serve those seeking asylum A report by Asylum Matters finds that accommodation such as hotels, hostels and former army barracks is unsuitable for people seeking refugee protection and causes mental and physical harm.
11	30/03/22	6 Meadowbank Ave Weston Stafford ST18 0EH	The proposal is inappropriate for many and varied reasons. The living accommodation is in units for single occupancy and hardly appropriate for families. Single males form the great majority of asylum seekers. So effectively the proposal is for an almost 500 person, mostly-male asylum seekers open prison. Asylum seekers are in limbo; they are awaiting the outcome of a protracted process which may lead to them being removed from the country. Hey cannot take employment, so they cannot earn a living. The stress of very low income living, coupled with the stress of waiting for the outcome of the application and possible appeals process is damaging to physical and mental health. Given the

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
			<p>close proximity of a primary school across the road and a secondary school across the fence, this location for an open prison would be ill advised . . .</p> <p>If we really do care about asylum seekers in England we need to create appropriate facilities with local opportunities for their development into productive citizens with the opportunity for family life and integration into the community. Dumping people on a defunct university campus with no money is not the way forward.</p>
12	31 March 2022	57 Melbourne crescent, Stafford, ST16 3JU	. . .given the immediate proximity of three local schools, two of which are primary schools, and the numerous residential family areas what measures will be taken to ensure that none of the people housed will be high risk?
13	01/04/22	21 Cowan drive Stafford ST16 3FA	I am not comfortable having such a large number of asylum seekers move so close to schools
14	02/04/22	61 Marlborough avenue Stafford St16 3sj	The number is too great and the proposed residents being mostly made up of single men and women, not just families worries me, . . . almost 500 more people at once. I fear it's too many and in the wrong place. . . to have a huge influx of people with no background checks next to 2 schools is not appropriate. 500 people will change the entire demographic of the area, I'm concerned about crime and antisocial behaviour.
15	02/04/22	29 Sandringham road Stafford ST17 0AA	<p>Lots of schools and therefore children. Its very close to large area of residential properties.</p> <p>How are these asylum seekers being processed?</p> <p>What are their backgrounds - criminal records?</p> <p>What security is being installed? How will they be monitored?</p>
16	03/04/22	6 Alcester Row STAFFORD ST18 0YX	The key concern I have is the proximity of housing hundreds of predominantly male residents next to primary and a secondary school with the accommodation located between the schools and the respective residential areas. There is obviously a risk of resident group congregations and subconscious perceptions from parents that will no doubt lead to an increase in parents driving their children to school that may currently walk along the Weston Road.
17	04/04/22	32 Harcourt Way Stafford ST16 1QY	This is a residential area near schools and a sports centre where young girls attend. . . I would be scared for my daughters, granddaughters, sisters, mothers etc if this goes ahead.

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
18	04/04/22	95 Charnley Road Stafford ST16 3JX	As a female I would feel unsafe walking around the area on my own.
19	06/04/22	5 Hadley Green Stafford ST18 0ZA	I object to this plan because I do not feel it would be safe. The local area already has issues with crime, and we do not want that potentially adding to. Younger members of my family who use the local schools would not feel safe, and I would not feel happy, letting them go past this new site to walk to school if filled.
20	06/04/22	24 Baswich Crest Stafford ST17 0HL	Stafford is such a small town, so 500 asylum seekers packed into one area is far too many. This could result in large groups loitering around the area with nothing to do, which is worrying considering the proximity to schools and homes. . . . It is also concerning that this accommodation is only intended for single people, which means that it will be mainly (if not completely) large groups of men.
21	06/04/22	30 Bell close Stafford ST16 3NJ	Objection to the location in Stafford at the old Stafford University campus. These migrants will not have received any proper safeguarding checks to be located so close to a primary school and a high school. You cannot police over 400 migrants
22	06/04/22	4 Vardon Close Stafford ST16 3YW	This site is not suitable for such a facility. SERCO does not demonstrate ability to effectively and efficiently manage its services, This building is situated next to 2 primary schools and a high school, along with several family housing estates, our safety and freedom would be compromised with such a building on our doorsteps.
23	06/04/22	7 Melbourne Cres Stafford ST16 3JU	It is too close to local schools and young children. Many females frequent the area and will feel vulnerable with news that there are great numbers of young male. There are a great number of residents and mothers in the close proximity and community are concerned about the application for change of use.
24	07/04/22	11 Elm Court Hyde Lea Stafford ST18 9BJ	Inappropriate location for something of this nature with school and youngsters in close proximity
25	07/04/22	8 Bupton Road Stafford ST18 0EF	I am not against asylum seekers in Stafford, I feel awful for the plight of these poor souls, what I am against is the volume in such a small town. . . . This planning application going forward would endanger the lives of the people of Stafford and the lives of the people they intend to house. Our town could accommodate and welcome small numbers,

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
			but people in this volume are more suited to larger cities like Birmingham where there are more facilities and services to keep people safe
26	07/04/22	4 Darley Avenue Stafford ST18 0DQ	I do not believe this will be acceptable in an already built up area with lots of children around daily due to schools being so close by.
27	07/04/22	13 Audlem Road Stafford St180gn	I have , two of which are in the weston road high school. Local teenagers do not have enough safe open spaces to enjoy social times in a constructive way eg playing football if the plans go ahead as there will be an increased threat to safety
28	07/04/22	29 northburgh avenue Stafford ST18 0GW	Clearly haven't put the main issue above on purpose. With it being very difficult to vet people coming in does it really make sense to put this settling next to 3 schools, and huge family estates. Doesn't take a genius to work out the issues there. If you can prove a good vetting procedure then I would be happy for this, but obviously, if anything happens, there would only be fingers pointed in one direction. If you look at statistics, a large majority of the people incoming would be young males aged 18-34, around 4 in 10 on average, as opposed to 1 in 10 female minors or most vulnerable. Hope if this goes ahead, we help the right people.
29	07/04/22	7 Quinton Gardens Stafford Staffs	How anyone thinks this is a good idea is beyond me? Let's not kid ourselves, we all know what kinds of issues come with these locations. You only have to look at the issues they have created in other areas and the way crime rates have risen. My two children walk to & attend the schools next to & directly opposite this building. My partner walks to the university building at night. This makes me very concerned in regards to their safety. . . . A father shouldn't have to worry about keeping his family safe on his own doorstep.
30	07/04/22	15 Edmund Avenue Stafford ST17 9FT	There is a lot of new housing in the area where there are many young families, and understandably parents will be very concerned about their children - The fact that these young men will not be able to legally work means they will be constantly looking for a source to supplement their meagre daily grant from UK Govt. This will encourage them to beg in public places. And without doubt some will turn to crime.
31	07/04/22	53 Silkmore Crescent Stafford ST174JL	The amount of single men will certainly make things uneasy for the people of Stafford.

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
32	10/04/22	36 Northburgh Avenue Stafford ST18 0GW	This specific location has hundreds of young school children who walk to and from school on a daily basis, undoubtedly they will feel intimidation from having to walk in an area with gangs of young men hanging on every corner, if parents have any sense they would immediately start to take their children to school just to ensure their safety. Our children should be able to walk the streets of their country without fear or intimidation
33	12/04/22	41 Gladstone Way Stafford ST163JT	I am deeply concerned about the risk of increased crime in the area from having so many single males of unknown origin on my doorstep. I also strongly object on . . . and unsuitability for the area, near two schools. . . . I have no faith in SERCO as they have a history of mis managing sites under their control. In short, this application would be a disaster for community cohesion in Stafford. . . and put public safety at risk. You may look at the cold hard planning criteria, but any sensible decision for the future prosperity and safety of Stafford must be to say no.
34	12/04/22	3 Kensington Drive, Stafford ST18 0WA	. . . concerns runs deep regarding the proposed location of the asylum seeker centre and the impact this will have on the local community. The fact that the building meets SERCO requirements should not be the over-riding factor in decision or policy-making. For safeguarding reasons, it is not appropriate or morally acceptable to set up an immigration centre, primarily for single adults, next to facilities predominantly used by younger and therefore more vulnerable members of our community, namely: 1- A secondary school and a primary school. 2- Sport facilities largely used during the week and at the weekend by children and teenagers aged between 5 and 18 years. . . . Stafford council has duty of care to think about the welfare of the children and teenagers who use these sports facilities regularly and who attend the schools next to the building, and to consider the fact that they walk to and from school, often unaccompanied, passing this building in question every day. They too, have a right to feel safe, secure and unintimidated. . . Adding 482 single adults at the heart of facilities used by children and teenagers and presents safeguarding issues. There is a primary and secondary school next to the proposed centre. It is highly inappropriate to have single adults, with time on their hands as they await the outcome of their asylum claim, congregating near the two schools. SERCO acknowledges that the local community may find this 'unsettling' but equally states that 'no restrictions' will be placed on the day-to-day whereabouts of individuals. A significant number of unknown individuals located in one area is intimidating for young children and teenagers walking to and from school. SERCO, with its damaged reputation in running prisons and immigration centres, is not going to manage the behaviours of centre residents outside the centre. . . We do not think whatever statements SERCO makes, it will guarantee and deliver the safety of the schools' children next to the centre in question, nor that of the centre's residents. The sports facilities in the same complex are used

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
			<p>regularly at the weekend for football and hockey matches and for training during the week by children and teenagers aged from 5 to 18. For similar reasons of safeguarding, it is not appropriate to have an IAC centre next to children's facilities. Children using the facility will, understandably, feel uncomfortable if they suspect they are being watched, or worse, feel unsafe, particularly on arrival or departure as they move around the site. In a town where children's leisure facilities are already in short supply, parents feeling uneasy about their children attending the site have few alternative options. Potentially, the site Owner could say it will shut the sports facility, but this would only punish the local community. Equally, as stated within its proposals, SERCO could 'facilitate on site leisure activities' for asylum seekers. Whilst we understand that engagement in sport will bring benefits to those seeking asylum, the facilities are already in high demand and potentially, local children will be the ones to miss out.</p> <p>Policing in Stafford is already overstretched. Staffordshire's Chief Constable has already warned of an increase in serious crimes (particularly knife-related; child sexual exploitation and rape), dwindling resources and job cuts. Attending an increased number of forums and multi-agency meetings in connection with asylum seekers can only decrease the quality of service provided.</p>
35	19/04/22	52 Holden Park St Mary's Gate Tixall Rd Stafford ST180ZQ	I wish to lodge my official objection to the proposed change of use at Stafford Court Beaconside. You claim this is for the housing of Asylum Seekers where have these individuals/families come from? Are they to be Security vetted to see if they pose a risk to the local community? . . . concerned about the safety of our children and close proximity this facility will be to a junior school and High School on Weston Road or to the Local community living near to this complex.
36	22/04/22	9 Sweetbriar Way STAFFORD ST17 4HS	Serco want to house 482 'refugees'. If I am not wrong, most of these 'refugees' will be young single men from African countries or the Middle East. African and Middle Eastern cultures are very different from our own, their attitudes to women, in particular, are at polar opposites to those in Britain. Most arrive with no paperwork, how can Serco possibly know who they are or what their history is? How can Serco guarantee the safety of the people they will be housed almost next door to? This accommodation sits within a dense residential population, within sight of a secondary school and nearby a Primary School. I believe it would be highly irresponsible to house 'refugees' in this location.
37	26/04/22	6 Holyrood Close Stafford ST18 0WE	the possibility of groups congregating in the local area which could prove intimidating for local residents.

