

SCHEDULE A: Applications with Recommendation

13/0740

Item No: 16

Date of Committee: 15/11/2013

Appn Ref No:
13/0740

Applicant:
Hopscotch Care Ltd

Parish:

Date of Receipt:
27/09/2013

Agent:

Ward:
Currock

Location:

Currock Villa, 71 Currock Road, Carlisle, CA2 4BH

Proposal: Change Of Use Of Vacant Property Into Residential Childrens Home For Up To Five Young People Aged Between 11-18 With One Staff Bedroom

REPORT

Case Officer: Barbara Percival

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 It is recommended that this application is approved with conditions.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- 2.2 Impact of the proposal on the character of the area
- 2.3 Impact of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties
- 2.4 Impact of the proposal on highway safety
- 2.5 Other matters

3. Application Details

The Site

- 3.1 Currock Villa is a substantial mid terrace property located on the eastern side of Currock Road close to its junction with Alton Street. Parking provision for the property and the adjacent Currock Villa Boxing Club is to the rear, accessed via a lane off Alton Street.

The Proposal

- 3.2 This application seeks Full Planning Permission for the change of use of a vacant building, a former youth club, into a residential children's home for up to five young people aged between 11-18 years of age. The submitted drawings illustrate that the lower ground floor would accommodate an office, interview room, teaching/meeting room, laundry and education room. The ground floor would have a living room, dining room, kitchen, larder, en-suite bedroom and w.c. The first floor accommodation would comprise of 4no. en-suite bedrooms and 1no. en-suite staff bedroom.

4. Summary of Representations

- 4.1 This application has been advertised by the direct notification of six neighbouring properties and the posting of a Site Notice. In response, five letters/e-mails of objection, two of which are from the same household, have been received. An e-mail of support has also been received.

- 4.2 The letters/e-mails of objection identifies the following issues:

1. concern about security
2. increase in noise and disturbance
3. impact on highway safety
4. development would increase pressures on existing on-street parking
5. potential for anti-social behaviour
6. de-valuation of adjacent properties
7. inappropriate location for a children's home
8. HMO refused and appeal dismissed within the immediate vicinity
9. inappropriate use in a residential area
10. lack of external amenity space

- 4.3 The e-mail of support identifies the following issues:

1. intended use compliments its previous use as a youth club
2. proximity of the boxing club is an added asset

5. Summary of Consultation Responses

Cumbria County Council - (Econ. Dir. Highways & Transportation): - the application form states that there are four parking spaces. The Cumbria Parking Standards are one space per three staff and one space per three

classrooms so it appears that the four spaces meet this requirement. Parking is a concern as Currock Road is a main distributor road and due to the high density housing, most of which have no 'off-street parking' it is an issue especially at evenings/weekends. In all probability the traffic generation from the proposed use will be less than the previous use, therefore, provided that the four parking spaces referred to are available and accessible 'in curtilage' then there is no issues with the proposal;

Cumbria Constabulary - North Area Community Safety Unit: - no objections to the application.

6. Officer's Report

Assessment

- 6.1 The relevant planning policies against which the application is required to be assessed are Policies CP5, CP6, CP17, H2 and T1 of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2001-2016. The proposals raise the following planning issues:

1. Whether The Principle Of Development Is Acceptable

- 6.2 The application seeks Full Planning Permission for the change of use of Currock Villa, a former youth club, into a residential children's home for up to five young people aged between 11 and 18 years of age and one staff bedroom. The property is located within a Primary Residential Area as identified in the Local Plan, therefore, as such Policy H2 is relevant.
- 6.3 Policy H2 outlines that proposals for new residential development within Primary Residential Areas will be acceptable subject to four criteria. Namely, existing areas of open space and other amenity areas are safeguarded; the proposed development does not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent residential properties; the proposed development complements and enhances existing adjacent residential areas and their amenity; and satisfactory access and appropriate parking requirements can be achieved.
- 6.4 By way of background, dwellinghouses fall within Use Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Use Class C3 categories dwellinghouses as: used by a single person or family; upto six people living together as a single household and receiving care; and groups of people (upto six) living together as a single household.
- 6.5 In light of the foregoing, given that the application seeks permission for a residential use within a Primary Residential Area, the principle of development is acceptable.

