

Parish Council Briefing for Planning Application 19/02899/FUL

Introduction

Octopus Healthcare and Liberty Properties have submitted their planning application ref. **19/02899/FUL** to build a Class C2 Nursing Home and a community car park on land to the West of High Street immediately South of St Helen's Church and Cemetery.



The proposal includes,

- A 65 bed Class C2* Nursing Home providing 100 per cent single bedroom accommodation.
- Creation of approximately 65 Full Time Equivalent jobs over 3 shifts.
- A 93 space community car park, including 5 disabled bays and 6 motorbike spaces.
- The community car park would be gifted to the Parish Council to own and manage.
- A separate 23 space dedicated car park for care home staff and visitors.

Full details of the planning application can be found at <https://pa.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/online-applications/> or <https://bit.ly/2HvWI9H> and search for **19/02899/FUL**

Please note that there are over 40 documents included with this planning application.

Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Objectives, Strategy & Policies

The following extracts from Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan are relevant to this planning application

Neighbourhood Plan Vision...

3.1 A Vision for Tarporley

By 2030 Tarporley will be:

- A village where our everyday essential needs are catered for without the need to travel elsewhere.
- A village with social diversity and cohesion which continues to be a safe, secure and healthy place to live.
- A village with a cherished history which has retained its unique character, scale and atmosphere, where residents have a strong sense of pride and belonging and visitors are attracted and welcomed.
- A village which continues to be a key rural service centre, providing significant employment opportunities to the local population.
- A village with a picturesque, vibrant High Street which is enriched by its open aspect to the countryside, marked by buildings of character whilst offering a diverse range of independent shops and services.
- A village which ensures easy access and safe movement for pedestrians and cyclists into and throughout the village.
- A village which has managed its growth, with infrastructure and services which meet the needs of its local population.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives...

3.2 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

The following Objectives have been identified for the Neighbourhood Plan:

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

1. To deliver a housing growth strategy tailored to the needs and context of Tarporley as a Key Service Centre for the rural area.
2. To deliver integrated transport infrastructure proportional to the growth in local needs, improving traffic management, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes to create a pleasant and safe environment.
3. To ensure sensitive, sustainable development which protects and enriches the landscape and built setting of heritage assets, and respects the Village Design Statement.
4. To ensure continued provision of a comprehensive range of local shops, services and major community facilities that meet local needs.
5. To encourage and enable growth in local employment opportunities.
6. To seek improvements to utility infrastructure and digital connectivity to meet the existing and future requirements of local residents.
7. To protect and enhance the value of green space and landscape to support nature conservation.
8. To maintain a green buffer zone around the perimeter of the Parish to ensure it does not merge with neighbouring settlements.
9. To involve local people on an ongoing basis in the process of plan-making, monitoring and delivery of development.
10. To maintain a diverse, cohesive, safe and healthy community with greater use of shared facilities.

Neighbourhood Plan Strategy...

3.3 Strategy

- 3.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is required to make provision for at least 34 additional dwellings and other economic development over the Plan period up to 2030, in line with the adopted Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies 2015. The net housing figure of at least 34 units has been agreed with Cheshire West and Chester Council¹⁰ and takes into consideration the requirement in Policy STRAT 8 Rural Area for the provision of at least 300 new dwellings.
- 3.3.2 There are local concerns about the scale and quantity of development proposals which have come forward over the last few years (without corresponding infrastructure improvements, other than those required under current planning regulations / S106 agreements) and the potential impacts further significant development could have on the conservation area, setting, and built form of the village and the loss of green fields and countryside. These concerns are clearly set out in the results of the various public consultations undertaken during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan's strategy is supportive of appropriate development that delivers significant infrastructure improvements, for example, development that could bring major health benefits, such as the replacement of GP surgeries and/or the hospital beyond the settlement boundary.
- 3.3.4 With this focus on improving infrastructure and ensuring no loss or reduction of public amenity (most notably car parking within the settlement boundary, for example):
- Policy TH1 protects the number of car parking spaces and safe access to facilities while supporting some new housing development.
 - In addition, Policy TIFC3 Relocation of Existing Facilities provides significant flexibility to support the relocation of existing facilities provided that the former site is released for new development including uses such as employment and housing.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies...

Policies

The Policies within the Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan (NP) that are relevant to this planning application are as follows.

NP Policy TE1 - Additional Business Premises and Employment Opportunities includes: “The development of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in Tarporley will be supported, subject to development respecting local character and residential amenity, and the residual cumulative impacts on highway safety and the local transport network not being severe.

NP Policy TE4 – Car Parking includes: “Proposals for new public car parking facilities within or adjoining Tarporley village centre will be supported in their entirety or as part of new developments on suitable sites where:

- A. There is appropriate vehicular and pedestrian accessibility; and
- B. Appropriate hard and soft landscaping is provided to ensure the designs are sensitive to the setting of the conservation area and nearby historic buildings.”