	Date	Address	Comment (points not related to crime omitted)
38	22/07/22	36 Canberra Drive Stafford ST16 3PX	. . .The problem is that you actually don't know who these people are. In amongst many good characters you could have [redacted] There have been issues with asylum centres in other areas . . . Additional concerns are that our police force has been recently rated inadequate. I'm sure that this is due to multiple factors including underfunding, but I don't believe they have the resources or capacity to deal with increased This means that placing such a site close to a large population centre and next door to two schools. . . The inadequate rating of our police force and position right next to two schools means that this proposal must be rejected
39	25/07/22	35 Redhill Gorse, Stafford ST16 1SW	. . . I feel you would be better served in looking at how the current operation is working in Cannock, after speaking to members of Bridgtown Parish council it is clear SERCO have lost control of the site currently being used (Ramada hotel) it is well reported to both the council and Cannock Police . . .Bridgtown Parish council have requested a stronger Police presence
40	25/07/22	13 Lymington Road Stafford ST16 3SQ	they will have very little to do they will be congregating in public spaces. This will happen as noted in other areas such as Cannock and Stoke. . . We should be encouraging our children to enjoy the outside and outdoor leisure amenities, not forcing them to stay indoors relying on technology for entertainment.

APPENDIX 6

Press coverage relating to asylum facilities

Appendix 6a: Derby Telegraph article regarding Laverstoke Court, Derby.

Appendix 6b: BBC News article regarding Laverstoke Court, Derby.

Appendix 6c: Express and Star article regarding a protest in February 2023 in Cannock town centre.

Appendix 6d: BBC News article regarding a demonstration at Kegworth, Leicestershire.

Appendix 6e: The Guardian article regarding events in Knowsley nr. Liverpool.

Appendix 6f: BBC News article regarding events in Knowsley nr. Liverpool.

Appendix 6g: ITV News article regarding events in Knowsley nr. Liverpool.

Appendix 6h: The Independent article regarding demonstrations in Skegness, Lincolnshire and Newquay, Cornwall

Appendix 6i: Staffordshire Live article regarding the determination of the planning application for the proposals at Weston Road, Stafford subject to this appeal.

<https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/derby-news/laverstoke-court-asylum-seekers-derby-1697447>

Derby asylum seekers 'urinating, taking drugs and getting drunk', it is claimed

But complaints by residents of anti-social behaviour have been played down by refugee centre

NEWS BY **Zena Hawley** Agenda editor
10:35, 21 JUN 2018 **UPDATED** 14:34, 21 JUN 2018

Residents living close to an asylum seeker reception centre set up in Derby earlier this year have complained to councillors about anti-social behaviour in the area.

They claim they have witnessed asylum seekers smoking cannabis, drinking alcohol and urinating in public close to the Laverstoke Court centre in Peet Street.

But G4S, which runs the centre in the former **University of Derby** hall of residence, says it is "unable to confirm from the limited information provided that the individuals observed were resident at Laverstoke Court".

Debbie Regan, who has written the letter to the ward councillors on behalf of residents, says she has personally seen asylum seekers leave the centre and occupy benches at the junction of Peet Street and Drewry Lane.

She said: "I am not the only person not happy with this situation at all. There are groups of people congregating on the benches throughout the day but it is particularly bad into the evening and night. They also congregate in the grounds of St Luke's Church drinking."

Up to 60 people move into new Derby asylum centre

The letter to the councillors said: "The area at the top of Drewry Lane has become a zone for asylum seekers only. They congregate there smoking cannabis and drinking alcohol and urinating in full view of passers by. This is not just a one off, it's a regular occurrence. The rubbish is just piling up and each day more is added. My theory is other people see this and add to it. This area used to be a nice place for locals to sit but now it's a no go area for us."



These are the benches where residents claim asylum seekers are drinking and publicly urinating (Image: Derby Telegraph)

Another resident, Graham Rowe, has written separately to ward councillor Asaf Afzal and said: “The seats on the grassy area at the top of Drewry Lane used to be used frequently by the local drunks, but an increase in local policing and an alcohol ban greatly reduced the problem.

“The same area is now commonly used by the occupants of Laverstoke Court – they have as much right to use the space as anyone else – but it seems to have resulted, at least to some degree, in a return of some behaviours that most people would find unacceptable when conducted close to their homes.



“Recently, I saw people obviously drunk on the seats and also urinating in full view at 4.30pm, making no effort to cover himself or turn in the other direction.”

The asylum seeker reception centre was given the go-ahead last October when city planning councillors approved a change of use for the university building.

Prior to being given the green light, many local residents had signed a petition and written to the council expressing their concerns about the centre being sited close to the residential area.

Initially, 60 asylum seekers were admitted to the centre, where they stay for up to 21 days while their application for asylum is examined. If refugee status is granted then they will be moved to a more permanent address, usually in another city, unless they specify they need to be in Derby.

READ MORE

- [Family of seven from Malaysia are first residents of new Derby asylum centre](#)

If their application for refugee status is denied, they will be returned to a centre where they can await deportation.

Replying to Mr Rowe's letter, Mr Afzal said: "I am concerned to hear the comments you have made regarding the alleged anti-social behaviour around the seating area on Drewry Lane, I have asked council officers to investigate.

"I am keen to hear the views of residents in the area, so will be organising a walk around the area in the next few days to gather comments, views and any concerns residents may have about Laverstoke Court and the general condition of the area.

"I will also ask our community protection officers to visit the area as they can take action against anti-social behaviour such as public drinking and disorder as well as fly tipping and littering."



Laverstoke Court in Peet Street which admitted the first asylum seekers in January this year (Image: Derby Telegraph)

A spokesman for G4S said: "We have been unable to confirm from the limited information provided that the individuals observed were resident at Laverstoke Court. This behaviour is not representative of the asylum seekers who live at Laverstoke Court, who are courteous to their neighbours in the community.

“However, if anyone witnesses inappropriate behaviour we would encourage them to inform the police or appropriate authority.”

Derbyshire police could not find any record of inappropriate behaviour being reported in the area because they did not have specific dates and times when people might have contacted them to be able to access for the Derby Telegraph.

READ MORE

- [Residents furious after Derby asylum centre gets green light](#)

Derby City Council confirmed that a walk round would be taking place in the Peet Street and Drewry Lane areas.

A council spokesman said: “Following reports of anti-social behaviour and littering on the streets surrounding Laverstoke Court, we have arranged for bins to be emptied and streets to be cleared.

“We will continue to monitor the area closely to ensure it is kept in a good condition. In addition, we are organising a walk-round to speak with local residents about their concerns, as well as how they can get involved in looking after their local neighbourhood.

“Our community protection officers, who continue to provide a friendly and fast response to neighbourhood issues, will also continue their routine visits of the area.”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-derbyshire-53726317>

'Racist' graffiti on Derby asylum seeker building

Published 10 August 2020



IMAGE SOURCE,GOOGLE

The building targeted on Peet Street is an accommodation centre for adults seeking asylum

"Racist" graffiti portraying a Nazi symbol and the words "go home" is being investigated by police.

It has been found in several locations in Derby including on the wall of a centre for asylum seekers.

Serco, which runs the facility on Peet Street, said it was "appalled and horrified at this dreadful act of racist vandalism".

Derby City Council said it "won't tolerate acts of hate" and will be removing the red paint.

Derbyshire Police said it was aware racist graffiti had been painted in several locations including Peet Street, Stuart Street and Cathedral Green.

Insp Keith Chambers called it "disgusting" and said it did not reflect the attitude of the majority of residents in the city.

One of the locations targeted, an accommodation centre for adults seeking asylum, opened in 2018.

Jenni Halliday, from Serco's asylum accommodation and support services, said: "We are appalled and horrified at this dreadful act of racist vandalism.

"We immediately notified the police and we are grateful to the council, who have quickly removed the graffiti."

A spokesperson for the city council said it would be removing all the "offensive and totally unacceptable" graffiti.

"We won't tolerate acts of hate and extremism in our city and are working closely with the police," they added.

Derbyshire Police is looking at the possibility that it was painted by a man wearing a hoody and riding a bicycle seen at about 00:30 BST on Monday.

<https://www.expressandstar.com/news/politics/2023/02/04/police-oversee-protest-and-counter-protest-over-asylum-seekers-in-cannock/>

Police on hand for protest and counter protest in Cannock over asylum seekers

Published: Feb 4, 2023 Last Updated: Feb 6, 2023

Police were on hand for a demonstration in a Staffordshire town centre by people calling on the Government to take a harder line on immigration, as well as counter-protesters with welcoming messages for refugees.



The demonstration in Cannock town centre

Several dozen people marched from the Beecroft Road car park near the centre of Cannock to the town's main shopping area on Saturday morning with signs including one that said: "Our Government needs to deport not support."

A number of men were carrying an England flag on which the words "Illegal [sic] invaders" had been drawn.

There were around 150 people involved in the demonstration once it arrived in the town centre, and it was met with a counter-protest of about 40 people with signs reading "refugees welcome here" and "no-one is illegal".

Police officers formed a barrier between the two protests and chants were exchanged.

Protesters who walked behind the "deport not support" sign insisted the message was not a racist one, and complained about hotels in Staffordshire being used as accommodation for asylum seekers.



In Cannock town centre

One man said there were homeless people in Cannock who needed support and suggested that money spent on housing asylum seekers, estimated by the Home Office to be around £6.8 million per day, could help them instead.

He said: "There's homeless people in Cannock sleeping on the streets and someone in his family, in this country, has paid taxes to ensure he's supported from cradle to grave. But here he is, on the street."

And another protester said: "Nobody is standing for us which is why people are here, they've had enough."

Earlier in the week Staffordshire Police [appealed for calm](#) amid rising tensions, and confirmed that one man had been arrested and charged with a 'vehicle interference' offence.