2. Impact Of The Proposal On The Character Of The Area

- 6.6 Concerns have been raised by the occupiers of neighbouring properties in respect of whether the use of the premises as a children's home is appropriate within a residential area. Citing concerns about the potential for anti-social behaviour, increase in noise and disturbance and lack of external amenity space.

- 6.7 As Members may be aware, the former use of the premises was that of a youth club. Cumbria Constabulary's Crime Prevention Design Advisor has been consulted and has no objections to the application. The consultation response outlines that although there may have been calls to the Police during its previous use, it cannot be presumed that the proposed use will also generate calls.
- 6.8 The concerns of the occupiers of neighbouring properties are noted; however, given that the proposed use of the premises are for residential purposes, albeit a residential care home, the property is unlikely to have such a significant adverse impact on the streetscene to warrant a refusal of the application.

3. Impact Of The Proposal On The Living Conditions Of The Occupiers Of Neighbouring Properties

- 6.9 The occupiers of neighbouring properties have raised concerns in respect of the potential for the premises to impact on their living conditions through anti-social behaviour, increase in noise and disturbance etc. The objections of the neighbours are acknowledged; however, this is supposition and can not be substantiated as the use has not commenced and as such can not be considered as a material planning consideration.
- 6.10 A judgement has, therefore, to be made as to whether the use of the premises as a residential care home would have a significant impact on the living conditions of the neighbouring residents than its previous use, a youth club.
- 6.11 Reference has also been made to the lack of external amenity space. The submitted Management Plan outlines that the premises would operate on the same basis as a foster home or an adopted family home. In such a context, the premises would have the same external amenity space as other family homes within the immediate vicinity.
- 6.12 In light of the foregoing assessment, the previous use of the premises together with the number of residents proposed, the development is unlikely to give rise to such a significant intensification of use to warrant refusal of the application.

4. Impact Of The Proposal On Highway Safety

- 6.13 Objections have been received in respect of the potential for the proposal to add to the existing pressures for on-street parking provision. The submitted application forms; however, outline that there would be four off-street vehicle parking spaces within the rear yard area together with cycle storage provision.
- 6.14 Cumbria County Council, as Highways Authority, has advised that the Cumbria Parking Standards of one space per three staff and one space per three classrooms have been met. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to impose a

condition ensuring that the parking provision serving the development is available and retained for use at all times.

5. Other Matters

- 6.15 Objectors have drawn attention to a proposal for a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) within the vicinity was refused and the subsequent appeal dismissed (application 05/0312). By way of background, although the premises had six bedrooms, the Delegated Report highlighted that the property was capable of providing accommodation for upto thirteen residents, hence its classification as an HMO.
- 6.16 As outlined earlier in the report, given the proposed number of children and staff who are to be resident at the premises at any one time, the proposal falls within Use Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), therefore, the premises will not be classed as a HMO. Should the situation change i.e. increase in the number of occupants to more than six then a further planning application would be required. Accordingly, as the proposal is not classed as an HMO under planning legislation this issue is not relevant in consideration of the proposal.
- 6.17 Loss of value of existing properties within the immediate vicinity is not a material planning consideration.

Conclusion

- 6.18 The proposal seeks permission for the use of the premises as a residential children's home within a Primary Residential Area, therefore, the use is compatible under the provisions of the Local Plan. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area or on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. Adequate parking provision can be also be achieved.
- 6.19 In overall terms, the proposal is considered to be compliant under the provisions of the relevant Local Plan policies. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval.

7. Planning History

- 7.1 There is no relevant planning history.

8. Recommendation: Grant Permission

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

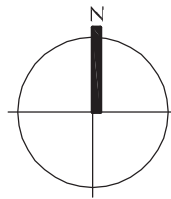
Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The approved documents for this Planning Permission comprise:
1. the submitted planning application form received 13th September 2013;
 2. the Design and Access Statement received 13th September 2013;
 3. the location plan received 13th September 2013 (Drawing Number 11588 - Location);
 4. the block plan received 13th September 2013 (Drawing Number 11588-01);
 5. the existing and proposed floor plans received 29th October 2013 (Drawing Number 11588-10A;)
 6. the Currock Villa Management Plan received 29th October 2013;
 7. the Notice of Decision; and
 8. any such variation as may subsequently be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To define the permission.

3. The rear parking provision serving the development shall be retained and be capable of use and shall not be removed or altered without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Policy T1 of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2001-2016.



