Design , Access and Sustainability Report for proposed development at Elm Court, 60 Grange Lane Cundy Cross , Barnsley, South Yorkshire. The Grange Residential Care Home & Willow Brook Health Ltd. Extension of a 4 bedroom self contained flat at first floor and roof level.

Analysis : Predominantly this area consists of residential dwellings and various shops , There is a community college near by and also meeting places in the form of public houses , various eateries , churches and communities facilities. An adjoining and extensive public country park offers amenity and recreation . Therefore the needs of the community are met locally.

The existing building consists of a small block of 4 self contained flats over two storeys and built about 12 years ago . Currently the flats are maintained and supervised by the business on site , which operates as a care home. Elm Court is set well back from Grange Lane and enjoys relative privacy and security with its own private drive on to the public highway , Grange Lane. This road is relatively busy as to traffic , but only at peak hours . The walking distance from Elm Court to Grange Lane and all of its public life is only some 60 meters . The current and individual flats are occupied by vunerable members of the community who suffer from learning difficulties , low level mental illnesses and those recuperating from alcoholism and drug addiction. These residents are assisted with minimal supervision in re establishing self sustaining behaviour , running their own lives in good quality , self contained accommodation and all in a conducive environment. The proposed flat will be offered to exactly the same type of resident.

Over the last 20 years the business and service offered has maintained an excellent record with the registration and social services authorities . The site has integrated well into the local community with little complaint or inconvenience caused or registered by the local population. The site is located on the edge of Cundy Cross and is ideally located , establishing the service as a successful example of "Care in the Community" following government guide lines and requirements.

Planning History : A recent planning permission lapsed in November 2008 for a larger development on this part of the site . Financial constraint over the last 5 years did not allow the above scheme to be implemented. However the directors will always seek to improve and up grade their service , which is predominantly offered to the public sector. Historically profits have been ploughed back into enhancing this site and service, all as evidenced by the planning record on this site. Financial support may become available and therefore the directors apply for a modest extension to create a further self contained flat on this site , the subject of this application.

Market Conditions : The demands on this care sector now demands that homes / businesses move with the times. Investment in providing increased accommodation and generating appropriate income is critically required to ensure the long term viability of the home , while at the same time protecting this valuable service offered to all of the surrounding area

Local needs : The accommodation on this site is in constant demand from the various social services departments and health care trusts. This home has been constantly full with a waiting list for the last 15 years and demand increases in line with national statistics. Further this special accommodation is extremely rare in any community and is consequently not easily available to the disadvantaged and more vunerable members of society.

Particulars of the proposal: Access is gained via an existing concrete stair and ground floor lobby to the first floor flat. Only 2 flats are served by this access stair . This is a dedicated fire escape route and all accommodation within the proposed flat is designed to be to the vigorous requirements of the Fire Act and standards of modern self contained accommodation. Indeed this special accommodation is purpose designed for the prospective residents and their special needs. Over the last 15 years the applicant' s experience has allowed development of successful strategies and accommodation , which is unique in this area of design and social provision. The applicant's policy to provide the best service and accommodation has always resulted in the crucial and consistent patronage enjoyed.

The 4 new residents will be assessed and inducted into a compatible family life style. Each bedroom is to registration size ,of large floor area and with special furniture, TV and finishes. Private en suite and safe bathrooms provide showers , wc and basins . A communal lounge of above approved floor area provides for basic kitchen and dining use with all required amenities such as a TV and space for social interaction and company , but only as desired by the residents. Systems installed cover the Fire regulations and emergency summoning of assistance. All staff are trained to cover these emergencies and personal care plans are the standard operating remit of the service provider / applicant.

The new service users / residents will be basically fit and able and cable of using stairs etc , although they will not be allowed by law to drive private vehicles .

Amenity Space : As before the country park is within a 200 meters walk away. Garden areas surround the buildings and are well established .The disposition of the residents does not lead them to demand any greater level of provision than that provided and predominantly the residents stay inside their commodious accommodation.

Travel and Parking : The residents cannot drive cars by law. However local public bus services pass the site in Grange Road. Local taxi services appear to be well established. The home runs its own pool vehicle for resident use for all essential appointments and are accompanied by staff. The train station is in the town centre. Generally residents get visitors rarely and the projected increase in staff hardly changes. As a company policy employees are recruited locally within walking distance . Visiting hard pressed social workers visit site only as required . Health consultants never visit site by choice. Registration officials visit site 2 times per year. In addition there is a very large and little used public car park within 200 meters walking distance from the site . Therefore no additional parking is considered necessary.

Impact of the Proposal : Over looking. Proposed windows are located as windows previously approved under the recently lapsed planning permission. Some additional new windows look eastwards over the bottom of adjoining gardens , but not over more private areas close to the rear of neighbouring houses. Some new windows look southwards over neighbouring bungalows , but are not close enough to be undesirable. The bungalows are below the Elms in level of the site and windows to the bungalows habitable rooms predominantly look southwards . Therefore hardy any direct window to window contact exists.

Further all the well established tree / planting screening on the north , east and south boundaries on the application site will be retained and maintained by the applicant as has been the case to date.

Materials used. All materials to be used for new work will match the existing finishes, materials and colours .Roof, walls & joinery as standard practise , to be agreed in writing.

Positive impact: The development and construction work would generate wealth and work opportunities within the local community . All required materials , skills and labour can be sourced locally and avoid detrimental national transport need.

Disabled users : The new residents are generally not disabled physically . However other special accommodation for the wheel chair bound and severely handicapped is provided for else where on the site in previously approved projects. Access to the new flats is by an existing concrete stair and designed to public access standards . It therefore has semi ambulant standard steps of low rise and an easy going . As required by regulations and in side the new flat common corridors are generous in width allowing for easy disabled travel and access. Main access and entry doors inside the apartments to rooms are to be approximately 925mm wide for disable users' ease of use.

Water and Energy Use : Water and energy saving devices are to be installed within the flat such as showers , efficient washing machines and dish washers etc. Direct point of need / feed from condensing gas SEDBUK rated boiler would obviate the need for hot water storage and energy waste . The proposed construction works are comprehensive in nature and as such can be thermally insulated above current building regulation standards to reduce energy consumption and heating. The use of low energy electric bulbs are standard company policy. Acoustic insulation installed is also to be designed by a specialist consultant to ensure privacy and comfort of the residents.

Waste away : A designated palladin / bin area exists on site and waste is collected by specialist contractor . Easy access for collection can be direct to the near public road.

Conclusion: This proposed accommodation will provide good living conditions for 4 more disadvantaged adults in secure a+nd comfortable environment, living as normal a life a possible with dignity. The possible effect on the surrounding and local community is very little.