The force could not substantiate other claims made about asylum seekers.

Tracey Sweeney, who lives nearby and organised the march with Kaz Southall, said: "We're disgusted with the Government deciding to put immigrants up in our town.

"It's about time and it's about time the Government heard our voices. We're not racist one little bit, we just want the Government to see that we've had enough of this."



In Cannock town centre

She added she was hopeful others, in towns across the country, would hold similar demonstrations and that they all would take coaches to Downing Street to share their message to the Government.

Some protesters complained that money was being spent on accommodation for asylum seekers whilst people were struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Children could be seen, and heard, joining in with chants against asylum seekers as the protesters set up at the bandstand near Greggs – across from the counter-protesters at the opposite bandstand.

One man added: "Why do the councils, or MPs, never consult us at all about this? They forget that we put them there and we pay their exuberant wages and they work for us, like the police and the Government but the way they continue to act you wouldn't think so."

The group split into two half way through a talk through a PA system the organisers had set up – with calls for "calm" as others headed to confront the counter

protesters, with a line of police forming to act as a 'barricade' between both sides and ensuring the demonstration remained peaceful.



The counter demonstration

Nick Kelleher, secretary of Wolverhampton's TUC branch, said the country only accepted a "very few" people from overseas compared to other countries – and "we should be doing our best for those fleeing from war zones".

He added he had joined the counter-protesters to show solidarity with them, but felt "disappointed" at the numbers on the opposing side – adding the Government's use of hotels to house migrants was "bringing money into the local economy".

Another woman who did not want to be named said: "I'm here today to oppose people who are coming out on the streets today, I'm here in solidarity with all asylum seekers and anyone who has experienced racism and racist abuse."

Shaz Akhtar, secretary of Walsall's TUC, said "We're all here today to say refugees are welcome here. No one leaves their homeland without a choice, they leave because they've got no choice – because our country is making decisions affecting people whether that's in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and it's really upsetting to be faced with a crowd like this.

"I'm hopeful people are understanding that when asylum seekers are coming into our country they are not doing it by choice, they've got no other option."

The counter-protesters stood behind a line of police, playing music promoting understanding, whilst the other group shouted, chanted and confronted the police officers – with some waving flags with "Patriotic Alliance" scrawled across them.

Another counter-protester, from Birmingham, initially confronted the other group when they first arrived. "I don't like to see people using refugees as scapegoats," he said.

Soon after the protest began to dissipate with members on both sides deciding to call it a day at around 12.30pm.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-64797583>

Kegworth: Man charged after asylum seeker hotel protest



IMAGE SOURCE,ITV NEWS CENTRAL

Dozens of people attended the protest

By **Sonia Kataria** BBC News Published 28 February 2023

One person was arrested during a protest over a hotel in a Leicestershire village being used to house asylum seekers.

A large crowd gathered to demonstrate outside the hotel in Kegworth on Monday evening.

Leicestershire Police said it was aware of the protest and had provided a "proportionate" response.

The force said a 53-year-old man was charged with wilfully obstructing a highway with a non-motor vehicle.

He is due to appear at Leicester Magistrates' Court on 15 March.

The Kegworth hotel is one of about 30 being used to house asylum seekers in the East Midlands while the government deals with a backlog of cases. The demonstration was advertised on social media, with organisers citing concerns about the impact on local services.

Leicestershire Police said it had engaged with protest organisers, key partners and stakeholders beforehand.

The force added officers had left the scene by about 19:00 GMT.



IMAGE SOURCE, LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

The Bishop of Leicester said hotels has appealed for calm

Leicestershire County Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and local independent MP Andrew Bridgen have publicly opposed the hotel being used to accommodate asylum seekers.

The Bishop of Leicester Martyn Snow said hotels were not ideal accommodation for those seeking asylum but **urged campaigners to show compassion**.

A Home Office spokesperson said: "The number of people arriving in the UK who require accommodation has reached record levels and has put our asylum system under incredible strain.

"We engage with local authorities as early as possible whenever sites are used for asylum accommodation and work to ensure arrangements are safe for hotel residents and local people."

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/feb/10/far-right-demonstrators-clash-with-police-at-liverpool-hotel-housing-asylum-seekers>

Far-right protesters clash with police at Merseyside hotel housing asylum seekers

Three people arrested as witnesses say police van set on fire and counter-protesters surrounded

Diane Taylor

Fri 10 Feb 2023 23.49 GMT

Disturbances have broken out in Knowsley near [Liverpool](#) after several hundred far-right demonstrators protested against asylum seekers who have been housed in a local hotel by the Home Office.

Merseyside police said three people had been arrested on suspicion of violent disorder.

Witnesses at the Suites hotel said missiles were thrown and far-right supporters set a police van and its equipment on fire.

Anti-fascist demonstrators also attended and one said the far-right protesters had split into three groups and surrounded the smaller number of anti-fascist protesters.

There were reports that the protest was organised by the far-right Patriotic Alternative but the group denied this in social media posts.

Clare Moseley, the founder of the charity Care4Calais which supports asylum seekers and who attended the demonstration to support those in the hotel, said: "I don't know if the asylum seekers will be safe. I am deeply shocked and shaken by what I have witnessed in Liverpool tonight.

"I have sympathy for anyone in our country who is concerned for our services or their own future, but terrorising victims of war and torture is unforgivable. Our politicians' rhetoric of hate and division is destroying our society and our British values. My greatest concern is whether the police can keep the people in this hotel safe both tonight and in the future."

Care4Calais tweeted: "We are trapped in the car park, surrounded by hundreds of far-right protesters who have broken through police cordons."



Several hundred people attended the demonstration at a hotel housing asylum seekers. Photograph: Joel Goodman/LNP

Merseyside police said there had been no reports of any injuries.

In a statement, they said: “Additional officers are in the area to deal with these incidents. We have also implemented a number of road closures on the East Lancs Road and would urge motorists to avoid the area and those in the area to disperse.”

Knowsley’s Labour MP Sir George Howarth said the demonstration was triggered by an “alleged incident posted on social media” and criticised misinformation about refugees being “feather-bedded” at the hotel.

In a statement, he said: “I have referred an alleged incident posted on social media, which has triggered a demonstration outside the Suites hotel, to Merseyside police and Knowsley council.

“Until the police have investigated the matter, it is too soon to jump to conclusions and the effort on the part of some to inflame the situation is emphatically wrong.

“If an offence has been committed, the police should deal with it appropriately through due process. In addition, the misinformation about refugees being feather-bedded is untrue and intended to paint a picture that does not at all represent the facts.



Merseyside police said additional officers were in the area and monitoring the situation closely. Photograph: Joel Goodman/LNP

“The people of Knowsley are not bigots and are welcoming to people escaping from some of the most dangerous places in the world in search of a place of safety. Those demonstrating against refugees at this protest tonight do not represent this community. We are not like that and overwhelmingly behave with sympathy and kindness to others regardless of where they come from.”

In a tweet, Stand Up To Racism blamed the violence on the government’s “scapegoating of refugees”.

Merseyside’s assistant chief constable, Paul White, said: “We will always respect the right to protest when these are peaceful, but the scenes tonight were completely unacceptable, putting those present, our officers and the wider community in danger.

“Thankfully we have not had any serious injuries reported up to this point, but for officers and police vehicles to be damaged in the course of their duty protecting the public is disgraceful.

“We have arrested some of those suspects and will continue without hesitation to review all and any evidence which comes in, through CCTV, images or other information you may have.”

The leader of Knowsley council, Graham Morgan, tweeted: “This kind of senseless violence and destruction will not be tolerated in our community.” He said those involved did not represent the people of the area, and were “the polar opposite of the vast majority of our residents, who are tolerant and compassionate”.

Merseyside's police and crime commissioner, Emily Spurrell, tweeted: "Deeply shocking and concerning scenes of violence in Knowsley this evening. Utterly unacceptable behaviour, putting officers & public in danger. I am monitoring the situation closely. There is absolutely no excuse for this."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-64689140>

Asylum hotel disorder: Demonstrations held in Liverpool

Published 18 February



IMAGE SOURCE, PA MEDIA

Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn spoke at the event in support of refugees

Hundreds of people attended a rally in support of refugees following violence outside a Merseyside hotel housing asylum seekers a week ago.

Liverpool mayor Joanne Anderson and former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn joined the event, saying they wanted to "stand up for refugees".

A small group also gathered in the city centre to protest about local placements of asylum seekers.

Police struggled to keep both sides apart during confrontations.

The demonstrations took place after protests turned violent outside a hotel accommodating asylum seekers in Kirkby on 10 February.

One man was charged and 14 other people were arrested after a police officer and two members of the public were hurt when missiles including lit fireworks were thrown.



A police van was set on fire after a protest turned violent in Kirkby

The initial protest had been triggered by an allegation that a man had made inappropriate advances to a local teenage girl.

A man was arrested and released but is no longer living in Merseyside, police said. Officers said the Knowsley protest and counter-demonstration had been "peaceful" before a group of people arrived who were "only interested in causing trouble".

Some of the asylum seekers staying at the hotel said they were afraid after the violence.

However, one woman told BBC North West Tonight that she attended the initial protest over concerns for youngsters' safety and did not believe it was racially-motivated.

Another small protest was held outside the hotel on Friday night despite a police dispersal order against anti-social behaviour.

Following Saturday's rally in Liverpool, Mr Corbyn tweeted: "We will not let the far-right divide us."

One speaker said Liverpool has been "bringing in people from around the world for as long as we've been a city and we cannot forget our roots", while another said the city's accent was a result of migration.

<https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2023-02-23/asylum-seekers-tell-of-fear-after-riots-outside-hotel>

'We were scared': Asylum seekers on Merseyside tell of fear after hotel targeted by protestors

[GRANADA](#)

[ASYLUM LINK MERSEYSIDE](#)

[IMMIGRATION](#)

[KIRKBY](#)

Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 4:14 pm



Video report by Granada Reports Correspondent [Ann O'Connor](#)

Asylum seekers on Merseyside have told ITV Granada Reports of their fear and frustration after hotel accommodation was targeted by protestors.

Earlier this month, the Suites Hotel in Kirkby was the [scene of a large disturbance](#) in which arrests were made and a police van set on fire.

Today, 23 February, new government figures show the backlog for processing claims is at the highest since records began.

The figures, from the Home Office, show around 166,000 asylum seekers are **waiting for a decision** on their future, the highest for over 30 years.



