

**KG Planning Ltd**

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## Planning Statement

Ashgreen House, Somerset Avenue, Wilpshire. BB1 9JD



## **1. THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SETTING**

- 1.1 The application site is a detached five-bedroom property situated on Somerset Avenue. There is an existing drive and hard standing to the front which can accommodate at least 4 cars and garden space to the rear.
- 1.2 The area is residential in character. There are no parking restrictions on Somerset Avenue and there are bus stops, with regular bus services, in close proximity on Whalley Road.
- 1.3 The application site is located within the Settlement Boundary of Wilpshire.

## **2. THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The application seeks consent for the change of use of the property from a dwelling (C3 - Dwellinghouses) to a children's home (C2 - Residential Institutions). The proposal is to register the property as a registered children's home for a maximum of four children aged from 5 to 17 years. When the home is fully occupied there will be 2 staff on an Early/ Late/Sleep shift (10am-10pm) on a 2 in 4 off rolling rota, 1 staff on Early/Late shift (10am-10pm) and a manager 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.
- 2.2 Four of the bedrooms will be occupied by children. The downstairs study will be converted to a bedroom, so each member of night staff will also have their own bedroom.
- 2.3 The applicant already has a home in Wilpshire and also successfully operate a number of homes in Chorley and neighbouring authorities.
- 2.4 The proposed children's home seeks to replicate, as closely as possible, a normal family environment. The model is to create a warm and nurturing family style environment for the medium to long-term care of a small number of children. This type of provision is operated in the same manner as a regular family home to ensure that the children have as much consistency and stability as possible.

- 2.5 This type of provision, which government policy is promoting, is to help children who often, through no fault of their own, have not had good parenting in their early years. Care is provided in small sized, family spaces where residential carers help to develop the social and life skills of the children. Without such homes and positive interventions, the children are more likely to end up in adult institutions, suffering from long term health problems.
- 2.6 If able to, the children will attend a DfE registered school or attend mainstream school however in some cases, the children have missed an extensive proportion of their education or are affected in a way that means that they would not cope with a large classroom environment. In such cases, they would initially be tutored, online from home, they would then, overtime, progress to a specialist unit (smaller class sizes) then hopefully onto a mainstream school. One member of staff will also be an education mentor and will assist with homework and assist with the children's educational needs.
- 2.7 In the evenings and at weekends the children will engage in a range of social and recreational activities, similarly to other children of their age who live in the local area.
- 2.8 The property would provide the young people with their sole and main residence, with shared access to living, dining, and kitchen facilities with the children and carers eating together. All household chores such as cleaning, cooking and gardening will involve the children, and no additional staff are employed at the premises to undertake such jobs.
- 2.9 Social services will visit the property twice per month. Meetings with other care staff or clinicians will take place away from the home or virtually.
- 2.10 Internally, Ofsted require locks to be fitted to each of the bedroom doors for the privacy of each child and fire regulation requirements dictate that fire doors - 35mm with internal closers - are fitted along with a fire alarm system.

### **3. ANALYSIS**

#### **Principle of Development**

- 3.1 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the key social objective of national planning policy and states the following: ‘to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of home can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations’. This proposal will result in a property, which meets the needs of young people.
- 3.2 Whilst the application would result in a building which falls within use class C2 rather than C3, it is in essence only because the carers will not live permanently at the property, that uses such as this, fall within C2 rather than C3. In many other respects the proposed use will be very similar in nature to the existing (C3) use.
- 3.3 Key Statement DS1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that development will be focused towards Tier 1 villages such as Wilpshire.
- 3.4 Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy also states that:
- 1. Development proposals in the principal settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the tier 1 villages should consolidate, expand or round-off development so that it is closely related to the main built up areas, ensuring this is appropriate to the scale of, and in keeping with, the existing settlement.*
- 3.5 The proposal would be located within the village of Wilpshire and will re-use an existing building. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Key Statement DS1 and Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

#### **Residential Amenity**

- 3.6 Paragraph 135 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decision should ensure that developments: ‘*create places that are*

*safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users..'*

- 3.7 Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy states that development must not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area.
- 3.8 The only change proposed is the use of the study as a staff bedroom, all the other rooms in the property will be used in the same way to how they are currently used. The proposed level of occupation reflects the average occupation of a dwelling of this size, such that the noise levels will be comparable both within the house and in the garden.

### **Visual Amenity/External Appearance**

- 3.9 Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments are of a high standard of building design. No external changes are proposed in this case.

### **Highway Safety, Parking and Accessibility**

- 3.10 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF requires that the residual cumulative highways impact of the development is not severe and it would not prejudice highway safety.
- 3.11 The dwelling currently has five bedrooms and is therefore likely to be occupied by a large family with multiple cars. It is not considered that this proposal would result in an increase in vehicular movements over and above the established use, such that there would not be a severe impact on highway safety.
- 3.12 Policy DMG3 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that *All development proposals will be required to provide adequate car parking and servicing space in line with currently approved standards.*
- 3.13 Policy DMG1 also states that development must:
1. Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.

2. Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.
- 3.14 Space for at least 4 cars can be accommodated on the driveway and the existing access will be utilised.
- 3.15 In addition, the proposal for a residential children's home in the village of Wilpshire would comply with Policy DMI2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located to minimise the need to travel and should incorporate good access by foot and cycle and have convenient links to public transport to reduce the need for travel by private car. The property is sustainably located within close proximity of bus route with a regular service.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The proposal will utilise an existing dwelling within an existing residential area and there will be very little change both visually and in terms of the level of occupation of the property, when compared to the current situation. On this basis it is considered that the proposal accords planning policy and should be approved without delay.