

ITEM 4.2 – (15/00887/FULL2) – CHISLEHURST HOUSE, 143 CHISLEHURST ROAD, ORPINGTON

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM NEIGHBOURING WARD COUNCILLOR DAVID LIVETT

Mr Chairman, Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this matter.

The Bromley borough plan has clearly defined commercial zones – one significant zone, currently greatly under used, includes Lagoon Road. Lagoon Road is approximately one mile from 143 Chislehurst Road.

Chislehurst Road lies within Petts Wood, a residential area. Indeed Petts Wood has been specifically identified by Bromley Council as an Area of Special Residential Character.

The Council position on the location of this property is clear. Chislehurst Road is residential.

This change of use application makes great play of the fact that it will be used by six district nurses and two other staff. It appears such use is all that our Highway and Planning Officers have considered. And the speaker on behalf of Bromley Health Care has just suggested only two people will be on site.

But before you is an application for 175 square metres of office space to be used other than in conjunction with a care facility. This could be any office activity and under workplace regulations 175 square metres would allow a maximum of 38 staff. More realistically 175 square metres would be relatively comfortable for 25 people. Would approval of an application for offices for twenty five have been recommended? Planning department has expressed doubt such potential for increased use can be conditioned or controlled.

And do not overlook how far the use of this site has crept to date.

Already there have been two occasions when local residents have called for enforcement action because this site was being used for activities outside its planning permissions. In each case the extended use was eventually deemed ancillary but the intention is plain. Please do not think that Bromley Healthcare will not test the boundaries of any permission.

And I need not remind you that budget pressures are only going to get greater and that assets are an attractive source of cash. This application, if granted, would create openly marketable office accommodation.

The use of this site will far exceed that suggested to you. Even now the site is regularly used for training sessions and recently thirteen cars from the centre were parked in Grosvenor Road alone.

Aside from the fact that this application flies in the face of borough plans, it is also a source of potential hazard. This short section of road is already a site of many accidents, two in the last month. A development that encourages more car parking will make the Chislehurst Road junctions with Willett Way and Grosvenor Road and the Chislehurst Road bend even more dangerous.

A very similar application for change of use was made and rejected in 2005 when councillors opposed the offices attached to the care facility. Another similar application was withdrawn in 2011.

The Planning Officer's report gives no explanation of why you should now take a different view to that taken in 2005 and opt to support the creation of B1 office space in an area clearly identified as residential – especially when there is so much office space standing empty elsewhere.

To give permission now would seem quite ridiculous and I ask you to reject this obvious and unnecessary planning creep. Thank you.