Police in riot gear after a demonstration outside the Suites Hotel in Kirkby. Credit: Peter Powell/PA

[Police issue fourth dispersal order after rally at asylum seekers' hotel](#)

One man from Iran who is at the Suites hotel, says everyone was scared the riot could have spread inside. He said all people there want to do is work and contribute to society.

The 31-year-old fled to the UK on a dinghy in January, after persecution in his home country for his conversion to Christianity.

The engineering student was sent to Merseyside, and on 10 February, watched from his hotel room fearing that demonstrators might attack the building.

He has asked ITV News to disguise his identity.

He said: "We were frightened."

"Especially when they tried to break the fence, we thought they might come inside the hotel and set the hotel on fire."

[Huge 'refugees welcome' rally in Liverpool following riot outside hotel](#)

Mohammad has been living at another hotel on Merseyside for almost a year and is desperate to complete his British qualifications to become a qualified radiologist.

He says the vast majority of people he's met have been welcoming, but he's still wary.

He said: "In Afghanistan I was a doctor.

"I want to pay back this country, but I'm not allowed to work here, I'm not allowed to travel."



Mohammad worked as a doctor in Afghanistan. Credit: ITV News

The [Asylum Link charity](#) on Merseyside has echoed calls from the leader of Knowsley Council for the government to get a grip of asylum claims, the conditions people are held in and tackle the social media rumour mill that inflames tempers.

Ewan Roberts from the charity said: "It is inevitable that you get trouble like this.

"People should be properly embedded in communities, they should be engaged."

The government has announced it will fast track 12,000 asylum applications by ditching face-to-face interviews and replacing them with a form filled out in English that must be returned within twenty days.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seeker-hotel-protest-demonstration-b2289604.html>

Hundreds attend asylum seeker hotel protest and counter demonstration

Banners saying 'Refugees welcome' were met by others saying 'We want our country back'

[Maryam Zakir-Hussain](#)

Saturday 25 February 2023 19:56

[14](#) Comments

[Hundreds of protestors](#) with conflicting views over [asylum seekers](#) staying in UK hotels filled the streets of two English [seaside towns](#) on Saturday.

In Newquay, Cornwall, around 100 people holding signs saying “refugees welcome” were faced by opposing marchers - with one holding up a sign saying: “You are anti-white racists”.

Meanwhile, in Skegness, Lincolnshire, a rally of about 200 people brandished signs saying “No more refugees” and chanted: “We want our country back”.

Patriotic Alternative, designated as a far-right group by anti-racist campaigners Hope Not Hate, led a demonstration in Skegness near to a hotel used to house asylum seekers.

People clutched a Patriotic Alternative banner emblazoned with “stop the invasion we will not be replaced” and “you stay, [migrants](#) pay”.

Anti-fascist campaign group, Hope not Hate, said that “far-right groups are trying to stir up tensions in local communities to further their own agendas”.

Jacob Morris, 22, a Patriotic Alternative supporter from Lincoln who was at the Skegness rally, said he was protesting against the council’s decision to

“put migrants across the Channel” in hotels that are “costing the British taxpayers millions,” also claiming “a lot of these aren’t genuine asylum applications.”

75 per cent of asylum claims were granted protection at the initial decision stage, according to government statistics for 2022. Asylum seekers only make up a very small proportion of the number of immigrants in the UK, at 6 per cent of the total.

Mr Morris added: “Ukrainians are one thing but a lot of these people crossing the Channel are certainly not Ukrainians, there’s been reports in the press a lot are from Albania and elsewhere.”



Protesters from nationalist group Patriotic Alternative face anti-fascists from Cornwall Resists, during a protest, organised by the far-right group (PA)

When asked if the group is racist, he said: “It’s not racist to stand up for your own people, that’s all I can say. We advocate for the white British people.”



A protester raises his arm, during a protest organised by far-right group Patriotic Alternative (PA)

Mark Collet, Laura Towler, Joe Marsh, Wesley Russell and Sam Melia, who all claimed to be senior members of the group, were spotted at the rally.

Lincolnshire Police said there were “no arrests or reported incidents” at the “Enough is Enough” demonstration in Skegness and the crowd “dispersed peacefully” when it finished.

Superintendent Pat Coates said: “We have a duty to uphold the right to lawful protest, which is a fundamental part of our democracy, and Lincolnshire Police facilitated that right today.

“During the day, our officers engaged with protesters, members of the local community, and visitors to the town while they were on patrol to help ease concerns and diffuse tensions.”



Anti-fascists from Cornwall Resists, stand outside a hotel in Cornwall which houses refugees
(PA)

A Devon and Cornwall Police spokesperson said “officers were engaging with those in attendance to ensure everyone’s safety and facilitate peaceful protest” and no arrests were made.

In a statement, Rosie Carter, director of policy at anti-fascist campaign group Hope not Hate, said: “Far-right groups are trying to stir up tensions in local communities to further their own agendas.

“Hope not hate have seen a 102 per cent increase in far right, anti-migrant activity in the last year.

“This huge increase in far-right, anti-migrant activity doesn’t exist in a vacuum.

“It’s incumbent on the government to end their inflammatory use of language that feeds and enables the far-right, put safeguards around hotels in place, and look again at their policies that have led to this dangerous situation in the first place.”

It comes after a police van was set alight and fireworks were thrown during a protest outside the Suites Hotel in Knowsley, Merseyside, which is also housing asylum seekers, earlier this month.

<https://www.staffordshire-live.co.uk/news/local-news/stafford-asylum-seeker-accommodation-plans-7390445>

Stafford asylum seeker accommodation plans thrown out

It comes after a stormy meeting where people protested against the scheme to house people in old university halls

NEWS By Kerry Ashdown Local Democracy Reporter George Bunn
08:16, 28 JUL 2022



More than 400 asylum seekers could have been housed at the former Staffordshire University halls in Stafford. (Image: Copyright Unknown)

Families have won their battle to stop hundreds of asylum seekers moving into former university accommodation in Stafford. More than 300 objections were put forward in response to the application from Serco, which manages asylum seeker accommodation on behalf of the Home Office.

There were strong feelings expressed by members of the public [as Stafford Borough Council's](#) planning committee considered the proposals yesterday, Wednesday, July 27. Dozens of people packed into a neighbouring room to hear the proceedings, including a number holding up signs saying "Say no to Serco".

The meeting was briefly paused due to disruption from people in the public seating area, which included boos, hisses and comments referring to child sex crimes in

Telford while a supporter of the application was speaking. A council officer warned that police could be called if their disruption continued.

Up to 481 asylum seekers could have been housed at the former Staffordshire University halls of residence at Weston Road. The proposals earmarked 171 bedrooms for initial accommodation for urgent stays of between three and four weeks' average, while a further 310 dispersed accommodation bedrooms were intended for single adults for extended periods of months or years.

But residents living near the site feared for the safety of local children as there are three schools nearby. There were also concerns that crime could rise in the area and the facility would put extra strain on local services such as health centres.

Councillor Frances Beatty, who called the application in for consideration, said the concentration of asylum seeker accommodation proposed was "far too dense" for a town of Stafford's size. She told the committee: "There is no lack of empathy but parents are understandably anxious the way of life of their children will be affected, walking to school or at play.

"There is no indication the local NHS services will have the capacity and specialisms to meet the needs of this population. Our GP surgeries are at full stretch – and there is a national shortage of GPs."

Resident Steven Spennewyn said that the proposal went against human rights. He added: "I don't think you have the right to treat your residents in this way – go and speak to residents about how worried they are.

"They don't want to cope with 400 single males who will be able to wander around unhindered. There is a suggestion to build a wall to protect them from local residents and I find that really insulting."



Members of the public were there protesting against the proposal (Image: LDRS)

But Lisa Dysch, who spoke in support of the application, said on-site healthcare would be provided in the initial accommodation section. She added that there would be staff on site 24 hours a day.

"It cannot be denied more facilities like the one we are proposing are required", she said. "We recognise this is the first time asylum seekers will be accommodated within the borough and understand this has resulted in questions and fears."

The application was recommended for approval by council planning officers ahead of Wednesday's meeting. Committee members were told there had been no objections raised by statutory consultees, although police recommended installation of perimeter fencing.

Councillor Carolyn Trowbridge, who proposed the application be refused, said: "I think putting asylum seekers into what is essentially a prison with smaller bedrooms – and definitely less facilities and care than a prison – is disgraceful and Serco should be ashamed for even suggesting this. It would only take one person living in this prison-like complex to kick off to cause huge issues for people already vulnerable."

Councillor Jill Hood said: "I cannot support this application. I believe it would be inhumane."

Councillor Marnie Phillips said: "There will be inadequate support services which is only going to be to the detriment of the community. We need to make sure everyone in our community is looked after and I don't feel this application does that."

The committee went against the recommendation however and voted to refuse permission for the change of use for reasons including fear of crime and the effect on community cohesion. Seven members voted against the proposal, with two voting in favour and one abstention.

APPENDIX 7

**Officer report in respect of Derby City Council
planning application ref. DER/05/17/00698 at
Laverstoke Court, Derby**

Committee Report Item No: 2**Application No: DER/05/17/00698****Type: Full Planning Application****1. Application Details****1.1. Address:** Laverstoke Court, Peet Street**1.2. Ward:** Abbey**1.3. Proposal:**

Change of use from student accommodation (sui generis) to a hostel (sui generis)

1.4. Further Details:

Web-link to application:

<https://eplanning.derby.gov.uk/online-applications/plan/05/17/00698>**Brief description**

Members will recall that this application was deferred at the Planning Control committee meeting on 14 September with a request for additional information to be provided with regard to the intended number of occupants and room space standards, security arrangements for the hostel and management/staffing levels.

The applicant has now provided further documents in response to Member's concerns and proposes to reduce the maximum number of occupants at the site from 240 to 225. It is also proposed to form new ground floor activity space within the site. The proposed operator has also given an undertaking not to increase further the settled Asylum community in Dispersed Accommodation in the city.

The documents submitted include an accommodation assessment undertaken by Derby City Council and a Management & Operations Plan. The room assessment gives details of the accommodation at the site; room sizes and required space standards for residents. The management plan provides detailed information about the intended operation of the hostel; staffing levels, housekeeping and servicing, site security and safety process, moving in procedure and community liaison. Further detail can be found in the Officer Opinion part of this report.

Full permission is sought for a change of use of Laverstoke Court on Peet Street, from student accommodation to a hostel, which are both sui generis residential type uses. The site comprises of nine accommodation blocks which has 180 rooms and was built as student accommodation in the early 1990's. All the blocks are three storeys in height and are served by two access points on Peet Street and Drewry Lane with an on-site car park. The accommodation was previously managed by the University of Derby, although it is currently vacant.

