

**Design and Access Statement
Planning Statement**
Change of use from C3 dwellinghouse
to C2 residential care home
Bridge House
Park Lane
Surfleet



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Table of contents

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

Table of Contents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
1. Introduction	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
2. Proposed development	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
3. Site location and proposed development	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
4. Planning considerations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
5. Design Component	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
6. Access Component	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
7. Conclusions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20

1. Introduction

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

1. The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015, requires certain types of application for planning permission to be accompanied by a **Design and Access Statement**. This statement has been prepared in line with relevant national requirements, and in line with best practice guidance on the preparation of such statements. Regard has also been paid to the development plan, and in particular the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).
2. The statement comprises seven main elements:-
3. A description of the **proposed development** and its location
4. The **Site Appraisal** section examines the physical context. The design solution for the site has been based upon a full and thorough understanding of the site and the surrounding area. Site appraisal forms a fundamental part of the evaluation process.
5. The **Planning Considerations** section considers the planning issues arising from the proposed development with particular regard to development plan policies.
6. The **Design Component** sets out the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development. It describes how the physical characteristics of the scheme have been informed by robust site appraisal, assessment and evaluation. The resulting design principles that emerge from that appraisal process are considered under the headings of **Use, Amount, Layout, Scale, Landscaping, and Appearance**.
7. The **Access Component** explains the approach that has been adopted in relation to accessibility. It describes how relevant **development plan policies** have been taken into account. **Consultations** undertaken are outlined. It describes how prospective users will gain **access to the development** from the existing transport network and, why points of access have been chosen. It also considers **equality of access**; how everyone can get to and move through the proposed development on equal terms regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.
8. The **Conclusions** section outlines how the proposed development conforms to good design principles.

2. Proposed development

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

9. This application, which is a full planning application, proposes the conversion of a large residential property to form a C2 residential care home.
10. The premises will comprise a residential care home – with an emphasis upon supported living - for a maximum of 6 adults with autistic spectrum disorders / learning disabilities. The premises will be owned and operated by the Kisimul Group who provide education and long-term care to children and adults with complex learning difficulties.
11. The application property, Bridge House is a large detached residential property located on the northern side of Park Lane, Surfleet adjacent its junction with the A1536 Surfleet Road. Immediately adjacent the property to the north is the bridge crossing of the River Glen.
12. The application property comprises a relatively modern brick property, with a concrete-tiled roof. The property incorporates 5-bedrooms. Set in the rear garden area is a garage building (accessed from Park Lane) with annexe accommodation over. The dwelling is set in extensive enclosed grounds, and incorporates a large gravelled parking and hardstanding area to the east of the garage / annexe building. Tree cover is generally confined to the site perimeter.
13. This planning application seeks to change the use of the premises from its existing C3 residential use to a C2 supported-living residential care home use. The property will comprise the long-term home for 6 residents with autistic spectrum disorders and learning disabilities. The property will, be staffed on a shift basis by non-resident staff. Daytime shifts will typically comprise 6 members of staff plus a manager, with three staff on-site overnight. Kisimul operate a number of similar facilities in the wider area, as well as other locations nationwide. The company also operate a number of specialist schools, including Calman Colaiste at Thorney. Minimal internal alterations are required to the building to accommodate the use. There is adequate space within the grounds of the property to accommodate the parking needs of the use.
14. In operation, the use will have the characteristics of a residential use; indeed, the property will serve as the long-term home of its occupants. The existing property is large and can potentially accommodate a large extended family. In operation, the use will not be significantly different in character to the existing residential use. The site will provide long-term residential accommodation for adults suffering from autistic spectrum disorders and learning difficulties, in a high quality environment. Demand for specialist care facilities for people with autism is increasing.
15. The building in this case occupies a large site with adequate car parking to accommodate the operational needs of the use. The proposed use will accord with relevant national and local planning policies and will give rise to no demonstrable harm. The residential character of the area will be preserved. No adverse amenity impacts will arise from the proposed development.
16. The particulars of the application are considered in further detail within this Design and Access Statement. For clarity they are summarised below;

