

REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT

04 October 2011

Subject Heading:

P1067.11 – Will Perrin Court, Guysfield Drive, Rainham

Conversion of Will Perrin Court from sheltered housing into a hostel.

(Application received 13th July 2011)

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

**Local Development Framework,
London Plan, Planning Policy
Statements/Guidance Notes**

Financial summary:

None

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	[]
Excellence in education and learning	[]
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	[]
Value and enhance the life of every individual	[X]
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	[]

SUMMARY

This application relates to Will Perrin Court which is currently a vacant building, formerly used for Sheltered Housing. The site is located directly east of the Health & Welfare Clinic on South End Road, to the rear of properties along South End Road, Guysfield Drive and Guysfield Close, Rainham.

The proposal is for the conversion of the existing vacant building into a Hostel for homeless people.

Staff consider the relevant issues to particularly include the principle of the development, the effect of the development upon the character of the street scene, the impact upon the amenities of existing adjoining residential occupiers, amenity space and car parking provision for the existing and proposed occupiers and highways considerations.

Although Members will wish to make a balanced judgement on the issues arising from this application, on balance, Staff recommend that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission be granted subject to the planning conditions set out below:

1) Time Limit: The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2) Landscaping: No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and shrubs on the site, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for the protection in the course of development. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised within the scheme shall be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In accordance with Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to enhance the visual amenities of the development, and that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

3) In accordance with plans: The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications.

Reason:

The Local Planning Authority consider it essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted. Also, in order that the development accords with Policy DC61 of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

4) Refuse storage: Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, provision shall be made for the storage of refuse and recycling awaiting collection according to details which shall previously have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of amenity of occupiers of the development and also the visual amenity of the development and the locality generally, and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

5) Cycle storage: Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, cycle storage of a type and in a location previously submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall be provided and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason:

In the interests of providing a wide range of facilities for non-motor car residents, in the interests of sustainability and in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC36.

6) Secure by Design: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved a full and detailed application for the Secured by Design award scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, setting out how the principles and practices of the Secured by Design Scheme are to be incorporated. Once approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Havering Crime Prevention Design Advisor the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason:

In the interest of creating safer, sustainable communities and to reflect guidance in PPS1 and Policies CP17 and DC63 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

7) Details of CCTV: No development shall take place until such time as precise details of CCTV cameras, including details to control the extent of their area of vision, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved and maintained in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason:

In the interests of security and in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC63.

8) Management Scheme: Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted, the applicant shall submit in writing a management scheme setting out details of the overall site and resident management. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved and maintained in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason:

In the interests of security and local amenity and in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC61 and DC63.

9) Parking: Before the building(s) hereby permitted is first occupied, provision shall be made within the site for 15 car parking spaces (in accordance with Drawing Nr: 2-61023/206 Revision A) and thereafter this provision shall be made permanently available for use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that adequate car parking provision is made off street in the interests of highway safety.

10) Boundary treatment: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of all boundary treatment shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatment shall be erected in accordance with the agreed details prior to the commencement of the approved use to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and maintained permanently thereafter.

Reason:

In the interests of site security and visual amenity.

11) External lighting: Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of all external lighting within the site shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved lighting shall be

installed in accordance with the agreed details prior to the commencement of the approved use to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of amenity.

INFORMATIVES

1. Reason for Approval:

It is considered that the proposal satisfies the relevant criteria of Policy DC61 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

2. The applicant is advised that planning approval does not constitute approval for changes to the public highway. Highway Authority approval will only be given after suitable details have been submitted, considered and agreed. Any proposals which involve building over the public highway as managed by the London Borough of Havering, will require a licence and the applicant must contact StreetCare, Traffic and Engineering on 01708 433750 to commence the Submission / Licence Approval process.

3. The developer, their representatives and contractors are advised that planning permission does not discharge the requirements under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004. Formal notifications and approval will be needed for any highway works (including temporary works) required during the construction of the development.

4. The applicant is advised that if construction materials are proposed to be kept on the highway during construction works then they will need to apply for a license from the Council.