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Project **Currock Villa, 71 Currock Road, Carlisle for Hopscotch Care Limited**

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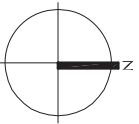
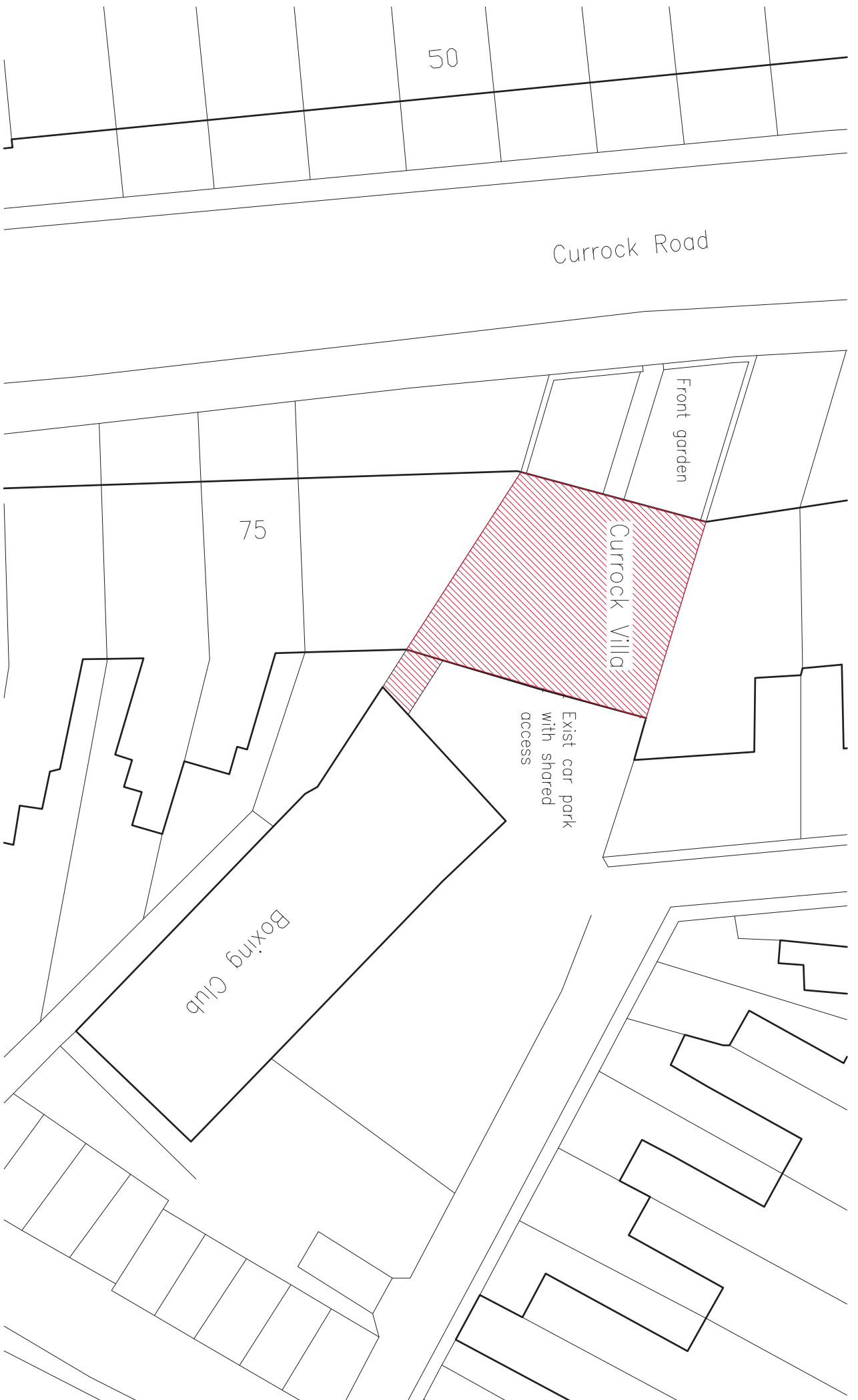
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Project Currock Villa, 71 Currock Road, Carlisle for Hopscotch Care Limited

