

Application for Full Planning Permission by

Country Court Care Ltd

for

A 2-Storey Rear Extension to the Existing Care Home to Provide Additional Bedrooms, Day Space, Storage, A Nurses Station, Assisted Bathrooms and an Associated Increase in Car Parking Spaces

at

Ashwood Care Home, 43 Spalding Common, Spalding Lincolnshire, PE11 3AU



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT AND PLANNING STATEMENT

Date: 22nd April 2024
Our Ref: PH/474/24

Part 1 – Design and Access Statement Page 1
Part 2 – Planning Statement Page 11

PART 1 - DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement is provided in order to support this submission for full planning permission and to supplement the drawings and additional details that also accompany this proposal.
- 1.2 This Statement has been compiled in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

2.0 General Principles

- 2.1 Statements that accompany applications must explain how the Applicant has considered the proposal and understands what is appropriate and feasible for the site in its context. It should clearly explain and justify the 'design and access' principles that will be used in the development of the scheme.
- 2.2 The details and information submitted show how the proposed development will be appropriate within the surrounding area and in the local context. This Design and Access Statement explores the full principles of the development and the issues connected with such a proposal in order to justify how the development will be acceptable in planning terms.

3.0 The Site & Its Surroundings

- 3.1 The application site is located to the eastern side of Spalding Common, the B1172, which is a radial road linking the A1175 from the south to Spalding Town Centre to the north. Spalding Common runs parallel to Cradge Bank and the River Welland, both of which are to the east, and both head north into Spalding.

- 3.2 The application site is some 1.8 miles south of Spalding town centre as the crow flies, and a 2.1 mile drive. The A1175 is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the south of the site along the B1172.
- 3.3 The majority of the development within this area is linear along Spalding Common itself, although the application site is now bordered to the north and east by new residential development which is being constructed on the site of a former agricultural nursery (135 dwellings, as approved on the 13th March 2018 under application H16-0668-16).
- 3.4 There are still open, agricultural fields to the south of the care home, and on the opposite side of the road (the latter of which is allocated for residential development).
- 3.5 Ashwood Care Home itself is a mix of single and 2-storey structures, which are adjoined to the rear, and linked to the front with 2 flat roofed structures that form 'quiet lounges' within. The care home is constructed in light buff bricks, with brown concrete roof tiles and white windows.
- 3.6 The car parking to serve the care home is located to the northern and eastern sides of the building. This area has increased in size since the commencement of the adjacent residential development, as it was previously limited to just the north side of the care home, with additional spaces on the access road. As the access road has now been formalised to serve the residential development, the car parking area has been 'contained' by the adoptable road and footpath.
- 3.7 The existing care home provides 47 bedrooms, with the associated reception and lobby area, offices, day spaces, shop, hair salon, storage, a lift and stairwells, kitchen, dining room and laundry room. There are currently 20 parking spaces that serve the care home.
- 3.8 It is fair to say that due to the shape and layout of the care home, it does not function well in terms of movement through the building and in terms of distances between some of the bedrooms and the main day spaces and dining areas. Therefore, as part of the overall development, some internal elements of the existing buildings will be reconfigured or repurposed so as to improve the overall function of the care home. These changes are mainly within the first floor of the existing care home, and where the ground floor element links in to the new-build, and are shown on the submitted drawings accordingly. Several bedrooms will be relocated, so where only 19 additional bedrooms are proposed, the new-build will contain 28 of the 66 bedrooms in total.