5. In aiming to satisfy Condition 6 the applicant should seek the advice of the Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor. The services of the local Police CPDA is available free of charge through Havering Development and Building Control or Romford Police Station, 19 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM1 3BJ." It is the policy of the local planning authority to consult with the Borough CPDA in the discharging of community safety condition(s).

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application site relates to a Council owned property formerly used for Sheltered Accommodation which is currently vacant. The site is located directly east of the Health & Welfare Clinic on South End Road, to the rear of properties along South End Road, Guysfield Drive and Guysfield Close, Rainham.
- 1.2 The site measures 0.45ha. Will Perrin Court is a 2-storey flat roofed building, measuring approximately 5.5m in height with a floor area of 2150sq metres. Currently there are 36 sheltered units. The main entrance to the site is from Guysfield Drive, towards the south with a secondary access towards the rear, from Guysfield Close. The site has preserved trees (TPO Nr. 3-08).
- 1.3 The character of the area is mainly residential with 2-storey terraced and semi-detached dwellings surrounding the site (towards the north, east, south and west). Other than residential, there is a health centre next to the site.

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The Council is in receipt of a planning application seeking permission to convert the existing vacant Will Perrin Court which was formerly used for Sheltered Housing for the elderly, into a Hostel for homeless people. The proposal will provide temporary supported accommodation for single people or families requiring accommodation in an emergency whilst permanent solutions are being sought.
- 2.2 Externally the proposal would involve minor changes. To the front, the existing entrance doors will be replaced with aluminium doors to improve security of the building. The industrial screen to the side of the building will be replaced with a new perforated metal screen which will be colour coded. There will be a number of minor alterations to the eastern elevation, mainly replacing windows and doors to be matching aluminium.
- 2.3 The proposal would involve general internal refurbishment works in order that all units have their own shower room, creating 2 fully accessible units and conversion of the existing warden's flat into additional studios. Overall there will be an increase in the number of units from 39 to 46, consisting of 12 x 1-bed flats, 32 x studio flats, 2 x wheelchair accessible flats, a staff room and training room area. The footprint of the building will remain as existing.

2.4 The existing car park to the front of the site will be enlarged to allow additional parking and also provide accessible spaces and an additional service / van parking space.

2.5 Revised drawings have been received with the following changes:

- 1) Addition of gates to the rear car parking area which will also have some fencing attached
- 2) Additional notes about raising the height of the fencing to 2.0m, the majority of the rear of the site already has fencing this high.
- 3) Changed the pram stores to be general stores
- 4) Added secure Bike parking
- 5) Added a children's play area in the courtyard
- 6) Provide fencing around the courtyard area
- 7) Added notes for the door types and windows types.
- 8) Provided an additional door to access the two rear most flats from the corridor to provide a more straight forward route.

3. Planning History

3.1 There is no history relevant to this application.

4. Consultations/Representations

4.1 The application has been advertised on site and in the local press as a major development given the floor space being 2150sq metres. Neighbour notification letters have also been sent to 270 local addresses. At the time of drafting this report, 136 letters of representation have been received, raising objections in respect of the following:

- The development would not be a positive contribution to the area or community
- Additional pressure on local services (i.e. doctors, schools, social services)
- Concerns over management and staffing of hostel
- Unsuitable development in residential area
- Safety of children, elderly people and local residents will be compromised
- Antisocial behaviour
- Increase in traffic / parking problems / congestion
- Additional noise and disturbance
- Devalue property values
- Drug and alcohol abuse in the area
- The close proximity of the proposal to local schools
- The close proximity of the proposal to the off-licenses
- The 24/7 use of the building and activities associated with CCTV usage
- Parking will dominate and lack of landscaping
- Harmful to character and appearance
- Additional noise / disturbance and odours
- Overlooking and loss of privacy

- Light disturbance
- Influx of people into the local area
- Bin storage area will be unsightly and additional pollution
- Increase in crime rates
- No play area for children would result in children playing on street

Amongst the objection letters were a letter from the Residents Committee with an attached petition signed by 1000 people with an additional 215 signature received (total 1215). It was noted that the covering letter state 1472 people signed the petition however, Staff counted 1000 on the original plus 215 signatures and addresses.