Drawing Block Plan

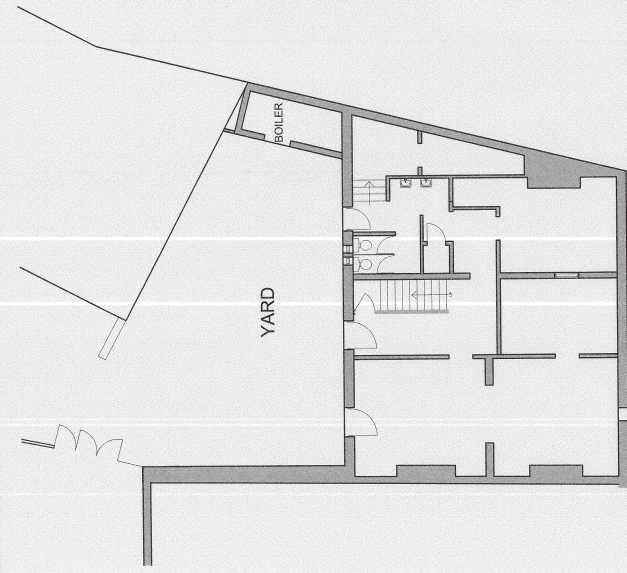
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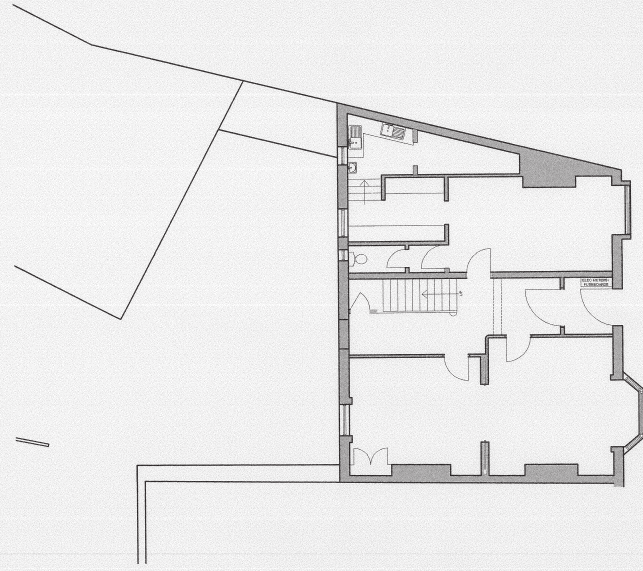
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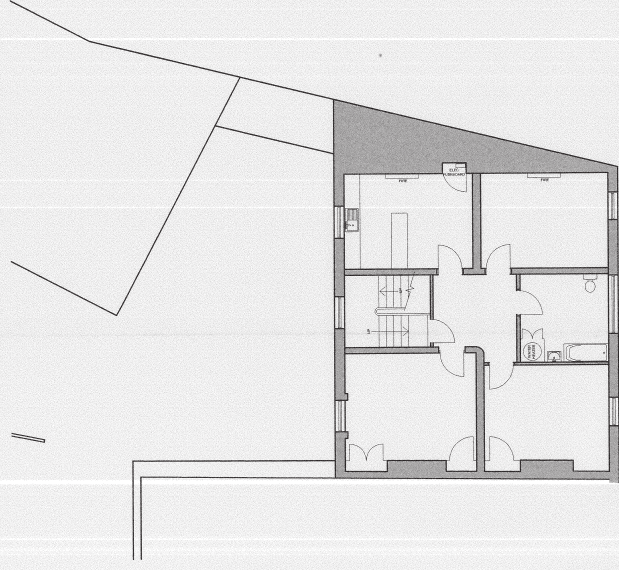
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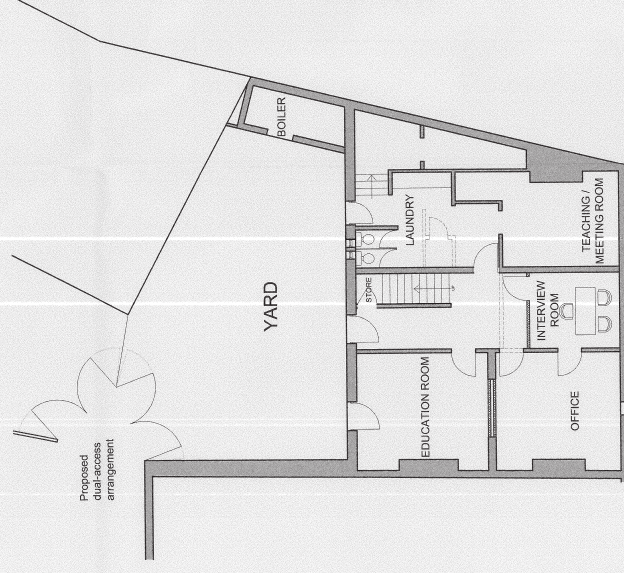
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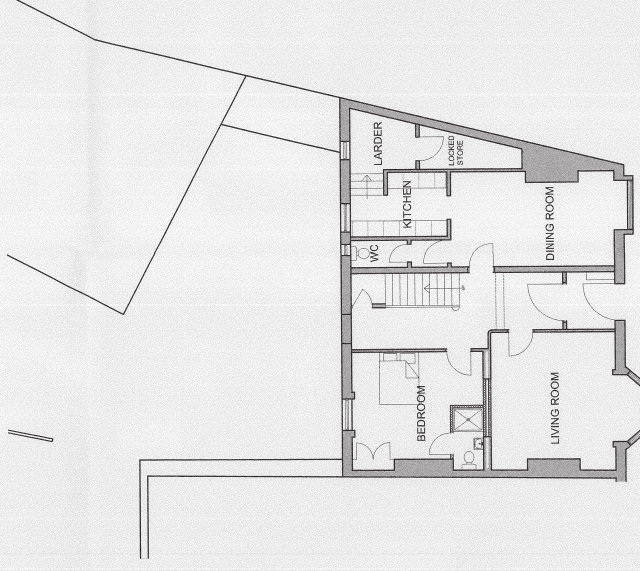
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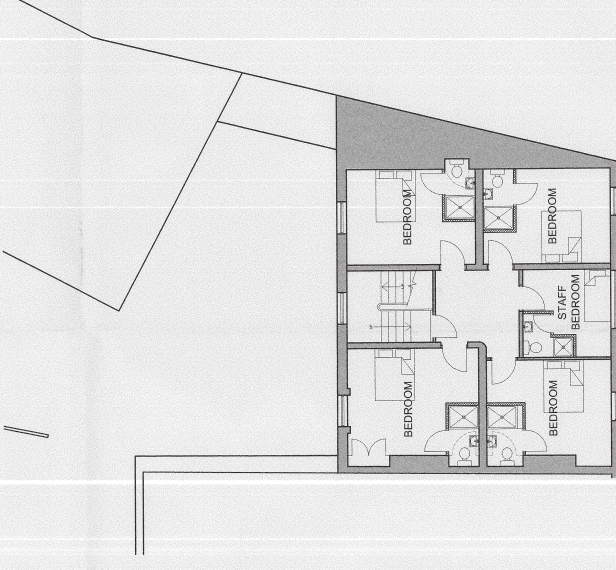
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LOWER GROUND FLOOR - AS PROPOSED