Laverstoke Court is located close to Uttoxeter New Road and close to the city centre, in a residential area which is primarily made up of Victorian terraced housing.

The proposed change of use is to form a hostel, which is intended to house asylum seekers. The maximum number of occupants is proposed to increase from 180 to 225 people. The hostel would be provided on behalf of the Home Office as Initial Accommodation for people who have recently sought asylum and are destitute and have little access to money and accommodation. The people would occupy the hostel for a period of up to 20 days while their claims are assessed. Following this period the occupants would leave the hostel either to be deported or placed in accommodation elsewhere in the country, whilst asylum applications are determined.

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The hostel would be managed by staff on a 24 hour basis. It is intended to be a condition of the accommodation that residents must be in the building by 10 pm.

The supporting Planning Statement states that the proposed hostel is required to provide additional accommodation in the Midlands, Yorkshire and East of England to process asylum seekers. There are existing accommodation centres in Birmingham and Wakefield.

2. Relevant Planning History:

Application No:	11/91/01412	Type:	Full Application
Decision:	Granted Conditionally	Date:	07/02/1992
Description:	Erection of flats for student accommodation		

3. Publicity:

Neighbour Notification Letter – 15 letters

Site Notice

This publicity is in accordance with statutory requirements and the requirements of the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

The applicant has carried out a public consultation event, in form of a leaflet drop to 3500 local residents and an exhibition with invitation to local residents, which took place on the 17 August 2017 during the course of the application. The submitted Statement of Community Involvement confirms attendance by 61 residents with a 125 written responses.

4. Representations:

A re-consultation of neighbours has been carried out following the submission of the additional documents and any further representations received will be reported orally at the meeting. The application so far has received 43 objections and a petition in objection with 221 signatures. There have also been 9 supporting comments to date. The main objections raised are as follows:

- The building is unsuitable for the form of residential use
- The use would lead to anti-social behaviour and crime in the local area and impact on community cohesion
- Adverse impact on the local community
- Increase in numbers of asylum seekers in the city
- Site is not sufficiently secure for the proposed use
- The use would result in an increase in noise, traffic and overcrowding

The main supporting comments are as follows:

- Good location for the proposed use
- There are people in need of accommodation
- Should be providing accommodation in the community

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The 49 car parking spaces are proposed to remain.

The applicant does not mention any provision of cycle storage within the boundary of the application site.

No significant highway implications, and in view of this, no objections subject to the following condition.

Condition:

No part of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until provision has been made within the application site for parking of cycles in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle storage shall be located near to the main entrance of the development, be covered and that the area shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose other than the parking of cycles.

5.2. Resources and Housing (HIMO):

Further comments as a result of the re-consultation process will be reported at the meeting.

Original comments

No objections. Ratio of amenities to occupants acceptable.

5.3. Police Liaison Officer:

Further comments as a result of the re-consultation process will be reported at the meeting.

Original comments

Supporting documents reference occupants to be 'fully managed and supported', in receipt of daily subsistence, and in many cases requiring assistance from centre staff with day to day issues like interpretation. Conversely supporting documents require service users to be able to self-care.

In respect of the principle of the application we would adopt a neutral stance.

What is of concern is the apparent lack of evidence of community consultation undertaken by the applicants to date.

They are clearly cognisant of community safety matters, and at point 3.26 of their planning statement acknowledge associated community concerns connected to crime and disorder, with a commitment to full, open and transparent community liaison.

The significant number of objections from local residents bears out this view, many of which might have been reassured with an adequate community consultation event.

Consequently it would be my recommendation that there should be a full and transparent community consultation exercise undertaken as part of the planning application process, rather than unspecific references to liaison with community, voluntary, faith and 3rd sector groups seemingly after any permission has been granted.

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There is currently no clear indication as to staffing levels on the premises at any given time. I understand that this may be subject to future agreement and licences, but should be made clear as part of the planning submission.

The image of the centre at present is somewhat run down and lacking maintenance. Some investment to the grounds and boundaries of the site would be an additional manner of demonstrating commitment to a well-managed establishment to the local community, whilst in tandem providing a more sustainable enclosure.

Specifically the current wooden boundary fencing and gating is in need of repair and would best be replaced with a metal rail/gate similar to the remainder of the site.

This, together with a general condition regarding site upkeep and landscaping in perpetuity would be appropriate to tackle community concerns and the historical problems associated with transient use for this development.

6. Relevant Policies:

The Derby City Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 25 January 2017. The Local Plan Part 1 now forms the statutory development plan for the City, alongside the remaining 'saved' policies of the City of Derby Local Plan Review (2006). It provides both the development strategy for the City up to 2028 and the policies which will be used in determining planning applications.

Derby City Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy (2017)

CP1	Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
CP2	Responding to Climate Change
CP3	Placemaking Principles
CP7	Affordable and Specialist Housing
CP23	Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network

Saved CDLPR Policies

GD5	Amenity
H13	Residential Development – General Criteria
E24	Community Safety
T10	Access for Disabled People

The above is a list of the main policies that are relevant. The policies of the Derby City Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy can be viewed via the following web link:

[http://www.derby.gov.uk/media/derbycitycouncil/contentassets/documents/policiesandguidance/planning/Core%20Strategy ADOPTED DEC%202016 V3 WEB.pdf](http://www.derby.gov.uk/media/derbycitycouncil/contentassets/documents/policiesandguidance/planning/Core%20Strategy%20ADOPTED%20DEC%202016%20V3%20WEB.pdf)

Members should also refer to their copy of the CDLPR for the full version or access the web-link:

<http://www.derby.gov.uk/media/derbycitycouncil/contentassets/documents/policiesandguidance/planning/CDLPR%202017.pdf>

An interactive Policies Map illustrating how the policies in the Local Plan Part 1 and the City of Derby Local Plan Review affect different parts of the City is also available at – <http://maps.derby.gov.uk/localplan>

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Over-arching central government guidance in the NPPF is a material consideration and supersedes earlier guidance outlined in various planning policy guidance notes and planning policy statements.

7. Officer Opinion:**Key Issues:**

In this case the following issues are considered to be the main material considerations which are dealt with in detail in this section.

7.1. Policy Context

7.2. Residential Amenity

7.3. Traffic impacts and Parking

7.1. Policy Context

This application proposes a change of use of the site from student accommodation (sui generis) to a hostel for asylum seeker accommodation which would also be a sui generis use.

The additional documents which have been submitted following the previous committee meeting propose to reduce the maximum number of potential occupants to 225 individuals where the existing student facility comprises approximately 180 rooms. The proposal is for a change in the land use of the site from one form of residential use to another and in planning terms the proposed use as a hostel would be similar to the existing use as student accommodation. Both uses constitute a temporary form of residential accommodation, of a specialist nature. The proposed increase in the number of residents on the site is not strictly a consideration under a change of use application, particularly where there are no changes to the buildings on the site. However, if Members wish to set a maximum limit for numbers of occupants, then this could be achieved by means of a planning condition.

Policy CP7 of the adopted Local Plan – Part 1 relating to Affordable and Specialist Housing supports the provision of residential accommodation to meet specialist needs. The application is supported by a Planning Statement which sets out the requirement for asylum seeker accommodation and the needs of the occupants which are to be met by the proposal.

Both the NPPF and the Adopted Local Plan – Part 1 seek to approve applications for sustainable development and so the sustainability credentials of the proposal are the key consideration in determining the application. The three elements of sustainable development are social, environmental and economic sustainability and these should all be considered as part of the process of determining the application. The proposal needs to meet all three elements in order to be acceptable. In particular policy CP1(a) reflects the Council's policy on the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Policy CP2 deals with the sustainable location of development and the sustainable construction of buildings. The location of the site is close to the city centre and has reasonable connectivity and good transport links. The Neighbourhood Centre at Rowditch, on Uttoxeter New Road is a reasonable walking distance and offers a

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small selection of local shops and facilities. The city centre is about 600 metres away and is accessible by public transport along Uttoxeter New Road with a bus stop close to the site.

Policy CP3 (Placemaking Principles) seeks a high quality design and good standards of privacy, safety and security in all developments. Proposals should also embrace the principles of sustainable development. There are no proposed substantive external changes to the buildings or site layout. Therefore the impacts of the change of use on the streetscape and the local environment will be minimal. The residential use would need to meet the requirement for a high quality living environment for the occupants, which is also carried through in saved Policies GD5 (Amenity) and Policy H13 (Residential Development – General Criteria) of the adopted City of Derby Local Plan Review (CDLPR).

7.2. Residential Amenity

Both the existing and proposed use of the buildings on the site is of a residential type, which are similar in their character. The existing student accommodation and the proposed hostel use both cater for a transient population, living on site for a short period of time. The existing and proposed accommodation is managed with staff being present on site to provide an element of care and security for the residents. In terms of the type of residential use proposed, the hostel use would appear to be a like for like replacement, due to the comparable operation of the accommodation and short term nature of the occupants.

In terms of the level of accommodation which is provided on the site, there is to be no increase in the number of rooms. The agent has now confirmed that there are four single rooms and two family rooms on each floor of the eight buildings, (with three floors) and there would be no more than 10 individuals occupying each floor. When reflected across the whole site, this then equates to a maximum occupancy of 240 people.

The proposed number of occupants has been reduced to 225 and the applicant now proposes to create a formal social activity space on the ground floor of one of the buildings. A timetable of activities is given in the submitted management plan, which is undertaken at the existing centre in Wakefield.

According to the City Council's accommodation assessment for the site, there is also a communal lounge and kitchen/dining area per floor and bathrooms/showers are proposed to be provided on each floor. The assessment of space standards for bedrooms indicates that those bedrooms on each floor of the building exceed the minimum space required for single and family sized rooms. This information suggests that for the proposed maximum number of occupants, there would be a satisfactory level of accommodation on the site to provide a high quality living environment for the residents, including the provision of social and activity space. It should also be borne in mind that a proportion of the new occupants, would be children with their parents, whereas the building was previously occupied by students in single occupied rooms. The Council's Housing Standards Officer will provide further comments in response to the accommodation assessment, to be reported at the meeting. However, I am also mindful that the previous Housing Standards comments were satisfied with the overall ratio of space provision for the occupants, which implies that there are no

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concerns in relation to potential overcrowding issues as a result of the increase number in residents. The current proposal is for 15 fewer residents than originally indicated, so the accommodation space on the site should still be satisfactory for the intended number of occupants.

In terms of the impacts of the hostel use on the amenities of local residents, saved Policy GD5 sets out that new development should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby areas. Saved Policy E24 requires development to provide a safe and secure environment for users of a development and the wider community.

