

K & L Quality Care Consultancy

Our Ref : 26/01677/PRE

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Date : 10th August 2026

FAO: Karen McDonnell

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Pre Application Advice: Proposed Change of Use from HMO to supported living unit
32 Mendip Way, Great Ashby, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 6GE**

I refer to your pre-application submission in respect of the above site, I am writing to you following an examination of the information submitted.

I would emphasise that this does not constitute a formal determination and is without prejudice to any subsequent formal planning application.

For your information the relevant government guidance and policies from the development plans are set out below.

Development site

The application site comprises No. 32 Mendip Way, a semi-detached three storey dwelling within a residential area of Great Ashby.

Relevant planning history

No previous history relevant to the proposal.

Consultation responses

Environmental Health -

For a full application we would need to see a Selection Criteria document laying out the type of individuals that will be occupying the premises and the type of care they require. We would also need to see an Operational Management document detailing how the premises will be managed.

A condition would likely be added should a full application be made to ensure that the premises runs in line with the Selection Criteria and Operational Management documents.

Proposal

North Herts Council, PO Box 7075, Manchester, M28 8JX

Pre-application advice is sought for a change of use of the dwelling from an existing HMO to a supported living unit (use class C2).

Relevant policies

NPPF

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places;

North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011-2031:

Policy SP2 Settlement hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy T1 Assessment of transport matters

Policy T2 Parking

Policy D1 Sustainable design

Policy D3 Protecting living conditions

Policy NE4 Biodiversity and Geological Sites

Discussion

The main material considerations relating to this development concern:

- The principle of the development.
- The character and appearance of the development.
- Impacts upon neighbour amenity.
- The standard of amenity afforded to future occupiers.
- The requirement for biodiversity.

Principle – Defining the Use (C3 to C2)

The application is within a residential area within the adjusted settlement boundary of Stevenage/Great Ashby, as defined by the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031. The proposal seeks the change of use of the dwelling from use class C3 to C2 (Residential Institution), to operate as a supported living unit. Policy SP2 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 would therefore be complied with.

The site is approximately 400m from nearby bus stops on Great Ashby Way, providing public transport access to the wider area for staff to and from the site. As such, it is considered that the site would be in a location that could be accessed by members of staff and occupants via sustainable methods of transport if required. A shop, school and other amenities are found approximately 400m from the site on Whitehorse Lane to the south. The location is therefore sufficiently sustainable.

Changes of use from Class C3 to Class C2 require planning permission and are considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the use, intensity and impact.

The submitted planning statement advises that the property would be staffed, with staff not living within the property and operating on a shift pattern. Therefore, as they are not permanent residents of No. 32 Mendip Way the use class would fall within C2. Furthermore, I consider that the C2 use class (Residential Institution) would apply given the building would be used for providing accommodation and support for vulnerable people, it would be

managed by a provider, would have some degree of turnover of the residents, and would involve the housing of individuals that are not related or associated with one another.

To meet the requirements sought by Environmental Health, a planning application would require the inclusion of an Operational Management Plan, including details of:

- Selection Criteria (the types of individuals occupying the premises and the type of care required).
- Staffing and staff rotation times and arrangements.
- Any noise mitigation required if necessary.
- Parking arrangements.

Any permission would be granted subject to a condition requiring the operation of the premises be in accordance with these documents and details.

Character and Appearance

The proposal seeks no external changes to the building. The building, as viewed from the exterior would retain its residential character and appearance. Internal changes are proposed to convert some of the rooms into bedrooms with bathrooms. The predominant consideration of character impacts relates to the nature of the use.

The use would be residential in nature and the dwelling is set within an existing residential street. Given the low intensity of its use, it is considered that the use would not appear out of place with the local residential dwellings. It can therefore be considered that the proposed use would likely operate without significant changes to the character of the property and area.

Neighbour Amenity

No external alterations are proposed and would therefore the alterations to convert the dwelling into the proposed use would not result in harms to neighbour amenity. The nature of the use is advised as operating in a similar nature as a domestic household, with no anticipated noise, light or resident activities that would result in harms to the amenities of neighbours to the site. Subject to consultation with Environmental Health at the application stage, the proposed use is not considered to occasion unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupants.

Parking and Highways

The dwelling appears to benefit from parking within the parking court to the rear of the site. The planning statement advises that the use would not result in significant traffic generation compared to the existing/previous lawful use. Staff will operate on a rota/shift basis and would therefore limit vehicle movements throughout the day outside of handover times. The site is in a sustainable location, and where necessary, benefits from on-street parking. Parking impacts would therefore not be unacceptable.

Environmental Implications

The development would fall within the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption for delivering 10% BNG and is not considered to be required to deliver measurable BNG given the nature of the proposed works, as required by Policy NE4 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031.

Conclusion

The proposal is not considered to be objectionable in principle. It is recommended that comments above be considered prior to making any formal submission for planning permission for these works.

Any advice given by Council Officers for pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision of the council with regards to future planning permission or other consents. The above comments are not binding on any future decision of the Local Planning Authority.

Thomas Howe

Planning Officer

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