GROUND FLOOR - AS PROPOSED



FIRST FLOOR - AS PROPOSED

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FIRST FLOOR - AS PROPOSED

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Project Currock Villa alterations for Hopscotch Care Ltd.
Currock Villa, 71 Currock Road, Carlisle
Drawing EXISTING AND PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS

Scale 1:100 Date SEPT 13 Drawn JMC Number 11588-10A
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Revisions:
REV A - 25/09/2013 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR BEDROOM CHANGED TO EDUCATIONAL ROOM, ENROUTE REMOVED



Currock Villa Management Plan.

Introduction

The proposal for Currock Villa is to provide a residential home for children and young people, registered with Ofsted to accommodate up to five young people between the ages of 12 and 17. The young people will live in the home just as they would in a foster home or an adopted family home with Hopscotch staff offering 'good parenting' care according to the government's National Minimum Standard and the ethos of company applying well monitored bedtimes and mealtimes, and young people will be encouraged to join in with local activities and be a part of the community.

Staffing and Residents

The home will be staffed with an experienced Manager and a Deputy Manager and depending on the number of young people resident up to 6 Full Time Equivalent Residential Children's Care Workers as well as a cook/housekeeper and cleaner/handyman. At any one time then minimum number of staff on duty would be two and usually three, depending on the number of young people resident.

