

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9/2(f)

Parish:	Stow Bardolph	
Proposal:	Change of use from residential dwelling to short term supported accommodation.	
Location:	179 The Drove Barroway Drove Norfolk PE38 0AL	
Applicant:	Norfolk And Waveney Mind	
Case No:	23/01632/CU (Change of Use Application)	
Case Officer:	Helena Su	Date for Determination: 19 October 2023 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 15 December 2023

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – Called in by Cllr Rose

Neighbourhood Plan: No

Case Summary

The proposal is to change the use of a residential dwellinghouse to offer short term supported accommodation at 179 The Drove, Barroway Drove, PE38 0AL. Barroway Drove is classified as a Smaller Village and Hamlet within Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2011.

The application site is an existing two-storey dwelling approved under planning references 21/01056/F, 18/02168/RM, and 15/02082/O, located within the built-up settlement of Barroway Drove, approximately 397m of Barroway Drove village hall, and immediately northeast of local commercial sites. By virtue of the recent approval of the dwelling, the site is considered to be a sustainable location within a smaller village and hamlet.

Key Issues

Principle of Development
Neighbour Amenity
Form and Character
Highway Safety and Parking Provisions
Drainage

Recommendation:

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The proposal is to change the use of a residential dwellinghouse (use class C3) to offer short term supported accommodation (use class C5(b)) at 179 The Drove, Barroway Drove, PE38 0AL.

Barroway Drove is classified as a Smaller Village and Hamlet within Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2011. By virtue of the recent approval of the dwelling, the site is considered to be a sustainable location within a smaller village and hamlet.

The application is made by Norfolk and Waveney Mind, a well-established mental health charity that supports local people through their wide range of services and support programmes.

The application for a Short Stay Recovery House (SSRH) was made following the success of a similar scheme approved in South Norfolk in 2020 (known as Holly Tree House). A SSRH is a service which has been developed as part of NHS ambition to improve mental health. It operates 24 hours a week, 7 days per week, providing short term residential care in a calm and relaxing environment for those who struggle to cope with everyday life.

Users of the scheme will be those registered with a West Norfolk GP practice and living locally to the borough. The short-term accommodation does not serve people who require formal admission to an acute mental health hospital.

Lastly, the proposal is intended to serve four residents at any one time, with between two and four members of staff on the site at any one time.

SUPPORTING CASE

Planning Application for 179 The Drove, Barroway Drove (23/01632/CU) we arranged an information event on Wednesday 1st November at Barroway Drove Village Hall to meet with residents and parish councillors to talk through the proposed application for the Short Stay Recovery House. Timings 14:30- 18:30. Attendance 10x Residents including couples plus 1 Parish Councillor, Colin Rose

Residents' comments and concerns were as follows:

- Resident states they have no concerns with our plans for the house and no concerns in regards to safety, security, amenities.
- Resident was not concerned about the service we are planning to deliver, or the people who will be using the service as has their own personal experience of struggling with poor mental health.
- Resident left stating they are even more in support of us after meeting and that they will actively be encouraging local residents to support the service.
- Resident came to highlight the noise we might receive created by the traffic from local farmers especially during Harvest.
- Resident vocalised her opinion on the risks posed by people such as paedophiles, rapists and people that should be in the criminal justice system.
- Resident expressed concerns of pot holes in the road and that we would contribute to them, the traffic / if cars are parked outside the premises, the noise and the impact it might have on deliveries to businesses etc.
- Resident was concerned if late shift handover took place they would disrupt his sleep as he has to get up early for work.

- Resident concerned on the drainage issues of the property. He informed us that the pipes from 179 go under his house and these might not have been installed correctly. Along with privacy to their back garden

Norfolk Wavery Mind (NWM) Responses:

- NWM explained the quiet environment is what we create inside the service, as we can't control external noise, traffic, wherever the service will be located.
- NWM informed under no circumstances would we house people of that nature and due to our strict risk assessment process, referral policy and procedures the type of service we would be running would not happen and therefore should not be of concern.
- NWM talked about the shift patterns and reassured all staff members would be considerate and mindful around handovers, if we have security lights we will make sure they are not directed at anyone's houses.
- NWM have offered to erect fencing in the back garden and will liaise with neighbour directly to make sure he is happy with the plans.
- NWM provided reassurance, we showed the Code of Conduct and explained and provided details, including the presentations of the people we have supported since we have been operational in Norwich.

Residents and Village Hall committee members George and Jackie fully support the service and just wanted to come along and find out more about the operational running of the service.