In relation to the proposed management and staff levels at the site, the submitted Management and Operations Plan gives a substantial amount of detail in regards to the intended operation, maintenance and management of the hostel. The hostel is to be staffed permanently, 24 hours a day and when fully occupied there would be 20 staff on site, including managers, housekeepers, maintenance operatives and seven security staff. A minimum of two security staff would be on site at all times. A charity, Migrant Help would also be on site to provide financial support and assistance to the occupants.

The safety and security arrangements for the proposal are set out in the Management and Operations Plan and in addition to the security staff present on the site; the proposal is to install CCTV cameras within the site to monitor the building and entrances. Access to the site would be via an intercom system and a signing in an out arrangement for all residents and visitors. It is also a condition of the accommodation that occupants return to the building by 10pm and absence is not permitted without prior agreement. The Plan gives details of the procedures and requirements which are intended to ensure a safe and secure environment for the occupants and for local residents in the community. It also indicates that there would be penalties for breaches of security.

The main issues raised by third parties in both objections and support comments are related to the effect of the occupation of the site by asylum seekers on the living environment of local residents and on wider community cohesion. There are concerns raised particularly in relation to noise and disturbance, crime and anti-social behaviour arising from the type of residents who would occupy the building. There is clearly a perception amongst local people that the occupants of the hostel are likely to lead to harmful impacts for the existing community.

These concerns are addressed in the submitted Management & Operations information which gives details of the procedures which would be put in place to deal with issues raised by local residents and engagement with the community, by means of public meetings for local residents, with police and fire representatives to attend.

The Planning Statement also points to other sites with existing accommodation of this type in Birmingham and Wakefield, where discussions with local police show that criminal activity has not increased as a result of the hostel being in use. This statement is reiterated in the submitted management plan.

The supporting information confirms that the proposed hostel would be subject to a management regime and permanent staffing on-site and engagement with local police, fire authorities and community groups to deal with any community issues. On the basis that these parameters are implemented by the applicant, then this should

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provide sufficient safeguards to protect the amenities of local residents and maintain community cohesion in the surrounding area.

The Council's Police Liaison Officer in his original comments on the application did not raise any concerns about the principle of the proposed use or in regards to a potential increase in crime or anti-social activity in the local area, but recognised that there is concern in the local community. Some of the additional information provided responds to his comments about community engagement and management of the site and further comments from the Police Liaison Officer will be reported at the meeting.

Provided that the procedures in the Management & Operations Plan are put in place, particularly in relation to security, then it is reasonable to assume that the proposal would not cause undue harm or detriment to the amenities of local community, having regard for the relevant saved Policies GD5 and E24.

A public consultation event has been carried out during the application process, on behalf of the applicant, which has sought to engage with the local community and provide information and assurance about the nature and operation of the proposed use. This generated a substantial response to the applicant from residents, which is comparable with the comments made to the application process. This information has been submitted in support of the application.

On balance, the impacts on residents amenity and community safety arising from the hostel use would not in my view be more harmful than the permitted use of the site for student accommodation and accordingly the proposal meets the requirements of both saved Policies GD5 and E24 in the City of Derby Local Plan Review (CDLPR).

7.3. Traffic Impacts and Parking

There is an existing car park and access road within the site, which served the previous student accommodation and has 49 car parking spaces. There are no plans to alter the parking and access arrangement for the proposed hostel use, although it is intended that only members of staff on site would use the car park. Since the occupants of the hostel would not have access to a car, there would be a lower traffic generation resulting from the proposed use. Having regard for the absence of car ownership by the intended occupants, there are unlikely to be any undue traffic impacts on the local road network. The highways impacts on the local road network are therefore likely to be much reduced from the occupation by students, who are generally more likely to have a car. It is noted that the Highways Officer has not raised any concerns in regard to the traffic or highway safety implications of the proposed use and is only seeking additional cycle parking to be provided on the site. This can be appropriately provided via a suitable condition.

The site is located in a highly accessible location in the city, close to the city centre and in proximity to bus and cycle routes on Uttoxeter New Road. There are pedestrian entrances to the site on both Peet Street and Drewry Lane frontages. The site allows for occupants to walk, cycle and use public transport to the city centre and other local facilities. The proposal is therefore considered to be in a sustainable location, which meets the requirements of Local Plan – Part 1 transport Policy CP23.

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When taking into account the previous use of the site as student accommodation, which is likely to have generated comparable impacts on amenity, in respect to noise, general disturbance and any other anti-social activity, the proposed use of the site for asylum seekers would not, in my opinion and judgement, result in significantly more harmful impacts on the amenities of local residents than the permitted use. Whilst there are recognised to be concerns among local residents about the types of occupants to be housed in the proposed hostel, the fact that they may be asylum seekers is not in itself a material planning consideration, which can be used to determine this application. The proposed increase in the potential number of occupants by 45 individuals is not considered to be a significant rise and has been assessed against the accommodation space available to be acceptable in terms of the intended living environment.

Overall, the proposed use would constitute a 'sustainable form of development' as defined by the NPPF and provide for a satisfactory living environment for the occupants of the hostel and not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of the local community. The change in the type of residential use on the site from student flats to a short stay hostel is considered to accord with the relevant Derby City Local Plan - Part 1 Policies CP1a), CP2, CP3 and CP7 (Affordable and Specialist Housing) and with the amenity and community safety requirements in saved policies GD5, E24 and H13 of the adopted City of Derby Local Plan Review.

8. Recommended decision and summary of reasons:**8.1. Recommendation:**

To grant planning permission with conditions.

8.2. Summary of reasons:

The proposed sui generis hostel use is an appropriate form of residential use in this sustainable and accessible location, close to the city centre. It is acceptable in terms of impacts on highway safety and residential amenity and the proposed form of residential use would not result in significant harm to community safety or social cohesion in the local area.

8.3. Conditions:

1. Standard condition (3 year time limit)
2. Standard condition (specified approved plans)
3. Provision for cycle storage to be made on site in accordance with details to be agreed and implemented.
4. Details of a scheme of security measures and any boundary treatment on the site to be agreed and implemented.
5. To restrict the number of occupants to no more than 225.

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Application**

8.4. Reasons:

1. In accordance with relevant Town and Country Legislation.
2. For the avoidance of doubt.
3. To promote cycling and sustainable forms of transport
4. In interests of protecting community safety and residential amenity
5. In interests of providing a high quality living environment and safeguarding residential amenity.

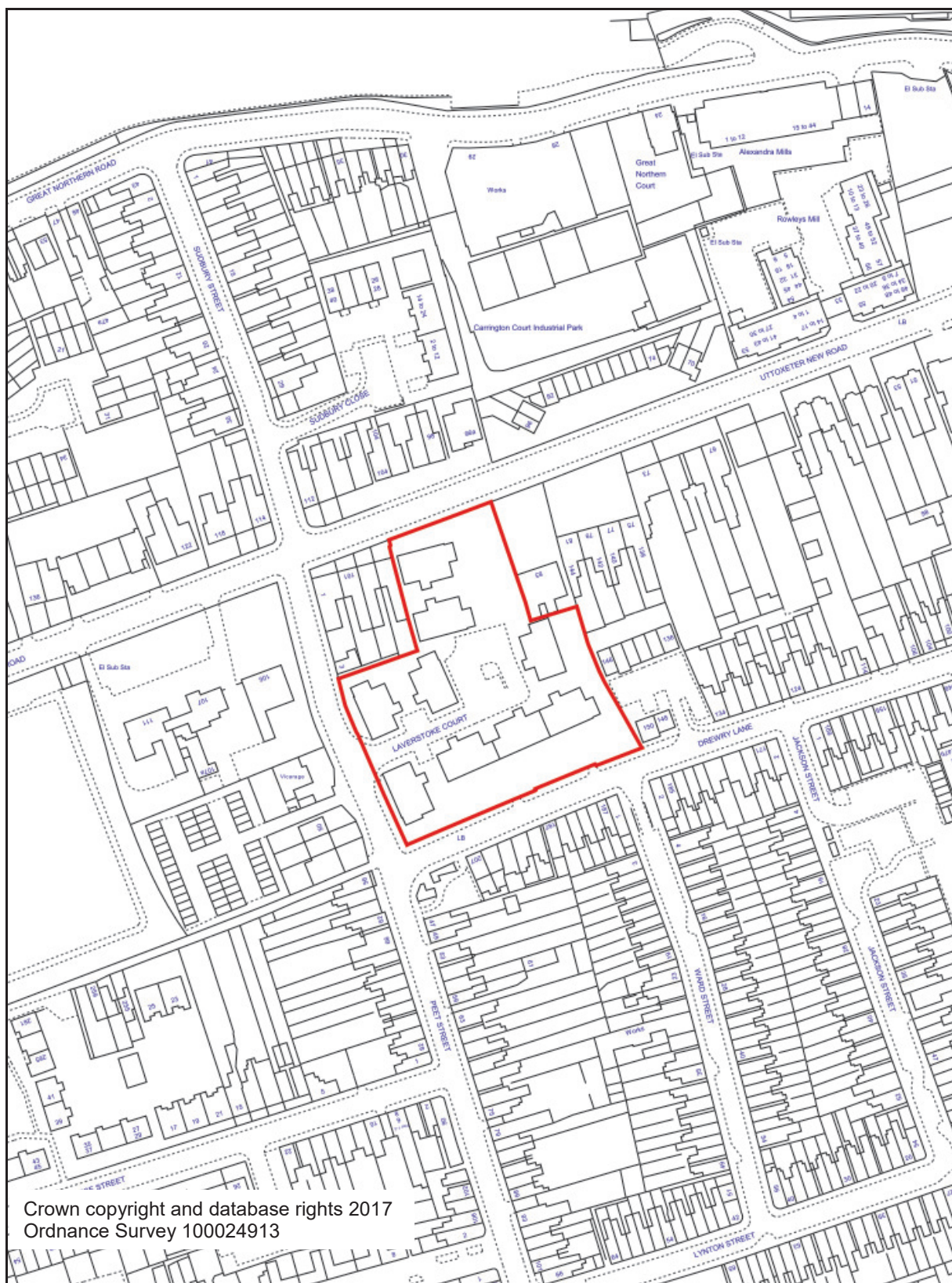
8.5. Application timescale:

The target date for determination expired on the 2 August and an extension of time has been agreed.

