

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

08 June 2023

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO: 23/0151/08 (KL)
APPLICANT: Rhondda Cynon Taff C.B.C
DEVELOPMENT: Change of use from dwelling (Use Class C3) to a childrens home (Use Class C2).
LOCATION: WILLOWFORD HOUSE, MAIN ROAD, GWAELOD-Y-GARTH, TAFF'S WELL, CARDIFF, CF15 9HJ
DATE REGISTERED: 23/02/2023
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Ton-teg

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

REASONS: Whilst there is some concern with regards to the suitability of the site for its use as a residential children's home, particularly due to its location outside of the defined settlement boundary and within a C2 flood zone, the site relates to an existing residential property and, other than an element of care and the presence of a small number of staff, the proposed use would continue to be residential in nature.

Furthermore, the proposal would not involve any significant external alterations that would impact upon the character and appearance of the application property or upon the amenity and privacy of surrounding properties, nor would it have any adverse impact upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.

REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

- The application has been submitted by, or on behalf of the Council or involving land owned by the Council, where the Council's interest is of more than a minor nature.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of an existing residential dwelling (C3) to a residential children's home (C2). The conversion would not result in any external changes to the property however, a small number of internal alterations would be made in order to facilitate the proposed use, including the subdivision of the existing living room to create a separate living room and rec room and also the creation of a ground floor W.C within the existing kitchen/dining room.

Some alterations would also be made to the garden area to provide for 6 off-street car parking spaces (1 no. disabled) along with the provision of a tarmacked driveway. Access to the site would remain as existing.

Information submitted with the application indicates that the home would be registered with Care Inspectorate Wales. It would provide 24 hour care and support for up to 3 children with varying needs who will be cared for in a safe, stable, nurturing home environment to support them in meeting their potential within their local community.

The use would employ 2 full-time and 2 part-time members of staff and, as a result of its residential care use, it would operate 24 hours a day. A minimum of 3 members of staff would be on duty between the hours of 07:30 – 23:00 and 2 members of staff between 23:00 – 07:30.

Further information on the Council's Residential Care Transformation Strategy and the wider context of the application site and its suitability for use as a residential children's home is included at Appendix A.

SITE APPRAISAL

The application site relates to a two-storey, detached property which is set within an irregular shaped parcel of land on the western side of the country lane between Treforest Industrial Estate and Gwaelod y Garth. The property is set within a large plot with the north-east facing front elevation being set back from the lane. An enclosed garden is situated to the north-western elevation with off-street car parking being provided within. Vehicular and pedestrian access is provided via gates to the north-eastern boundary.

The site is sandwiched between the River Taf to the east and the main train line between Cardiff and Pontypridd to the west. The areas to the north and south of the site are heavily vegetated. A Public Right of Way (DRE/53/4) runs through the northern end of the site however, it is unclear whether the path is still operational as there appears to be no access to it from the lane, or any directional signage to indicate its presence.

The surrounding area is typically characterised by open countryside and there are no residential or commercial properties in the immediate vicinity of the site. The nearest residential properties are located in Crib-y-Lan which are over 100m away to the south-east on the other side of the trainline. A number of commercial properties are located in Treforest Industrial Estate approximately 140 metres to the east on the opposite side of the River Taf.

It is noted that at the time of the officer's site visit, a number of works were already being carried out at the site.

PLANNING HISTORY

There are no planning applications on record for this site in last 10 years.

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised by means of direct neighbour notification and through the erection of site notices in the vicinity of the site. One letter has been received in response to this exercise. The letter does not raise any objection to the children's home however a number of points are made and are summarised as follows:

Suitability of the site for use as a children's home

- There is concern that the Council and its Safeguarding Team have completely misunderstood the requirements for children at the location. The dwelling would not provide a safe and secure location for children in care due to the local environment.
- The dwelling is close to a railway line and the new fencing that is being erected would not provide sufficient security to stop children entering the railway line as there are so many opportunities along the line.
- The dwelling is close to the River Taf and there is less than 20m between the boundary of the house and the river. Children may not see the risk of going towards the water's edge and could be swept away.
- The house and surrounding area has been flooded during the storms within the past 5 years, placing children in a known flood area is not wise.
- The road that goes passed the house does not have the ability to place a pavement so that children can access easily.
- There is a blind bend to the right as you exit the house.
- There is no streetlighting in the area.
- There is an increased risk of potential accidents on the road and places additional risks to any car drivers.
- The gates of the property currently act as a natural passing place between cars/vans as the road is fairly narrow, therefore this could potentially increase the risk of accidents in the road.
- The house is not suitable to use as a children's home due to the speed and volume of traffic as the exit from the house is directly onto the road.

South Wales Metro

- The proposal negates all the work and activity that has been in place for the new metro station at Treforest Industrial Estate.
- Reference is made to a Wales Online article (Dated 20 June 2018) which indicates that the existing station at the Treforest Industrial Estate will be moved further south to be closer to the Coleg y Cymoedd campus and new HQ for the Department for Work and Pensions.

- It is suggested that the Council then took ownership of the land and property at Willowford Road, which were intended to be used to support the South Wales Metro in the future.
- Reference is made to a news article published on the Council's website on 12 May 2021 which refers to the land and buildings along Willowford Road, stating that the public transport offer linking to Treforest Industrial Estate would be enhanced and that the acquisition will safeguard the land for future use in support of the South Wales Metro.
- Not only has there been a change in the use of the area, the conclusion must be that the Council have misled the public in their intent to purchase the land/house, thereby using local council funds to pay for the acquisition, which has been designated for the Metro system.
- The misleading of local funding should be referred for review.
- The conclusion is that RCT have already made the decision on this application.

Details of the application and consultation

- It is not clear from the planning application exactly what is being planned.
- There is no indication of how many bedrooms the house will be made into.
- There is no indication of whether an extension is being built.
- The application is sparse in detail and it is therefore difficult to understand what is happening.
- There is already work going on at the house and this is not preparatory work. The works include the removal of existing hedge fencing and the construction of a wall as well as other internal and external work.
- There has been a constant stream of contractors, builders, electrician's etc since the beginning of the year. All of these activities will have used Council funding to change the use of the dwelling before it has been officially approved.
- The consultation exercise is a paper exercise in the Council's duty as RCT have already used this dwelling during December 2022 when children were placed in the current house on a temporary basis, before any remediation work was carried out.
- RCT have already placed adverts for employment at this location as a Children's home in November 2022.
- It is quite clear that RCT has made this decision without informing residents appropriately.
- The advert was not for temporary assignment at the children's home in Willowford Road, therefore the assumption that this was for permanent roles which have now been filled.

CONSULTATION

The following consultation responses have been received:

Coal Authority: No objection. It is advised that the site is situated within the defined Development High Risk Area however, the nature of the development is exempt from

the requirement for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be submitted with the application.

Ecology (RCT): No objection.

Flood Risk Management: No objection, conditions recommended.

Highways and Transportation: No objection, condition recommended.

Natural Resources Wales: No objection, advice provided in respect of foul drainage and flood risk.

Public Health and Protection: No objection, standard advice provided in respect of hours of construction, noise, dust and waste.

Public Rights of Way Officer (RCT): No objection.

South Wales Police: No objection, condition recommended for the submission of a Management Plan.

Welsh Water: No objection, advice provided in respect of foul water drainage.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The application relates to an existing residential property that is located outside of the defined settlement boundary. The following policies are considered to be relevant in the determination of this application:

Policy CS2 (Development in the South): sets out criteria for achieving sustainable growth including development that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole.

Policy AW2 (Sustainable Locations): advises that development proposals on non-allocated sites will only be supported in sustainable locations.

Policy AW5 (New Development): sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 (Design and Placemaking): requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to placemaking, including landscaping.

Policy AW7 (Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment): seeks to protect public rights of ways.

Policy AW8 (Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment): seeks to ensure that developments would not unacceptably impact upon features of importance to landscape or nature conservation.