A letter of objection was received from Councillor Michael Deon Burton, raising objections in respect of:

- increase in traffic
- additional noise
- the use is inappropriate in this location
- antisocial behaviour
- disturbance

Councillor Burton also sent in 222 pro-forma letters.

All issues raised in additional petition and pro-forma covering letters have been covered above.

4.2 The Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor raised concerns in respect of the application. These concerns will be discussed in more detail in the section on “community safety issues”.

5. Relevant Policies

5.1 LDF Core Strategy Development Plan Document

CP1 – Housing Supply
 CP2 – Sustainable Communities
 CP17 - Design

5.2 LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

DC2 – Housing mix and density
 DC3 – Housing design and layout
 DC4 – Conversions to residential and subdivision of residential uses
 DC5 - Specialist accommodation
 DC21 – Major developments and open space
 DC32 – The road network
 DC33 – Car parking
 DC34 – Walking
 DC35 – Cycling
 DC36 – Servicing

DC40 – Waste recycling
DC51 – Water supply, drainage and quality
DC55 – Noise
DC61 – Urban design
DC63 – Delivering safer places
DC72 – Planning Obligations

5.3 The London Plan (2011)

3.1 (Equal life chances for all)
3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply)
3.4 (Optimising Housing Potential)
3.8 (Housing Choice)
3.9 (Mixed and Balanced Communities)
3.16 (Protection and Enhancement of Social Infrastructure)
6.7 (Better Streets and Surface Transport)
6.9 (Cycling)
6.10 (Walking)
6.13 (Parking)
7.1 (Building London's Neighbourhoods and Communities)
7.3 (Designing out Crime)
7.4 (Local Character)
7.21 (Trees and Woodlands)

5.4 Government Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing
Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 – Transport
Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 – Planning and Noise

6. **Staff Comments**

6.1 The main issues in this case are considered to be the principle of the development, the effect of the development upon the character of the street scene, the impact upon the amenities of existing adjoining residential occupiers, amenity space and car parking provision for the existing and proposed occupiers and highways considerations.

6.2 **Principle of Development**

6.2.1 Policy CP1 states that where sites which are suitable for housing become available outside the Green Belt, the employment areas, the commercial areas, Romford town centre and the district and local centres, the Council will not normally permit their use for other purposes. The location of the site complies with these criteria. Although a change of use is proposed in this instance, the residential use of the building would be maintained (the change of use relates to the number and nature of occupation of the units). The proposal is therefore acceptable in land use terms.

6.2.2 Policy DC4 states that planning permission will only be granted for the conversion/demolition/subdivision of residential uses to residential communal uses (including bedsits, house in multiple occupation and nursing homes) provided that:

- The original property is detached and well separated from neighbouring dwellings
- The nature of the new use does not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area and will not be likely to give rise to significantly greater levels of noise and disturbance to occupiers of nearby residential properties than would an ordinary single family dwelling
- It satisfies policy DC5.

6.2.3 With regards to the criteria set out in Policy DC4, Will Perrin Court is detached and well separated from neighbouring dwellings. The impact of the development in terms of the nature of the use and potential levels of noise and disturbance to nearby residential properties will be assessed elsewhere in this report.

6.2.4 Policy DC5 requires applications for social service residential projects to satisfy the following criteria:

- The proposal is located within a residential area unless its scale and nature is of such that it would be inappropriate in a residential setting
- The site has reasonable pedestrian and cyclist access to shops and services
- The site is well served by public transport
- Where the conversion of an existing residential property is involved, Policy DC4 is satisfied
- The proposal should comply with Policy DC61 by being a high standard urban design, does not result in overshadowing, loss of sunlight, unreasonable noise and disturbance, overlooking or loss of privacy.
- Residents / visitors are able to park without detriment to highway safety, having regard to Policy DC33 and DC35.