Colin Rose Parish Councillor attended to formally object but has invited a member of NWM to attend a meeting with them as it was deemed highly useful. This has not been arranged yet.

Overall, a very positive meeting of which we received some encouraging feedback and also the local residents were pleased to have been given further clarity to appease any concerns they may have had.

PLANNING HISTORY

21/01056/F: Application Permitted: 06/07/21 - VARIATION OF CONDITION 1 for Planning Permission 18/02168/RM: to change the design of Plot 1 (Delegated)

18/01772/F: Application Permitted: 12/11/18 - Change of use of agricultural land to garden land to existing development site. (Delegated)

18/02168/RM: Application Permitted: 05/03/19 - Reserved matters application for site for construction of two dwellings. (Delegated)

17/01395/RM: Application Permitted: 10/11/17 - Reserved Matters Application: Site for construction of two dwellings. (Delegated)

15/02082/O: Application Permitted: 16/02/16 - OUTLINE APPLICATION: Site for construction of two dwellings. (Delegated)

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: No observations in favour or against.

Highways Authority: In terms of highway safety considerations only we do not have an objection to the principle of the application.

I did observe however that the vehicle access over the highway is yet to be completed as part of condition 3 of planning reference 21/01056/F and this should be completed prior to occupation of the dwelling.

REPRESENTATIONS:

TWO SUPPPORT comments:

- Welcome and support accommodation for people who need help in our community.
- Hope they enjoy living here.
- Do not see anything wrong in the change of use.

FIFTEEN OBJECT comments:

- Wanted to live in a quiet rural location. Short stay accommodation would not benefit our roads.
- Strangers coming into the village
- Invasion of privacy in a rural community
- 2-4 members of staff onsite 24 hours a day supporting residents would bring noise, traffic, light and activity throughout the day and night.
- Not clear whether residents would have vehicles
- Activity during shift change, disturbing peaceful and dark evenings and nigh times that support family routine.
- Property was not built to accommodate or support such a large number of people.
- Drainage - reliant on domestic drainage shared with a number of other properties.
- Residential driveway not designed/built to support large number of vehicles that would be parked or moving at each point.
- Barroway Drove is not an appropriate area for such a facility. It is a small village and does not have sufficient facilities or amenities to support any independence, transport, or safe walking from the site.
- Bus services in the village only run a few times a day.
- Barroway Drove is not a sustainable location given the number of staff required.
- No justification has been given as to why a rural area is favoured over a larger town.
- Not clear what supported accommodation means. Raises questions about house of multiple occupation (HMO) or Residential Institutions.
- Boundaries are not fully enclosed, there is concern that residents may inadvertently enter neighbouring businesses leading to safety issues.
- Good to meet with MIND to understand their plans.
- Lack of/insufficient infrastructure - drainage, internet, shops, public transport.
- MIND have not done anything to alleviate the local communities concerns.
- Funding of the project
- Questions about future occupants - are they trustworthy? Will they disturb the villagers (screaming/shouting etc)

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS02 - The Settlement Hierarchy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM2 – Development Boundaries

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM17 - Parking Provision in New Development

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
National Design Guide 2021

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Form and Character
- Neighbour Amenity
- Highway Safety and Parking Provisions
- Drainage

Principle of Development:

The application site is an approved dwelling under planning reference 21/01056/F, 18/02168/RM, and 15/02082/O, which was recently constructed. By virtue of the planning approvals, the location of the site is considered to be a sustainable location within a Smaller Village and Hamlet, being approved for residential use.

Third parties have queried the sustainability of this site for the proposed use, identifying that Barroway Drove has limited services and amenities, with limited footpath provisions in the village. The closest bus stop is approximately 274m to the northeast of the site, offering services to Downham Market and Welney on Monday - Saturday, and there is no footpath provision from the application site to the bus stop.

In a letter submitted by the applicants to the residents of Barroway Drove, Mind have explained that a rural location was chosen to provide a calm, peaceful setting to help resident's recovery. The scheme seeks to create tranquillity and respite for people who have

been through tough times to allow them to focus on their wellbeing and concentrate their mental health needs. This proposal departs from general residential use under Use Class C3 as residents will be living on the site for no more than five days in a managed environment for a short stay need, so access to local facilities and services will be limited. There is a low-level expectation or ability for residents to integrate with the wider local community. The support staff would have access to alternative modes of transport to reach the site but may have some reliance on private car use given the limited local timetable and likelihood of shift working.

