



**Background Papers:**

The following papers are available for inspection by contacting the above officer(s).

History and Policy referred to in the report

## The Site

The site comprises a detached Victorian villa situated on the south side of Alexandra Road, currently used as a residential care home. There are modern flat developments to either side of the application site with garage courts to the rear of the plots.

## Proposal

Erection of a single storey supported living suite for 3 persons and staff sleep-over accommodation.

## History

S/08338 Change of use to guest house and hotel. Granted 02/05/1978.

S/24775 Change of use to nursing home. Granted 04/09/1985.

94/0437/N Change of use from nursing home to residential care home for people with learning difficulties. Granted 28/09/1994.

S/2009/1181 Erection of single storey supported living suite for 4 persons and staff sleep-over accommodation. Refused 28/01/2011.

## Consultations

*Environmental and Technical Services* – No objection subject to piling condition.

*Highways Development Control* – There are no objections to the proposal as there are no highway safety implications.

## Neighbour Representations

Last date for replies: 13 May 2011

Received: Letters of objection received from Flat 4, 50 Alexandra Road raising the following concerns:

- Anti-social behaviour already experienced from this site and will worsen if consent granted. Noise and disturbance, damage to fencing, little peace and quiet in adjacent gardens.
- Back land developments and infill rear garden spaces will have significant detrimental effects on amenities of local residents and set a precedent for further back land schemes which would be detrimental to the character of the area.
- Accessibility for emergency vehicles
- Insufficient parking already, more residents and staff would mean need for more spaces.
- States that DAS is incorrect as it suggests that in a neighbour consultation exercise the scheme was well-received by local residents.

Letter from property at rear (32 Hawkshead Street) stating no objection providing a high fence or extended wall is built to prevent overlooking into his garden. Wall is in poor

state of repair and needs renovation – concerned may fall down during construction works.

## Policy

The application site is situated in an area allocated as Primarily Residential on the Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan.

AD2	Ensuring Choice of Travel
CS3	Development Principles
DQ1	Design
DQ3	Trees and Development
H10	Development in Primarily Residential Areas
SPG	New Housing Development

## Comments

Main issues – impact of the development on residential amenity and character of the area.

The proposal is seeking consent for the erection of a single storey annex building in the rear garden of the existing building. The existing home can accommodate up to 10 residents and has care workers resident on site. This proposal is for 3 self-contained living suites with staff accommodation as an annex to the existing care home. The suites will provide accommodation / support packages offering residents the opportunity to live independently within a supporting community, creating a 'step down' opportunity giving tenants the experience of living independently with a view to them moving on to their own supported living accommodation elsewhere. This approach allows for this transition to occur more successfully. The proposal is specifically designed for adults with learning difficulties and will operate ancillary to the existing care home, providing an additional stage in the transition from fully supported accommodation.

This site has been the subject of a previous scheme for 4 self-contained care suites in the rear garden area (S/2009/1181). The application was refused on the basis of having a detrimental impact on residential amenity for both existing and proposed residents and adjacent neighbours by reason of siting and arrangement of the proposed suites; and that the form of development was alien to the character of the area and which would not offer any flexibility for future use.

This proposal is for a reduced scheme, with only 3 care suites proposed and a significantly different layout and design of the building in order to avoid concerns raised with the previous scheme.

The applicant was asked why the additional accommodation could not be provided as an extension to the existing building rather than a separate building. The applicant's agent has confirmed that an extension was initially considered but concerns were raised that it could lead to a loss of privacy or create an overbearing situation to adjoining properties. The separate building also allows the existing amenity space at the site to be protected. Furthermore, there is benefit in the supported living accommodation being separate as it assists residents in feeling physically separate and therefore more independent from the fully supported units within the main building.

## **Residential Amenity**

Policies CS3, DQ1 and H10 require proposals for development to ensure they do not have a significant detrimental impact on residential amenity in terms of overlooking, overshadowing and a poor outlook.

The layout of the building is a T-shape with all main living areas / kitchenettes and bedrooms having a reasonable outlook onto the communal garden / patio areas. The only room with a limited outlook is the 'staff sleepover' bedroom which looks onto the 2m high boundary wall at a 1m distance. However, as this room is for staff to sleep over between 10pm and 6am the level of outlook for this room is acceptable. The accommodation will provide a reasonable quality of accommodation and is appropriate in terms of amenity for proposed occupants.

The proposal will reduce the level of existing amenity space serving the care home but by less than the previous scheme which has been reduced in scale by almost 40 sq m in order to address this issue. The existing care home will retain an area of usable private amenity space to the rear of the building which residents can utilise of approximately 176 sq m which meets the 15 sq m per resident recommended by Supplementary Planning Guidance New Housing Development.

The proposed building is a sufficient distance from ground floor windows to maintain a reasonable outlook for existing residents. The proposed care suite annex building will have additional patio and garden areas for use by residents and the overall level of amenity space for the site is considered acceptable. The issue of character of the area is dealt with below.