6.2.5 Policy DC5 recognises that hostels and bedsits can provide valuable temporary housing for those who may not have access to permanent housing in the borough, particularly the non-priority homeless, students and low-paid workers.

6.2.6 Assessed against Policy DC5, the proposal is located within an established residential area and indeed, has been used as residential accommodation in the form of Sheltered Accommodation. No external works are proposed and Staff are of the opinion that the proposal is not inappropriate within this existing residential setting.

6.2.7 Turning to the other criteria set out in Policy DC5, although the site has a low PTAL rating (PTAL 1 – 2), Will Perrin Court is within walking distance

from local shops and services (approximately 180m) and Southend Road is served by bus services to Hornchurch and Cherry Tree crossing. No extensions are proposed to the building which can have an impact on neighbouring amenity however, the impact of the development on the street scene and local character and its impact on neighbouring amenity will be assessed in detail elsewhere in the report. Similarly with parking, although Staff consider the level of parking provision to be acceptable, it will be assessed in more detail elsewhere in the report.

6.2.8 Staff are of the opinion that the proposal satisfy the in principle criteria of Policies CP1, DC4 and DC5 of the LDF with detailed consideration on specific matters of the Policies considered later in the report.

6.2.9 The need for accommodation is considered to be a material consideration in this case. The Council has recently reviewed all its hostel accommodation. The February 2011 Cabinet Report highlights the Council's statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless people in the borough. The needs of homeless people are set out in Havering's Supporting People Strategy.

6.2.10 The Cabinet Report proposed that the Council's hostel accommodation is provided on two sites rather than the current four dispersed sites. The first site being Will Perrin Court which has been vacant for some time and changing the use of this building would enable closure of three current hostels.

6.2.11 According to a statement provided by the applicant, the term "hostel" can sometimes have negative connotations and Members may find it more appropriate to think of the refurbished Will Perrin Court as providing temporary accommodation for families with children and single people requiring accommodation in an emergency. The applicant confirmed that the primary users of temporary hostel accommodation within the borough are families with, or expecting, children who have been excluded by parents, other family members or friends because they can no longer continue to accommodate them. It is therefore extremely rare for the Council to house people from out of the Borough in temporary hostel accommodation.

6.2.12 For the avoidance of doubt, the Council's hostels provide *temporary* accommodation, they are not used for longer term accommodation. The current average stay is 12 weeks.

6.3 Layout and amenity space provision

6.3.1 Policies DC4 and DC5 advises that planning permission will only be granted for proposals involving conversions to residential provided the certain criteria are satisfied. These criteria state that proposals should provide adequate parking, not result in a conflict with adjoining uses, not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy, provide adequate amenity space and ensure that the living rooms of new units do not abut the bedrooms of adjoining dwellings. Policy DC4 advises that proposals for residential communal uses

will only be granted where the use would be within a detached property and well separated from neighbouring dwellings whilst Policy DC5 requires such development to be located within a residential area unless its scale and nature is of such that it would be inappropriate in a residential setting. Both policies also advise that proposals for communal uses must not give rise to significantly greater levels of noise and disturbance. The provisions of Policy DC4 and DC5 will be considered throughout this report.

