

Elm789DASTP709

**Design , Access and Sustainability Report for proposed development at
Elm Court, 80 Grange Lane , Stairfoot , Barnsley, South Yorks, S71 5QQ.**

**The Grange & Elm Court Residential Care Home Site for
Willow Brook Health Ltd. Extension of 3 self contained flats at ground , first
and second floor level. New flats to be designated Flats no. 7 , 8 and 9.**

Analysis : Predominantly the local area consists of residential dwellings and various shops. There is a community college near by and also meeting places such as public houses, various eateries , churches and communities facilities. 200 meters from the site there is an extensive country park open to the public and offers amenity and recreation . Therefore the needs of the community are met locally.

The existing building , Elm Court consists of a block of 5 self contained flats , two storey in height and built about 12 years ago. A recently approved flat no 6 is being built at present. Currently the flats are maintained and supervised by the business on site , which provides sheltered accommodation . 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 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 facilities is only some 60 meters . The current and individual flats are occupied by vulnerable members of the community designated as the service users . These service users or 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. Due to the constant demand for this type of accommodation it is now proposed to create 3no. flats designated 7 , 8 and 9 , again self contained flats similar to that approved . The proposed flats would 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 Barnsley and ideally located , the established service is a successful example of "Care in the Community" that adheres to government guide lines and requirements. This type of special accommodation provides an opportunity for the service uses to be rehabilitated and re enter the community . However availability is rare and this leads to constant and desperate demand for accommodation from mostly the public sector. The applicant has always ploughed back profits into providing a better service and creating more of this type of accommodation . Accordingly flats 7, 8 and 9 are now applied for.

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 implementation of the above scheme . However recently in June 2009 approval was gained for flat no 6, which is now to be constructed this Autumn .

Topography. The site is on a hill and existing garden slope can allow for floor levels to be arranged so as to provide for three storey development, the recently approved flat no6 being three storey development . Any reduction in site levels would not effect the roots of tree screening to the boundaries. It is further proposed that the second floor accommodation can be partially housed within the roof envelope, i.e. a partially sloping ceiling to rooms , but always providing the critical 1.5 m habitable headroom. It is possible to line through ridge and eaves heights as the existing building so as to maintain a cohesive appearance.

Market Conditions. To day the demands on the residential care sector demands that providers move with the times , to constantly re invest to provide the best service and create more excellent accommodation . In this way this care business can be assured a long and sustainable future and also maintain its' valuable service to the community.

Local needs : The accommodation on this site is in constant demand from the various local 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. This special accommodation is extremely rare in any community and consequently not easily available to the disadvantaged and more vunerable members of society.

Particulars of the proposal: Proposed 3 no self contained flats , each of 4 bedrooms with en suite shower room. Bedrooms are all over 12.0m 2 floor area. Generous amenity space to be provided in the living room.

Level access to the entrance lobby and easy going stair is provided for the semi ambulant user to gain access to a flat at each level via fire doors. This is a dedicated fire escape route and all accommodation within the proposed flat is designed to be to the rigorous 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 new residents will be assessed and inducted into a compatible family life style in each flat . Each bedroom is above required registration size , with special furniture, TV and finishes. Private en suite bathrooms provide showers , wc and basins . A communal living room of above standard floor area provides kitchen facilities ,dining and living space with all required amenities such as a TV . Sufficient space is planned for social interaction and companionship , all as may be desired by the flat's residents. The systems installed cover the requirements of 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. Those care plans designed to offer only the necessary supervision and aid to the service user.

The Service User. Most service users or residents of this accommodation suffer from learning difficulties, they may be recovering alcoholics and drug users or suffering from general dementia or low level mental illness. Basically the residents will be reasonably fit, although they will not be allowed by law to drive private motor vehicles of any sort.

Amenity and Recreation : As before the country park is within a 200 meters walk away. Garden areas surround the buildings and are well established, although the disposition of the average resident does not lead them to demand any great level of provision. The resident can choose to stay within their commodious bedrooms. The space and floor area requirements of internal accommodation comply to the latest law and regulation.

Travel : Local public bus services pass the site in Grange Lane. Local taxi services appear to be well established. The home runs its own chauffeured pool vehicles for resident use, for all essential appointments and recreation. The service user is accompanied by staff as necessary. The train station is in the town centre.

Parking : By law the residents are not allowed to drive motor vehicles. Generally residents get visitors rarely. The applicant's employment policy and records show that most employees are recruited very locally and mostly within walking distance, therefore avoiding car use. Hard pressed social workers visit site only as essentially 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. Available parking provision on site has always been adequate. In conclusion no additional parking is considered necessary or desirable.

Impact of the Proposal : Considering the impact of windows to the proposed living rooms and bedrooms at higher level. Over looking from primary windows is minimal over critically private areas of adjoining gardens to the East. The well established and mostly 5.0 m high plus tree screening to site boundaries is to be retained and maintained by the applicant. Thus to further obscure views and psychologically encapsulate the site. Some small windows look southwards over neighbouring bungalows, however these are secondary windows. Bathroom windows are to be obscured glazed. The above bungalows are below the level of Elm Court and in addition the windows to the bungalows' habitable rooms predominantly and naturally look southwards and away from Elm Court. A considerable tree screen exists on the southern boundary and is to be retained. Therefore hardly any direct window to window contact exists.

Advantages of the proposal: 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 therefore avoid detrimental national transport need. The applicant does employ a lot of local unskilled labour, who are typically trained to their potential and all as recognized under the NVQ / National and Vocational Qualification system.

Disabled users : The new residents are generally not physically disabled. Although other special accommodation for the wheel chair bound and severely handicapped is provided for else where on the site . However access to the new flats is by semi ambulant standard stairs of low rise and an easy going . As required by regulations the internal accommodation offers access corridors of generous width , allowing for easy disabled travel and movement . Main access and entry doors inside the apartments to rooms are to be over 900 mm wide for wheel chair and disable users. Thresholds are to be level with the floor finish. User friendly DDL approved ironmongery is to be used through out..

Materials and Construction : The materials , the building's appearance and detailing is to match the existing building as possible to gain a cohesive appearance. The construction will be traditional all as the existing block. The specification geared to achieving a long life of the building to suit the perceived long term need and an envisaged sustainable future.

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. Where possible the use of low energy electric bulbs are standard company policy.

Acoustic and General: The acoustic insulation is to be designed by a specialist consultant to ensure compliance , 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 refuse vehicle / collection can be direct from the near public road, Grange Lane. The drive on site is to approved highways width and can allow access for these large vehicles , such as fire brigade engine / tender in the case of emergency.

Conclusion: This proposed accommodation will provide good living conditions for more disadvantaged adults in a secure and comfortable environment, living as normal a life a possible with dignity. Sufficient and appropriate supervision of the service users / residents is planned to protect , secure and encourage their development and rehabilitation. Therefore effects on the surrounding and local community is very little and indeed this has always been the case.

Further this proposal will stimulate local wealth creation and at the same time provide employment opportunities over the long term. Much of that employment for the " first job" youngster and the low and non skilled member of the very local community. In addition income / spin off benefits would be available to the local food and furnishings supplier and service businesses generally.