

KEY INFORMATION

Ward Craigeibank

Proposal

Change of use from offices to children's nursery with associated offices

Address

Belsize House
Belsize Road
Broughty Ferry
Dundee DD5 1NF

Applicant

Pelamar Property Limited
31 Hawkhill
Dundee DD1 1NF

Agent

G D Architectural Services
101 Brook Street
Monifieth

Registered

11 March 2002

Case Officer

Charlie Walker



Proposed Children's Nursery at Belsize Road

This change of use from offices to children's nursery with associated offices is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed nursery fully complies with Policy SCE4 of the Local Plan and the amendments to this Policy approved by the Committee in May 2000. Adequate provision is made for parking within the site and the development will not adversely impact on residential amenity. The development is therefore recommended for **APPROVAL** with conditions.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought to change the use of the ground floor of the premises to a nursery for 50 children and use the upper floor as offices for this nursery and other nurseries within the applicants ownership. No changes to this Category C listed building or its grounds are proposed. The applicants state that the existing areas of hardstanding can accommodate up to 31 cars. It is proposed to use some 500 sq. metres of garden ground to the front of the building as an outdoor play area for the nursery.
- The site lies within a residential area where Policy H1 seeks to protect residential amenity. Policy SCE4 sets out criteria for nursery schools including the provision of car parking and outdoor play areas.
- 3 letters were received from the occupiers of flats on Belsize Road. The letters do not object to the proposed development but do point out that there are parking difficulties in the locality. The residents are concerned that overspill parking from the application site might occupy residents parking spaces on Belsize Road. One of the letters also seeks an assurance that the children's outdoor play area would not cause a disturbance and that any signage would be appropriate for the area.
- The proposed development fully complies with Policy SCE4 of the adopted Local Plan and the amendments to this Policy approved by the Committee. Furthermore it is not considered that the use of the building as a nursery will adversely impact on the amenities of the surrounding residents. The level of parking proposed for the nursery is well in excess of that required by Policy SCE4 and parking for the upper floor offices exceeds the Council's standards for this development.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the ground floor of the premises to a children's nursery and use the upper floor as offices for this nursery and other nurseries within the applicants ownership. The applicants state that the nursery would be for 50 children with a staffing complement of 15 (of whom 13 would be full time and 2 part time). They state that an additional 10 to 12 people would be employed on the upper floor of the premises to administer a number of nurseries that they own.

No internal or external changes to the building are proposed. Externally the access arrangements are to lock the gate at the junction of Strathern Road and Belsize Road and to use the existing access at Belsize Road for all access to and from the site. The applicants state that the existing areas of hardstanding can accommodate up to 31 cars. It is proposed to use some 500 sq. metres of garden ground to the front of the building as an outdoor play area for the nursery.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises Belsize House and its grounds and is some 0.3 ha in extent. Belsize House is a substantial arts and crafts villa erected in 1910 and is a Category C listed building. It has been sympathetically extended on its eastern side in more recent times. The building has been used as offices since the 1950's and is currently vacant.

There are 2 access points to the building, 1 at the junction of Strathern Road and Belsize Road and the other on Belsize Road. There is a large parking area to the north of the building surfaced in "grasscrete" to disguise its impact and there are lawn areas to the south of the building. There are a number of attractive mature trees on the site.

The site is surrounded on all sides by housing. The flatted dwellings to the west of the site have on street parking at Belsize Road.

POLICY BACKGROUND

The site lies within a residential area where Policy H1 seeks to protect

residential amenity but does not preclude the retention or sensitive introduction of services or facilities which are desirable within residential areas.

Policy SCE4 sets out criteria for nursery schools including the provision of car parking and outdoor play areas. As these details were not provided at the time of the original application the development was advertised as potentially contravening this policy.

In May 2000 the Council adopted revisions to Policy SCE4 although these changes do not have a bearing on this application. They lessen the requirements for staff parking and outdoor play space but also contain a requirement that new nurseries should not be within 250 metres of existing nurseries.

LOCAL AGENDA 21

The proposed development is considered to be sustainable and in accordance with the Council's Agenda 21 policies because it involves the



reuse of an existing building and the provision of services in an accessible location.

