

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM DAY CARE CENTRE TO OFFICE USE AT NORTHGATE DAY CENTRE, STATION ROAD, BEACONSFIELD.

APPLICATION : CC/69/00

**APPLICANT: SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
BUCKS STREET ATLAS PAGE 175, F1.**

To: Development Control Committee

Date: 5 December 2000

From: Head of Spatial Planning

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To determine application no. CC/69/00 for the proposed change of use from day care centre to offices use at the Northgate Day Centre, Station Road, Beaconsfield.

PROPOSED ACTION

- 2 **The Committee is invited to APPROVE application no. CC/69/00 for the proposed change of use from day care centre to office use at the Northgate Day Centre, Station Road, Beaconsfield subject to conditions to be determined by the Head of Spatial Planning, including:**

The retention of the yew tree at the Station Road entrance.

B SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Site Description

- 3 The Northgate Day Centre is located off the western side of Station Road at its junction with Wattleton Road in Beaconsfield. Residential properties lie to the north and west and on the eastern side of Station Road. A number of large mature trees lie within the site boundary including a yew tree at the Station Road entrance. There is also a rear entrance onto Wattleton Road. Consent no. CC/46/79 was granted in 1979 for a change of use from Children's Home to Day Care Centre. Prior to that the property was in residential use.

The application

- 4 The application was received on 13 October 2000, and was sent out for consultation on 13 October 2000. The application is submitted by the Head of Property Management on behalf of the Social Services Committee. The application has been advertised by both site notice and neighbour notification.

- 5 The application proposes the change of use from day care centre to office use. In support of this it is stated that the day care service for older people which has occupied the building is being moved to the Burnham Day Centre and Queensmead in High Wycombe. There were insufficient referrals to this site to keep the service open at this location. However, it is intended to re-open a service in the locality if referrals from the area increase. The site was never an open day centre for the local community but only served people who had a need assessed by Social Services.
- 6 There are currently 13 staff working out of the site, 8 of whom work out in the community. Up to 20 clients used to visit the site per day, being delivered by taxi or family car. In addition Care Managers, Nurses etc. would visit the Day Centre. It is now proposed that a maximum of 17 staff providing Home Care in the district would be based at the site, but five of these would only visit once or twice a week. Home Care is an essential service which is at the forefront of Community Care. The service will therefore continue to be one which serves the local community.
- 7 Daily vehicle movements are not anticipated to exceed the existing 66 per day. The car parking provision at the site would also be re-arranged to provide 11 spaces which the applicant considers would be adequate to meet the demand, given that not all staff will be on site at the same time.

Planning Policy

- 8 Policy E5 (Employment-generating development in south Buckinghamshire) of the County Structure Plan is relevant. Policies COM2 (Loss of Community Facilities), E1 (Employment -generating development), TR7 (Parking provision) and L10 (Proposals affecting TPOs) of the South Bucks District Local Plan are also relevant (Appendix A).

View of the District Council

- 9 The view of the South Bucks District Council is awaited but it is understood that objection is likely on the following grounds:
- a Loss of a community facility contrary to policy COM2 of the District Local Plan;
 - b The introduction of an employment generating use contrary to policies E5 of the County Structure Plan and E1 of the District Local Plan;
 - c The parking standards for offices requires 13 spaces to be provided, but only 11 are proposed with the potential for non-residential on-street parking;
 - d The extension of the car parking area would lead to the loss of a mature yew tree which contributes to the visual amenity of the street scene contrary to the provisions of policy L10 of the District Local Plan.

Consultations and representations

- 10 The Local member, Mrs Dewar, supports the application.

- 11 Beaconsfield Town Council considers that the proposal would lead to the loss of a good amenity to Beaconsfield.
- 12 Highways Development Control comments to come.
- 13 No letters of representation have been received from members of the public.

Conclusions

- 14 Whilst the South Bucks District Council considers the application to be contrary to the provisions of policy COM2 d), it is intended that it would still be used by County Council staff providing necessary home care services to the local community in south Buckinghamshire. I do not therefore consider that there is a loss of a community facility in the way that there would be if the County Council did not intend to make further use of the site itself. I also do not agree with the District Council's argument that allowing the proposed change of use would be effectively to allow employment generating development in an unsuitable location contrary to policy E5 of the County Structure Plan and policy E1 of the District Local Plan. Also, as with any consent granted for a County Council development, the benefit of the consent will only enure for the County Council's purposes and should the property be sold to a third party at a later date then, without the benefit of further planning consent, it would revert to its former use before any consent was granted by the County Council, which in this instance would be residential.
- 15 With regard to the parking provision and the loss of the yew tree at the Station Road entrance, the applicant has re-configured the parking arrangements to allow for the retention of the yew tree. The District Council's Parking Standard for office use is one space per 25 m², however, the general standard used by the County Council in considering proposals such as this is one space per member of staff. Although there would be a maximum of 17 staff at the site, given that five of these will be generally working out in the community, I would not oppose the application on the grounds that there are only 11 car parking spaces proposed.
- 16 In conclusion I recommend that planning consent is granted subject to a condition to ensure the retention of the yew tree at the Station Road entrance.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application CC/69/00

County Structure Plan

South Bucks District Local Plan

Consultee replies dated October and November 2000

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