In terms of the impact on existing neighbours, 3 additional residents and the associated sleep over staff cover is not considered to be a significant addition to the operation of the premises in terms of noise and disturbance. The care suites are small one bedroom units and whilst the building is sited at the rear of the plot within the existing garden area, both plots either side of the site are modern flat developments with large garage courts to the rear. The areas immediately adjacent to the care suite building in adjacent plots are therefore not usable amenity space and as such the proposal cannot be considered to have a significant detrimental effect on amenity in this respect. Furthermore, there is no vehicular access to the proposed annex building and so the scheme will not generate any additional traffic to the rear of the building.

On the basis that this proposal represents a much reduced scheme to the earlier refused proposal for this site and has a different layout and design, the application is considered to comply with policy in terms of impact on residential amenity.

Concerns were raised in terms of potential access for emergency vehicles (especially fire appliances) given the position of the building at the rear of the site. The agent has confirmed that there are a number of options available to solve this problem including extended hose facilities, specific fire risk assessments, position of a hydrant local to the new building or the installation of a sprinkler system. It is undecided at this stage which option the applicant will choose but they have confirmed that there is no intention to use neighbour's driveways to access the rear building in an emergency.

## **Design and character of the area**

It is accepted that backland residential development is not a characteristic of Alexandra Road or Hawkshead Street. However, there are garage courts serving the existing flats

either side of the site which are situated to the rear of the plots, in the same position as the building proposed here. The hardsurfacing of the rear sections of plots in this area is commonplace and is therefore a basis for allowing a small scale building in the rear of the existing plot. In terms of objections received relating to setting a precedent for future backland developments elsewhere close to the site, each proposal would be considered on its individual merits, specific to that site and its surroundings, and as such this proposal alone cannot be considered as setting a precedent for future development.

The proposed building is single storey and has a 2.7m eaves height and maximum ridge height of 4.3 metres. The design is simple using traditional facing and roofing materials, with windows of appropriate scale and proportion to the building. The roof of the building is hipped away from the surrounding three boundaries which help to reduce the impact to neighbours in terms of the building's bulk and visual prominence. The rear elevation of the proposed building is very close to the rear boundary of the site, but given the significant level of tree planting and substantial length of the rear garden of 32 Hawkshead Street, this is considered to be acceptable and will not cause harm to visual or residential amenity. The rear boundary wall is of poor quality and as such a new boundary treatment can be required by condition. The limited scale of this proposal is appropriate for this site and will make a positive contribution to its surroundings in accordance with policy DQ1.

### **Trees**

Policy DQ3 requires the planting of 1 new tree on the site per 50 sq m of new floorspace. In this case, the proposed building of 168 sq m requires 3 new trees to be planted on the site. The amended site plan shows three new trees to be planted and the proposal therefore complies with policy DQ3.

In terms of existing trees at the site, there are a number of significant trees outside the boundary in neighbouring properties. These trees are mature and offer a significant degree of screening and help to give the area its character. The proposal will not require the removal of any of these existing trees and will help to screen the building from surrounding properties.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed scheme is smaller than that previously refused and given the proximity and position of adjacent garage courts serving the flats at 46 and 50 Alexandra Road, is considered appropriate in this backland position. The proposal will offer a valuable facility giving residents the opportunity to live with significant independence whilst also maintaining immediate support on site. The scheme offers a reasonable standard of accommodation for residents and reasonable levels of amenity space are provided for existing and proposed residents. The building is of an appropriate scale and proportion to the site, has a simple design, and is a sufficient distance from the existing building to maintain reasonable outlook and levels of amenity for existing occupants, compliant with policies H10 and DQ1. The appropriate level of tree planting is proposed in accordance with policy DQ3 and the application is therefore recommended for approval.

### **Conditions**

1. T-1 Full Planning Permission Time Limit
2. M-2 Materials (sample)
3. M8 Boundary Treatment

4. L-4 Landscape Implementation
5. The annex building hereby approved shall only be occupied in association with or for purposes ancillary to the residential care home use of the existing property at 48 Alexandra Road and shall not be occupied, sold off or let separately as an independent unit of accommodation.
6. The annex building hereby approved shall be occupied by no more than 3 residents at any one time.
7. X1 Compliance
8. L-2 Method Statement

## **Reasons**

1. RT-1
2. RM-2
3. RM8
4. RL-4
5. To prevent an over-intensive use of the site to prevent harm to the amenities of adjoining residents and to comply with policies CS3 and DQ1 in the Sefton Unitary Development Plan.
6. To prevent an over-intensive use of the site, to prevent harm to the amenities of adjoining residents and to comply with policies CS3 and DQ1 in the Sefton Unitary Development Plan.
7. RX1
8. RL-2

## **Drawing Numbers**

Location plan, 09/1743/200, 201A, 202, 203

# Existing site plan



<b>Sefton Council</b> Department of the <b>Built Environment</b> Jane Gowing Head of Planning Services	S/2011/0501		48 Alexandra Road Southport PR9 9HH OSGR: 334620_417606		Sheets: 4/00	Area: 1238 sqm	<b>Standard Site Plan</b> Scale: 1:2250 Date: 26/5/2011 Drawn By: BERRON	
	© Crown copyright and database rights 2011. Ordnance Survey 100018192 Created by Sefton Council Planning Services using MapInfo Professional		Ward(s): Cambridge Postcode Sector(s): PR9 9 Polling District(s): X5 Parish(es): None Found					



# Proposed site plan