The most likely scenario when the home is fully operational would be that Currock Villa would be the permanent term home for three or four young people with the possibility of an additional bed for any emergencies that might arise.

Day time

The young people will be encouraged to enter into education at whatever level deemed suitable for their age and abilities, engaging them in education or training or positive activities for anything between two and five hours a day. Some young people may be educated on site, but most of the young people will be at local schools or colleges. All young people in Currock Villa will have a supervising social worker from the Local Authority and a designated Key Worker from Hopscotch Care

Young people will be encouraged to retain their links with their families and return for home visits, if this is deemed beneficial by the social workers, at weekends and occasional evenings for a day or for overnight stays. It is likely that there will be relatively few occasions when the home was fully occupied with five young people resident at the same time. On these occasions the staffing will be sufficient to ensure the young people were looked after appropriately and are kept safe whilst respecting the safety and ambience of the local community.

Young people will be encouraged to join organized groups and clubs and be engaged in positive activities during the day and in the evenings.

Night time

In the late evenings staff levels will be at maximum number as this is the time when the young people are most likely to need the highest staff ratios for support, care and management.

Bed times are regulated by the National Minimum Standards for Childrens Homes and the Care Planning regulations and will be from 10.00pm - 11.00pm with the recognition that it will take some time for older teenagers to settle down. Staffing rotas will ensure there are sufficient staff on until the 11.00pm when the night staff take over.

The night staff will arrive on shift at 10.30pm and depending on the nature and number of young people there will be one member of staff who sleeps in, on the premises going to bed once the young people are settled and have gone to sleep, and another member of staff acting as a "Waking Watch", who remains on duty and is awake through night. If there are any young people who are deemed to be at risk of self harming, absconding or causing any disruption in the home or the community then staffing will be increased to two waking watch staff and one sleeping in staff, to ensure that there are enough staff members, should it be necessary to take a young person out of the home for any reason, leaving two members of staff on duty.

The night staff finish their shifts at 8.00am when the day time staff take over.

Anti Social Behaviour

Managing young teenagers with emotional and behavioural problems inevitably brings with it occasions where a young person might cause problems by absconding, returning late or returning to the home after they have taken drugs or alcohol. Hopscotch Care Ltd. is fully aware of the problems that teenagers can cause in the local community if they are not managed properly. The company prides itself on the staff that it recruits and the behaviour management training it provides to ensure that these situations are managed in such a way that the young people are engaged in discussion and there is a de escalation of any conflict situations. There will always be sufficient staff on duty or on call to ensure that any anti social behaviour is not tolerated.

Hopscotch Care has been operating a Childrens home in a small town in Lancashire for just under 2 years and there have been no complaints from neighbours or the local community, despite some initial anxiety. An open evening was held for anyone interested in visiting the home, prior to opening and this proved very successful and we would plan to do something similar for Currock Villa. Local schools, elected members and police have been very supportive since opening. The home sits next to the local church and young people have been involved in fundraising efforts to support the renovation of the church spire. We value our support from the community and are always trying to find ways to build confidence and be an local asset, rather than a nuisance.

Access and Car parking

There is recognition that local residents are most concerned about car parking on Currock Road. It is the intention of the Directors to ensure that any staff arriving by car will park their vehicles at the rear of the property on land owned by the freehold owner. There are sufficient spaces for up to 5 cars and during the day this would enable the three staff members on duty and any visitors e.g. social workers or family members to park without taking any additional spaces on the road. It would be unusual for there to be more than one

or two visitors a day to the home and they would usually be there for between one and two hours. The only time there might be insufficient space would be at the shift change over when three staff arrive and three would be leaving but as soon as the first shift had left all staff would be instructed to move any vehicles to the rear of the property.

Regulation and Standards

All children's homes are regulated by OFSTED and are visited on a regular basis to ensure that the home is of sufficient quality for children and is respectful of the local community. There is recognition that the role of the community is a key feature in offering young people the opportunity to maximize their potential and become positive members of society.

In addition to the regulator visits, independent assessment is made of the Childrens home on a monthly basis and this gets fed back to OFSTED.

Hopscotch Cares track record with OFSTED is that we have been assessed as 'good' on all occasions that we have been inspected.

Richard Witt
Director
Hopscotch Care Ltd.