Policy AW9 (Buildings in the Countryside): supports the alteration, renovation or conversion of existing buildings outside the defined settlement boundaries for

residential, employment, community or tourism uses, provided that the building is structurally sound and that there are no other viable uses.

Policy AW10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health): development proposals must overcome any harm to public health, the environment or local amenity as a result of flooding.

Members will be aware that the current LDP's lifespan was 2011 to 2021, that it has been reviewed and is in the process of being replaced. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced provisions specifying the period to which a plan has effect and providing that it shall cease to be the LDP at the end of the specified period. These provisions were commenced on 4th January 2016 but do not have retrospective effect. Therefore, the provisions do not apply to LDPs adopted prior to this date and plans adopted before 4th January 2016 will remain the LDP for determining planning applications until replaced by a further LDP. This was clarified in guidance published by the Minister on 24th September 2020. Subsequently, Members are advised that the existing Plan remains the development plan for consideration when determining this planning application.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Design and Placemaking
Nature Conservation
Planning Obligations
Access Circulation and Parking

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of national planning policy which are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where national planning policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW) was issued on 24th February 2021 in conjunction with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (FW2040). PPW incorporates the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into town and country planning and sets out Welsh Government's (WG) policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of all planning applications. FW2040 sets out the National Development Framework for Wales (NDF), WGs current position on planning policy at regional and national level.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking set out in PPW; and is also consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's sustainable development principles through

its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives of driving sustainable development and building healthier communities and better environments.

Given the minor scale of the proposed development and its relationship with only the immediate surrounding area, there are limitations to the extent such a scheme can have in promoting planning objectives at a national scale. As such, whilst the scheme aligns with the overarching sustainable development aims of FW2040, it is not considered the policies set out in the document are specifically relevant to this application.

Other relevant national policy guidance consulted:

PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;
PPW Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities;
PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design;
PPW Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk;
PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport;

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

Main Issues:

Principle of the proposed development

The application relates to the change of use of an existing residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to a residential care home for up to 3 children (Use Class C2).

The site is situated outside of the defined settlement boundary and there is some concern that the site is unsustainable and unsuitable for use as a residential care home, particularly given that the site is served via a narrow country lane with no pedestrian footway provision or lighting and that there are no facilities in the immediate area. Furthermore, whilst Treforest Estate train station is located in reasonable walking distance of the site, it is located further along the lane and, due to the lack of pedestrian footways and street lighting, it is unlikely that anyone would travel on foot between the site and the station. The use would therefore be heavily reliant on travel by private motor car.

There is further concern that the site is situated within close proximity to the River Taf and, as a result, it is within Zone C2 in respect of flooding. TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk would not usually permit highly vulnerable development, such as a residential care home, within such areas however, consultation with Natural Resources Wales has not raised any objection to the proposal. The comments received indicate that the vulnerability of the site would remain the same however, it is noted that there could be a potential intensification of use, which may create more pressure on emergency services should evacuation be required. The comments advise that the Local Planning Authority may wish to consider whether a Flood Consequences Assessment is required, or the applicant may wish to undertake one for their own benefit however, NRW consider that the proposals could be acceptable, subject to the applicant being made aware of the potential flood risks to the area.

Whilst there are clearly some very valid concerns in respect of the proposal, the existing and proposed uses are both residential in nature and the overall character of the use would remain the same. Furthermore, the proposal does not include any extension to the property and so any intensification of the use of the site would be minimal. Therefore, without any objection from Natural Resources Wales, the proposal is on balance considered to be acceptable in principle.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The proposal would not result in any external alterations to the property, other than for minor repair and refurbishment works. The character and appearance of the property would therefore remain the same.

It is noted that there would be some works to the garden area to provide additional parking however, given the nature and scale of these works, this would be in-keeping with the residential appearance of the existing property. Furthermore, the garden area is largely screened from Main Road by existing trees and hedgerows and the alterations would therefore not be particularly visible from the public highway.