USE: the use or uses proposed for the development and any distinct development zones within the site identified

The application proposes the change of use of a 5-bedroom dwelling plus annexe to a 6-bed, C2 supported-living residential care home for adults with autistic spectrum disorders and learning disabilities. In operation, the use will have very similar characteristics to the extant C3 use. The property will serve as the long-term home of its residents, and the primary objective is to create a homely rather than an institutional feel to the accommodation. The building will retain the characteristics of a residential dwelling. The property is located within a largely residential area and the residential characteristics of the area will similarly be preserved. The use will be consistent with national and local planning policies and will give rise to no adverse impacts upon the character and amenities of the locality.

AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT: the amount of development proposed for each use

The application in this case relates to the change of use of the existing property. The property already incorporates 6 bedrooms (5 in the main dwelling and one in the annexe) and no external alterations are required to accommodate the use. Internal alterations will place four bedrooms in the main house and two in the annexe.

LAYOUT: an indicative layout with separate development zones proposed within the site boundary where appropriate

The development has no implications in terms of layout. The site layout remains unchanged. There is adequate space within the grounds of the dwelling to accommodate the parking needs of the use.

SCALE PARAMETERS: an indication of the upper and lower limits for height, width, and length of each building within the site boundary

The development has no scale implications. The application comprises a change of use only and no physical building alterations or additions are proposed.

LANDSCAPING: an illustration of the landscaping strategy underpinning the development

The existing buildings sits within a landscaped setting. Whilst landscaping contributes significantly to the character of the wider locality, existing site landscaping will not be affected by the change of use.

APPEARANCE: an indication of the factors informing the design and appearance of the buildings on the site

The appearance of the building will not change in this case. The development comprises a change of use only.

ACCESS POINTS: an area or areas in which the access point or points to the site will be situated

The development will be accessed from the existing access points from Park Lane. Traffic flows associated with the use will be modest, and largely confined to staff. Adequate provision is made within the site for the parking of cars. (Additional car parking spaces can be provided if required by the local highway authority). Public transport services are within walking distance of the site.

3. Site location and proposed development

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

17. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the need for good design to emerge from the planning process, and regards the two as being indivisible. High quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation. It ensures places function well and that developments add to the overall character and quality of the area, not just for the short term, but for the lifetime of the development. Good design will emerge from a full understanding of the site and its surroundings. This section describes the site and the surrounding area, and then appraises the factors which contribute to the character and appearance of the area, and the key factors that should influence design on the site.

The application site and the surrounding area

18. The application property comprises Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet.



19. The property comprises a five bedrooomed detached house with an adjoining single bedroomed annexe, which is located on the northern side of Park Lane, Surfleet, adjacent its junction with A1536 Surfleet Road.

20. The property is relatively modern, dating from the last 30 years. To the north, is the River Glen (a footpath runs between the property and the river), and adjacent the site is the bridge crossing of the river, linking Surfleet Road and Gosberton Road; the main road passing through the village. Although the main vehicular access to the dwelling is from Park Lane, the dwelling itself fronts on to Surfleet Road and there is a pedestrian access from that road. To the south east of the property is a large detached bungalow served from Park Lane. Directly to the south, across Park Lane, is a light industrial unit (previously consented for residential redevelopment – H17/0537-16) and a former two-storey office building, once associated with the light-industrial use and subsequently consented for residential conversion and subdivision (H17-0008-04 et seq). Set across Surfleet Road are frontage residential properties

21. Accompanying the application are detailed floor plans of the building.





Google Earth
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The application property viewed from Surfleet Road. To the left of the bridge crossing of the River Glen. Visible to the rear of the dwelling is the garage / annexe building.



Google Earth
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The annexe building to the rear of the dwelling, accessed from Park Lane.