4.0 The Planning History of the Site

4.1 There are several planning applications for this site which are identified on the Council's website. These are as follows:

- H16-0771-00 – Planning permission was refused on the 4th August 2000 for a single storey extension to the front of the care home to provide 8 additional bedrooms. The application was refused based on the forward position of the proposed extension and the impact that this would have on the street scene.
- H16-0157-01 – Planning permission was granted on the 1st October 2001 (at appeal) for a single storey extension to the front of the care home to provide 10 additional bedrooms. This development was not implemented.
- H16-0407-05 – Planning permission was granted on the 9th May 2005 to renew the above planning permission. It is understood that that this development was implemented shortly afterwards.
- H16-0405-08 – Planning permission was granted on the 18th September 2008 for extensions to the care home in order to provide more bedrooms, lounge space, staff accommodation and associated spaces.
- H16-0399-10 – In connection with the above planning application, Condition 3, which related to the means of foul water disposal, was discharged on the 12th July 2010.

5.0 The Proposed Development

5.1 Consent is sought for an L-shaped, 2-storey extension to the rear of the care home which, when coupled with the internal alterations to existing layout, will increase the number of bedrooms by 19 and will provide additional day space, storage areas, a nurses station and assisted bathrooms. The proposal will also create 8 additional car parking spaces, a private courtyard area and additional garden space to the rear.

5.2 The proposed development will be described in more detail in the following sections of this Statement.

6.0 The Assessment of the Site

- 6.1 The assessment of the site and surroundings explains how the site has been appraised and how the opportunities and constraints of the site, as existing, led to the form of the proposed development. In order to achieve this the 'local context' of the site was examined along with physical, social and economic issues.

The Physical Context of the Site

- 6.2 The application site and surroundings has been described in Section 3 of this Statement. The proposed site layout plan below shows the location of the proposed extension and how this relates to the newly constructed dwellings to the north and east of the site.



The Social Context of the Site

- 6.3 This section examines how, if at all, the people in the locality will be affected by the development.

- 6.4 The existing care home buildings are open to view from Spalding Common to the west, especially when driving towards Spalding from the south. The proposed extension is discreetly located to the rear of the existing buildings, away from the public highway, and will have no resulting impact on views into the site from Spalding Common.
- 6.5 The formalised car parking area will be open to view from the new access road into the residential development to the north and east, as is evidenced by the photograph on the front cover of this Statement. This parking area will be at a lower level to the new road and footpath and will have no harmful visual impact on the users of this residential access road.
- 6.6 The proposed extension itself would be at least 18m to the south of the new access road, and over 10m to the west of it, where the road turns south, then east, and feeds into the rest of the site. The nearest dwellings to the eastern site boundary are either gable-end on to the proposed development, or face out over the car parking area further to the north. Due to the location of the development in relation to these dwellings, and the fact that the application site is considerably lower, there will be no adverse impact on these dwellings as a result of the proposed development. The photograph below provides a view over the application site from the north east, with the temporary car parking in place. The dwelling on the left of the photograph is the new dwelling which has a gable wall that will face the proposed extension.



The Economic Context of the Site

- 6.7 The Applicants are experienced care home operators and are fully aware of the increasing need for care home places within the towns and villages within which they have premises. The increasing need for such facilities also brings with it a desire for modern, purpose-built development. Where viable, it is highly sustainable to extend existing premises where these features can all be 'designed in' to the proposed development, making the facility not only more user friendly (for the care staff) but more customer/resident friendly too.
- 6.8 With the size of the overall site the obvious solution is to extend to the existing premises, in a logical manner, to satisfy the need for increased bedroom space within the wider area, to improve the status and turnover of the business and to increase staff levels in order to provide the required levels of care. The increase in bedroom numbers logically brings with it the need for more staff, and there should be the potential for 6 to 8 new full-time staff members as a result of the proposed development.
- 6.9 It remains encouraging to see a business such as this looking to move forward and provide additional, functional, care home facilities within the District. In doing so the business will create new full time and part time jobs and will boost the local economy as residents and their visitors will use the nearby facilities and services that already exist within the wider area.

7.0 Design Considerations

Use

- 7.1 Obviously, the site has an established C2 care home use in its entirety. Such a use is entirely compatible with the other uses within the area and is not detrimental to those uses in any way. By extending that use there will be no adverse impact on the general area. Conversely, the future residents of the care home, once extended, would not be harmed by the existing uses within the area, which are primarily residential.
- 7.2 Moving forward with the proposed development shows a desire to increase and improve the C2 facilities within the area with a modern, purpose-built extension to complement the existing building and use.