SITE HISTORY

There is no history of planning applications relevant to the current proposals.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and the development was advertised as a potential departure from Policy SCE4 of the adopted Local Plan. 3 letters were received

from the occupiers of flats on Belsize Road (copies available for inspection in the Members Lounge). The letters do not object to the proposed development but do point out that there are parking difficulties in the locality. The residents are concerned that overspill parking from the application site might occupy residents parking spaces on Belsize Road. One of the letters also seeks an assurance that the children's outdoor play area would not cause a disturbance and that any signage would be appropriate for the area. These issues are considered in the Observations section of this Report.

CONSULTATIONS

The Council's Forestry Officer has pointed out that there are a number of mature trees on the site which are worthy of protection.

OBSERVATIONS

The determining issues for the Committee in this instance are:

- 1 Does the proposed development comply with Policy SCE4 both as in the adopted Local Plan and as subsequently amended by the Committee?
- 2 Will the development adversely impact on the amenities enjoyed by local residents, which are protected by Policy H1 of the Plan, with particular reference to parking provision and the use of the outdoor play area.

The proposed development fully complies with Policy SCE4 of the adopted Local Plan. This policy states that nurseries are acceptable in residential areas. For a nursery of this size (50 children) it requires 500 sq. metres of outdoor play space and this is provided on the site (with ample additional ground should this be required). Parking of 1 space per 2 staff members is sought (7 spaces) and in this case the figure is exceeded by a large factor. Where there are on street parking difficulties (and in this case local residents state that there are), then there should also be provision for facilities to drop off and collect children within the site as well as 2 additional parking spaces. These facilities and ample excess

parking are proposed as part of this application.

The amendments to Policy SCE4 have no bearing on the current proposals. They reduce the requirement for outdoor play space but in this case the higher standard in the adopted Local Plan is achieved. They also reduce the requirement for staff parking and increase the requirement for visitor parking but in any case the proposed development exceeds these figures by a large margin. In addition the amendments state that the nursery should not be within 250 metres of an existing nursery and again the proposal complies with this requirement.

In terms of residential amenity issues, Policy H1 accepts the introduction of commercial uses into residential areas and Policy SCE4 considers that residential areas are appropriate for nurseries. The level of parking provision on the site is well above the Council's standards for this type of development, so there should be no overspill parking which might impact on surrounding streets. The 31 spaces proposed allows for 100% parking for all staff on the premises (well above the Local Plan requirement) with 5 extra spaces for dropping off and collecting children (again above the Local Plan requirement) and in addition turning areas are provided within the site. The proposed outdoor play area is screened from the nearest houses by a substantial hedge and fence and the road at Belsize Place. In these circumstances it is not considered that the use of this outdoor play area will adversely impact on the amenities of the surrounding residents.

It is acknowledged that there are a number of mature trees and shrubs on the site and the retention of these features is important not only to preserve the visual amenity of the area but also to screen the parking areas and the outdoor play area. A condition is proposed to protect this planting.

DESIGN

As no alterations to the building or site are proposed there are no design issues connected with this application.

CONCLUSION

The proposed nursery fully complies with Policy SCE4 of the Local Plan

and the amendments to this Policy approved by the Committee in May 2000. Adequate provision is made for parking within the site and the development will not adversely impact on residential amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The use of the upper floor of the premises shall be confined to a Class 4 office use as defined in the Use Classes Order 1997 which is directly associated with the management of children's nurseries within the applicants ownership.
- 3 Details of the provision of the outdoor play area including any enclosures and equipment shall be submitted to the Council for approval before any development is commenced and if approved the development shall be carried out only in full accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Details of an improved access to Belsize Road wide enough for 2 vehicles to pass and the internal layout of parking spaces and turning areas shall be submitted to the Council for approval before any development is commenced and if approved the development shall be carried out only in full accordance with such approved details.
- 5 The existing trees and shrubs on the site shall not be cut down, grubbed out topped, lopped, uprooted or root pruned without the written consent of the City Council. Any trees or shrubs removed without such consent or dying, or being severely damaged or diseased, shall be replaced with trees and shrubs of such size and species as may be directed by the City Council and to the standard as approved by the City Council.

Reason

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 In order to permit the Council to review this consent should there be a change in the nature of the upper floor use that could have implications for the demand for parking spaces.
- 3 In the interests of residential amenity and in order to ensure that the setting of the listed building is not adversely affected.
- 4 To ensure that adequate provision is made for access and parking within the site and that the marking out of such areas is not detrimental to the setting of the listed building.
- 5 To protect those trees and hedging which are of significant amenity value to the area and which would ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development.