Chapter 8 of the NPPF seeks to promote healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 92 and 93 states planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, and provide social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs. The proposed short term assisted accommodation would benefit the wider community of West Norfolk, providing a safe supportive space for residents dealing with mental health struggles as they endeavour to reintegrate back into the wider community. As the proposal is not for a medium/highly secured facility, but a space to provide short term respite within the countryside, for a calm environment, the scheme is considered to have a wider public benefit for Barroway Drove and West Norfolk.

In planning terms, the site is considered sustainable within a smaller village and hamlet and as such the principle of development is generally considered acceptable in accordance with Policies CS02, CS06, and CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 and provisions within the NPPF, subject to compliance with other policies discussed below.

Form and Character:

The application site comprises a two-storey modern sex-bedroom dwelling, with an integrated garage, situated to the northside of The Drove in Barroway Drove. The site sits in-between a residential dwelling of identical scale and appearance to the northeast and a commercial business (Accio Consult and Construct) to the southwest. No alterations to the external appearance of the dwelling and site are proposed.

Concerns have been expressed that the proposed use of the dwelling and associated activities will be out of character of the area, such as with additional vehicle movements from the staff's shift pattern. On some limited occasions, e.g. shift change over, there may be on a balance of probability, that the number of vehicular movements would be greater than that of a six bedroom dwelling. However, the overall position is that, with four members of staff attending in day shifts and limited movements from residents and visitors, that the proposals will not result in any unacceptable harm to the overall residential character of the area.

Regarding impact on form and character of the locality, impacts will be limited and in accordance with Policy CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 and DM15 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMPP) 2016.

Neighbour Amenity:

Neighbours have raised anxieties related to loss of privacy, security concerns to the adjoining commercial business, traffic movements during shift changes disturbing neighbour amenity, impact on living conditions, and anti-social behaviour of future occupiers.

Given the nature of the proposed development, which is for a change of use only, there would be no overshadowing and overbearing impacts.

As there are no physical alterations to the site, impacts on overlooking to neighbours have already been considered acceptable subject to conditions. The site is defined by an

approximate 1.8m tall closed boarded fence on the northeast, northwest, and southwest boundary, and a 2m closed boarded fence to the southeast of the rear garden. Along the northeast boundary of the raised patio, an obscured glazed screening should be installed prior to occupation, which would offer more privacy to the neighbour, No 177, to the northeast. Whilst neighbours have raised concerns with the residents using the garden, the use of the garden would be the same as if the dwelling were occupied as a residential dwelling for a single household.

Concerns were raised regarding the loss of privacy due to existing boundary treatments not being fully enclosed. At the time of the site visit, the rear garden of the site was fully enclosed as mentioned above. In addition, along the northeast boundary of the neighbouring commercial business, the boundary comprises vegetation and metal fencing. The risk of security to the commercial business is considered to be minimal.

There are objections that there could be additional noise and disturbance created by the increase in vehicle movements generated by the staff. Given the level of staff proposed, it is not considered that the number of trips generated would be hugely different from a single dwelling of this scale, and while there may be times when staff are changing shifts and there are more cars on site, there is adequate room on site for parking and manoeuvring and this is considered to be acceptable and would not cause an unacceptable noise and disturbance impact.

Finally, third parties have raised concerns related to anti-social behaviour of residents. Whilst perception of fear can have an impact upon well-being, the applicants have outlined that residents would not be those who require formal admission to an acute mental health hospital. The proposal seeks to provide a calm environment to offer residents respite for up to five days. The operation of the proposed use by Mind is subject to regulatory oversight in terms of professional standards of care and security for residents. During the residents' short time at the site, they would have to follow a strict code of conduct that they will have agreed to prior to a referral being accepted. Mind have a national track record of running such facilities in a professional and appropriate manner, with suitable approval from licensing authorities, as such, the perception of harm in regard to anti-social behaviour issue limited weight in this matter.

Regarding impact on neighbour amenity, the scheme is considered to comply with Policy CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM15 of the SADMPP 2016.

Highway Safety and Parking Provisions:

The Local Highway Officer did not object to the principle of the development but observed that the vehicle access over the highway is yet to be completed as part of condition 3 of planning reference 21/01056/F and said that this should be completed before the occupation of the dwelling. Condition 3 relates to the access being built to the specification of TRAD 5 by Norfolk County Council Highways prior to occupation. The same condition will be carried over to this planning consent, should it be recommended for approval, to ensure the driveway will be constructed as per the agreed details prior to the occupation of the building.

