DELEGATED

AGENDA NO 5
PLANNING COMMITTEE
18 JUNE 2014
REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

14/1212/COU
The Old Vicarage, Morrison Street, Stillington
Change of use from dwelling house (use class C3) to a children's home (use class C2)

Expiry Date: 4 July 2014

UPDATE REPORT

This report is provided as an update to the main report. It includes additional consultation responses received and additional considerations.

Residents comments
Additional objections have been received from:
Dr Larson, Nyhem, Whitton
Susie Bean, 4 Jasper Grove,
Victoria Brown, 28 St Johns Park,
Alex Hakes, indicated as being the Chairman of 'Action for Stillington Vicarage.
Jaqualine Elliott, 4 Weare Grove, Stillington
K Broatch, 30 West Street, Stillington
Manson, 10 Bellsmoor Close, Stillington
Matthew Parker, 36 West Street, Stillington
Michael Kirk, 4 Weare Grove, Stillington
Marilyn Spence, 6 West Street, Stillington
Robert Wilson, 4 Mount Pleasant, Stillington
Victoria Brown, 28 St Johns Park, Stillington

Residents have suggested that there should be a full public scrutiny and public acceptance of the process of the council purchasing properties in this manner, before permission is granted.

The council were copied into a letter from Mr Hakes to Councillors and the Parish Council which raises a number of concerns about the position of the home adjacent to the school, the risks that are considered to arise as a result, taking into account overlooking windows and the position of the schools playground and other matters previously deleted in the main report.

Comments have been raised in relation to;

- the number of bedrooms the property has,
- that there will be a bedroom provided on the third floor,
- the level of parking and lack of turning for an ambulance within the site,
- lack of amenities at Stillington
- volume of traffic,
- the way in which the property was purchased
- remoteness of Stillington, lack of services and the need for children to be located near to family and services.

Deputy Chief Constable of Cleveland Police

Comments appended in full to this update report.

SBC – Children, Education & Social Care (CESC).

In the year 2013-14, from a cohort of 381 children, 17 young people committed a total of 33 offences.

Of these:

- *7 were placed out of borough*
- *6 were placed at Princess Avenue*
- *2 were placed in a children's home within the Borough similar to the type of home which is the subject of this application*
- *1 was living at home with parents*
- *1 was living with foster carers*

Therefore, for the last financial year, out of 381 children, there were only 2 children that offended whilst living in a care home similar to the Spark of Genius model.

Material Planning Considerations

The majority of additional comments received have already been considered as part of the main report. Comments relating to the purchasing process of the property are considered to not affect the suitability of the use and therefore carry little weight in the determination of this application.

Comments from the Deputy Chief Constable (appendix. 1) have been made to clarify the position of the police and highlight that the police had no intentions of raising any objections to the application on the basis that the local authority shared the details of how they intend to operate the home and the care that would be taken in selecting people to reside at the premises. The comments advise that it is important to recognise that the proposal will provide long term care and that the council already have 4 long term care homes within the Borough, at which, police attendance is infrequent and significantly less than some of the shorter term intake units. The Deputy Chief Constable has indicated that with continued good management and proper risk assessment of individuals being placed in the home, Cleveland Police can foresee no reason why these facilities or their residents should adversely affect levels of crime and disorder in the locality.

The additional comments from CESC reflect matters relating to offences being committed by looked after children that Stockton Council is responsible for. These are considered to portray that offences by children from a similar type of home to that being proposed are limited. The points raised by both the police and CESC are considered to be informative.

Conclusion

The additional comments raised are noted and are considered to not alter the recommendation in the main report or the associated conditions.

Recommendation

That the application be determined in accordance with the recommendation in the main report.

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer Mr Andrew Glossop Telephone No 01642 527796

WARD AND WARD COUNCILLORS

Ward : Western Parishes, Ward Councillor Councillor Andrew Stephenson

Appendix. 1. Confirmation letter from Cleveland Police detailing the Force's considerations to the proposal.

CLEVELAND POLICE
Putting People First

Iain Spittal
Deputy Chief Constable

Postal Reply to: Shared Service Centre
Ash House
III Acres
Princeton Drive
Thornaby
Stockton on Tees
TS17 6AJ

13th June 2014

Mr Neil Schneider
Chief Executive
Stockton Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
Church Road
Stockton-on-Tees
TS16 1LD

Dear Neil,

Re planning applications Hartburn and Stillington

Following our conversation earlier today I thought it appropriate to clearly lay out my understanding of the consultation between Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, regarding the proposal to establish several Children's Residential Homes in the Stockton Borough Council area, and to specifically confirm the force position regarding the proposals at Hartburn and Stillington.

During July 2013 a number of senior officers within Cleveland Police were involved in discussions with members of your team who were progressing your proposals to establish Children's Residential Homes in the Stockton area. As a result of these discussions Cleveland Police confirmed that it had no intentions of raising any objections to the proposals outlined by your team. This was on the basis that the local authority shared the details of how they intended to operate the residential homes and the care that would be taken in selecting young people to reside at these premises.

Sadly, the consultation undertaken in July 2013 was not considered as part of Cleveland Police's response to the planning applications that related to proposed residential homes at Hartburn and Stillington. One of Cleveland Police's Architectural Liaison Officers (ALO) provided a brief, but factual response without consideration of the specific proposals that led to the stated position of the force last year.

Had the ALO been made fully aware of the outcome of the consultation in July 2013 a fuller response would have been provided. The response would have indicated that: Stockton Borough Council has submitted planning applications for the development of a number of large dwelling houses into residential homes for local children in the long term care of the Local Authority. This has understandably raised some concerns within the communities in the vicinity of these proposed homes, with some residents expressing

HEADQUARTERS
Ladgate Lane,
Middlesbrough.
TS8 9EH.
Sat Nav Code: TS5 7YZ.

Telephone: 01642 301213 **Facsimile: 01642 301462**

concern for the safety of their own children, along with a fear that this will lead to a significant increase in crime and anti-social behaviour. Whilst Cleveland Police understands these concerns, it also recognises that the Local Authority, and indeed society in general, has a duty to safeguard children and young people in the 'looked after' system. In many cases these children end up in care through no fault of their own, leaving them even more vulnerable than their peers and counterparts.

It is important to recognise that the intention of Stockton Borough Council is to utilise these properties for children in long term care and they already operate four other long term units within the Borough and police attendance at these homes is infrequent. It is certainly significantly less than at some of the shorter term 'intake units', where police officers regularly visit in the course of their duties.

The Local Authority have explained to Cleveland Police that the children they are planning to accommodate at these homes are not involved in anti-social behaviour and do not have criminal records. They are working to ensure they achieve an appropriate mix of young people in each home, with no more than five children in each, ranging from 8 years upwards.

With continued good management and proper risk assessment of individuals housed there, Cleveland Police can foresee no reason why these facilities, or their residents, should adversely affect levels of crime and disorder in the locality surrounding them. For these reasons Cleveland Police, as previously indicated, will not be raising objections to the proposed plans.

You indicated at our meeting your desire to ensure that the children that reside in these homes are seen as good neighbours, and will seek to ensure that managers of the homes regularly engage with the local neighbourhood police teams and the community in order to understand and manage any ongoing concerns. I am supportive of this approach and will ensure our local neighbourhood police teams actively contribute to these arrangements.

I trust that this clarifies the position of Cleveland Police.

Yours sincerely

Iain Spittal
Deputy Chief Constable