

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

11th SEPTEMBER 2002

**TROWBRIDGE: CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL
TO OFFICE USE AT 55A BRADLEY ROAD
(Application W.02.0993.CP)**

Purpose of Report

1. To comment on the application and to recommend that permission be granted subject to conditions.

The Application

2. The application is submitted by the County Council under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. It seeks planning permission for the change of use of the former Caretaker's house from residential to office, for use by Rutland House as part of the County Council's Social Services Department.
3. A site plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Background

4. The Director of Social Services has submitted the following statement in support of the proposal:-

"Until the outcome of various wide-ranging reviews are complete and their results implemented the Learning Disabilities Team (North) are seeking to temporarily locate within the above caretaker's house, now vacant, to provide a service to the local centres including Rutland House upon whose site the house is located. Ten staff would be located at the premises. The staff would be sustaining the work of Rutland House and a small number of other centres for people with learning disabilities. The premises have sufficient parking thereon particularly as there are some local members of staff who will be walking and cycling in line with the County's policy on sustainable transport. In case of any specific occasional parking demands these would be catered for by Rutland House itself which has ample parking space. The premises would be administrative and for a staff base with no requirement for public access. Any alterations for the office use would be limited to small scale works such as altered partitions and bringing IT services to the building. There would be no exterior change."

Consultations

5. **West Wiltshire District Council** - no objections.
6. **Trowbridge Town Council** - no objections.

7. **Trowbridge Civic Society** - "The Society wishes to object to this application for change of use from residential to offices, even though it is only a temporary measure. This part of Bradley Road and Rutland Crescent is entirely residential. Office accommodation would change the nature of this area. Wiltshire County Council has other office accommodation in Trowbridge which is currently under-occupied and could be used to relocate the staff for what is said to be for only a short period of time. We believe that this would also be a 'better value' solution."

Publicity

8. The application has been advertised on site and a neighbour notification exercise has also been carried. The only objection received is from Trowbridge Civic Society (see above).

Relevant Planning Policies

9. The site is not shown as within any specifically designated area in the adopted West Wiltshire District Plan 1996. However, Policy CF2 regarding community facilities is considered relevant. This policy is basically retained in the West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration Revised Deposit, November 2000, and is set out in the attached **Appendix 2**.

Planning Considerations

10. The property is a domestic dwelling of conventional appearance being formerly accommodation for the Caretaker of Rutland House. The property fronts the eastern side of Bradley Road and is flanked on each side by residential development.
11. The supporting statement explains that there will be no external changes to the building as a result of this use change. Ten staff are expected to work there. Staff car parking would be located in the existing parking facility at Rutland House which has sufficient capacity. The nature of the services provided would not generate visits from the public to the offices.
12. It is therefore unlikely that there would be any discernible change to the nature or amenity of this predominantly residential area.
13. Regarding the issue of an alternative Trowbridge location for office use, raised by Trowbridge Civic Society, the County Council's Valuer makes the following comments:-

"The County Council is currently implementing new higher office space requirements; space within the County's Trowbridge Estate has not been identified elsewhere that could adequately support the temporary office function proposed for 55A Bradley Road, which otherwise might remain vacant."
14. As the change of use raises no visual, parking or public access issues, the proposal is considered an acceptable community use. With no discernible adverse effects on residential amenity, the proposal thus conforms with relevant planning policy.

Conclusion: Options Considered

15. Alternative suitable floorspace has not been identified in Trowbridge for this office function. As the change of use should have no adverse impact on the adjoining residential areas, the proposal is in conformity with Policy CF2.

Recommendation

16. That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-
 1. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the County Planning Authority or required by conditions attached to this permission, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted planning application W.02.0993.CP and Drawing Number T81.
 2. The development hereby granted is for a limited period of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason for Recommendation

17. To provide the County Council's Social Services Department with the necessary office accommodation for the discharge of its statutory functions.

RICHARD J. LANDER

Director of Environmental Services

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

Consultation replies and correspondence

Environmental impact of the Recommendation contained in this Report:

See paragraphs 11, 12 and 14