Impact on residential amenity and privacy

The proposal would not result in any external alterations to the property and with the application site being situated at least 120 metres away from the nearest neighbouring residential and commercial properties, it is not considered that the proposed development would adversely impact upon their amenity or privacy.

Furthermore, other than the element of care and the presence of staff, it is considered that the proposed residential care home, which would be of a limited scale, would generally exhibit the same residential characteristics as the existing residential dwelling and it is not considered that the use would result in harmful levels of noise and disturbance. As such, any potential impact upon surrounding properties would be limited in this regard.

Access and highway safety

The application has been assessed by the Council's Highways and Transportation section and no objection is raised in relation to the proposal, subject to condition. The comments received are summarised as follows:

Access

Some concern is raised with regards to the access leading to the application site in that Main Road is lacking in segregated footway facilities and street lighting, which results in pedestrians being forced to walk in the carriageway with potential hazards to the detriment of safety of all highway users. However, the property as a C3 (residential) use would have generated a similar amount of movements as the proposed C2 (children's home) use and therefore the concern would not be so significant that it would warrant a highway objection.

Parking

The existing residential dwelling requires up-to a maximum of 3 off-street car parking spaces, in accordance with the Council's SPG Access, Circulation and Parking (2011), with 3 provided. The proposed use as a residential care home would require 1 space per resident staff, 1 space per 3 non-resident staff and 1 space per 4 beds. The proposal includes 5 bedrooms, one for staff and 4 for children with a full-time equivalent of 3 non-residential staff members. This would require 3 no. off-street car parking spaces however, the proposal includes works to the garden area to provide additional parking (6 no. spaces) and the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard (condition recommended to ensure the car parking arrangements are implemented prior to the proposed use being brought into beneficial use).

Other Issues:

The following other material considerations have been taken into account in considering the application, though were not the key determining factors in reaching the recommendation.

Drainage

The application relates to a change of use meaning that there would be no changes to the external hardstanding areas within the site. As such, the applicant will not be required to submit an application to the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) Approval Body (SAB).

The proposal has been assessed by the Council's Flood Risk Management team and the response received indicates that there are areas of high, medium and low surface

water flood risk identified to the south of the property, within the proposed site area. It is further advised that there is also a high surface water flood risk surrounding the west periphery of the proposed site area, with the ordinary watercourse flowing from west to east at the northern end of the site. The ordinary watercourse identified appears to have a low impact on the application site however, the application property has minimal impact from all surface flood risks mentioned.

It is noted that surface water will be disposed of via the main sewer however, the applicant has not provided any relevant surface water drainage proposals as part of the application. A condition is recommended in this regard to ensure that surface water is appropriately managed however, given that there would be no change to the external hardstanding areas, this condition is not considered necessary in this instance.

Ecology

The applicant has confirmed that the proposal would not result in any works to the existing roof however, some repair works have already been undertaken, including the replacement of broken slate tiles and damaged gutters. Consultation with the Council's Ecologist has confirmed that on this basis the proposal would not trigger the bat survey protocol and, as such, the application is not required to be supported by a bat survey. However, a condition for biodiversity enhancement details is recommended.

Other Issues Raised by Local Resident

One letter has been received from a local resident. Where the issues are not addressed in the sections above, the following comments are offered:

Metro

The letter refers to the provision of the South Wales Metro and the land being acquired by the Council to safeguard the land for future use in support of the Metro.

Whilst it is noted that a new station has been advertised at Treforest Estate, the exact location of this development is firstly not clear and secondly, at the time of writing this report, no application has been received for the provision of such a development. It must be noted that the Council is not in control of the development of the South Wales Metro with the provision of this service largely relying upon the involvement of other parties. Therefore, whilst the land and buildings may be safeguarded for the future use of the Metro, it does not necessarily mean that the application site will be used for any specific purpose relating to it, nor should it mean that the site should go unused prior to it being required for the Metro.

The suggestion that the public have been misled, that the Council have acted under false pretences and that the Council have already made the decision on this application is therefore incorrect. The application must therefore be considered on its

own planning merits and no weight can be given to something that may or may not happen at an indeterminate point in the future.

