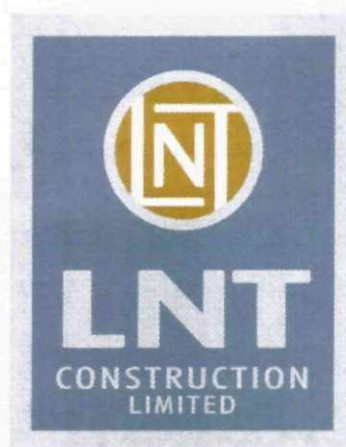


Design and Access Statement

Proposed 62 bed residential care home for older people on the site of the former Oakwood Old People's Home, Oakwood Road, Royston.



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Introduction

This statement is submitted on behalf of Orchard Care Homes Ltd in support of a full planning application to develop the land of the former Oakwood Old People's Home, Oakwood Road. The application seeks to redevelop the brownfield site with a purpose built residential care home for older people.

The proposed scheme involves the redevelopment of the site with a two storey 62 bed care home with associated parking, amenity space and landscaping.

This statement explains the background to the proposed development, describes the scheme and, in the context of relevant planning policy, sets out the case for the proposal.

Site and Surroundings

The site is shown edged red on the accompanying site location plan. The site is an area of approximately 0.4 hectares (0.98 acres) the former care home is vacant on site. The footprint of the former home is shown below (see Fig.1).



Figure 1 - Former Oakwood Old Person's Home

The site is surrounded by residential development on three sides, bounded to the east by properties on Oakwood Avenue and to the south and west by properties on Oakwood Crescent. To the north of the site is a large area of open space. The site is level with several trees surrounding the site.



Figure 2 - Open space adjacent to the site

The site currently has a vehicular and pedestrian access to the site from both Oakwood Crescent and Oakwood Road with an additional pedestrian access from Oakwood Road.

Justification for the development

There is a recognised demand within the area for the provision of care beds due to the closure of several Local Authority homes and the limited provision of EMI (Elderly Mentally Infirm) care.

The site has been historically used for a care home therefore the principle of the use is acceptable. The site is located within the defined urban area and is surrounded by housing and local amenities.

The site is a brownfield site within an area that would provide a sustainable and suitable location for a care home for older people.

Policy Background

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

Barnsley UDP was formally adopted in Dec 2000, and provides guidance for development in the area. The site is unallocated within the UDP. The policies relevant to the site are listed below.

Plan Policies

Relevant policies to the proposed development include:-

H8 – Existing residential areas
GS22 – Woodland, Hedgerows and Trees
BE6 – Design Standards
T22 – Car Parking Standards
T26 – Facilities for cyclists
T27 – Walking
CF2 – Existing Community Facilities

Royston Community Area Volume 6:

RO2 – Housing Policy Areas
RO15 – Existing Community Facilities

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following guidance was produced to supplement the UDP adopted in December 2000. These guidance notes have been used in the preparation of the scheme.

SPG2 – Design and Layout of New Housing
SPG 9 – Trees and Hedgerows
SPG11 – Design to Avoid Crime
SPG 29 – Flood Risk and Development
SPD32 – Parking, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

Design Principles

The UDP and SPG's provides guiding principles for development taking into consideration issues of layout, density, scale, massing, materials, landscape, access and local distinctiveness and character. All these issues have been taken into consideration when developing the site and are detailed in the following text.

After pre-application consultations with the local planning authority the scheme has been prepared to reflect the characteristics of the area, the form and layout of the street scene and site.

Mass and height of the building

The previous care home on the site is a combination of single and two storeys constructed in the 1970's. The building covers a considerable proportion of the site; Fig 3 shows the footprint of the previous building. The surrounding properties are predominately two storeys with bungalows adjacent on Oakwood Crescent.