Amount of Development

- 7.3 The existing care home provides 47 bedrooms and associated space, over 2 main floors of development, with the first floor of development being much smaller than the ground floor.
- 7.4 The proposed extensions will provide 1388m² of new development in order to provide 19 new bedrooms in total (following the internal alterations to the existing building) over 2-floors, along with associated day space, a nurses station, assisted bathrooms and storage. The total number of bedrooms in the extended care home will become 66.
- 7.5 These proposals will provide an efficient use of the site without detriment to the usable amenity space to serve the wider use of the site. Bearing in mind that internal day space is more critical than outdoor amenity space for a care home use, the potential to maximise internal day space, is a good solution for the operation of the care home. A sufficient level of external amenity space for the residents will still be provided.

Layout of the Development

- 7.6 The proposed site layout for the site can be seen on page 5 of this Statement.
- 7.7 The proposed internal layouts for the care home are submitted as part of this planning application and show how the extension will link into the existing care home to the north and south, and how the existing floor layout will be reconfigured in order to maximise the functionality of the use of the building.

The Scale and Appearance of the Development

- 7.8 The proposed development is designed in such a way in order that it replicates the scale and appearance of the existing building on the site and, over time, will be indistinguishable from it. In this regard, the scale and the massing of the proposed extension will not only be sympathetic to the care home, but also to the new residential development to the north and east.



- 7.9 The proposed development will use materials to the walls and roofs to exactly match those used in the existing building and all hard and soft landscaping will match that which already exists on the site.

Landscaping

- 7.10 The only landscaping proposed as part of the development will be to enhance the car parking areas and to provide grassed and planted garden space for the care home residents to the east of the proposed extension and within the central courtyard areas.

8.0 Access

Disabled Access

- 8.1 The application is for an extension and internal alterations to an existing C2 residential care home. The development will have to be in full accordance with the current Building Regulations (Part M) in terms of providing disabled access facilities throughout the building.
- 8.2 Disabled car parking provision will be formalised and provided in close proximity to the entrance to the reception area, to the north side of the care home. At ground level, footpaths around the proposed extensions and from the car parking areas will allow level access throughout the site.

Access into the Site & Movement within the Site

- 8.3 The development as proposed will have no detrimental impact on vehicular or pedestrian access into and out of the site and should in no way affect traffic movements within the wider locality due to the lightly trafficked nature of the care home use of the site.
- 8.4 The car parking areas have been designed in order to accommodate the required traffic movements. The minor increase in traffic movements that will be generated by the proposed development will have no effect on the free flow of traffic on the access and local roads accordingly.
- 8.5 The existing access into the site from Spalding Common will be used to serve only a small cluster of 8 parking spaces for visitors. The remaining parking area will be served from 'in & out' access points from the new road to the north and east, as shown on the proposed site layout plan.

- 8.6 Vehicular movement within the site will be restricted to the access road and car parking areas accordingly. The number of car parking spaces provided will increase from 20 to 28, and will be formalised in accordance with the proposed site layout plan. This is considered to be more than ample to serve the extended C2 care home, even when factoring-in the visitors to the additional 19-bed spaces to be created and the additional staff that will be employed as a result of the development. The car parking calculations can be found below.

Existing Parking Provision:

47 bedrooms and 20 car parking spaces = **1 parking space per 2.35 bedrooms**

Proposed Parking Provision:

66 bedrooms and 28 car parking spaces = **1 parking space per 2.35 bedrooms**

- 8.7 In order to fully justify the levels of parking to serve the extended care home, this planning application is also supported by a Parking Appraisal by Bancroft Consulting, which concludes that:

'A review of the parking standards set out within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan confirms that the number of proposed parking spaces would be sufficient, as a minimum of 22 parking bays would be required for a 66-bedroom care home.'