Details of Planning Application and Consultation

The letter suggests that it is not clear what is being proposed as there is no indication of the number of bedrooms or whether there would be any extensions to the property. The plans and documents submitted with the application have all been published on the Council's website and are available for members of the public to view. The existing and proposed plans clearly show that the property would not be extended and the number of bedrooms is clearly shown (5 no.).

It is further suggested that residents have not been informed about the application properly however, the consultation exercise has been carried out in accordance with the requirements set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012. A total of 28 properties were directly notified of the application (which is considered to be excessive given that there are no properties within 100 metres of the site) and a total of 2 site notices were erected on Main Road, either side of the application property.

Development Works

It is noted that works have previously been, and continue to be, carried out at the site. As stated earlier in this report, the proposed use would be facilitated through a number of internal alterations. The building would not be extended, nor would any external alterations be required, other than the provision of additional car parking spaces in an existing area of hardstanding within the garden curtilage. It is not considered that these works would require planning permission and they could be carried out regardless of the outcome of this planning application, which is primarily for the change of the use of the property.

Whilst the letter suggests that adverts have been published for employment at this site, it is not clear whether the advert specifically related to this site or for the service in general. If it is the case that it was for this specific site, then this is considered to have been done prematurely. In any case, the outcome of that advertisement exercise is not pursuant to this application and it would therefore be irrelevant should this application be refused.

The letter received further suggests that for the above reasons, the outcome of the application has already been decided however, that is clearly not the case given that the planning process has been followed and the application is to be determined by elected Members of the Planning and Development Committee.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Liability

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 31 December 2014.

The application is for development of a kind that is not CIL liable under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Conclusion

Whilst there is some concern with regards to the suitability of the site for its use as a residential children's home, particularly due to its location outside of the defined settlement boundary and within a C2 flood zone, the application property relates to an existing residential property and, on balance, the principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable. Furthermore, the proposal would not involve any significant external alterations that would impact upon the character and appearance of the application property or upon the amenity and privacy of surrounding properties, nor would it have any adverse impact upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to a number of conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent:

- Site Plan (Rec. 09/02/23)
- Ground Floor Plan – Proposed (Rec. 09/02/23)
- First -Floor Plan – Proposed (Rec. 09/02/23)
- Second Floor Plan – Proposed (Rec. 09/02/23)
- Site Layout Plan (Rec. 28/04/23)

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The premises shall only be used as a regulated children's home and for no other purpose; including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order. When the use hereby approved ceases, the premise shall revert back to its original Class C3 use.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity, drainage and highway safety in accordance with Policies AW5 and AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. Prior to the use hereby approved commencing the operator shall submit a management plan for the premises to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The premises shall operate in accordance with the agreed details for as long as the use is carried out at the property.

Reason – In order protect the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policies AW5, AW6 and AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. Before the development is brought into use, the means of access together with the parking facilities shall be laid out in accordance with the submitted site plan (ref. D3-PO1) and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The parking spaces shall be surfaced in permanent materials and retained thereafter for the parking of vehicles.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that vehicles are parked off the highway, in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

6. Within 2 months of the date of this decision, a scheme for biodiversity enhancement shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Future Wales requires all development to maintain and enhance biodiversity.

Appendix A: Additional Information

1. On 28th February 2023, Cabinet approved the Children Looked After Residential Care Transformation Strategy, the link to those documents can be found [here](#). On 13th March 2023 and 16th March 2023 briefing sessions in respect of the Transformation Strategy were also provided to Elected Members. A further one is planned for June 23. There was excellent engagement by attendee Councillors at those sessions where Officers answered questions and gave reassurances about our intention to work in partnership with Councilors, especially those ward members where there are new developments. During the sessions there was an opportunity to refresh Councillor awareness of their duty as Corporate Parents:

Councillors as Corporate Parents have an important role to play in ensuring that every child in their Council's care receives the best care possible. They should be striving to provide the level of care they would be happy for their own children to receive.