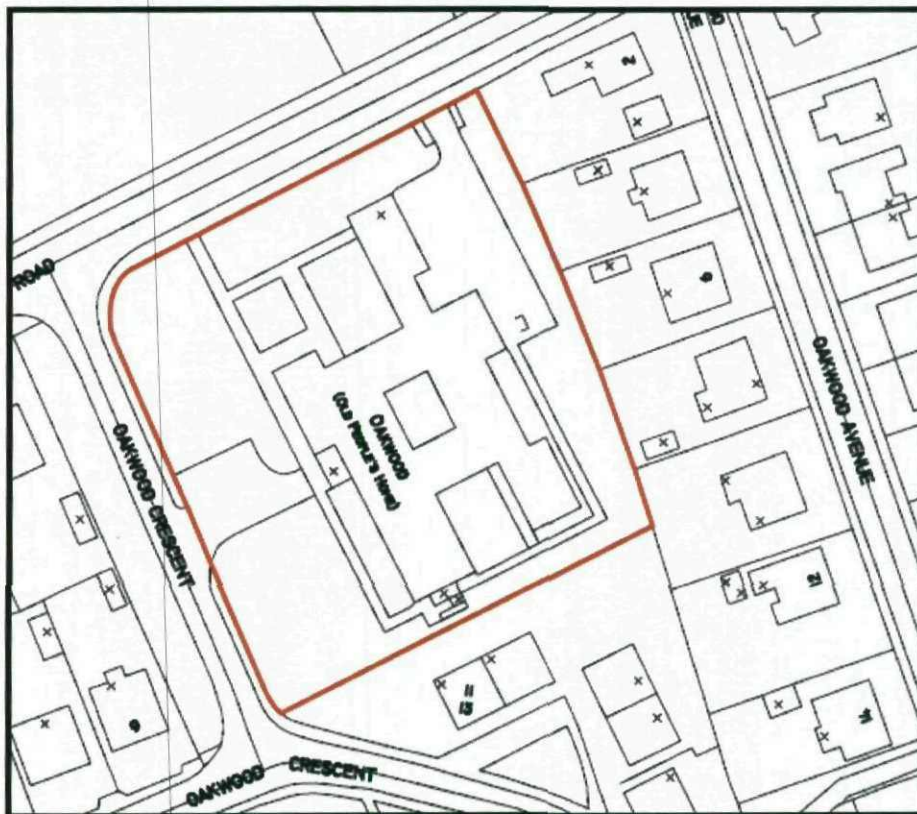


Figure 3 - Footprint of the existing building

The proposed building is two storeys with an approximate ridge height of 8.4m. The adjoining properties of No.11/13 Oakwood Crescent and No.2 Oakwood Avenue both have a higher ridge height of approximately 0.5m than the proposed development.

The design incorporates a mixture of gable and hipped features. The hipped roof reduces the scale of the building in relation to the properties along Oakwood Avenue and the two storey flats on Oakwood Crescent. The gables are restricted to design features to make a prominent entrance and distinctive features along the other elevations.

Due to the positioning within a corner plot it is felt the proposed building reflects the massing and height of the surrounding properties. It is felt the proposed building would sit comfortably within the site and will not appear incongruous within the street scene.

Siting and density

The proposed building allows the full, effective and efficient use of the developable land within the site, providing all the internal and external requirements of the home and gives full consideration to the surrounding properties and the wider street scene.

The building has been sited within some of the building lines of the existing building on site where possible, and within the existing building lines of the nearest properties along Oakwood Crescent and Oakwood Road.

The projecting wing located at the southern end of the east elevation is set on a similar building line to the existing building. There is an approximate separation distance of 21m, in line with the Guidance contained in SPG2. The end gable has windows that lead to the end of corridors and fire escapes, therefore no overlooking will occur. The existing building has windows on both floors set at a similar distance, therefore the proposed building will have a lesser impact.

The projecting wing at the northern end of the east elevation is approximately 23.5m away from the rear elevation of the closest property No.4 Oakwood Drive. This property now has a large garage that runs along the length of the rear garden. The existing building is single storey in this location, although the proposed two storey would have an increased impact upon the property it is considered acceptable as the separation distance is in excess of the local authority's guidance, there are no habitable windows in the end elevation of the proposed building and the garage occupies and screens the private habitable outdoor space.

The corner section of the southern and western elevation sits on a similar building line to the existing building. There is a separation distance of approximately 12m between the end elevation of the proposed building and the rear elevation of the two storey block containing 4 no. flats on Oakwood Crescent. The end elevation contains end of corridor and fire escape windows. Currently there are habitable windows in this elevation.

The west/front elevation faces onto Oakwood Crescent retaining the open aspect that currently exists. The vehicular access is maintained, positioning the

entrance to the building centrally in a prominent position from this access. The front elevation is approximately 35m from the adjacent bungalows.

The corner of the west and north elevations occupies a part of the site that is not currently developed. The position of the building will provide a positive street frontage for the building with the existing trees and mature hedge providing screening to the building and maintaining some of the existing character within the street scene.

It is considered that the relationship with all the existing residential dwellings adjoining the site will be acceptable without causing overlooking or an unacceptable impact on the amenities that the residents currently enjoy.