- 6.3.2 Having regard to the previous use of the building as Sheltered Accommodation and the fact that the proposal is for reuse of an existing building for residential use within a predominantly residential area with no external alterations, Staff are of the view that the proposed use of the building would not adversely conflict with adjoining uses. The building is detached and a sufficient distance from neighbouring dwellings and would in the context of Policy DC4 have no lounge / living rooms abutting bedrooms of existing neighbouring properties.
- 6.3.3 This proposal would see the internal conversion of the existing building to provide 12 x 1-bed flats, 32 x studio flats and 2 x wheelchair accessible flats. Policy DC4 states that studio flats will not be permitted. Policy DC4 is however not aimed at specialist accommodation and in this instance, it is important for Members to note that the proposal, although providing studio flats, is not for residential accommodation in the usual sense of housing long-term occupiers. The proposal is a temporary solution for homeless people awaiting to be housed elsewhere and average stay at any of the Council's hostels is currently 12 weeks. A clear distinction can therefore be made and the proposal for a number of studio flats would be acceptable under these special circumstances.
- 6.3.4 Amenity space provides many benefits in terms of opportunities for recreation and leisure and enhancing quality of life through improved health. Members will be aware that the Council has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document for Residential Design. This document does not specifically refer to the need to provide amenity space within a development of the nature proposed. Notwithstanding, the site is within an established residential area and has a number of mature trees and grassed areas in particular towards the west and east of the building. Revised drawings have been submitted to indicate a secure children's play area within the court yard towards the rear. This and the soft landscaped areas within the site, would provide some form of amenity for its occupiers. Again, in light of the nature of the type of accommodation provided and given that it is for a temporary period only, Staff are of the opinion that the level of amenity space on the site is adequate in this instance.

6.4 Impact on character and street scene

- 6.4.1 Given that the proposal primarily comprises a change of use of an existing building, rather than the erection of a new building, the effect of the proposal upon the character of the street scene is negligible. To the front, the existing entrance doors will be replaced with aluminium doors to improve

security of the building. The industrial screen to the side of the building will be replaced with a new perforated metal screen. There will be no extensions to the building and the majority of changes will be to extend the existing car park. Staff are therefore of the opinion that the proposal relate satisfactorily to the existing street scene character in terms of siting and design. Policies DC5 and DC61 is therefore considered to be satisfied.

6.5 Community Safety issues

6.5.1 Hostel accommodation can raise concerns relating to “fear of crime” with the public especially, although not exclusively, those living close to proposed developments. However, given appropriate management, the occupants of these properties should not cause significantly greater impacts than other similar users or indeed residents of private homes. Providing accommodation for homeless people can often provide a wider benefit which weighs against local anxiety / fear of crime amongst local residents. Notwithstanding, the increased intensity of the use can result in concerns related to noise and overlooking however, these concerns are unassociated with the background of the occupants.

6.5.2 Amongst others, the main issues raised in objections were in respect of:

- Management and staffing of hostel
- Safety
- Antisocial behaviour
- Drug and alcohol abuse in the area
- Increase in crime rates

6.5.3 The Council’s Crime Prevention and Design Advisor raised the following main concerns:

- the location is in an area which already suffers a disproportionate amount of crime. The proposal may raise the potential for crime and fear of crime
- future occupiers may be vulnerable to crime, unless the building provides conditions that discourage crime and the fear of crime
- staffing and the type of people who would be given temporary accommodation cannot be guaranteed.
- the lack of parking spaces may result in on-street parking, leaving vehicles vulnerable to crime
- concerns were raised in respect of the building itself from a design point of view

6.5.4 Policy DC63 of the LDF requires new development to address safety and security in the design of new development. Following discussions with the Borough Crime Prevention Design Advisor the applicant has submitted a statement to address the community safety issues arising from the proposed development. The applicant responded to the above concerns by stating the following:

- Although the area suffers from high crime rates already, the proposal would bring a vacant building back into use. The proposal will ensure that the building will be staffed and introduce activity, potentially reducing anti-social behaviour and crime
- Strict residence rules are in place and participating in any form of anti-social behaviour will result in eviction
- Local residents will be able to contact staff, should any problems arise
- Staff will be present 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- There will be constant CCTV surveillance
- Havering's statistics show that homeless people are not drug and / or alcohol addicts, nor people who are vulnerable because they have been in prison.
- The 15 parking spaces does not include the area to the rear of the site which can provide a further 6 spaces to be used by Will Perrin employees

6.5.5 In addition, revised drawings have been received addressing the concerns raised by the Council's Crime Prevention and Design Advisor. These include changes to the fencing and gates, storage areas and secure cycle parking, a children's play area, secure windows and doors and changes to access routes.