22. Whilst consented and constructed as a dwelling, the property is demonstrably suitable by its size and location to accommodate alternative residentially based uses. In this context, it is considered that there is some scope to accommodate alternative, residentially focussed uses, for example, uses falling elsewhere within use class C1 (guesthouses), or within use class C2. Uses that preserve the residential character and appearance of the locality and that are not harmful to residential amenity are considered to be appropriate building uses in this case.
23. The applicants in this case, Kisimul Group Limited, are seeking, via the present application, to utilise the building as a C2 residential supported living care home for adults with autism

and learning disabilities. Essentially, the intention would be to utilise the property as a permanent residential accommodation for a group of up to 6 adults, with a team of non-resident carers supporting them. The residents will share communal facilities (kitchen, lounge etc) and the property will serve as their long-term home. This is considered to represent an appropriate residentially-based use of the building, and one that can be accommodated without detriment to the wider character of the area, or adjoining residential amenity.

24. As illustrated in the following section, such a use will have residential characteristics and represents an appropriate use within a residential area. The proposals need to be considered in the context of what we consider to be a reasonable and realistic fall-back position that would enable the building to be used in a broadly similar manner for up to 6 residents under the provisions of use class C3(b).

[The proposed development](#)

25. This full planning application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the premises from its existing C3 residential use to a residential care home falling within Use Class C2. The care home proposed would accommodate 6 adults in a similar manner to the other homes that the Group operates. There will be a particular emphasis upon supported living, albeit that the residents will share facilities such as kitchen and lounge areas. Four residents will occupy the main dwelling and two will occupy the annexe (although the communal facilities of the main dwelling will also be available to the annexe occupiers). The overall site will comprise one planning unit. The facility will employ a total of 24 people spread across two daily shifts, 3 teams of six on daytime rotations and 2 teams of 3 rotating overnight, together with a manager. During the day staffing will depend on the level of care needed, and would not normally exceed 6. Overnight staffing would typically be 3 people. The staff will be non-resident. There is adequate space within the grounds of the dwelling to meet the parking needs of the use. Six spaces are identified in line with relevant parking standards although additional spaces can be provided if required. The Group have a strategic green travel plan in place and promote initiatives aimed at minimising vehicle journeys, and single occupancy vehicle journeys. Staff are encouraged to travel to work by non-car modes and the site location, in walking distance of a high frequency bus route, makes the bus a practical travel to work option. A flood risk assessment accompanies the application. The loss of grass lawn in this case to accommodate the slightly enlarged parking area is less than 25 sq.m and thus falls within the *de minimis* provision of the BNG regulations and as such BNG assessment is not required.

