

**APPLICATION REPORT – FUL/350363/22**  
**Planning Committee 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Registration Date: 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Ward: Royton North

Application Reference: FUL/350363/23  
Type of Application: Full

Proposal: Change of use from a residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to a family assessment unit (Sui Generis) offering parenting assessments by a registered social worker.

Location: 25 Queen Street, Royton, OL2 5JY

Case Officer: Emma Breheny  
Applicant: Aontacht Ltd  
Agent: Ms K Healey Pegasus Group

## **INTRODUCTION**

The application is a minor development for a change of use of a dwelling to a family assessment unit. The application has been referred to Planning Committee for determination by Councillors Phythian and Quigg on the basis that there is high level of community interest in the application, concerns over additional traffic and demand for on-street parking and concerns regarding how the proposal would change the character and amenity of the area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in this report and that the Head of Planning shall be authorised to issue the decision.

## **THE SITE**

The application site comprises a two-storey end-terraced dwelling within a row of similar residential premises. The property has been previously extended by means of a single storey rear extension and a rear dormer.

The current layout of the dwelling comprises two reception rooms, a kitchen and utility room at ground floor, 4 bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor, and two bedrooms and an ensuite at second floor.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

The applicant seeks to change the use of the premises from a single dwelling to a family assessment unit.

The proposed use of the premises will offer temporary accommodation for parents and their children supported by professionals to ensure that they develop parenting skills to a standard which allows them to safely care for their children.

Families will be accommodated for a period of 12 weeks to allow their parenting skills to be assessed and developed.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

The 'Development Plan' is the Joint Development Plan Document (Local Plan) which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham. The site is allocated in the Proposals Map associated with this document as within Saint Paul's Conservation Area

As such, the following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

Policy 1 - Climate Change and Sustainable Development;

Policy 2 – Communities;

Policy 9 - Local Environment;

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Highways Engineer: No objections subject to a condition requiring provision of secure cycle storage.

Environmental Health: [No Objections

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

The application has been publicised by means of neighbour notification letters, site notice and press notice. In response, 43 letters of objection have been received, and 49 letters of support.

The objections relate to:

- Number of properties notified
- Impact on Conservation Area
- Noise
- Drug and alcohol use
- Parking
- Insufficient external space
- Devaluation of property
- Demands on health services
- Alternative sites should be considered
- Safeguarding of neighbours

The support letters relate to:

- Benefit to families in Oldham
- Allowing families to remain together
- Preventing children being put into care
- Utilising a dwelling would create a familiar setting for a family

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Principle**

Policy 2 states that the Council will support proposals for new and improved community facilities that meet an identified need by working with partners. Policy 2 defines a community facility to include special needs housing involving communal living and/or supported living accommodation.

Policy 9 seeks to ensure developments do not cause an unacceptable level of disturbance to neighbouring properties in terms of noise, smells, traffic and other disturbances, Policy 9 also seeks to ensure that occupiers of the development are not impacted upon unnecessarily.

The proposed use would provide temporary residential accommodation for families in need of additional support to enable parenting skills to be observed and developed to allow, wherever possible, children to remain in the care of their parents. The application site is located within a residential street and as the proposed use would be predominately for residential purposes, albeit temporary, it would be acceptable within an existing residential area.

Given the above, it is considered that the principle of development is acceptable in this instance, subject to other material planning considerations.

### **Residential Amenity**

The existing property is a large dwellinghouse with six bedrooms which could accommodate a large single family. Such use of a large family home is likely to be associated with numerous comings and goings including those made by vehicle. The proposed use of the property as temporary accommodation for up to four parents, four children, and two staff members, would not have a significantly greater impact on residential amenity in terms of noise, disturbance or traffic generation.

### **Design and Integration with Local Character**

The proposal does not seek to impose any external alterations to the premises. As such, the property would retain its appearance as a dwellinghouse, and would not appear out of character within the residential street.

Although the site is located within a Saint Paul's conservation area, given that no alterations are proposed to the exterior of the premises, the proposal has no impact on the conservation area.

### **Highways**

There is no off road parking serving the dwelling and none would be provided for the proposed development. Given the site constraints, it was evident from the site visit that the properties along Queen Street and surrounding streets utilise on street parking, and there are no parking restrictions in place.

The proposed development is in a sustainable location with good links to public transport opportunities for walking and cycling and access to a wide range of amenities. It is considered unlikely that there would be any significant additional traffic generation or demand for parking generated by the proposed use.

The Council's Highways Engineer has been consulted on the proposal and has raised no objections.

## Response to Representations

- Number of properties notified

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure Order) (2015) requires local authorities to either write to properties sharing a boundary with the application site or post a site notice close to the premises. In this case, all adjoining neighbours were notified by letter, and a site notice was also posted at the front of the property and an advertisement published in the local press. The Local Planning Authority has therefore exceeded the minimum publicity requirements for the proposal.

- Impact on Conservation Area

As discussed in the main body of the report, there are no external alterations proposed to the property and as such, there will be no impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

- Noise

The proposed use of the property as a residential setting would not be dissimilar to its use as a family home. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to significant noise disturbance above that which is already experienced.

- Drug and alcohol use

The applicant has advised that no families will be permitted to reside in the accommodation if they are using illegal substances. There is no evidence to suggest otherwise, nor is there any evidence to suggest that the proposal would give rise to anti-social behaviour. Any future illegal behaviour would be a matter for the Police in the same way it would be for occupiers of a dwellinghouse

- Parking

This is covered in the main body of the report.

- Insufficient external space

As discussed above, the proposal is not dissimilar to the use of the building as a family dwelling. Although the external amenity space is limited it is similar to neighbouring properties within the immediate vicinity and would not be a reason to refuse the application.

- Devaluation of property

This is not a material planning consideration that can be afforded any weight in the determination of the application.

- Demands on health services

The proposal would be for temporary accommodation only. The families occupying the premises would be registered with their own GP practice and the proposed use would not give rise to any significant impact on the existing health services within the area.

- Alternative sites should be considered

The Local Planning Authority is required to consider all applications as submitted. There is no planning policy requirement for alternative sites to be considered. The proposal which has been submitted must be fully assessed for its compliant with local and national policies.

- Safeguarding of neighbours

As the premises would continue to be used for residential purposes there is no reason to suggest that additional safeguarding for neighbouring properties is required. As discussed in the main body of the report, should the proposal be for permanent residential use for families, then planning permission would not be required. There would be staff present at all times to help care for the families' needs within the property.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposal is considered compliant with Development Management Policies 2, 9 and 20 of the Oldham Local Plan, and guidance within the revised National Planning Policy Framework. It is therefore recommended that the application be approved, subject to the imposition of the conditions provided below.

## **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

Grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission. REASON - To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the Approved Details Schedule list on this decision notice. REASON - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.
3. The use of the building hereby approved shall not commence until a scheme for the provision of secure cycle parking has been implemented in accordance with details which shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved facility shall remain available for users of the development thereafter. REASON - In order to promote sustainable means of travel having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan

**SITE LOCATION PLAN (NOT TO SCALE):**