NP Policy TEH3 – Local green Spaces designates the development site as one of the Local Green Spaces and states that “Development of Local Green Space is not permitted, other than in very special circumstances.”

NP Policy TH3 - Housing for Older People states that “New housing, including nursing homes and older persons accommodation, which is designed to meet older peoples’ needs, either as part of mixed developments or as separate schemes, will be encouraged.

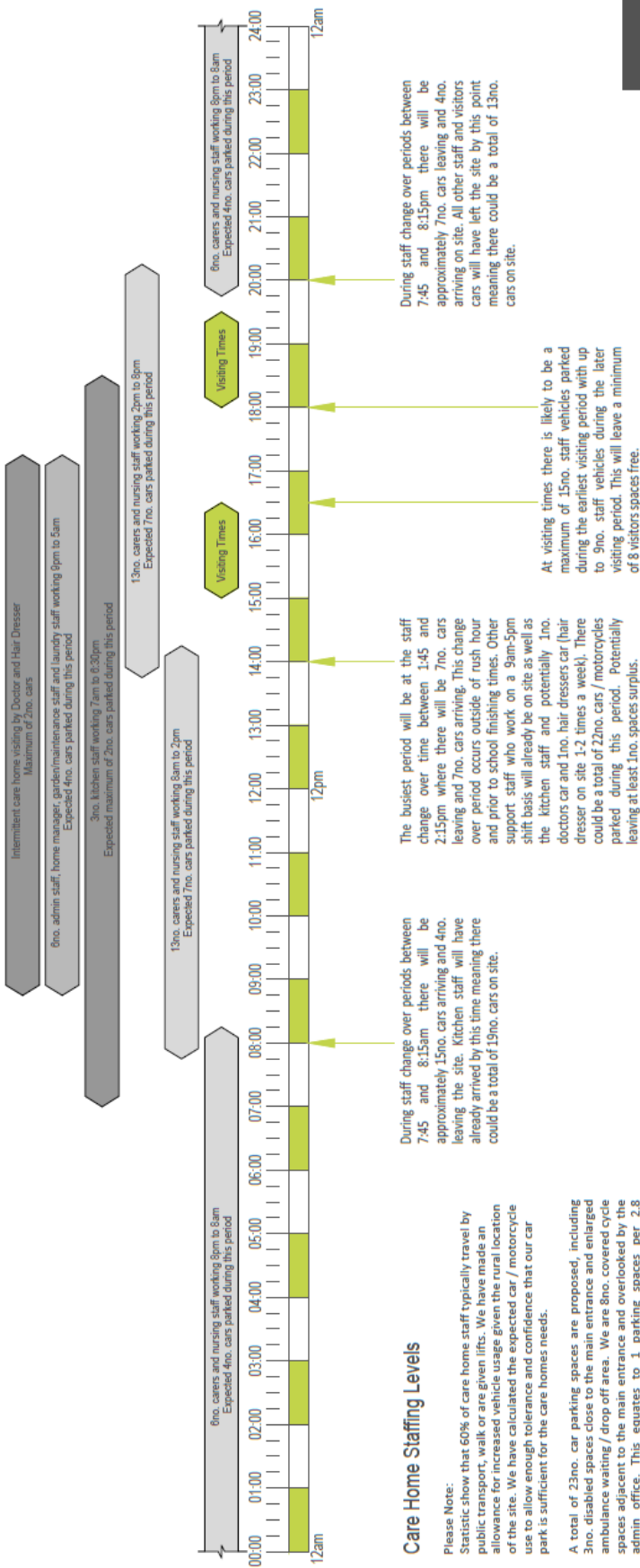
Care Home Jobs

When requested in July 2018 for a breakdown of the profile of the jobs at the care home, the following response was provided by the developer:

“The new care home facility will create 65 jobs, these are generally as follows:-

1. Care Assistants – 24
2. Senior Care Assistants – 5
3. Care Team Leaders – 4
4. Registered Nurse – 9
5. Senior Nurse – 3
6. Care Home Assistant Manager – 1
7. Care Home Manager – 1
8. Receptionist – 2
9. Gardener/Assistant – 2
10. Maintenance – 1
11. Housekeeping/Assistants – 7
12. Laundry Assistants – 2
13. Admin Assistants – 2
14. Administrator – 2”

In addition, the following staffing and parking level breakdown was provided in July 2018



Care Home Staffing Levels

Please Note:
Statistic show that 60% of care home staff typically travel by public transport, walk or are given lifts. We have made an allowance for increased vehicle usage given the rural location of the site. We have calculated the expected car / motorcycle use to allow enough tolerance and confidence that our car park is sufficient for the care homes needs.