4. Planning considerations

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

Kisimul Group

26. The applicants in this case are the Kisimul Group Limited. Established in the 1970's, the group specialises in educational and care services for children and young adults with complex learning difficulties, challenging behaviour, autism and global development delay. Education and care services are provided at a range of specialist schools and homes. Placements are typically made via Local Education Authorities (LEA's). Kisimul Group is committed to providing excellent teaching and continuity of service to very vulnerable young people for whom drastic change is overwhelming. As well as providing educational services up to the age of 25, the Group also provides adult care services, in the form of residential homes, providing important continuity for the students. This also maintains social groups that have evolved through the learning years. The accommodation proposed in this case would serve this latter need. Further information about the group and its activities are available from their web-site www.kisimul.co.uk.
27. The original Kisimul School was established in the Old Vicarage in Beesthorpe in 1977; moving to current location in Swinderby in circa 1982. Following subsequent expansions, this now comprises the lower school, catering for students up to 15 years of age. Kisimul Upper School is located at Acacia Hall, Friesthorpe (near Market Rasen). This caters for students aged 16-19 years of age. Calmain Colaiste near Thorney provides post-16 education and training. This is a relatively short journey from the present application site..
28. Residential placements at schools and homes are available for 38-52 weeks per year. Typically the homes would operate year round, as they become individuals' principal residence. The Group aims to provide a warm caring environment in which a child or adult can flourish and develop skills to his or her full potential. Residential and school staff work as a team to provide a consistent 24-hour approach.
29. Each pupil/student has an education programme based on an assessment of his / her needs, and in which parental views are considered to be an important part of the process. Emphasis is placed upon providing a stimulating and rich environment, including such activities as horse riding, cinema and ten-pin bowling as well as outings to zoos, theme parks and theatres. Pupils/students have the opportunity to go camping and hill walking and weekend activities associated with this add to the busy pattern of life. Trips to and from the site are always supervised, and typically undertaken by minibuses based at the site.
30. The schools offer a very high staff ratio (usually at least 1:1). Young adults after leaving the school will typically require a lower ratio of staff, with small groups at all times, and a consistent, structured approach. Schools follow a broad and balanced curriculum, including a modified National Curriculum. As well as an extensive range of therapeutic and development programmes, including speech and language therapy, aromatherapy and structured play development. The post -16 programmes are underpinned by a wide variety of ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) programmes, through which pupils can gain external accreditation.
31. Care and welfare needs do not stop at 19 years of age when pupils become adults. There is a clear demand for accommodation for these young adults. Having spent many years at Kisimul schools, strong bonds are developed between student groups. It is desirable in such circumstances to be able to move pupils into an adult care regime in familiar surroundings with familiar faces. School leavers are able to remain in the area they have grown up in, with people

they trust. Locating adult care homes in close proximity to existing schools also enables the young adults to make a smooth transition from one facility to another, with the possibility of visits back to the school to utilise the facilities available. The Group now has a number residential homes for young adults in the local area, and the objective at all times is to place residents close to their original homes or the home of their parents.

National planning policy considerations

32. The National Planning Policy Framework sets the agenda for the development of housing. Fundamental to the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the promotion of the efficient and effective use of land, and the promotion, wherever practicable, of the development of previously developed land. It offers limited guidance on the type of development proposed in this instance, although assessed against the broad principles outlined in the guidance, the development proposed must be seen to represent a sustainable form of development, in an appropriate, sustainable location.
33. Some guidance on C2 uses was previously offered in Circular 03/2005: Changes of Use of buildings and land - The Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. This guidance however has subsequently been replaced by the NPPF (albeit that there are no equivalent provisions within the NPPF). It offers some limited guidance about the use of land and buildings for C2 purposes.
34. Circular 03/2005 identified that the principal considerations that should be applied to the determination of planning applications for C2 care home uses, are **amenity considerations** and **environmental considerations**.
35. The application property in this case comprises a property with a residential character, within a residential area. The particular characteristics of the proposed use place it within Use Class C2, although there is little to distinguish the use in this case from a conventional C3 dwelling use, other than the staff movements to and from the site. What is evident in this instance is that the nearby dwellings within the locality are relatively large in scale with a large number of bedrooms and the capacity to accommodate large, extended family groupings.
36. In operation the proposed C2 use would not be harmful to the amenity of the locality. The applicant, in seeking to use the site for C2 purposes, has purposely sought a residential environment for the proposed use, as that type of environment is the most suitable and appropriate for future residents. The site is well contained and well screened and will offer a calm, and safe environment for residents. The use in its operation is not materially different to that of a dwellinghouse. The only slight difference is the traffic generation to and from the site. This will comprise staff movements to and from the site, as well as the use of people carriers to transport residents to various activities. These vehicle movements are slightly greater than that associated with a dwelling use. Green travel initiatives such as car sharing by staff and the promotion of cycling, through cycle purchase schemes, offer the scope to minimise car journeys and single occupancy travel. In this instance, the proximity of the property to a bus route, (Brylaine: B3: Boston-Spalding; from a stop approximately 100m away) makes the bus a realistic transport and travel-to-work option. The use will not give rise to any adverse impacts upon adjoining residential amenity.
37. In use terms therefore the proposed development will have no implications in terms of the way the site functions. In operational terms, there will be no material or adverse impacts upon the wider community. From points outside the site, the site use will not be distinguishable from a conventional residential property. The site has the character of a residential property. This will be unchanged as a result of the development.

