DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

This statement has been prepared to support the planning application referred to below having regard to the provisions of Article 4C of the Town & Country Planning General Development Procedure Order 1995 as amended.

Application
Outline application for a residential care home on approx. 0.55ha of land on the south side of Foundry Street, Elsecar, Barnsley for Hyde (UK) Ltd.

Background
The applicants have recently had a detailed application for the erection of a 40bed care home refused (29 September 2010 ref: 2010/0516) because of its unacceptable design. These proposals were submitted in the belief that such a scheme would be acceptable following the grant of an approval for a 40 bed home on 10 September 1993 ref: B/93/0439/HN pursuant to an outline planning permission granted on 10 September 1992 ref: B/91/1747/HN. During the course of discussions in connection with the most recent proposal the planning officer made it clear that in principle a care home on this site was acceptable.
Rather than risk committing further time and expense in redesigning the proposed care home the applicants wished to be reassured about the acceptability of its proposals and thus have recently completed a pre-application submission process as a result of which the planning officers have confirmed the general acceptability of the principle and the siting and layout of the new home. The details now submitted have been prepared in the light of the discussions that have been held as part of the pre-application process and in the further light of the written response provided by the planning officer.
Notwithstanding this design and access statement also sets out the applicant's new approach to the design of their proposed care home.
The planning site history of the site also reveals that on 15 November 1990 an outline planning permission was granted on appeal for the erection of a dwelling towards the western end of the site which also involved the demolition of an industrial building. That building has already been demolished. Whilst this permission has never been implemented a similar proposal has recently been granted permission. It should be noted that the site the subject of that permission has now been absorbed into the site to which this new care home application refers.

Context
Physical – this site is within the built fabric of Elsecar on its south-eastern side although open land exists to the south west. Most of the site is rough unkempt ground but it is in part already developed and historically was occupied by a quite substantial range of buildings including houses. The site is mainly level along most of its frontage to the unmade Foundry Street which is also level. However, at its western end where a welding and fabrication workshop remains the site has a significantly lower level and this lower level continues for much of the southern third of the site. The resultant slope in the ground is partly tree covered the trees having little or no value in arboricultural or landscape terms. From the dyke marking the southern boundary to Foundry Street there is an approximate change in level between 3.5m at the western end and 5m at the eastern end.
On the north side of Foundry Street and importantly on slightly higher ground are four long established houses and at the western end of the street, beyond the workshop, are two more modern bungalows. Behind the houses the land slopes steeply upwards to the centre of Elsecar.

Access to the site is gained via Foundry Street's junction with Hill Street and on the northern side of the access is a detached house and on the south side a public house with a car park to the rear adjacent to the application site.

Social – because of the planning history of the site and in the light of the most recent planning application no separate consultations have taken place with the local residents. It is however, understood that there are no objections to the proposals. This would suggest that the owner/occupiers of at least the existing dwellings on Foundry Street do not believe that the care home would detract from their amenities. It must also be true that the improvements proposed to Foundry Street as part of the new development will bring important benefits to those residents. The new approach being taken to the scheme will it is believed also bring enhancements to the local area by making sound and effective use of a degraded area of land.

Planning policy – the site is located within the built fabric of Elsecar and is subject to a designation as a residential policy area. As such subject to normal policy constraints applicable to most forms of development the erection of a care home on this site would not conflict with this policy and this is confirmed by the planning officer ion nhis letter dated 8 March 2011. That letter refers to the need to accord with Government Guidance as set out in PPS1, PPS3, PPG13 and PPS25 as well as UDP policies H5, H5B, H8, BE6, T2 and T2a.
PPS1 seeks the delivery of sustainable development and in paragraph 27 sets out a range of criteria aimed principally at local planning authorities in their role as plan and decision makers. This proposal aids the process by assisting in the well-being of the local community by promoting a high quality and safe development and by bringing back into use a large area of degraded previously developed land in an accessible and efficient manner without in turn giving rise to any harm to local residents or the local environment.
PPS3 is advice not specifically aimed at care homes but in as far as the submission is part of the wider provision of living accommodation the desire for high quality, accessibility and integration into the local community is met by this application.
PPG13 similarly seeks well designed safe and accessible developments which is exactly what is being proposed.
PPS25 relates to flood risk but the site is not in a flood risk zone and no assessment is required. However, the site borders a dyke that has some history of localised flooding downstream and the constraints this imposes can be met on site by adopting a sustainable drainage system for the scheme.
Climate change - national policy in the form of the supplement to PPS1 requires that applicants need to consider how their proposal can help to mitigate and adapt to climate change over the course of its expected lifetime. In a broad sense there is little that the applicant in this case is able to do to counter the overall effects of climate change because of the relatively modest size of the development but a part can be played by for example making sure that as far as is practicable the emissions from the building are minimised. This can be done by employing appropriate building techniques and for example ensuring an efficient heating system coupled with a high standard of insulation. Reducing the overall impact of the work and subsequent building might also be possible by using wherever possible recycled and recyclable materials in the construction as long as it does not compromise the intended use of the building. Certainly rainwater capture and grey water recycling are measures that could be utilised but other approaches such as the use of solar panels, photovoltaic panels, ground source heat pumps and heat recovery call for much more careful consideration and cost benefit analysis as well as considering their possible design impacts. There is little likelihood that the site or building would ever be subject to flooding.

The development

The new design for the care home has evolved from the framework provided by the previous refusal and by the characteristics of the site (particularly the changes in ground levels) and its surroundings.

The aim has been in terms of the massing and siting of what has, because of its function, to be a large building to maximise the use of the lower areas of ground to the western side of the site.This has enabled a design to emerge that largely will seem, when completed and landscaped, to be a single storey structure. This benefits the existing residents of Foundry Street as well as helping to achieve a good standard of privacy for the elderly residents to be cared for in the home whilst at the same time providing good visibility of those important areas to ensure that a safe and secure development is achieved.

The mass of the building is also broken down by having a series of one and two storey blocks with differing ridge heights which in turn wrap around a centralised "tower" that will house the necessary lift and staircase whilst giving a focus to the external appearance of the home

The aim has been to try to achieve for as many of the future care home residents as possible an attractive outlook from the individual rooms whilst remaining close to the important internal facilities of the home as well as ensuring the Care Commission's standards are met and where possible exceeded.

Users and visitors to the home and local residents will benefit from the proposed improvement to Foundry Street which will give access to a 25 space car park at the same general level as Foundry Street. But the staff needs are to accommodated in separate spaces in the service yard to the rear of the building.

External materials will consist of natural stone and rendered walls with a grey tiled roof provided that a suitable tile can be sourced that will give the appearance of a slate.

The care home will also be constructed having regard to the very latest requirements to achieve as high a standard of insulation whilst utilising as little energy as practicable and thus achieving a low carbon footprint.

Access

In addition to the comments above access requirements will meet the standards set by the Building Regulations whether for ambulent or disabled residents or visitors. Level access will be afforded to the car park and the main building entrance