6.5.6 In making this application, the applicant has given a clear statement of intent which indicates that the rooms are to be let to those who are homeless mainly to households with children, pregnant woman with no other children, people with physical disabilities, mental illnesses, 16 / 17 year olds, people who are of old age or people who are vulnerable due to health or domestic violence.

6.5.7 In light of the above information provided by the applicant in respect of the type of people for which temporary accommodation is provided by the Council and, the Council's management schemes at current homeless hostels of a similar nature, Staff are of the opinion that the proposal would not give rise to an increase in levels of crime or anti-social behaviour which will compromise safety of surrounding residents. With an appropriate management scheme in place, activities, comings and goings at the site can be monitored and this can be required by means of an appropriate planning condition. Members are invited to apply their judgement to this aspect of the proposal.

6.6 Impact on Amenity

6.6.1 Policy DC61 states that planning permission will not be granted where the proposal results in unacceptable overshadowing, loss of sunlight/daylight, overlooking or loss of privacy to existing and new properties.

6.6.2 The use would provide 46 units, most of which are either 1-bedroom or studio flats. At present, Will Perrin Court has 41 units. The proposal would therefore arguably see a rise in the number of people present on the site at any one time however, Staff are of the opinion that this would not be

significantly more compared to its previous use as Sheltered Accommodation.

- 6.6.3 Whilst Staff give notice to the concerns raised in representations relating to antisocial behaviour, Members attention is again drawn to fact that the use is mostly for single parents and families in need of temporary accommodation until they can be housed elsewhere permanently.
- 6.6.4 In addition, Members may be aware that the Council currently provides this service to four well managed hostels currently located in residential areas. According to the information provided by the applicant, these hostels do not disrupt other residents due to effective management plans which are in place. The management of Will Perrin Court, similar to other existing hostels, will include:
- 24/7 staff on site (overnight staff and not simply sleep-in cover)
 - Full CCTV coverage
 - Controlled entry to prevent overnight stays by those not resident at the scheme
- 6.6.5 Residents are required to abide by strict management rules as part of their licence agreement. All residents are required to sign and abide by a copy of the licence agreement. The licence agreement states that:
- residents must not do or allow to be done anything on the premises which may be a nuisance, annoyance or danger to others
 - Residents may not bring, keep or consume any alcohol or drugs on the premises
- 6.6.6 Given that Will Perrin Court will be used as temporary hostel accommodation, the usual legal provisions that require the issue of notice and a court order before eviction can be carried out, does not apply. Evictions can therefore be carried out immediately if necessary.
- 6.6.7 In light of the above, Members will note that the Council already has strict and effective management procedures in place and applies strict policies relating to the occupancy of temporary hostel accommodation. Staff are therefore of the opinion that any issues relating to potential antisocial behaviour raised in representations would not be harmful to the amenities of local residents.
- 6.6.8 With regards to the impact of the proposal upon the amenities of existing adjoining residential occupiers, again, given that the proposal comprises a change of use rather than major new building works, Staff consider that the impacts arising from the physical elements of the scheme would be minimal.
- 6.6.9 Staff are of the opinion that noise levels may increase due to an increase in the intensity of the proposed use. The building is however detached and removed from neighbouring dwellings and would therefore not result in direct noise translation between buildings. Any potential noise would be due

to an increase in the number of people on the site. Staff are however of the opinion that the number of people on the site would not significantly increase compared to the existing use of the site. General noise and activities associated with the proposed residential use is not considered to be unreasonable and is similar to what can be expected if the use were to remain Sheltered Accommodation.

6.6.10 Insofar as the wider impact along Guysfield Drive and Guysfield Close are concerned, given the nature of the client group proposed to occupy the building and the likely lower level of associated car ownership, it is unlikely that the additional traffic movements generated by the proposal would cause an unacceptable level of additional noise and disturbance upon the adjoining roads.

6.9 Parking and Highway Issues

6.9.1 The site will be accessed from the existing access via Guysfield Drive and Guysfield Close. The existing car park will be extended to provide a total of 12 parking spaces, an additional space for services / a van and 2 additional disabled bays. The parking area would consist of a mixture of tarmac, block paving and paving slabs.