38. We consider in this particular case that the use of the premises as a care home for young adults with severe learning difficulties, operated by the Kisimul Group, would operate in a manner almost identical to that of a conventional dwellinghouse; indeed, the very purpose and objective of forming homes in the community such as this, is to enable the residents to live in a caring home environment, rather than something having an institutional feel.

- ❖ Whilst the operation of the property involves elements of care and supervision, it is important to understand the nature of that care. The carers in this case are not providing physical care and treatment, as for example would take place in a care home for the elderly, but care that is more akin to a mentoring, supervisory and welfare type relationship. Supported living arrangements are generally tailored to individuals with greater capabilities and who are able to live more independently.
- ❖ The property will function in a manner similar to a conventional domestic dwelling with some communal living arrangements. The very purpose of the development is to create a home-style environment for residents, rather than somewhere with a more institutional feel. To all outward appearances, the property will appear as a residential dwelling.
- ❖ The medical and health-care needs of the young adults living at the home will be very similar to the medical needs of any other young adult. The nearest doctors in this case are reasonable proximity to the site. Use of the property as a conventional dwelling with a family that included young adults living there would encounter equivalent accessibility requirements to health care as the intended residents in this case.
- ❖ The property will function as a single household unit. Indeed, the property will comprise the long-term home for the residents and every effort will be made to create a homely, domestic atmosphere. There will be a continual staff presence (typically ranging from between 3 and 6 at any one time). The staff work shifts (including overnight shifts) and do not reside at the property.
- ❖ The residents, because of their condition, are not likely to work. They will not drive. They do however participate in a full and comprehensive range of activities. As they develop into adulthood, this will typically reflect their interests, and might include leisure activities (swimming and bowling), gardening etc. In many cases, residents will participate in local events and make use of local facilities.
- ❖ Residents will typically be taken to activities in people carriers owned by Kisimul Group. Whilst this might represent a slight visible differentiation between a conventional residential dwelling and the care home, in practical terms it is not likely to result in any greater number of vehicles to and from the property than that generated by what is a large residential property. The character of the site is such that these vehicles when parked have no material visibility from public vantage points.

39. Based upon the foregoing we consider that the operation of the premises as a residential home for adults with severe learning difficulties will be indistinguishable from the use of the premises as a dwelling. As a functioning home, the demands upon the community are not materially different from those of a conventional family dwelling.

40. Thus, in terms of the amenity and environmental considerations identified above, it is considered that no adverse impacts will arise. There will be no detrimental amenity impacts.

41. The use will give rise to no environmental impacts. In operation the property will function in a very similar manner to a residential property and as a consequence will have no greater impacts than those associated with a residential use.

Policy considerations

42. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan was adopted in 2019. There are limited policies in the plan that directly relate to the type of use proposed in this instance.
43. **Policy 17** of the Plan relates to **Providing a Mix of Housing**. The Policy includes the following commentary;

A growing ageing population with the increasing likelihood of mobility and disability needs to be met also make up over 10% of housing needs over the Plan period and these should be met through provision of homes capable of adaption and also through specialist care home provision. With a decreasing ability to access everyday facilities independently and an increasing need for healthcare, specialist care home provision should be located in the most sustainable settlements e.g. Sub-Regional Centres and Main Service Centres.

44. Although the policy includes two references to care homes, it is quite clear that the purpose and intent of the paragraph is to ensure appropriate provision is made for housing provision for the elderly; the policy specifically references that over 10% of housing needs over the plan period will be for elderly people. It is not the purpose or intent of the policy to cover the needs of individuals with autism and learning difficulties, and indeed, no specific reference is made to this cohort within either the policy or the supporting text.
45. The supporting text does however include the following, limited commentary;

When considering planning applications for sheltered and specialist housing schemes for older and disabled people the relevant Council will favour schemes where: the site is well served by passenger transport; there is good access to local services and facilities; and the proposal is appropriate to its locality e.g. Sub-Regional Centres and Main Service Centres.