Committee Report Item No: 2

Application No: DER/05/17/00698

Type: Full Planning Application



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Ordnance Survey 100024913

APPENDIX 8

**3no. letters from Director of Health and Care,
Staffordshire County Council – November
2022.**



Ann Smith
Deputy Director, Resettlement,
Asylum Support & Integration
Home Office

Sent via email to
Ann.Smith13@homeoffice.gov.uk

Dr Richard Harling
Director of Health & Care
Staffordshire County Council
No 1 Staffordshire Place
Stafford
ST16 2LP

Direct Dial: 01785 278700
Email: Richard.harling@staffordshire.gov.uk
Postal Address:
Staffordshire Place 2, Stafford, ST16 2DH

18th November 2022

Dear Ann

Re: Health and well-being risks associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire

We spoke to your colleagues Paul Bilbao and Chris Hennigan yesterday about a range of health and well-being risks associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire. We would like to thank them for their time, and we agreed to follow up with a written summary of our concerns and the actions required from the Home Office and its contractors.

There are currently 4 hotels being used for dispersal of asylum seekers in Staffordshire. Three of these are 'contingency hotels' and the fourth is 'spot purchased'. There have been around 600 arrivals in total, many in the last 2 weeks, and many with significant health needs including communicable diseases.

Current management arrangements have created significant risks for the asylum seekers themselves and for local residents. Local agencies have responded as quickly and effectively as we can to mitigate these, however the Home Office needs to urgently review these arrangements in order to avoid harm.

Our concerns include:

1. **Consultation and notice.** Local agencies are not consulted about the location of 'contingency hotels' and are given very limited notice when they open. This means that the facilities are often poorly sited and that we have limited opportunities to put in place the local response, for example access to healthcare. The 'spot purchased' hotel was opened with no notice at all: on 10 November 2022 around 25 asylum seekers arrived at the Hatherton hotel in South Staffordshire, since then a further 80 asylum seekers have arrived.
2. **Welfare of residents.** There has been limited consideration of the welfare of residents. At the 'spot-purchased' hotel in particular when asylum seekers arrived

there was no manager on site, no kitchen or cooking facilities, and no-one available to supervise them.

3. **Information about arrivals.** Local agencies have very limited information about arrivals: where they have been, which other facilities they have passed through and when. This is especially concerning when we are trying to manage communicable diseases: national protocols require prophylactic vaccination or antibiotics for people who have been in contact with cases, but with no information about where and when contact has occurred these are very difficult to implement.
4. **Management of health needs.** The local NHS has been given some resources for management of asylum seekers at 'contingency hotels', including GP registration and a health check. However, with limited notice of when they open there is little time to prepare the healthcare response. Also, many individuals have arrived with urgent healthcare needs, including communicable diseases. These require assessment and treatment on site both for the benefit of the individuals, and to avoid contagion to the wider community. Additional resources are required to establish comprehensive health services for these facilities. The local NHS has received no resources for management of asylum seekers at the 'spot-purchased' hotel. NHS colleagues have been offering support however this is creating considerable pressures on health services, which compromises the healthcare available to local residents.
5. **Communicable diseases.** As above, many of the asylum seekers have arrived with communicable diseases including one case of diphtheria. There appears to be no systematic screening on entry – or if there is, then local agencies cannot access any information about who has been screened or the results. In addition, it would appear that some people have been dispersed to asylum seeker facilities around the country even when site operators have known that they have a communicable disease – which has led to the spread of infection.

The immediate actions required from the Home Office and its contractors include:

- A. Local agencies must be consulted about the location of all asylum seeker accommodation in order to support determination of appropriate facilities. Then we must be given at least 2 weeks' notice before they open so that we can prepare the local response.
- B. All asylum seeker accommodation must offer minimum standards of environment and personnel on site to be able to safeguard the welfare of asylum seekers and allow supervision to protect the wider community if necessary. Staff should be trained to be able to manage this group of people effectively.
- C. Local agencies must be given a minimum data set about each asylum seeker so that we can identify health and well-being needs, and so that we can trace their journey through the various facilities and work out who they have been in contact with in the event they are a case or contact of communicable disease.



- D. The NHS must be properly resourced to provide healthcare to asylum seekers. This includes funding for a comprehensive on-site response both at 'contingency hotels' and 'spot-purchased' hotels.

- E. There should be systemic screening for a range of communicable disease on entry, with data about coverage and results available to local agencies. Asylum seekers should not be dispersed when contagious. There should be clear accountability within the Home Office and its operators related to prevention and management of communicable diseases so that if harm arises as a result of action or inaction then the individuals responsible can be held to account.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Harling".

Dr Richard Harling MBE
Director of Health & Care



Ms Abi Tierney
 Director General, UK Visas and
 Immigration
 Home Office

Sent via email to
 abi.tierney@homeoffice.gov.uk

Dr Richard Harling
 Director of Health & Care
 Staffordshire County Council
 No 1 Staffordshire Place
 Stafford
 ST16 2LP

Direct Dial: 01785 278700
 Email: richard.harling@staffordshire.gov.uk
 Postal Address:
 Staffordshire Place 2, Stafford, ST16 2DH

28th November 2022

Dear Ms Tierney

Re: Risks associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire

I wrote to Ann Smith at the Home Office on 18th November to highlight a range of health and well-being issues associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire (attached). I have not yet had a formal response.

These and other issues were deemed sufficiently serious that on 22 November the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Resilience Forum held a Strategic Assessment Meeting (SAM) and on 25 November convened a Co-ordinating Group (SCG) to consider the multi-agency response. The Home Office attended the SAM and took some actions but did not attend the SCG and have not reported back to local agencies.

There are now 6 hotels being used for dispersal of asylum seekers in Staffordshire and a further 2 in Stoke on Trent. Six of these are 'contingency' hotels and two are 'spot purchased'. There have been around 800 arrivals in total, many with significant health needs including communicable diseases.

Sub-optimal management by the Home Office and its contractors has created significant risks for the asylum seekers and for our residents. Local agencies have responded as quickly and effectively as we can to mitigate these, however the Home Office needs to urgently review procedures in order to avoid harm.

The immediate actions required from the Home Office include:


- A. **Consultation and notice.** Local agencies must be consulted about the location of all asylum seeker accommodation in order to support determination of appropriate facilities. The potential for community tensions and economic disruption must be built into the risk assessment when choosing sites. We must be given at least 2 weeks' notice before they open so that we can prepare the local response.
- B. **Welfare of residents.** All asylum seeker accommodation must offer minimum standards in the environment and personnel on site in order to safeguard the

welfare of asylum seekers and allow supervision to protect the wider community if necessary. Arrangements for managing absconders must be clarified.

- C. **Information about arrivals.** Local agencies must be given a minimum data set about each asylum seeker so that we can identify any welfare and health needs, and so that we can trace their journey through the various facilities and determine contacts in the event of cases of communicable disease.
- D. **Management of health needs.** The NHS must be properly resourced to provide healthcare to asylum seekers. 'Spot purchased' hotels should be converted to 'contingency' with associated funding or otherwise closed. Funding for healthcare provision at contingency hotels should be increased to reflect the serious health needs of the asylum seeker population, including communicable diseases.
- E. **Communicable diseases.** There should be systemic screening for a range of communicable diseases on entry, with coverage and results available to local agencies. Asylum seekers should not be dispersed when contagious. There should be clear accountability within the Home Office and its operators related to prevention and management of communicable diseases so that if harm arises as a result of action or inaction then the individuals responsible can be held to account. We note that one individual has already died from diphtheria.

We would welcome your early implementation of these actions and the attendance of the Home Office at future SCGs so that we can share information about the local situation and address other issues as they arise.

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Harling MBE
Director of Health & Care



Mr Nick Jariwalla
Asylum Support
Home Office

Sent via email to
asylumsupportbronzecommand@
homeoffice.gov.uk

Dr Richard Harling
Director of Health & Care
Staffordshire County Council
No 1 Staffordshire Place
Stafford
ST16 2LP

Direct Dial: 01785 278700
Email: richard.harling@staffordshire.gov.uk
Postal Address:
Staffordshire Place 2, Stafford, ST16 2DH

30th November 2022

Dear Mr Jariwalla

Re: Risks associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire

I wrote to Ann Smith at the Home Office on 18th November to highlight a range of health and well-being issues associated with asylum seeker hotels in Staffordshire (attached). I have not yet had a formal response.

These and other issues were deemed sufficiently serious that on 22 November the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Resilience Forum held a Strategic Assessment Meeting (SAM) and on 25 November convened a Co-ordinating Group (SCG) to consider the multi-agency response. The Home Office attended the SAM and took some actions but did not attend the SCG and have not reported back to local agencies.

There are now 6 hotels being used for dispersal of asylum seekers in Staffordshire and a further 2 in Stoke on Trent. Six of these are 'contingency' hotels and two are 'spot purchased'. There have been around 800 arrivals in total, many with significant health needs including communicable diseases.

Sub-optimal management by the Home Office and its contractors has created significant risks for the asylum seekers and for our residents. Local agencies have responded as quickly and effectively as we can to mitigate these, however the Home Office needs to urgently review procedures in order to avoid harm.

The immediate actions required from the Home Office include:


- A. **Consultation and notice.** Local agencies must be consulted about the location of all asylum seeker accommodation in order to support determination of appropriate facilities. The potential for community tensions and economic disruption must be built into the risk assessment when choosing sites. We must be given at least 2 weeks' notice before they open so that we can prepare the local response.
- B. **Welfare of residents.** All asylum seeker accommodation must offer minimum standards in the environment and personnel on site in order to safeguard the

welfare of asylum seekers and allow supervision to protect the wider community if necessary. Arrangements for managing absconders must be clarified.

- C. **Information about arrivals.** Local agencies must be given a minimum data set about each asylum seeker so that we can identify any welfare and health needs, and so that we can trace their journey through the various facilities and determine contacts in the event of cases of communicable disease.
- D. **Management of health needs.** The NHS must be properly resourced to provide healthcare to asylum seekers. 'Spot purchased' hotels should be converted to 'contingency' with associated funding or otherwise closed. Funding for healthcare provision at contingency hotels should be increased to reflect the serious health needs of the asylum seeker population, including communicable diseases.
- E. **Communicable diseases.** There should be systemic screening for a range of communicable diseases on entry, with coverage and results available to local agencies. Asylum seekers should not be dispersed when contagious. There should be clear accountability within the Home Office and its operators related to prevention and management of communicable diseases so that if harm arises as a result of action or inaction then the individuals responsible can be held to account. We note that one individual has already died from diphtheria.

We would welcome your early implementation of these actions and the attendance of the Home Office at future SCGs so that we can share information about the local situation and address other issues as they arise.