A total of 23no. car parking spaces are proposed, including 3no. disabled spaces close to the main entrance and enlarged ambulance waiting / drop off area. We are 8no. covered cycle spaces adjacent to the main entrance and overlooked by the admin office. This equates to 1 parking spaces per 2.8 bedrooms which is better than the national average.

CWAC Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document for states that for use class C2 in this area, 1 parking space per four bedrooms is required as a maximum. They are also state a minimum of 3 disabled bays. This equates to a maximum of 16 parking spaces in addition to three disabled bays. Therefore, our proposal will provide a surplus of 4 spaces above the Local Authority parking standards. Car sharing schemes will be encouraged by the operator as part of the sustainable travel plan for staff to further reduce the number of cars on site during busy periods.

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Parish Council resolution / submission to CWAC

Following public consultation on 6th July 2018, The Parish Council discussed the proposal in their meeting on 9th July 2018. The resolution agreed at that meeting as sent to Fiona Hore and Steven Holmes of CWAC Planning on 11th July 2018 was as follows:

“Dear Fiona Hore and Steven Holmes

Following Tarporley Parish Council being approached by Liberty Properties, their leaflet drop around the village, their public consultation, the Parish Council consultation and a public meeting, the Parish Council reviewed the proposal from Liberty Properties at its meeting on Monday July 9th 2018. Their proposal is to build a 65 bed class C2 care home with staff car park and to provide an 88 space public car park for the village on land at the High Street, south of The Manor House. Details of their proposal can be found at their website: www.tarporleyplans.co.uk

In essence, the Parish Council is supportive of the proposal provided that it can be guaranteed to be delivered as proposed.

Please see the full Parish Council resolution from the draft minutes of the 9th July meeting, attached.”

“Item 9 - Liberty Properties Care Home

RESOLVED – That the Parish Council is minded without prejudice to give the proposal further and supportive consideration on the basis that specific conditions are met, including the below:

That legally enforceable guarantees are put in place to:

- a. Provide the community car park as shown in the proposal with a minimum of 88 vehicles parking spaces and additional motorbike spaces and for the ownership of this car park to be transferred to the Parish Council for a nominal sum and with all associated legal costs paid for by the developer, and
- b. Provide the 65 bed Class C2 Care Home with the separate staff and visitors car park with a minimum of 23 parking spaces, all as described in the proposal.

After careful consideration, the Parish Council considers that the proposal does demonstrate the ‘very special circumstances’ as required by Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) policy TEH3, Local Green Spaces, to justify the loss of the green open space and development outside the settlement boundary for the following reasons:

1. The proposal meets the requirements of the TNP policy TE4, Car Parking which states:
*“Proposals for new public car parking facilities within or adjoining Tarporley village centre will be supported in their entirety or as part of new developments on suitable sites where:
A. There is appropriate vehicular and pedestrian accessibility; and
B. Appropriate hard and soft landscaping is provided to ensure the designs are sensitive to the setting of the conservation area and nearby historic buildings.”*
2. The proposal meets the requirements of the TNP policy TH3, Housing for Older People, which states: *“New housing, including nursing homes and older persons accommodation, which is designed to meet older peoples’ needs, either as part of mixed developments or as separate schemes, will be encouraged.”*

3. The proposal meets the requirements of the TNP policy TE1, Additional Business Premises and Employment Opportunities which states: *“The development of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in Tarporley will be supported, subject to development respecting local character and residential amenity, and the residual cumulative impacts on highway safety and the local transport network not being severe. The regeneration and small-scale expansion of existing business sites, or the sympathetic conversion of existing buildings, for business and enterprise, will be supported.”*

Tarporley Parish Council seeks confirmation from Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Senior Planners that support of this proposal, for the reasons above, would not in any way:

- i. Weaken the integrity of the Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan policies, nor
- ii. Set a precedent for further incursions beyond the settlement boundary that do not meet the Neighbourhood Plan, its policies and the ‘very special circumstances’ requirement.”

Care Home Parking Standards

The Parish Council asked CWAC on 1 August 2019...

“Please can you advise if there is any policy or legislation in place which limits, maximum or minimum, the number of parking spaces a care home can have for staff and visitors.”

CWAC replied on 1 August 2019...

“We do have a CWAC Parking Standards SPD that sets out the levels of parking we expect to be provided for different types of development and locations. I’ve attached that here. The key part is the table at page 15 that sets out the standards.

The relevant part of the table, for a care home in Tarporley would be:- Use class C2 –residential institutions – care homes – rest of borough. This gives a requirement of 1 space per 4 bedrooms as a maximum and this is expected to cater for residents, staff and visitors. Whilst it says maximum in the standards (which is the way everyone’s such standards are set out) we see this as the starting point and for any potential reduction they would need to demonstrate and convince us that it was workable.