Background to the Residential Transformation Strategy:

2. In all cases, the Council supports families to look after children at home, with support where necessary. In January 2022, the Cabinet approved the Council's looked after prevention strategy that sets out its commitment to family support, and making sure that only those children for whom there is no safe alternative, become looked after. Work under this strategy is showing promise with a reduction in the numbers of children with care and support needs who become looked after.
3. **Family first** - When children become looked after, care by relatives or connected people is always our first option, and foster care where that is not achievable. Some children's needs cannot be met by substitute family care or foster care, and they will need to be looked after in residential care which is also known as Children's Homes. This strategy, and its related action plan set out the intention to deliver an unprecedented change of strategic direction in relation to children's residential services.
4. Residential services (Children's homes) are an essential element of the portfolio of provision that is required to meet the Council's statutory obligations to looked after children. It

has been increasingly evident over recent years that the largely outsourced residential provision has struggled to supply services to meet the changing needs of our looked after young people, and commissioning systems have not entirely had the desired impact. In 2022 Welsh Government began to implement a policy to eliminate private profit making from the provision of care. There is consequently an urgent imperative on all local authorities to plan for this transformation ahead of 1st April 2027 when it is proposed that all providers will have transitioned to a not-for-profit status.

5. Children's Services has taken a sector-leading needs-led approach to the identification of the types of residential provision that will be required to meet the needs of children and in the future.
6. The vision for the strategy is that by 2027, all RCT young people who need residential care are looked after close to home in high quality settings where they can thrive, and that they are looked after by a stable, resilient, skilful and well supported staff group. This work will also be underpinned by our commitment to stability for looked after young people, understanding that looked after young people need specialist services.
7. Children's Services is already an experienced provider of Children's Homes that achieve high quality outcomes for our looked after children. Those homes are registered in line with the Regulation and Inspection of Care RISCWA (Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act (Wales) 2016). Reports about the quality of care and experiences are regularly brought to Corporate Parenting Board by the Council's Registered Individual. Information about the duties of a Responsible Individual can be found here [Responsible Individuals | Social Care Wales](#).
8. The planning application for Willowford House is the first of several developments that will be brought to Planning Committee in line with the strategy and our ambition to develop services that are close to home and not for profit.

About Willowford House

9. Prior to deciding to develop the Home, a location assessment was carried out by the Council's Registered

Individual. Any risks associated with the site and location have been viewed as manageable, noting that:

- The Social Care Wales registered manager will be carefully considering the needs of children who are matched to this setting, bearing in mind a range of factors including any environment or location issues for the specific needs of young people who will live there
- The setting is assessed as having potential to offer a huge opportunity to look after young people who need to recover from trauma, complex trauma, and re-trauma and progress into adulthood
- Children have a right to experience care that is close to home
- The Council has a duty to arrange sufficient provision of accommodation for looked after young people

10. In the fullness of time 3 young people will be living at the home, it's a long-term home that will implement trauma informed approaches, and young people will be supported by therapy as per their needs. The Head Teacher for looked after young people will have oversight of their education, and the children will be supported to achieve the best outcomes possible in a nurturing and homely environment. Children's Services staff will visit children at the home, and care and support plans will be reviewed by an Independent Reviewing Officer.

11. An experienced registered manager has been appointed, and the home has been refurbished to a high standard that will meet with RISCA requirements. Staff have been appointed who will also be registered with SCW, and supported with training and supervision to ensure the care is in with the trauma recovery model. Each staffing shift has a minimum of 3 staff on duty between the hours of 7.30am – 11pm and 2 staff on duty between 11pm -7.30 am, with one of these being a waking night. All staff are suitably experienced and have knowledge of the role and its responsibilities to safeguarding the young people. There is an on-call manager or senior on duty 24 hours a day who can be contacted to make any decisions for the home when needed.

12. The Responsible Individual will visit the home and provide quality of care reports to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) which will be viewed by Corporate Parenting Board, along with any CIW inspection reports.
