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Fire Protection
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My ref: 47884

Your ref: 24/02758/FP

Date: 9 January 2025

Dear Sir,

Planning application : –

Guysfield Care Home. Willian Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 2AB

Thank you for taking the opportunity to meet with me and my colleagues this week regarding the planning application for Guysfield Residential Home. Whilst the Fire & Rescue Service are not a statutory consultee under the **Town and Country Planning Act 1990**, I would take the opportunity to summarise our comments discussed during our meeting on 8th January 2025. I make particular emphasis on the guidance provided in **Approved Document B, Volume 2, Section B5 – “Access and facilities for the fire service”**.

Access to the building

From the plan provided (4870-ORA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-31004 Proposed site layout) it does not appear that adequate access to the building is provided. Based upon the plans provided total floor area is estimated to be 4150m² (approx.), with a modest estimate of the perimeter at 185m. Based on the guidance provided in the above guidance document, this would relate to fire service vehicle access, for a pumping appliance, to a minimum of 15% of the building's perimeter (28m) **ADB, V2, Table 15.1**. I would also draw you attention to the need for doors within those elevations, as detailed in **ADB, V2,15.3**.

As discussed, a fire strategy for the building does not appear to have been considered; it is assumed that progressive horizontal evacuation (PHE) will be utilised. For effective intervention, and to support an evacuation strategy of this type, it is essential that the FRS has access around the building. In order to make reasonable provision within the site to gain access to the building **ADB, V2, B5(2)**, vehicular access should also be provided at the southeast staircase.

Vehicle turning

The transport statement provided within the documentation provides tracking data based upon a Dennis Sabre fire appliance which is significantly smaller than vehicles currently in service. Swept path analysis should, therefore, be reviewed based on vehicles in our fleet (information shared by email on 20/12/24). It is noted that the proposal does not provide suitable turning facility for a fire appliance and would require a reversing manoeuvre of some 40m around an S-bend. This is contrary to guidance provided in **ADB, V2, 15.10** and **Diagram15.3**. Plans should therefore be reviewed to provide a suitable turning point, or circular route which negates the need for turning.

Further considerations:-

Fire suppression

Changes to the above guidance document, to be included in March 2025, will make the inclusion of a sprinkler system a requirement in care homes. It is therefore strongly recommended that provision is made within the project plan at this stage. The inclusion of fire suppression provides a significant benefit when residents require assistance to evacuate in the event of fire.

Planning to support the fire strategy

The fire strategy for the building should inform the building design, this is particularly important where PHE is to be employed. A fire engineer should be consulted at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the building design supports the needs of its occupants. Approved document B includes some fundamental considerations for the use of PHE in this context, "Residential care homes" 2.33 – 2.40.

The Fire Authority is committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure that the premises supports the safety of its occupants upon occupation.

If you require any further information or clarification, please contact me via administration.cfs@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,



Stuart Joiner
Fire Safety Inspector