46. This supporting text makes reference to *specialist housing schemes for older and disabled people*, and it might be argued that this commentary brings the proposals within the scope of this policy. The supporting text suggests that the Council will favour schemes where the site is well served by passenger transport. Whilst it is suggested that this would normally comprise Sub-Regional Centre and Main Service Centre locations, we consider that in this case the site offers very good public transport accessibility¹; indeed, the proximity of this site to high-frequency bus services to sub-regional centres, is arguably superior to parts of Spalding and the Main Service Centres where there are fewer or no bus services.
47. Despite its limitations - the principles outlined by this policy are satisfied in this case. This facility is appropriately located and demonstrably accessible by non-car modes.
48. **Policy 2** of the Local Plan relates to **development management**. The Policy states that all new development should be of a high-quality design. The Policy continues that it will be necessary to demonstrate that new development satisfies a range of considerations. Whilst not all of these

¹ Surfleet is served by hourly bus services between Spalding and Boston (Brylaine Service B3). There are also regular weekday services between Boston and Spalding via Bicker and Donington (B9). There are Saturday services between Boston and Spalding every two hours (Black Cat Service B13) Bus stops are located approximately 100m from the site.

considerations are pertinent to a change of use, we consider them below to demonstrate overall compliance.

POLICY 2: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT		
Proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to:		
No	Criteria	Comment
1	size, scale, layout, density and impact on the amenity, trees, character and appearance of the area and the relationship to existing development and land uses;	Regard has been paid to these considerations in the formulation of these proposals. As a change of use of the existing buildings with no external alterations proposed, the development has no scale implications. Existing site layout is maintained. Existing landscaping within the site is retained. The proposed development is compatible with surrounding development. The screened nature of the site is such that the development will not give rise to any adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality.
2	Quality of design and orientation	As a change of use only the overall appearance of the site will be unchanged. Orientation issues do not arise.
3	Maximizing the use of sustainable materials and resources	As a change of use of the existing building, this issue is not considered relevant. Any future internal building alterations will however have regard to these sustainability considerations.
4	Access and vehicle generation levels	Suitable provision is made for access, turning and parking within the site.
5	The capacity of existing community services and infrastructure	The development will not impact upon local service provision or facilities. Indeed, it is anticipated that the use will help to support local services and facilities.
6	Impact upon neighbouring land uses by reason of noise, odour, disturbance or visual intrusion	The development is compatible with adjoining land uses and will not be visually intrusive, nor give rise to adverse amenity impacts.
7	Sustainable drainage and flood risk	The property can be suitably protected against the risk of flooding (see flood risk assessment accompanying application).
8	Impact or enhancement for areas of natural habitats and historical buildings and heritage assets	No ecological issues arise in this case. The de minimis level of change is not exceeded in this case and BNG requirements do not arise. No heritage assets are impacted.
9	Impact on the potential loss of sand and gravel mineral resources	No mineral resource issues are raised in this case.

49. Policy 3 of the Local Plan relates to the Design of New Development. The policy identifies 15 considerations to which proposals should have regard. As with Policy 2, some strands have limited relevance to a change of use. We can identify no material conflict with these considerations;

POLICY 3: DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

All development will create distinctive places through the use of high quality and inclusive design and layout and, where appropriate, make innovative use of local traditional styles and materials. Design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Development proposals will demonstrate how the following issues, where they are relevant to the proposal, will be secured:

No	Criteria	Comment
1	creating a sense of place by complementing and enhancing designated and non-designated heritage assets; historic street patterns; respecting the density, scale, visual closure, landmarks, views, massing of neighbouring buildings and the surrounding area;	The existing sense of place, in terms of the relationship of the existing property to surrounding development, will be unchanged by this change of use.
2	Distinguishing between private and public space	There is a clear distinction between public and private space. This will not be changed as a result of the change of use.
3	The landscape character of the location	The overall character of the locality will not be changed adversely impacted in this instance.
4	Accessibility by a choice of travel modes including the provision of public transport, public rights of way and cycle ways	The property benefits from good public transport options. Regular frequency bus services link Surfleet with Spalding and Boston. The village is readily accessible on foot or by bicycle.
5	The provision of facilities for the storage or refuse / recycling bins, storage and/ or parking of bicycles and layout of car parking.	Suitable provision will be made for the storage of waste, cycle storage and car parking.
6	The lighting of public spaces	No public space is proposed as part of the development.
7	Ensuring public spaces are accessible to all	No public space is proposed as part of the development.
8	Crime prevention and community safety	The development proposals have been formulated with crime prevention / security considerations in mind.
9	The orientation of buildings on the site to enable the best use of decentralized and renewable low carbon energy technologies for the lifetime of the development	No relevant to a change of use of existing buildings.
10	The appropriate treatment of facades to public places, including shop frontages to avoid visual intrusion by advertising, other signage, security shutters, meter boxes and other service and communication infrastructure	Not relevant or applicable in this case.
11	Residential amenity	Adjoining properties – which are set some distance away - will not be impacted by the proposed development.

12	The mitigation of flood risk through flood resistant and flood-resilient design and sustainable drainage systems	The development is not considered to be at unacceptable risk of flooding – see flood risk assessment accompanying application.
13	The use of locally sourced building materials, minimizing the use of water and minimizing land take, to protect best and most versatile soils	Not Applicable to a change of use.
14	The incorporation of existing hedgerows and trees and the provision of appropriate new landscaping to enhance biodiversity, green infrastructure, flood risk mitigation and urban cooling	The site is presently well landscaped. Additional landscaping is not considered necessary in this case.
15	The appropriate use or re-use of historic buildings	There are no historic buildings within or in the vicinity of the site.

50. Accordingly, we can identify no policy conflict in this case.

51. The particular characteristics of the present site are such that the residential amenity of adjoining properties will not be adversely impacted in this instance. There is a notable separation for the neighbouring properties and use of the access point will not interfere with adjoining access arrangements.

52. The proposed development in this case will not generate significant amounts of additional traffic movements. As an organisation, Kisimul Group works to a strategic green travel plan, aimed at reducing the need to travel, and minimising the number of single occupancy car journeys. At each individual location, staff are encouraged to either car share, utilise public transport or to cycle. Measures are generally put in place at sites to achieve these objectives. If appropriate, a green travel plan can be produced for the site in line with the strategic green travel plan that is already in place. The site is within walking distance of good quality public transport services and this may be seen to represent a valid travel-to-work option in this case. There is scope within the site to provide for cycle parking and storage and for hook-ups for electric vehicles and bicycles.

53. Accordingly, we can identify no material planning policy conflicts arising in this case.

Planning conclusions

54. The C2 use proposed in this instance, in operation, will be very similar in character to a residential dwelling. Whilst there will be some staff movements to and from the site, the overall level of activity will be not dissimilar to that of a large residential property. In our assessment, given the particular characteristics of the building, the proposed number of residents can be accommodated without detriment, particularly in terms of residential amenity and environmental impacts.

55. No physical alterations are proposed to the buildings. The development as such will have no detrimental impacts upon the appearance of the building or the visual amenities of the street scene or wider locality.