9.0 Conclusion to the Design & Access Statement

- 9.1 The format for a suitable Design and Access Statement has been closely followed in this case and the 'Good Design Principles' identified at the end of the CAGE document have been adhered to in the formulation of this application.
- 9.2 It is hoped that with the use of this Design and Access Statement and the other supporting documentation, the acceptability of the proposed development is acknowledged.

PART 2 - PLANNING STATEMENT

1. The relevant national Government planning guidance in this case is contained within the **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPG), as reissued in December 2023, and the Governments' online **National Planning Practice Guidance** (NPPG), which came into force on the 6th March 2014.

The NPPF

2. The NPPF makes it clear that in Section 2 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At paragraph 8 it identifies sustainable development as being 'economic', 'social' and 'environmental' whereby all planning proposals should contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, support strong vibrant and healthy communities and contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. **Comment** - In our opinion the proposed development will help to contribute to the local economy and will support the local community by improving the care facilities that serve the population whilst, at the same time, having no detrimental impact on the local environment.
3. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF goes on to state that planning decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions and, in doing so, should take local circumstances into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of an area. **Comment** - The proposed development achieves these aims as it will help to improve the level of elderly care provision within the area and will extend the functional use of the site, without detriment to wider area within which it is sited. The proposed development will contribute to the local economy, will support the local community and will meet the defined need for more C2 bed-spaces within this area.
4. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF puts forward the presumption in favour of sustainable development and, in terms of decision making, states that development proposals that accord with an up to date 'development plan' should be approved without delay. **Comment** - It will be argued below that the proposed development will be in accordance with the 'development plan' and should therefore be approved accordingly.
5. Section 6 of the revised NPPF relates to 'Building a Strong, Competitive Economy' highlighting the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity. Paragraph 85 states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into

account the needs of local businesses and wider opportunities for development. **Comment** – Clearly, further bedroom additions to this existing C2 use will bolster the local economy and will increase jobs within the local area, not only during the construction phases but also on completion. It is anticipated that 6 to 8 new jobs will be created (care staff, reception staff, kitchen staff, cleaners, caretaker, etc.).

6. Section 9 of the NPPF relates to 'Promoting Sustainable Transport' and, at paragraph 108, indicates that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of planning in order that the potential impacts of the development on transport networks can be addressed. Paragraph 115 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. **Comment** - Conscious that C2 developments are very lightly trafficked, with trips to the site mainly by staff, deliveries and visitors, it is argued that the proposed expansion of this use would only generate a minimum of new traffic movements to the site. The increase in the parking spaces on the site, from 20 to 28, will be more than adequate to cope with the increase size of the care home, even during the busy periods. There will certainly be no 'severe' impacts on the highway network as a result of the development. The proposed development will be entirely acceptable in terms of sustainable transport movements.
7. Section 11 of the NPPF relates to 'Making Effective Use of Land', with an emphasis on the use of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. Paragraph 124 states that (*inter alia*) planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from urban and rural land through mixed use schemes, especially where there could be net environmental gains. Paragraph 127 states that LPAs should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose, where this would help meet identified development needs. **Comment** - The proposal, through developing on previously developed parts of the site for additional C2 uses, will serve to meet these requirements of the NPPF accordingly.
8. Paragraph 128 indicates that development should make an efficient use of land to meet all forms of development, taking into account need, market conditions, infrastructure and services, regeneration and design. **Comment** – The proposed site layout makes an efficient use of the land available and allows for a development that will make good use of available land without the need to develop on a greenfield site.

9. Section 12 of the NPPF focusses on 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' and acknowledges that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, appropriately landscaped, sympathetic to local character, have a strong sense of place and are safe, inclusive and accessible. **Comment** – Obviously there is already a care home development on this site, the design and layout of which have been approved by the Council as part of the original planning application(s). The proposed extensions to the care home follow the design, detailing and materials as originally approved in order to ensure continuity in the design and to ensure a positive impact on the general area.