Sometimes we see care homes that come in with an over-provision, compared to the max standards, however we don’t tend to ask them to reduce the numbers as, even though we have max standards, we do take a pragmatic approach when we think it is acceptable.

I would say that for ‘proper ‘ care homes these standards do seem to work well, I have dealt with quite a few over the years. It is a fact that not many (if any) of the residents will drive and that a lot of the staff (on shifts) do tend to be very local and the sad fact is that quite often the residents don’t see that many visitors. A lot can depend on the level of care that residents have. Associated traffic flows tend to be low as well and not significantly impacting in the peaks, particularly if the staff shift pattern turnover fall outside the typical peak traffic periods.

The one caveat I would add is that it does all depend on what type of ‘care home’ it is. For instance if it is more like McCarthy and Stone type ‘retirement’ homes, as opposed to actual care, then we look for more parking spaces more akin to what a residential apartment development would have.”

Parking Reports

Several parking surveys and reports have been produced over the last couple of years to examine the parking situation and identify the number of additional spaces available. All of these work from the base that we have the 3 existing car parks at the Rising Sun, RBL site and Community Centre in addition to the existing on-street parking. Here are some highlights from the conclusions of each.

Tarporley High Street Business Parking Survey 2017/18 - dated 6th December 2018

This report followed an in depth survey of employee and customer parking needs for businesses along or near the High Street and was approved by the Parish Council in its meeting on 10/12/18 – resolution 18/566...

Resolved 18/566 - - “That the Council approve the report on the Tarporley High Street Business Parking Survey 2017-2018, pages 561 to 566 of the Minutes, produced by the Parish Council which highlighted the need for at least an addition 265 public car parking spaces in Tarporley to cater for daily peak demand.

The report which reported a very high 68% response rate, stated evidence that currently 70% of existing parking spaces were required by employees of business. It was also noted that the report has been ‘deliberately conservative’ in its estimations noting that 25 of the 78 businesses of the High Street had not responded. Also the survey had not made allowances for school drop-off and collections times, funerals, weddings or other one-off events in Tarporley.”

Tarporley Business Customer Parking Survey – December 2018

The Parish Council noted this report in its 10/12/18 meeting. It was produced by John Beckitt who owns properties on the High Street. It was noted that report has similar outcomes to that produced by the Parish Council, though this survey had asked different questions. Among the report’s conclusions is...

“The only effective solution is the early provision of at least 200 additional car parking spaces which focus on the provision of all-day parking for residents and employees and long stay parking for visitors leaving the High Street and existing Rising Sun, British Legion and Community Centre car parks to provide shopper and short stay parking”

Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy - Action Plan and Impact Assessment – Tarporley January 2019

CWAC Council commissioned this report by Mott Macdonald as part of their Borough Wide Parking Strategy. The report was based on “Length of stay surveys were carried out at all of these parking areas between 8am and 6pm on a school term-time weekday and Saturday in October 2018”. (Businesses were not consulted on the extent that customers no longer come to the village because they find parking too difficult.) The report’s conclusions include:

“it is recommended that opportunities be pursued in the short-term to provide additional long-stay off-street parking capacity in the main retail area of the village. It is estimated that a capacity of between 50 and 100 extra spaces should be sufficient to accommodate valid suppressed and future

growth demand in the short-to-medium term without generating significant unnecessary car trips. This could potentially be provided through delivering an extension to an existing car park and/or through a new car park delivered, for example, via an appropriate planning agreement.”

Tarporley Parking Survey May 2019

Over a few days in May 2019, Andrew Wallace, Anne Ravenscroft and Mark Ravenscroft conducted an informal parking survey in Tarporley. The conclusions were:

Weekdays

89 cars surveyed over 4 hours.

Car park is predominantly (66%) used by people working in the village, most of whom stay for most of the day.

7% of users were visiting the doctors, because there was no parking available there or on Park Road. There was only one Park and Ride visitor.

There are typically no free spaces between 12.00 and 14.30

During this time period, we estimate about 50 cars drove in and out of the car park without finding a space. That said, the average wait time for a space during this time was about 5 minutes.

There was a broad range of postcodes for those using the car park.

If you look at the quotes in the embedded Excel file, there are some fairly polarised views on parking in the village, particularly with regard to whether we should charge or on the effectiveness of the restricted parking on the High Street.

Saturday

36 cars surveyed over 2 hours

Car park is predominantly used by shoppers (66%), most of whom stay for less than 2 hours.

Parking spaces available over the whole survey period, in both the car park and the High St.

Car park users are more locally based (CW6) than during the week