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Harling MBE
Director of Health & Care

APPENDIX 9

**Consultee response from Director of Children
and Families, Staffordshire County Council
13 July 22**

[REDACTED]
Director for Children and Families

Development Manager
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
ST16 3AQ

Staffordshire County Council
2 Staffordshire Place
Tipping Street
Stafford, ST16 2DH

Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Your Ref:

Date: 13 July 2022

Dear Sir

**Stafford Borough Council Planning Application 22/35765/FUL:
Former University Halls of Residence Stafford Education and Enterprise
Park Weston Road Stafford Staffordshire ST18 0AB**

**Change of use from student accommodation to asylum seeker
accommodation**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning application which I do in my capacity as Interim Director for Children and Families which encompasses the leadership of resettlement.

The comments contained in this letter are in addition to the responses already provided by Staffordshire County Council in its capacities as Highway Authority, Education Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority.

I consider that the impacts of the proposed development on the local area, community and services are likely to be considerable and detailed mitigation measures need to be in place to address and control those impacts from the outset and on the assumption that the change of use may in due course become permanent. Potential impacts of the proposed development if not sufficiently controlled/mitigated relate in particular to:

- Based on the information so far provided it is concluded, as previously indicated, there would be no impact on local school places in respect of primary or secondary education. This has been determined based on the Design and Access Statement which states that education provision is being provided on-site by Serco for families being accommodated in the IA facilities and that the children are not permitted to attend school. This needs to be secured by a planning obligation. However, there is no specific mention of early years or post 16 education within the planning application so if these are not provided on site there will be an increased demand for local services. Further information should be sought from the applicant;

- It has now been confirmed by the applicant that in respect of health care services none will be provided on site to the DA residents thereby increasing demand on local services. Asylum seekers are likely to have more challenging health needs than students due to such factors as trauma they may have experienced, poorer health generally and needing support such as vaccinations as well as acute care. We ask that you confirm with local health providers what impacts need to be mitigated;
- Public concerns that the accommodation is too close to schools and residential areas relating to safety of the community. Public concerns also about lack of facilities for the asylum seekers due to the location of the accommodation being outside of the town centre. The nature of the self-containment of the development may provide a barrier to integration. These are material planning considerations that should be carefully considered in the decision-making process.

If granted, any planning permission must provide for the following mitigation either by planning condition or planning obligation in order to 'make good' the assumptions made in the planning application documents:

- The temporary use of the premises until 2029.
- All proposed internal building alterations to be completed in accordance with the approved plans before occupation for the proposed use;
- Provision of outdoor recreational area before occupation for the proposed use;
- Before commencement of the use, submission for approval (and subsequent approval) of a Site Management Plan;
- Site Management Plan to contain/require:
 - No accommodation of families in the DA block.
 - No sharing of clusters by different families.
 - Segregation of accommodation for families from accommodation for single adults and of accommodation for single males from accommodation for single females.
 - Defined management structure for the IA and DA and Site Management Plan to include named managers/officers and roles and staffing numbers.
 - Provisions for the review, updating and (where necessary) the amendment of the Site Management Plan.
 - The establishment of a "Forum" to enable and provide for regular meetings with partner organisations such as NHS, Migrant Help, Police, Fire Service, District Council and County Council as well as the local community and faith groups to ensure effective and appropriate operation of the accommodation and community cohesion and harmony.
 - Procedures to ensure cleaning and maintenance of the accommodation to a high standard.
 - 24 hours a day staffing and 24-hour access to a telephone-based interpreter service.
 - Advise to occupants on conduct both within and outside the accommodation provided.

Require occupants to obtain approval from Serco/Home Office before leaving the accommodation for more than 24 hours.

Provide for on-site recreational, instructional and informative activities for all the occupants at an appropriate level and frequency including adult educational programmes.

Comprehensive Health and Safety processes, systems and controls including training to staff and subject to regular review.

- Compliance at all times with the approved Site Management Plan;
- Maximum bedspace and occupant numbers;
- Provision of adequate car parking spaces and bicycle storage;
- Provision of a shuttle bus service for residents to travel to and from nearby urban centres and all necessary appointments as well as availability of transport for ad hoc purposes as necessary on request;
- Provision of a health care provider on site for IA residents so local services will only be required in the event of a medical emergency;
- Provision of education to children residing at the site including early years, primary, secondary and post 16 teaching.
- Implementation of Covid 19 and other infectious diseases management systems including to provide for testing and vaccinations.

If it is proposed to grant the planning permission it is requested that Staffordshire County Council is consulted upon and if appropriate made a party to any related s106 planning obligation.

In conclusion therefore, and based on careful consideration of the information so far provided by the applicant as measured against what can amount to material planning considerations, this authority does not have any objection in principle to the proposal. However, it has to be said that there are a number of important factors which I have set out in my letter which give rise to very great concern about the development proceeding.

I hope that the above comments are useful and if you require any further clarification please let me know.

The County Council reserve the right to comment further in the event that additional information relevant to the application becomes available.

Yours faithfully



Director for Children and Families

APPENDIX 10

Application correspondence regarding health provision.

Our Ref: SBC/22/35765/FUL

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent CCGs' Headquarters

Date: 24/05/2022

First Floor
Staffordshire Place 2
Stafford
ST16 2LP

LPA	Stafford Borough Council
App Ref	22/35765/FUL
Development	Change of use from student accommodation to asylum seeker accommodation
Address	Former University Halls of Residence, Stafford Education and Enterprise Park, Weston Road, Stafford
Applicant	Mr M Atkinson
Case Officer	Vanessa Blake
e-mail	vblake@staffordbc.gov.uk

Dear Vanessa,

Thank you for providing the CCGs with the opportunity to comment on this application. This response is given purely from the perspective of the primary care estates function.

Strategic Planning and decision-taking:

Section 8 of the NPPF 'Promoting healthy and safe communities' makes clear that policies and decisions associated with development should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.

At paragraph 93 b) it is also made clear that policies and decisions should *"take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community."*

In determining applications for development, the CCG wishes to work with local planning authorities and create awareness of local strategies to improve health and I would draw your attention to the advent of primary care networks (PCN). In brief the model seeks to ensure equality of service for patients by ensuring that all patients within England are covered by a PCN, which should help to integrate primary care with secondary and community services. Since 2019 General practices have been organising themselves into local networks to provide care at this greater scale.

The NHS Long Term Plan supports a vision of care delivered at system, place and neighbourhood level and supports NHS organisations to have more of a proactive focus on improving population health.

The submission detail and local infrastructure:

The site is located within the Stafford Central primary care network (PCN) with the nearest primary care premises being a branch practice (Beaconside Health Centre) of Weeping Cross Health Centre, which currently has a shortage of gross internal area (GIA) and clinical rooms to serve the current patient population (approximately 20,797 patients across the main practice and 2 branches).

The site falls outside of the catchment of the remaining practices within this PCN with the next nearest premises on foot or vehicle being Wolverhampton Road Surgery (1.7miles). The nearest

acute services are approximately 14.4 miles from the site. The submission suggests transportation would be arranged for occupants to see healthcare providers, for example, does this offer extend to all occupants within the dispersed accommodation on an ad-hoc basis?

The submission states that the initial accommodation facilities *'are the only part of the site where families stay and the support services they will need (education and health) during their short stay within the facility, typically four weeks, are delivered independently and therefore do not require any support from the Local Authority infrastructure'*. It is requested that further clarity should be sought in respect of the nature of this independent support and how this may be extended to the dispersed accommodation to be provided on site thereby allowing an understanding of what additional demand will arise from this facility, which is set to operate until 31st August 2029.

Yours sincerely

Philip Murphy
Planning and Development Lead
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent CCGs

Victoria Barraclough

From: Vanessa Blake
Sent: 29 June 2022 10:02
To: planning SBC
Subject: 22/35765/FUL - upload

From: Mark Jackson/GBR <mark.jackson@cushwake.com>
Sent: 10 June 2022 12:06
To: Vanessa Blake <vblake@staffordbc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 22/35765/FUL - Former University Halls Of Residence, Weston Road

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Vanessa,

I hope you're well.

Referring to comments and questions raised by the CCG, I confirm the proposed change of use includes floorspace for the provision of health care for all 171 Initial Accommodation (IA) residents. It will be for the health authority to determine if this floorspace is used, or if facilities are provided elsewhere.

Residents in dispersed accommodation will signposted to appropriate GP provision. The existing use provided accommodation for 556 student residents who also required appropriate GP provision. This application reduces the overall requirement by 246 to only 310 people. Thus the proposed development results in a net reduced impact on health services and also provides on site floorspace for health care.

Please give me a call if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Mark Jackson MRTPI
Partner, Planning, Development & Strategic Advisory

Direct: +44 (0)121 697 7227
Mobile: 07921 499854
mark.jackson@cushwake.com

Midlands
1 Colmore Square, Birmingham, B4 6AJ, UK



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You may have received my email at a time that does not match your typical working hours. We work flexibly at Cushman & Wakefield, and many people are part of global teams; please do not feel obliged to respond at a time that's inconvenient for you.

Jayne Ackroyd

Subject: FW: 22/35765/FUL

From: Philip Murphy (QNC) SSOT ICB <
Sent: 04 July 2022 09:58
To: Vanessa Blake <vblake@staffordbc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: ***EXTERNAL*** RE: 22/35765/FUL reconsultation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Council. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Vanessa,

I have spoken with the senior commissioning manager about this particular case and there is certainly agreement that any position, which seeks to use the former student use as a fallback would be misguided a) because there is no existing demand/pressure from this premises for local primary care services and b) the access rate to such care for the proposed use will not be comparable with that resulting from student accommodation i.e. the demand will be far more intensive for the proposed use. Therefore the position that there would be a 'net reduction' for the impact on health services is not a statement, which you should attribute any material weight to in your recommendation.

There will be a demand upon primary healthcare to ensure a health assessment (every person arriving in initial accommodation is offered a health assessment and appropriate referrals are made. Referrals can include to ante-natal and post-natal care, for active health problems, mental health services, child health) and appropriate triage and care/treatment for those presenting with communicable diseases or minor illness and/or more complex health issues. Details of funding for the provision of these health assessments for 2022-23 is currently awaited.

What is requested in this case is clarity that the physical space to be provided on site for the provision of healthcare will be suitable for use and provide the following:

- The space needs to have a fit out that would enable easy cleaning i.e. preferably a floor which is able to be mopped
- Windows would need to be occluded either with a washable blind or sprayed/covered glass
- A sink is required
- The space needs to be large enough to contain a desk, couch, two chairs, storage

Clarity on the standard of accommodation in this regard should be provided or conditioned for approval to ensure a safe and functional space for this purpose to serve the accommodation.

Kind Regards

Phil