Local Distinctiveness and Character

The surrounding area has a variety of vernacular styles and housing types with a variety of different materials. There are no prominent architectural styles in the immediate area (see Fig. 6). The existing building has no design features worthy of reflecting in the proposed building, therefore the building has been designed using key characteristics of surrounding buildings with additional modern features.

There are mixes of gabled and hipped roofs in the area. Hipped roofs have been included to reduce the scale of the building and gables introduced as design features and to give prominence to the entrance area.

Features have been added to the building to break down the scale and add variety to the elevations. The mix of materials provides variety in the elevations and assimilates the building into the surrounding area.

A variety of window styles have been used throughout the building to reduce repetition. The windows to the bedrooms are required to be of a particular size to allow maximum light into the rooms with the positioning of the window being governed by the internal layout required.

It is felt that the key characteristics of the immediate area are included in the proposed building to assimilate the care home into its surroundings.





Figure 4 - Buildings located within immediate area

Use

The existing building on site was most recently used for a care home, therefore the proposed use is acceptable.

The development of a 62 bed care home is proposed after extensive research into the demand in the area. There is a need for this category of care within the area; Orchard Care Homes are satisfied the home will be filled.

A residential care home is a compatible neighbouring use to the surrounding residential properties. Set within a predominantly residential location, close to local amenities and good public transport routes, the site is ideally situated for a care home, its residents, visitors and staff.

The building sits comfortably within the site providing amenity space and parking facilities. The National Care Standards Act 2000 has sought to secure improved standards in both the quality of care provided and the physical characteristics of the premises in which care for the elderly is administered. Minimum care standards were published by the Department of Health in June 2003, full compliance with which was mandatory by 2007. The internal layout and facilities within the building are governed by the standards set by the act. The individual rooms need to be a minimum size with adequate facilities such as day space requirements per resident, quiet lounge areas, assisted bathrooms and associated staff facilities. This restricts the design of the building internally and externally, the internal requirements govern the layout of the building and the external elements are then worked to reflect the surrounding area.

Layout

The building layout has been designed around the operational needs of the care home and within the site constraints.

The building is positioned to provide an active frontage with natural surveillance over the parking area and the garden areas around the site. The siting ensures adequate separation distance is provided between the proposed care home and the neighbouring properties and provides enough space around the building to provide amenity space and ensure the residents have adequate privacy.

A total of 20 no. spaces have been provided including 2 no. disabled spaces. From experience of the other homes operated by Orchard Care and from available TRICS data the level of traffic generated by a care home is generally low therefore the amount proposed is considered adequate.

There are currently two vehicular entrances to the site and an additional pedestrian access from Orchard Road. Both vehicular accesses are to be retained. The access from Oakwood Crescent is to be retained leading to the entrance and drop off/ambulance and disabled parking area with the access from Oakwood Road retained giving access to a staff parking area.

Landscaping

There are currently 7 no. TPO trees within the site. The building has been designed clearing the root protection areas of the majority of the trees with the exception of T3. The tree survey identifies T3 on the TPO plan as Category C. This tree is unlikely to survive the demolition of the building.

The other 6 no. TPO trees are all identified as Category B on the tree survey. There are two other trees that will be necessary to remove along Oakwood Drive to allow for the proposed development.

The hedge along Oakwood Road is proposed to be retained to maintain the existing character of the street scene.