6.9.2 The site is located within a low ranked Public Transport Accessibility Level Zone (PTAL 1-2), as defined in DC2 of the LDF. Annex 5 of the LDF requires provision for hostel type accommodation at a rate of 1 space per 2 resident spaces. On the basis of the number of 'bed spaces' proposed (44), 22 No. car parking spaces are required to serve the development. In this instance, a total of 15 No. spaces are proposed (which includes the service / van space and 2 No. disabled spaces). Annex 5 further states that the level of parking provision required will depend on the type of hostel proposed owing to the wide variation in parking demand generated by different types of hostels.

6.9.3 The Highways Authority objects against the lack of parking space provision as the 46 units would require 23 units based on the Council's parking matrix in Annex 5 of the LDF. The applicant did however indicated that in addition to the 15 spaces for residents, a further 6 would be provided to the rear of the premises for use by Will Perrin Court staff.

6.9.4 PPS 3 places an emphasis upon a reduced need for car parking spaces and encourages local planning authorities to be flexible in allowing housing developments with limited or no off-street car parking in areas with good public transport accessibility and where effective on-street parking control is present or can be secured. The site has a low PTAL rating of 1 – 2 however, Southend Road is served by a bus route leading towards Hornchurch and Cherry Tree crossing. The site is within 180m of local shops and services. Although there are no parking controls in place along Guysfield Drive, there are no known traffic / parking problems. In Staff's opinion, given the likelihood of low car ownership levels by future occupants, it would be unreasonable to refuse permission due to a lack of 9 parking

spaces. Members are however invited to apply their judgement to this aspect of the proposal.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposal is considered to comply with the aims and objectives of Policies CP1, DC4 and DC5 of the LDF by providing valuable temporary accommodation for those who may not have direct access to permanent housing in the borough. The proposal is close to local shops and services and a bus route which serves Southend Road, is within walking distance. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.
- 7.2 The development would introduce minor changes to the external appearance with no extensions or changes to the general appearance of the building. The proposal would therefore be acceptable in street scene terms with no harmful impact on the character of the local area. The proposal provides sufficient amenity space on the site and revised drawings indicate a children's play area. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy DC61 of the LDF.
- 7.3 Staff acknowledge that the proposal would increase the intensity of the use on the site by providing 46 units (instead of the existing 36 units). It is however not considered that the increase in number of people would be significant enough to result in harmful levels of noise, activities or disturbance which would be detrimental to the amenities of local residents. Should Members be minded to grant permission, it is recommended that a management plan is required by condition. The aims and objectives of Policy DC61 are therefore satisfied.
- 7.4 Careful consideration is given to anti-social behaviour, crime and fear of crime issues. Staff are of the opinion that the proposal would bring a vacant unit back into use, introducing activity to the site. Assessing the type of people usually taken in by the Council's other, similar hostels for homeless people, Staff are not of the opinion that homeless people should automatically be associated with issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour. With an appropriate management scheme in place, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to any community safety issues which would leave local residents vulnerable. Members are invited to apply their judgement to this aspect of the proposal.
- 7.5 The proposal would not provide the number of parking spaces required in accordance with Annex 5 of the LDF as 9 parking spaces will be provided (15 spaces required). In light of potential low car ownership and proximity to local shops, services and the Southend Road bus service, Staff are of the opinion that the level of car parking spaces is acceptable in this instance. There are no known parking problems along Guysfield Drive and it is not considered that that proposal would give rise to highway or parking issues that would conflict with local amenity.

7.6 On balance, Staff consider the proposal to be acceptable and recommend that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None.

Legal Implications and Risks

This application is considered on merits and independently from the Council's interest as owner of the site.

Human Resources Implications and Risks

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

The provision of hostel service by the Council is meeting the needs of the some of the most vulnerable members of the community. The approach recommended in this report will ensure that the level and quality of provision is maintained and improved. This includes appropriate provision for residents with disabilities at Will Perrin Court.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms, plans and supporting statements received on 13th July 2011.