

Plan: G DC/04/00150/FUL River Ward (A)

Address: 116 Hedgemans Road Dagenham

Development: Change of use to residential home for three young adults, with three bedrooms, offices and a loft conversion involving the formation of a rear facing dormer window for staff accommodation

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Agbalajobi

### **Introduction and Description of Development**

The application property is a two storey semi-detached house on the north side of Hedgemans Road close to its junction with Tilney Road. To the west, the garden of the house adjoins allotments, and to the north it borders the rear garden of 206 Tilney Road. In 1997 a two storey side extension was built to provide a garage at ground floor and three additional bedrooms at first floor, making the house a five bedroom house. The garage has never been used. There is no dropped kerb or crossover, and at present there is a step up into the garage. In addition there are a bus stop, a lamp post and a pedestrian crossing immediately outside or very close to the house.

The proposal is to use the house as a home for three young adults. The accommodation would comprise:

Ground floor – communal room, office, and store in the existing garage, and a kitchen, a lounge and an office.

First floor – three bedrooms, bathroom, separate W.C. and a store room.

Roof space (with new rear dormer) – staff bedroom and bath/WC.

No on-site parking is provided.

### **Background**

In 1997 permission was granted for a two storey side extension to provide a garage at ground floor and additional bedrooms over.

In 2003 an application for change of use to a residential home for three young adults was withdrawn

### **Consultations**

a) Adjoining occupiers

41 nearby occupiers consulted. A petition with a total of 72 signatures from 57 addresses has been received. 54 signatories are from 43 addresses in Hedgemans Road and Tilney Road, and there are 6 signatories from 4 addresses in Cartwright Road and Coleman Road. The remaining signatories are from significantly further afield. The petition raises objections on the following grounds:

- loss of a large, five-bedroom family house.
- use to provide accommodation for a changing population of young adults will change the nature of this residential area.
- noise and disturbance likely to be caused by occupants
- disturbance from staff comings and goings and from other visitors
- additional traffic and car parking demand
- security of homes compromised

Four of the petition signatories from Tilney Road have also sent in individual letters, and two further individual letters have been received. These add objections on the grounds of overlooking.

b) Head of Children's Services

Nothing to add to comments made on previous (withdrawn) application, which suggested that the Council was unlikely to use this accommodation.

### **U.D.P. Policy**

H7 Special Needs Housing  
Appendix 6 Car Parking Standards

Policy issue – use of semi-detached house

### **Analysis**

The proposal would provide accommodation for three young adults in need of foster care with 24 hour supervision, two staff being on site during the day and waking staff on duty at night. Facilities required in care homes, and staffing levels, competencies and qualifications are controlled by the National Care Standards Commission under other legislation. The applicant has discussed the scheme with the Commission and it meets their requirements in terms of the accommodation and facilities provided.

### ***Overlooking***

The back of the house faces across the backs of 206 to 192 Tilney Road and across their rear gardens. The new dormer window could therefore create overlooking and loss of privacy problems and windows should be obscurely glazed (the new windows are to the staff accommodation, including a bathroom).

### ***Loss of large family house and affect on character of area***

Policy H7 states that proposals for care homes will normally be permitted, subject to a number of criteria (including no significant environmental effects on surrounding properties, or on the character of the area), and that properties should normally be detached.

The Council does not have a planning policy that protects or seeks to retain larger family houses, and, of their nature, care homes will often seek to occupy larger houses. There appear to be no other care homes in Hedgemans Road or Tilney Road, and this proposal will not therefore significantly affect the character of the area.

### ***Parking and traffic generation***

The Council's maximum parking standard for care homes is 1 space per 4 residents and 1 space for every 2 full time equivalent staff. With 3 residents and 2 staff the maximum on-site parking requirement is therefore 2 spaces. However, it is highly unlikely that any resident will own a car, and the parking demand and traffic generated by 2 staff is unlikely to be any greater than that caused by a large family. Parking is available on Hedgemans Road alongside the allotments.

### ***Noise nuisance and compromised security caused by the occupants***

The planning policy preference for care homes to utilise detached houses is in order to minimise possible disturbance to residents. However, there are a very limited number of detached houses in the Borough. The application house does have the advantage of no neighbour on one side (where it adjoins the allotments), and the proposal is for only 3 residents. Two of the bedrooms are located on the west side of the house adjacent to the

allotments, thus reducing the likelihood of noise nuisance being caused to the attached neighbour at no. 114. The existing house could accommodate a family with four children and it is entirely possible that the proposed use would cause no more nuisance than a family of this size. The proposed care home would have 24 hour supervision.

The assumption that the future occupants of the house would in some way threaten the security of local residents, although an understandable apprehension, it makes assumptions about the likely character of the future occupants which cannot really be part of a planning decision. Should any issues of this nature arise they would have to be dealt with under the inspection and registration regime of the National Care Standards Commission and in the normal way through the police.

### ***Conclusion***

The proposal is unlikely to generate any more traffic or parking demand, than if the property continues in family occupation. Under normal circumstances, the use cannot be said to be likely to give rise to any greater noise nuisance than if the house is occupied by a single large family. On the basis of the planning issues involved, it is considered that this proposal is acceptable.

### **Recommendation**

That permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Q3 Matching Facing Materials
- 2) The windows to the proposed rear dormer shall be fitted obscure glazed windows only which shall thereafter be permanently maintained as such.