A gravelled parking and turning point are provided at the front of the site. The parking area measures approximately 7.9m deep and 13.7m wide, positioned immediately to the southeast/front of the dwelling on the site. An integrated garage is also provided within the dwelling, which could accommodate two additional parking spaces on the site. The application site was originally approved as a six-bedroom dwelling, and therefore required to demonstrate that four parking spaces on the site could be achieved in order to comply with Norfolk Parking Standards and Policy DM17 of the SADMPP 2016. Therefore, the number of parking spaces is considered sufficient to accommodate the proposed use of the site.

Based on the information provided by the applicant, during the day shift there is an expected total of three cars, and two cars during late/waking shifts. Residents of the scheme can arrange for family members to visit. However, it is unknown at this stage how regular this will be. Furthermore, it is also unknown whether residents would also have use of their own vehicles during their time here. Nevertheless, staff numbers are known and given the level of staff proposed at any one time, it is not considered that the number of trips generated would be hugely different than if the dwelling were occupied by a family as a residential dwelling.

Concerns have been raised that the intensification of the site would put pressures on the local road network. Again, considering the potential maximum number of cars visiting the site, impacts would be similar to those expected if the building was occupied as a six bedroomed residential dwelling. Maintenance of the road would be the responsibility of the local highway authority and is not a material consideration within the scope of this application.

In summary, it is considered impacts on highways would ultimately comply with Policy DM15 and DM17 of the SADMPP 2016.

Drainage:

Concerns have been raised that intensification of the site would put pressure on the drainage of the dwelling and local area.

The local ward member has brought to the attention of the Council correspondence with building control, who comment that the "adequacy of the domestic pump chamber of plot 177... may not be adequate to deal with the additional flow loads from more than 6 people (commercial use) who may be living in plot 179 should the change of use be granted."

It is expected at any one time the maximum number of people on the site would be around eight, with four residents at any one time, and at maximum, four members of staff. The applicant has set out that only the residents would be living on site using the shower facilities etc. However, it is still considered appropriate to address the potential for the additional capacity on local drainage and a condition related to full details of foul water drainage will be included on the decision notice so that foul drainage details are submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the occupation of the building for the proposed use.

Regarding drainage, subject to condition, the scheme is considered to comply with CS08 of the Core Strategy 2011.

CONCLUSION:

The application seeks to change the use of a residential dwelling to provide short stay supported accommodation for four residents. The application site is an existing six-bedroom dwelling in Barroway Drove, a smaller village and hamlet, where the sustainability of the site is considered acceptable.

Although concerns were raised by third parties, regarding impact on neighbour impact, drainage, and highways, it is considered that the proposed scale of operations of the proposed use would be similar to the residential use a large dwelling of this size and would not have any unacceptably detrimental impacts to concerns raised by third parties.

The Parish Council had no observations for or against the proposal, and the Local Highway Authority did not raise any objections with the principle of the application.

On the basis of the above, the scheme is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies CS02, CS06 and CS08 of the Core Strategy, Policies DM15 and DM17 of the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan 2016, and the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that Members approved this application, subject to the imposition of conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out using only the following approved plans:
 - Location plan - ref p4e/uk/992247/1337064.
 - Existing and Proposed floor plans. GROUND FLOOR DIAGRAM
 - Existing and Proposed floor plans. FIRST FLOOR DIAGRAM
 - Existing and Proposed floor plans. SECOND FLOOR DIAGRAM
- 2 Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition: Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, full details of the foul water drainage arrangements for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage details shall be constructed as approved before any part of the development hereby permitted is brought into use.
- 3 Reason: To ensure that there is a satisfactory means of drainage in accordance with the NPPF.
- 4 Condition: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the vehicular access shall be provided and thereafter retained at the position shown on the approved plan (Drawing No. B3420-19 Revision B of planning reference 21/01056/F) in accordance with the highway specification drawing no: TRAD 5. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.
- 4 Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway.
- 5 Condition: Prior to occupation of each dwelling hereby approved, the associated patio area shall be screened with obscure safety glazed balustrades as per the approved plans (Drawing nos. PEAS013-P01 Revision C of planning ref 21/01056/F). The screening shall be maintained in that condition thereafter.
- 5 Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may retain control over the development in the interests of the residential amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.

- 6 Condition: The number of people residing on the site shall not exceed 4 at any one time.
- 6 Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may retain control over the development in the interests of the residential amenities of the locality in accordance with the Policy DM15 of the SADMPP 2016 and the NPPF.