56. The development will be consistent with relevant development plan policies.

5. Design component

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

57. This section considers the design issues relating to the development arising from the site appraisal of the previous section. The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) Paragraph 130, outlines matters to consider when assessing design quality. These include a consideration of whether the development;-

A	<p>Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site is well located relative to services and community facilities. It is within walking distance of facilities within Surfleet, and all the services it provides.• The development preserves the existing form and pattern of development, and will not give rise to adverse amenity impacts• The site comprises part of an established residential area and will have no adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality• The application proposes an efficient use of space that is safe, accessible and user-friendly.• The development will have no impact upon the character and appearance of the locality• The building incorporate appropriate measures to minimise the carbon footprint of the building, and ensure its resilience to climate change.
B	<p>Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The existing form and appearance of the building will be unchanged.
C	<p>Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The use is compatible with its surroundings.• Landscape setting will not be impacted by the proposed development.
D	<p>Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces and building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development will complement the residential character of the locality. It will reinforce the character of the locality and sense of place.• The proposed development will preserve the existing pattern of development in the locality.
E	<p>Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site relates satisfactorily with adjoining development.• The development is compatible with surrounding land uses.• The use will help to support local services. Services and facilities are within easy walking and cycling distance.
F	<p>Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The development will be safe and accessible. The site is proximate to services and facilities• The development will offer a high standard of amenity for future residents• The development will incorporate appropriate measures to minimise crime and the fear of crime

58. Having considered compliance with these NPPF design objectives, this statement now considers the following issues required to be included in Design and Access Statements.

Use

59. The application proposes the change of use of a 5-bedroom dwelling plus annexe to a 6-bed, C2 supported-living residential care home for adults with autistic spectrum disorders. In operation, the use will have very similar characteristics to the extant C3 use. The property will serve as the long-term home of its residents, and the primary objective is to create a homely rather than an institutional feel to the accommodation. The building will retain the characteristics of a residential dwelling. The property is located within a largely residential area and the residential characteristics of the area will similarly be preserved. The use will be consistent with national and local planning policies and will give rise to no adverse impacts upon the character and amenities of the locality.

Amount

60. The application in this case relates to the change of use of the existing property. The property already incorporates 6 bedrooms (5 in the main dwelling and one in the annexe) and no external alterations are required to accommodate the use. Internal alterations will place four bedrooms in the main house and two in the annexe.

Layout

61. The development has no implications in terms of layout. The site layout remains unchanged. There is adequate space within the grounds of the dwelling to accommodate the parking needs of the use.

Scale

62. The development has no scale implications. The application comprises a change of use only and no physical building alterations or additions are proposed.

Landscaping

63. The existing buildings sits within a landscaped setting. Whilst landscaping contributes significantly to the character of the wider locality, existing site landscaping will not be affected by the change of use.

Appearance

64. The appearance of the building will not change in this case. The development comprises a change of use only.

6. Access component

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

Is the development accessible and inclusive?

65. The proposed development does not include any physical or social barriers to accessibility. The site is physically level and accesses directly to surrounding movement networks. It is well located relative to facilities in Surfleet and other higher order centres, which are accessible by public transport. The terrain and ease of access to facilities makes the development equally accessible to all, including those with physical impairments. The proposal appears to comply with relevant development plan policies with regard to accessibility.
66. Access to buildings is dealt with under the Building Regulations, and is not specifically covered in this statement. It is not considered that there are any exceptional access issues arising in this case.

How will access be achieved?

67. The site is accessible by all modes. Pedestrian access is achievable directly from Park Lane and from Surfleet Road.
68. The site enjoys direct vehicular access from Park Lane, from where there is ready access to the primary road network.
69. As a private residential care facility the proposed development raises no specific issues relating to public accessibility.
70. The development will be accessed from the existing access points from Park Lane. Traffic flows associated with the use will be modest, and largely confined to staff. Adequate provision is made within the site for the parking of cars. (Additional car parking spaces can be provided if required by the local highway authority). Public transport services are within walking distance of the site.

7. Conclusions

Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 residential care home, Bridge House, Park Lane, Surfleet

71. The appraisal process has identified a clear and justified design and access solution for the site. This has been based upon a thorough appraisal of the site and the surrounding area. It has drawn upon the physical context of the site and the surrounding area.
72. The residential character of the proposed use will be compatible with the residential characteristics of the wider locality. The development will conform to relevant development plan policies.

M Sibthorp
June 2025