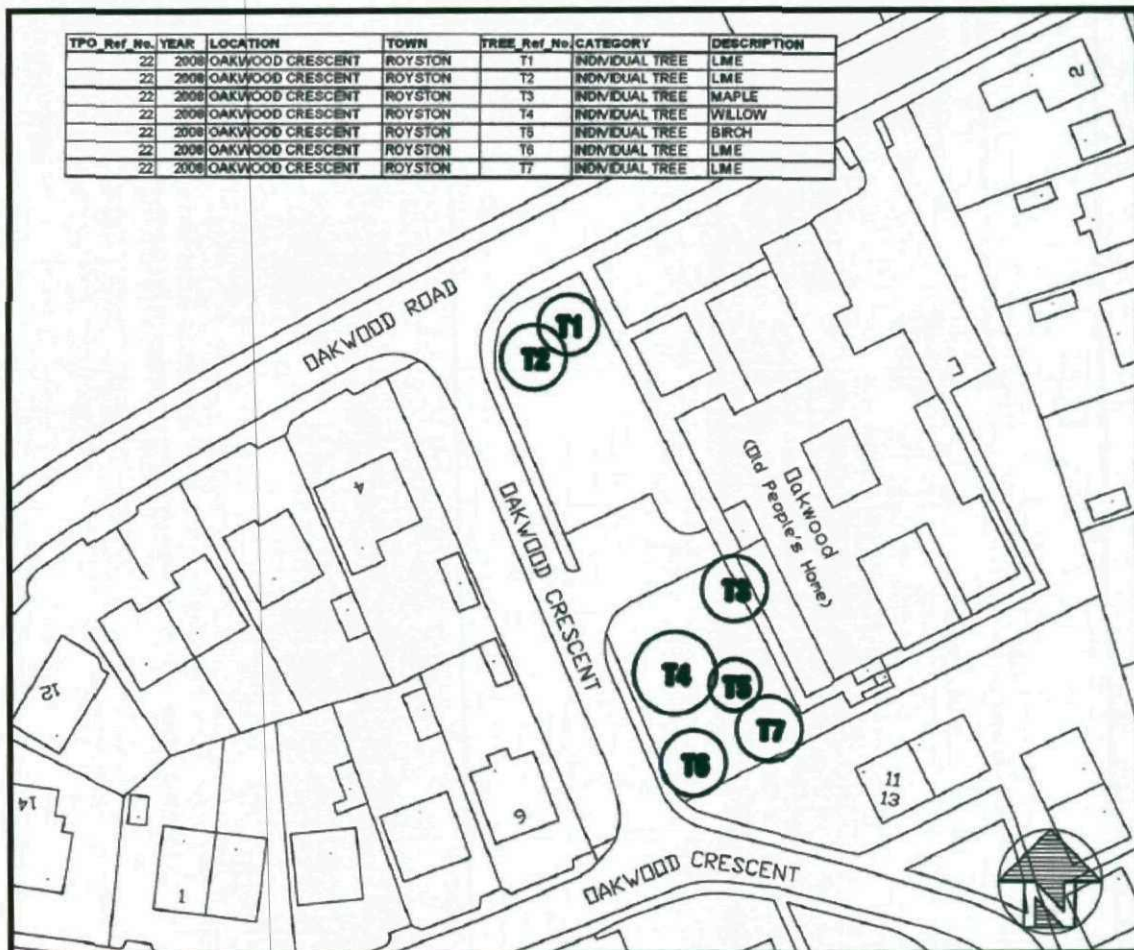


Figure 5 - Map of Tree Preservation Orders on site

The garden areas surrounding the building will be made secure for residents with an attractive landscaping scheme providing a setting for the building. Useable amenity space is provided around the building for the future residents of the home.

Access

As mentioned earlier an ideal location for a care home is within a built up residential area that provides good access to public transport and a nearby source of employees. The site is ideally located close to a good public transport network into Barnsley and Wakefield centres and surrounding areas and an available workforce. On average a care home of this size will employ approximately 40 - 50 staff both full and part time. The demographics of the area predict that there is a likely available workforce within the immediate area.

Walking and cycling

The surrounding roads are wide and usable for both walking and cycling. The site is easily accessible on foot and the existing road network allows for cycle use and is close to the cycle network, further details are contained within the submitted Travel Plan.

Cycle parking will be provided within the site and encouraged amongst staff.

Bus

Bus stops are located on Station Road and High Street with frequent services into the city and surrounding residential areas.

Car

In the absence of any set local authority standards the level of parking is provided to reflect the requirements of the home and other available methods of transport with a hope of discouraging the use of the private car. A Travel Plan will be prepared in recognition of the importance of Government Policy aimed at promoting sustainable development, travel patterns and modes of transport and reducing reliance upon the private car.

Disabled Access

The proposed development will be fully compliant with Disability Act 2005. The development incorporates ramped access from the disabled car parking area directly into the entrance halls of the building. Internally, all individual rooms and communal areas will be accessible and a wheelchair accessible toilet provided at ground floor level.

Conclusion

This statement has been produced to support the planning application for the redevelopment of the site of the former Oakwood Old People's Home to provide a 62 bed care home for older people. The site currently has no Local Plan allocation for the site.

The proposed development helps to provide a sustainable community creating job opportunities that local people can access easily providing a valuable community facility and fulfilling an identified need within the area. The vitality and viability of the area will be improved as a result of the proposed development providing a combination of a residential use with a commercial element.

The proposed development does not distract from the character of the area or the amenity of the existing residents.

The redevelopment of the site will enhance the area providing a well designed and landscaped proposal with benefits to the community as a whole.