The NPPG

10. The NPPG provides an informative section on 'Design' and goes into detail on why good design matters and what it achieves. Paragraph 004 of this section states that development proposals should reflect the requirement for good design set out in national and local policy and Councils are required to take design into consideration, giving weight to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally within the area. **Comment** – We are certain that proposed extension will enhance the visual appearance of the existing care home building and will in no way affect the character or appearance of the area.
11. The NPPG goes on to examine how buildings and the spaces between them should be considered and states that developments should be considered in relation to adjoining buildings, streets and spaces along with the topography of the area, the general pattern of building heights as well as views, vistas and landmarks. The main thrust of this part of the NPPG (paragraph 024) is to ensure that new and existing buildings relate well to each other. **Comment** – We are of the opinion that an extension of this size will relate well to the existing built-form and will not have any detrimental impact on the overall pattern of development within the area or any particular view, vista or landmark.

The Development Plan

12. The relevant 'Development Plan' policies in relation to this development are contained within the **South East Lincolnshire Local Plan**, as adopted on the 8th March 2019.

13. Policy 2 of the Local Plan relates to 'Development Management' and is effectively a 'cover all' policy for all planning proposals. It seeks to ensure that (*inter alia*) all development proposals are suitable in terms of size, scale, layout, amenity, landscaping and in relation to their character and appearance. It also requires quality in design, the sustainable use of materials, suitable access, the avoidance of pollution, suitable drainage, the avoidance of flood risk and the protection of habitats. **Comment** – The proposed development has been designed in such a way so as to accord with all of these requirements of the policy and therefore complies with this part of the Local Plan accordingly.
14. Policy 3 is a similar policy relating to the 'Design of New Development' and seeks to ensure that all development creates distinctive places through the use of high quality and inclusive design and layout, and where appropriate, makes innovative use of local traditional styles and materials. **Comment** – Through the provision of a sympathetic and suitably scaled extension to this building, which will be constructed in matching materials, we are able to show that the proposed development will be compliant with the provisions of this policy accordingly.
15. Policy 4 sets out the Council's 'Approach to Flood Risk' and seeks to ensure that all developments that are in Flood Zones 2 or 3 are supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment which addresses points a. to h. within the policy, and which shows that the site can be suitably drained. **Comment** – In this respect the proposal is supported by a robust Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrates that the proposed development is not at significant flood risk, and will not increase flood risk to others, subject the recommended flood mitigation strategies being implemented. In this case it is recommended that the minimum floor level provided is 3.20m AOD, which exceeds the existing land level by 1.0m, and that the development includes flood resilient measures as set out at paragraph 5.5 in the FRA.
16. Policy 36 relates to 'Vehicle and Cycle Parking' and requires all new development proposals to meet the minimum parking standards as adopted, unless a high-quality design can demonstrate that a lower standard of provision is acceptable. Parking should be integral to the site, and of a suitable scale and layout. Secure cycle parking and EV charging points should be provided where possible. **Comment** – The submitted Parking Assessment shows that the proposed levels of parking exceed the minimal requirements for a development of this scale. Through negotiation with the LPA, following the submission of this application, we will supplement the proposed site layout in order to provide the required number of cycle parking spaces and EV charging points, to ensure full compliance with this policy of the Local Plan.

Conclusion

17. The above paragraphs show that the proposed development is wholly in accordance with the national planning guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance and, at a local level, the 'Development Plan' as referred to above.
18. For these reasons it is considered that the proposed development is wholly compliant with both national and local planning policy. With no other material considerations to indicate that the development should be resisted, and in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF and Section 38(6) of the PCPA 2004, it is respectfully requested that the development is '*...approved without delay*'.
19. It is therefore requested that planning permission is granted accordingly.